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AWARENESS OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS  
OF THE JEWS OF MICHIGAN TO OUR STATE,  
OUR NATION AND THE WORLD.





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,  
 OF BLESSED MEMORY, AND DOROTHY DAVIDSON GERSON.



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## COVER PHOTO

*In 1933, Rose Bleicher Mendelson (1903-1981) came to Michigan as a divorcee with two young daughters. Within two years, in the midst of the Great Depression, Mendelson together with two partners founded the State College of Beauty, a school for men and women to learn the emerging trade of hair styling. Rose and her team grew the company seven-fold, opening two schools and five beauty salons.*

*The cover photo is one of the numerous creative advertisements Mendelson designed for the school. Rose Bleicher Mendelson is among the many women featured in JHSM's new book, Michigan Women Who Made a Difference. Her daughter, Naomi Siegel, shared the story of Mendelson's entrepreneurial success and some of the treasured photos and keepsakes from her mother's business.*

# 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

## THE JOURNAL OF THE JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN

Volume 54

Fall 2014

Tishrei 5775

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*\*of blessed memory*



The logo for JHSM (Jewish Home and Senior Center) features the letters 'JHSM' in a large, bold, serif font. The letters are slightly overlapping and have a subtle shadow effect, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. The logo is positioned at the bottom right of the page.

# EDITOR'S LETTER

Dear Readers,

Prepare for a fantastic journey. The book you hold in your hands is dear and takes us to the far corners of the globe. In this edition of *Michigan Jewish History*, one of our largest ever, we honor veterans of two wars: the Korean War and the nurses of WWII. We travel to Michigan's northern half to meet Dr. Harry Weitz, a roentgenologist who made his living and raised his family in Traverse City, and we roll through the Detroit area to read about the beginnings of the Detroit Public Library, the Detroit Jewish Community Book Fair, and the bowling center industry, of all things! We meet Michigan's Jewish federal judges and learn about the Jewish community's presence on Chene Street in Detroit.

Without intention, a few themes emerge from this assortment of articles. One is books. Annetta Miller, a World War II nurse, recorded her memories in a scrapbook, a well-worn, leather-bound treasure she has kept near to her all these many decades. JHSM's research director, Aimee Ergas, met with Miller to hear her share the tales of her time serving our country. Miller entrusted Ergas to carry that precious book to our offices so we could scan some of those images. More obvious, the connection to books is evident in the stories told by authors Barbara Cohn, on the origins of the Detroit Public Library, and Elizabeth Applebaum, on the exciting history of the nation's oldest Jewish book fair. The Jewish people are the people of the book and it is clear from these stories that indeed the book is not only sacred to us but revered, honored, and, thankfully, shared.

*Beshert*, the coincidences that form a perfect connection, is perhaps too strong of a word to describe the second theme the reader of *Volume 54* will find, but find it you will. Judge Bernard Friedman is the chance story that carries through the pages herewith. You will find "Bernie" Friedman mentioned in the story on the Jewish community that lived on and near Chene Street. Friedman's grandfather, Moishe, after emigrating from David-Horodok in the Russian partition of Poland, came to Detroit via New York to work in the auto factories. He soon opened a shoe repair store on Milwaukee Avenue, just off Chene Street. Moishe's son David would become a physician and, above the shoe repair, opened a medical practice. Bernie Friedman spent many hours in the building in which his father and grandfather made their livings, and shared those memories with Marian Krzyzowski for the Chene Street project.

Most of those who know the name of Bernard Friedman associate him with his present-day position as a federal judge. He is one of eleven Jewish federal judges to have served in the eastern Michigan courts. Author Robert Davidow distills brief biographies of these important men and women and offers yet another insight into the life of Judge Friedman. But, what will likely both surprise and delight you, will be the third connection to Judge Friedman – and that is that he once, in the days before his appointment to the third branch of our government, owned a bowling center. His ownership was not solely a financial one. Friedman – at the time a practicing attorney – and his partners ran the center, working the cash register, picking up litter, or doing whatever was needed. And yet, according to authors Sandy Hansell and Mark Voight, Judge Bernard Friedman never once threw a bowling ball down those wooden lanes.

It is in our human nature to look for themes. Often, in my role as editor of *Michigan Jewish History*, I've been asked to explore and develop specific themes. However, since this publication relies on the curiosity and generosity of our volunteer authors, such dreams are frequently only partially explored. Thus the themes that do emerge are accidental but they are also absolutely perfect.

- Wendy Rose Bice

# FEATURED ARTICLE

## FROM SEOUL TO ASH WOODS

by ANDREA GALLUCCI AND MAYNARD GORDON

*Jewish men and women from Michigan served in the Korean War in many capacities from battle, intelligence, and logistics, to keeping the troops informed. These soldiers, who were children during World War II, faced the daunting prospect of military service in a country they never hear of. This moving tribute shares some of their experiences and memories.*



*Dedicated in 1995, the Korean War Veterans Memorial commemorates those who served in the Korean War and is located on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.*

*Photo courtesy of the Korean War Veterans Association.*



**NINETEEN** soldiers silently emerge from Ash Woods in Washington, D.C., on patrol. These unpolished stainless-steel statues represent the men and women who served in the Korean War, the Forgotten War. Their faces look weary, guarded, almost scared. Their ponchos appear to be whipping in the wind; guns are held tightly. The slabs of granite and scrubby juniper bushes at their feet impart the rough terrain and obstacles the soldiers faced daily. They advance in a triangular formation making their way toward an American flag. This moving memorial, dedicated on July 27, 1995, exactly forty-two years after the Korean War ended, is a salute to America's sons and daughters who were brave enough to defend a country they never knew and a people they never met.

Jewish men and women from Michigan served in many capacities from battle, intelligence, and logistics, to keeping the troops informed.

*“Korea was war at its worst, but it was America at its best...  
It was a war; a hard, brutal war. And the men and women  
who fought it were heroes.”* President Bill Clinton<sup>1</sup>

On June 25, 1950, the North Korean army made a hostile invasion of South Korea in a brutal attempt to reunite the two countries. With democracy at stake, the world was asked to restore peace to a tiny, defenseless nation. The idea of a new war was a tough pill for Americans to swallow. The pain and hurrah of World War II were becoming a distant memory. The nation had reclined comfortably back into the routine of daily life. The baby boom had begun and the U.S. economy was growing. President Harry Truman, worrying this turmoil would snowball into World War III, entered into an agreement of a “police action” instead of war under the lead of the United Nations. Ultimately, the police action facade morphed into fierce trench warfare, an escalation largely ignored by the American public.



*MPCs were a form of currency used to pay U.S. military personnel during wartime. Available in amounts of 5 cents, 10 cents, 25 cents, 50 cents, 1 dollar, 5 dollars, or 10 dollars, MPCs were fully convertible to U.S. dollars upon leaving a designated MPC zone and were convertible to local currencies when going on leave (but not vice versa).*

The draft was crucial to man this effort. Soldiers were called up from the reserves. Those who served in World War II were asked to fight again. Veterans who had been deemed unfit for service, due to health issues or poor eyesight, were now hastily ac-

cepted for active duty.<sup>2</sup> More than sixteen nations pledged aid to Korea. The United States provided ninety percent of the ground troops; Israel sent 4,000 soldiers to serve alongside the Allied and South Korean Forces.<sup>3</sup>

The first Jewish Detroiters reported to perish in this forgotten war were Mandell Yuster and Louis J. Molar. Their stories are just two among many thousands. We proudly share a small sampling of the unique efforts put forth by our own Jewish Michiganders.

*Soldiers grimly joked, "If this is a police action,  
why don't they send the cops?"*<sup>4</sup>

### THE RECAPTURE OF SEOUL – YUSTER

"It was just like him, first in everything," tearfully remembered Mandell's parents, Sam and Dora Yuster of Detroit's Dexter-Davison neighborhood. The shocking news of the death of their youngest child, and only son, was delivered via telegram that told the details of how he perished in the bloody battle to recapture Seoul, on March 16, 1951. It was their first realization that their "baby Mendy" was in combat. In order to spare them worry, Mandell had sent them upbeat letters "... having a wonderful time at my Tokyo base," he wrote. Conversely, his sisters knew the hard truth and rough details of his real war work in the U.S. Army Infantry 1st Cavalry Division.<sup>5</sup>

Yuster was no stranger to hard work, dedication, and service. As a young boy, he had been a charter member of the Shaarey Zedek Detroit Cub Scout pack #104 and later earned scores of merit badges with their Boy Scout troop #164. It is rumored that he achieved Eagle Scout status. Yuster excelled in high-school sports and lettered in football, bowled for various teams around Detroit, and participated in sandlot baseball during summer breaks. He held the officer position of scribe with the Demolay Perfection Chapter of the junior Masonic Order. He was also active with the Romanian Beth Moses Synagogue, where his father Sam was vice president.



*Mandell Yuster's entry in the Jewish War Veterans Golden Book. The Golden Book, housed at the A. Alfred Taubman Jewish Community Campus in Oak Park, contains the names and short biographies of the more than 225 local military men who were mortally wounded in WWII and the Korean War. It is maintained by the Jewish War Veterans of Michigan.*

Mandell enrolled at the University of Detroit before enlisting in the army in 1948. His early military days were spent attending finance school and becoming a skilled marksman. He was discharged in 1950, but shortly after, he was called to return to service in Korea.<sup>6</sup> He went willingly, and within three months made the supreme sacrifice for his country.<sup>7</sup>



Cpl. Loue Molar (right) enjoys some time away from the battlefield

NATIONAL JEWISH WELFARE BOARD			
BUREAU OF WAR RECORDS			
MASTER CARD SYSTEM			
AUTHENTICATED		AWARD P.H.	
NAME	MOLAR Louis Joseph	RANK	S 1/C
	LAST (CAPS) FIRST MIDDLE		AGE
NEXT OF KIN		RELATIONSHIP	
ADDRESS		CITY	Detroit STATE Mich.
SOURCE OF INFORMATION	Nov. '44 mo. report sub. by E.R. Prussian in mo. report source bk		
INQUIRY DATE	5/9/45	FOLLOW-UP DATES	
WORKER CONSULTED	Keyser	FAMILY	
DATE APPEARED IN HONOR ROLL	8 Y8	BRANCH OF SERVICE	Navy

Cpl. Loue Molar's Purple Heart notification

## LONGED TO RETURN TO SERVICE – MOLAR

Loue Joseph Molar enlisted for service in WWII on December 7, 1942. He served four years in the U.S. Navy as a Seaman 1st Class aboard the USS Santee and the USS Gavia, respectively<sup>8</sup>. In October 1944, while in the South Pacific, his ship saw battle and sustained heavy torpedo damage.<sup>9</sup> Molar was wounded and was awarded the Purple Heart.<sup>10</sup> After discharge, the soldier found it hard to return to civilian life. In 1948, he enlisted in the army as a private. Not surprisingly, he was tapped to return to battle in Korea.<sup>11</sup> At this juncture, his mother, Bertha, was recovering from hospitalization, but Molar refused a deferment. Bertha told the *Detroit Jewish News*, "He was such a good boy, always thinking of his mother... but he wanted to return to his outfit and help end the fighting in Korea." Molar was reported missing in action in July 1950; his body was not recovered.<sup>11</sup> He achieved the rank of corporal before his death. He is memorialized at the Punchbowl Cemetery in Honolulu.



"If anyone were in my shoes, they'd do the same thing. It's just a messy job that has to be done."  
– Leon Hoffman

## THE DECORATED - HOFFMAN

Leon Hoffman was a career military man. He served in World War II and then Korea. On March 13, 1951, after a month in Korea, Lt. Leon Hoffman was faced with a challenge. His division lost radio contact during battle. An important message needed to get to the front lines. Hoffman answered duty's call and delivered it on foot, fending off ambush along the way. The message allowed the United Nations forces to capture an enemy stronghold. For this successful mission, he earned the Bronze Star.<sup>14</sup> Two months later, Lt. Hoffman's platoon was in control of a hill and ridge at Umi-dong, Korea. Strong enemy fire ensued, causing many casualties. The platoon was ordered

to withdraw. Hoffman's solution was to take an automatic rifle and lead a charge to take back the hill. In doing so, he directed the firefight and attention to himself, which allowed his men to regain control of this strategic spot. The date was May 18, 1951. The action earned him a Silver Star for leadership and bravery in battle.<sup>15</sup>

After the Korean War, Hoffman remained a reservist until his military retirement in 1971. He was employed by Army TACOM (Tank – Automotive Command) and resided in Detroit and Oak Park. Hoffman was an active member and officer with the Jewish War Veterans of Michigan - Joe Bale Post #474. On the court, he was considered a skilled basketball player and coach.

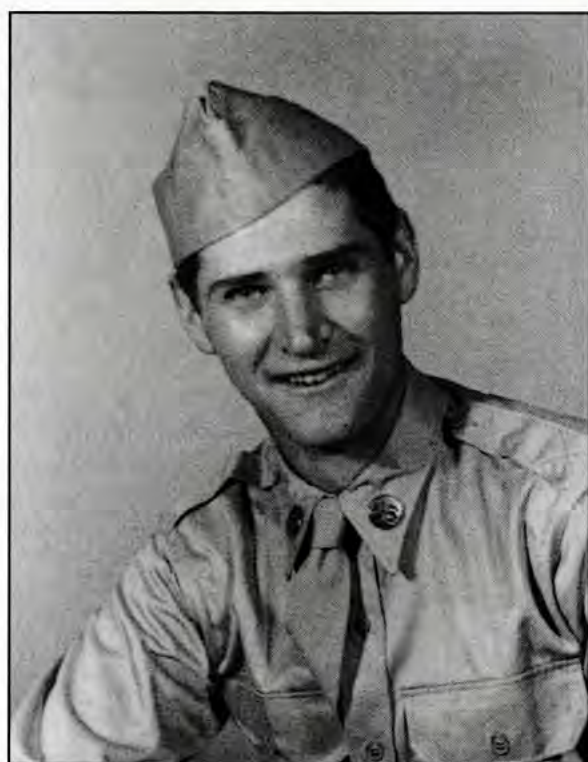
During his service, Hoffman earned two Silver Stars, four Bronze Stars, and the Combat Infantry Man's Badge. Additionally, he earned five Purple Hearts for wounds received in battle.<sup>16</sup> Hoffman retired with the rank of Lt. Colonel. He was married for sixty-six years to his wife, Nettie, until his death on January 31, 2013.<sup>17</sup>

### THE BANKER - SUBAR

When Jerome Subar learned he was classified as 4F – unfit for military duty – he enrolled in business school at the University of Michigan. Two years later, in December 1952, the Grand Rapids native was drafted into the army. After basic training, Subar attended finance school, graduated from military training, and was sent to the Far East Command through the Ft. Lewis, Washington, portal. Stationed roughly twelve miles from the 38th parallel near Uijonbu (wee-jon-boo), Korea, Subar worked in the 41st Finance Office as a cashier disbursing wages to soldiers using their R & R. Due to an active black market, compensation was made with military payment certificates (MPCs), the single form of U.S. currency permitted in Korea. In order to stop the flow of U.S. currency into unauthorized hands, the military periodically scheduled a complete changeover of the MPCs, making the cash office very busy. Subar had the primary responsibility of reconciling all currency by hand without the aid of specialized equipment.<sup>18</sup> His unique military service ultimately kept troop morale up and the black market down. After discharge, Subar returned home to Grand Rapids, calling upon his education and military discipline to help grow the family textile and uniform business started by his father, Max Subar, in 1923.<sup>19</sup> He passed away in January 2012 at the age of eighty-two. He was married to his wife, Judith, for fifty-four years.



*Jerome Subar*



*Fred Krainen*



*For Fred Krainen and his buddies – who were children during World War II – the prospect of military service in a country they never heard of was daunting. As required, these young men registered for the draft, hoping the war in Korea would end without their involvement. Krainen is shown here while in Korea.*

## THE NEWLYWED - KRAINEN

Before Korea intruded, life was good for nineteen-year-old Fred Krainen. He was employed as an apprentice electrician – a first step toward his goal of a master electrician's license and eventual business ownership. Fred and his sweetheart, Marilyn, were planning to marry sometime in the future, but when it appeared his draft call-up was imminent, they decided to get married sooner. They were married just four months when Fred's "Greetings" came. He was assigned to Camp Gordon, Georgia for training in the Signal Corps, and Marilyn joined him there. His overseas orders came around the time of their first anniversary.

In February 1953, Pvt. Krainen found himself on a troop train headed for Korea. Fred recalled: "We weren't told where in Korea we were headed or what we would do when we got there. On the train, we heard rumors and horror stories. All of us were scared to death, imagining what was in store for us." Presumably because of his training in the Signal Corps, Fred landed with Headquarters Company where he was assigned to R & M (repair and maintenance) compound, a stone's throw behind the front lines. R & M was the power lifeline for all the lights, communications, and radio needed within the campaign zone. He applied himself conscientiously to learn all he could about his new "job" and was soon placed in charge of repairing the generators trucked to his compound, making sure they were in top working condition before they were returned to their respective units. He excelled in this position and was promoted to the rank of Sergeant.

Although R & M was supposedly on the "safe side" of the fighting zone, danger was an arbitrary, ever-present feature of life. A soldier could only hope to avoid a misstep over an unseen line and being maimed by a land mine. Or, being the target of sniper fire while on guard duty. Or, in the darkness of night, plunging off the narrow, twisty mountain roads that wouldn't allow two oversize trucks to pass. Every night he wrote letters

home to Marilyn, pouring out his feelings of isolation and aching loneliness. He dreamed of the day he would return stateside.

In the spring of 1954, almost a year after the signing of the truce, Sgt. Fred Krainen's military commitment ended, and he came home to begin life anew as a civilian, husband, father, and homeowner. Fred and Marilyn credit their long separation with one positive side effect – a profound and lasting appreciation for one another.

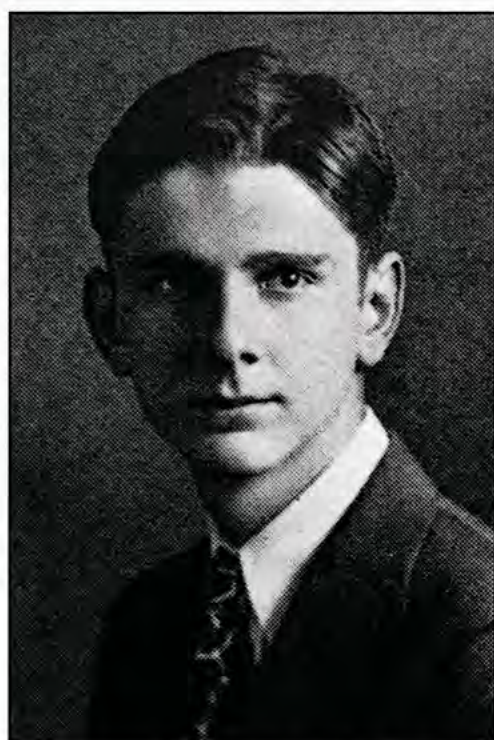


*Young and tall, Mac Gordon began his journalism career with the Wayne State University Collegian staff in 1945. Photo courtesy of the Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs.*

## THE JOURNALIST - GORDON

Sometimes a difficult situation can work in your favor. On a hot Georgia day, Private Maynard Gordon was sitting in a classroom on base when a knock came at the door. A soldier entered and handed a written order to the instructor: "Private Gordon, you have been reassigned to Camp Gordon headquarters." A truly lucky day. Gordon was pulled out of a unit that was headed to battle in Korea. His new assignment was to manage staff and write content for the Camp Gordon *Rambler* newspaper in Georgia. Yes, Private Gordon served at Camp Gordon – somewhat uncanny.

The pen had long been a tool in Gordon's arsenal. From his days at Detroit's Durfee Junior High to his editorships of Central High School's *Student* and Wayne State University's *Collegian*, Gordon knew his life's calling early on. His mother Leah had taught him to read and write at the age of three. And, his fascination with newspapers began at an early



*Maynard Gordon, Central High School graduation photo. Photo courtesy of the Walter P. Reuther Library, Archive of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University*

age when he began a lifelong habit of reading the *New York Times*, loyally trekking to a local newsstand to purchase the Sunday edition for ten cents.

Gordon graduated from Central High School in Detroit in 1944. Too young for WWII, he enrolled at Wayne State University and soon began working as a night editor for *The Collegian*, the campus paper where he received his nickname "Mac." He cut his college career short by accepting a full-time job as a copy reader at the *Detroit Automotive News*. His career was on the go, but then the Korean War knocked on the door. Although he had previously been deemed 4F, this time Gordon passed the physical and was drafted into the U.S. Army.

Military service integrated seamlessly into his life. While stationed in Augusta, Georgia, Gordon was able to experience life in a small southern Jewish community. He wrote freelance articles for the *Augusta Herald* (where he was offered an editorship after the Korean War ended). "I always wanted to be a journalist or a newspaper guy. Military life helped my career leapfrog. I got to do what I

wanted to do ever since I was kid," he recalled. After discharge, "Mac" returned to a position at the *Detroit Automotive News*, and spent the next fifty-plus years as a respected journalist and author. He now lives in California near his grown children. He is forever grateful for "the knock on the door."

## A THANKLESS WELCOME HOME

As peace talks dragged on at the 38th parallel, the troops continued to endure fighting and death. Approximately three years after it began, the Korean War ended in a truce, with neither country agreeing to permanent peace. They are, in essence, still in a state of war today.

Tickertape parades, picnics, and handshakes were non-existent for the returning Korean War vet, far different from the experience of those who served in World War II. Norbert Goldberg, an Army Specialist with the 1903rd Engineer Aviation Battalion, recalls running into his neighbors shortly after his stateside return from war. "Oh hey, we haven't seen you in a while," they remarked. "Yes, I was away in Korea," Goldberg responded. "The truth of the matter is that they couldn't have cared less."

The Korean War was bloody and brutal. It altered thousands upon thousands of lives. Korean War veterans have selflessly given an enduring contribution to further the flame of democracy. We salute all of our Michigan Jewish war heroes and heroines. With deepest gratitude, we remember and thank you for your service.

## KEEPING THE FAITH DURING WARTIME



*Korean War servicemen enjoy outdoor Hanukkah festivities.*

Soldiers used creative means to carry on with religious observance and worship during wartime. Although chaplains and rabbis were present in camps and aboard ships, physical houses of worship were few. Jewish soldiers held Sabbath and High Holiday services and Passover Seders in tents, in gymnasiums, and of course outside. Pious soldiers were known to rise before reveille to *daven*. Cpl. Abe Geller, a young Marine and son of a rabbi, was advancing with his platoon toward Seoul on Yom Kippur 1950. As was his custom, he observed the fast. The ritual saved his life. That day, Geller was struck in his abdomen by three enemy bullets. With a lack of penicillin on hand, surgeons noted that his empty intestines saved him from infection and death.<sup>21</sup>

At the beginning of his Korean service in 1952, Jerry Subar had a unique experience of celebrating High Holy Days while crossing the International Date Line. "We were on the high seas and Yom Kippur was fast approaching. Scheduled to cross the International Date Line meant that the calendar day would advance and most of Yom Kippur would be missed."<sup>22</sup> Subar along with the ship's chaplain carefully made preparations to ensure they would be able to faithfully carry on their observance of the holiday. Marine Pfc. David George wore a "lucky" *mezuzah* around his neck during his Korean duty. As a bombardment spotter, he dodged mortar fire and bullets as a regular part of his daily work. He credits his *mezuzah*, sent to him by his wife, with protecting his unit. "Only one person became wounded," he noted.<sup>23</sup>

*"My aunt sent me a letter reminding me that High Holy Days were coming up fast. She asked if I would be going to someone's house to celebrate.... How do you explain to your aunt that you are halfway between nowhere and nowhere?" Marvin Katz, Korean War veteran who served from 1951 until 1953.*<sup>24</sup>





**Andrea Gallucci** enjoys the sleuthing that archival work provides. She earned her MLIS at Wayne State University. Ms. Gallucci is a volunteer archivist at the Rabbi Leo M. Franklin Archive in Bloomfield Hills. She recently authored *Lest We Forget*, a history of the Jewish War Veterans of Michigan.



Detroit native **Maynard "Mac" Gordon** has achieved worldwide recognition for his lifelong career as a distinguished automotive journalist. He is the author of *The Iacocca Management Technique*.

*With special thanks to Marilyn Krainen for her essay on Fred Krainen.*

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# FEATURED ARTICLE

## LOOKING THROUGH A PHOTO ALBUM: A WWII NURSE REMINISCES

by ANNETTA MILLER

*Annetta Klein Miller was a Second Lieutenant in the Army Nurse Corps, serving in the European Theater of Operations during 1944-1945. A native of Indiana, she earned a nursing degree in 1943 from the Jewish Hospital of Philadelphia at the age of 21 and enlisted in the army because "there was a great need for trained people." After the war, Miller and her husband, Sidney Miller, an army doctor, returned to his home in the Detroit area and raised three children. She became involved in education and politics, particularly the peace movement, and served on the Michigan State Board of Education (1971-1994) and the Wayne State University Board of Governors (1997-2012). Miller now lives in Huntington Woods, Michigan.*

*This piece is excerpted and edited from a paper Miller wrote in the 1990s for a class at Wayne State University, when she was a candidate for a BA in art history. She wrote about personal collections of mementos and art and "the infinite variety of memories they evoke," as she examined her own collection of photos from World War II. The photos are from the leather album she mentions below. The soft-brown leather, well-loved album is a treasure for which we will be forever grateful that Annetta shared with us.*



*Annetta Klein Miller*

I have a leather album made for me by one of the enlisted men in my hospital unit [during the war]. Some of the original photos have disappeared over the years and here my feeling of loss was acute as I found the black pages holding paper corners empty of the pictures. Some I remember and feel a sadness that I will never see these pictures again except in my memory...invisible but visible to me. Some I had discarded, not wanting to remember. But I remember anyway.



*Annetta Klein Miller met Rosalie Tzirlin soon after her arrival at the basic training facility in New Jersey. The two became fast friends and spent many of those first months together. LEFT: Klein and Miller pose at Staten Island Halloran General Hospital, in 1943, wearing their nursing uniforms.*

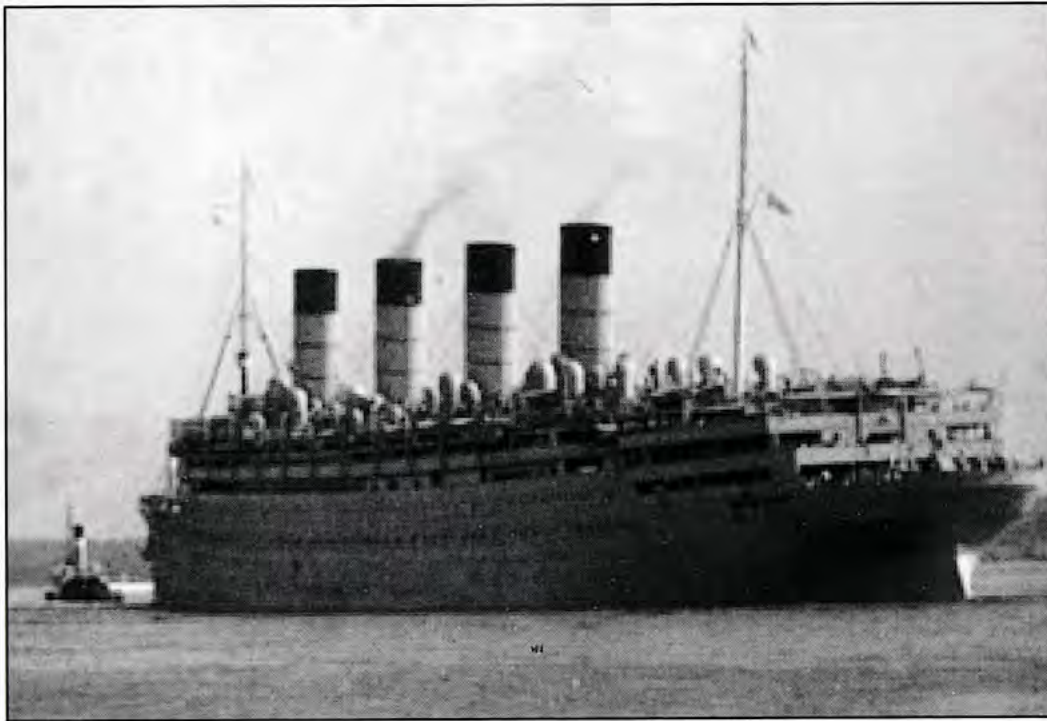
*RIGHT: Klein and Miller show off their uniforms in 1944.*

The album begins with pictures taken during basic training in New Jersey. My roommate, Rosalie, from the Jewish Hospital School of Nursing in Philadelphia, joined the army when I did, that is, as soon as our training was completed and we were officially registered nurses. Rosalie's pictures are all over that first page of the album.... Looking at her now, I remember that she hated to talk to anyone when she first woke up.... Actually, I was so tired after 12-hour days on duty in the hospital wards and then attending classes at Temple University, I didn't have the energy to say much anyway! Study was done after lights out, under the covers with a flashlight. We were on duty 6-1/2 days a week for three weeks and then got a full day off. In the third year of training, we got a week's vacation. We were fully ready for the basic training of the army. Life had



*Annetta Klein (center) while stationed in New Jersey for her Army basic training, 1944.*

been hard for three years; basic training at least got us out into the air and paid us \$70 a month. Three years of 12-hour days or 12-hour nights year round made us feel strong enough for anything! Our hospital was the last to go to 8-hour days. Our class started with 30 student nurses; our graduating class numbered 13.



*This luxurious and fast Cunard-White Star liner served as a troopship throughout WWII. During WWI the ship had carried 60,000 U.S. troops and served as an armed liner and transport and hospital ship.*

I look for pictures from the Staten Island Halloran General Hospital, where we were assigned duty stateside before shipping out. I can find only one – taken with my roommate, Rosalie, and a new friend...who served basic training with us. We look so young. At Halloran General, I took care of a young German POW, an 18-year-old who needed his family. I knew no German but could understand some of what he said because I knew some Yiddish. We left for overseas in 1944.

I remember meeting a black nurse before we shipped out. We became friendly, and I asked her if she would want to share a stateroom with us. She made inquiry and came back to tell me that black nurses couldn't bunk with white nurses. The army was not yet integrated.

The army provided many surprises. Where one person normally slept, the Aquitania (our ship) now accommodated three in hammocks, one on top of another. We had to be careful to roll in and out of bed and not to lift our heads. But we felt lucky to be in a stateroom; no matter that six of us were given a stateroom for two. We did have a porthole that let in daylight, but it had to be covered at night with black cloth. We zigzagged across the Atlantic for nine days because a German sub was pursuing our ship. The enlisted men slept in the hold and were



*Lt. Annetta Klein and staff posing at "tent camp."*



*The 305 Station Hospital, where Miller spent much of her time, decorated for the holidays.*

violently ill every night, resulting in a terrible smell. When we finally landed in Gairloch, Scotland, it was heaven.

Rosalie and I were based in England, but not at the same hospital. I was given a terrible job: watching over mentally ill patients, German officers who were prisoners of war. They were demanding and arrogant. We lived in tents that were heated with potbelly stoves. One of my tent mates, Doris, got too close to the stove one very cold night, and her flannel pajamas caught fire. We had to walk to a bathroom in a Quonset hut, where we washed ourselves and our clothes. During the winter, we strung a line across the inside of the tent to dry our clothes. They were frozen solid when we woke up. For a country known for its mild climate, England, like the army, was full of surprises. During that cold winter, we had “the snowfall of the century,” and could not exit our tents one morning. The POWs got the job of shoveling us out, under the watchful eyes of our enlisted men and MPs [military police].

On the rare opportunity of a weekend pass, I was able to leave the 305th Station Hospital and catch a train to London. At night, I could hear the bombs (from the Nazis’ Blitz bombing), but only saw the damage the next day. There was little opportunity to sightsee. I took advantage of the few public buildings that remained open during the war and did go to the theater, which carried on despite the bombing. I really learned the meaning of the saying “The Show Must Go On.” Nights were so black in London and at camp [because of the blackout regulations] that during one night at the hospital, my nose was broken when a nurse ran into me with her forehead. Neither of us expected anyone else to be out on the path to the ward. I carried a “torch,” but it had to be pointed to the ground, not facing forward, and she had forgotten hers. Unless you have endured



*While serving overseas, Annetta befriended a second family, the Shures. She and her intended, Sidney, visited the family to get "their OK" on their marriage.*



*(Top photo) "A Time Out to Pose."  
(Bottom photo) Sidney and Annetta stand outside the registrar's office where they were married, in their uniforms, in 1945.*

blackouts in an English fog, you never imagine how black night can be. I was never given a Purple Heart; neither was she.

During the war, I met a wonderful British family, the Shures, who became extended family for me while I was there. We remained in close contact for many years, and one of their sons immigrated to Toronto after the war.

When the war in Europe ended, our patients were shipped out to the U.S. to be dealt with here. Our hospital unit was sent to a redistribution center, where I met the man who was my husband for over 50 years, Sidney Miller. My "family," the Shures, brought their oldest son and the manager of one of their factories to check out this man I was to marry and decided he would make a good husband, even if we had met only two weeks earlier. They were right.

Sidney was sent to the Pacific Theater, while I remained in England for another six months. Fortunately, the war ended before he got to his destination. In November 1945, I was shipped out to return to the U.S. It really surprised me to be so thrilled to see the Statue of Liberty when the Queen Mary pulled into the dock in New York.

My World War II photo album is seldom taken out to look at or even think about. It produces memories of experiences that are long dormant. It represents an interesting adventure for me and is a tribute to many women who served and died in the war.

# FEATURED ARTICLE

## KNOWLEDGE IS POWER: THE EARLY JEWISH PRESENCE ON THE DETROIT PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

by BARBARA COHN

*Behind the magnificence of the Detroit Public Library on Woodward Avenue is a little-known history of the six prominent Jewish men appointed to the first library commission, whose efforts laid the early foundation of the library and whose contributions remain visible today.*

### INTRODUCTION

AS a Detroit Institute of Arts volunteer docent, I have always been captivated by the elegance and simplicity of the architecture of the Detroit Public Library Woodward Avenue building, which happens to be directly across the street from the art museum.

My discovery of the wonders inside the library began on a cold January day in 2013, when I first wandered through the building, overwhelmed by its beauty and grandeur. I felt like I was in Europe – in a palace or cathedral from an earlier era.

I wanted more information on the art, architecture, and history of the library. I tried to take a tour, schedule a tour, even start a tour — but each “tried” ended with the same response: “Not available.”

A combination of good luck and perseverance led me to the Friends Foundation of the Detroit Public Library, where executive director Patrice Merritt embraced my vision of an art and architecture tour. Thus, “Discover the Wonders of the Detroit Public Library” was created to highlight the library’s historic architecture, including the interior murals, mosaics, painted windows, ornate ceilings, Italian paintings and sculptures, and Pewabic tile. The inaugural tour was a resounding success, and the next one filled to capacity.

Upon hearing of the new tour, the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan approached me to create a specialized version with a “Jewish twist.” During the year that I spent researching the library’s art and architecture, I had not come upon any strong Jewish connections. JHSM’s inquiry prompted me to begin to research the angle. Discovering David Heineman, a prominent Jewish Detroiter, led to a journey that unearthed myriad Jewish connections to the Detroit Public Library’s beginnings.

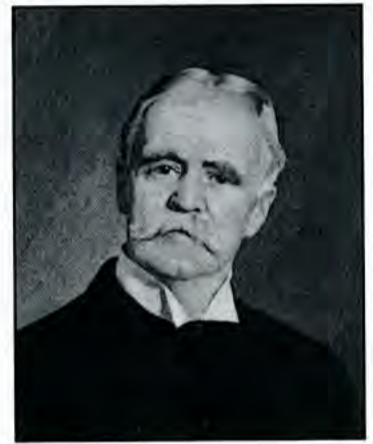


## THE DETROIT PUBLIC LIBRARY'S BEGINNINGS

The first Detroit Public Library opened on March 25, 1865, in the Old Capital Square Building (the building served as the State of Michigan's capitol building in the 1840s), with a book collection of 5,000 volumes. At that time, the board of education was the governing body. In 1881, the board transferred the entire management and custody of the library to the newly created Board of Detroit Library commissioners. Six members were – and continue to be – appointed by the Detroit Public Schools Board of Education. The seventh seat is reserved for the president of the board of education as an ex-officio member. From the late 1880s until the mid-1950s, there were six Jewish members on the Detroit Library Commission: Levi Lewis Barbour, Magnus Butzel, Bernard Ginsburg, David Heineman, Rabbi Leo Franklin, and Henry Meyers.

### Levi Lewis Barbour

The first Jewish Detroiter to serve on the commission was Levi Lewis Barbour (1840-1925), whose term ran from 1881 to 1889. Little is written on Barbour and his connection to the library. He was born in Monroe, Michigan, and married Harriett Hooper of Ann Arbor. He obtained his undergraduate and law degrees from the University of Michigan and eventually became a regent there. He practiced law for fifty years in the Buhl Building in Detroit. One of Barbour's important contributions is the movement he initiated that led to the City of Detroit purchasing Belle Isle in 1879. He was dubbed "the father of Belle Isle."



*Levi Lewis Barbour*

### Magnus Butzel

Magnus Butzel (1830-1900) served on the commission from 1883 until his death in 1900. Born in Bavaria, Butzel immigrated to Detroit in the 1840s and established a wholesale clothing business. Butzel — who together with his brother and brother-in-law provided uniforms to the Union soldiers in the Civil War and helped provide safe passage for slaves making their way along the Underground Railroad — recognized that a public library must be a "people's library." In 1892, as his time on the commission evolved, he strongly felt that the purpose of a library was to serve as a municipal asset. In 1893, he traveled to Chicago to attend conventions of the International Library of Congress and the American Library Association to learn about current trends. While there, he spent time studying the Chicago public-library branch system. Upon his return, Commissioner Butzel advocated for the establishment of library "branches" in neighborhood stores.

Butzel also traveled to Leipzig, Germany, with five hundred dollars in library funds to purchase books that would become part of the early collection of the foreign language department. Following a series of small fires in 1896-1897, Butzel initiated the process of installing fireproof shutters over the library windows.

Magnus Butzel died in 1900. More than a decade later, in 1913, the Magnus Butzel Branch on Harper Avenue at East Grand Boulevard was built in his memory. Architect Albert Kahn designed the building, which was built at a cost of \$40,000. The funds were a gift from the Andrew Carnegie Foundation. This was the only branch Kahn designed. It was demolished in 1998.

### Bernard Ginsburg

Bernard Ginsburg (1864-1931) was born in Columbus, Ohio, and moved to Detroit, where he attended Detroit Public Schools. He married Ida Goldman. Together with his father, Samuel N., and brother, Sol, he established R.L. Ginsburg and Sons, a scrap-metal business. Ginsburg served on the commission from 1909 until 1915. During that time, the commission was discussing the need to build a new and larger main library. Ginsburg had strong feelings about what should be constructed. He envisioned a world-class library that celebrated and symbolized cultural life in the community. In 1912, he went on an inspection trip with four others visiting libraries in Massachusetts, New York, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and St. Louis. A report was completed detailing the features and advantages of the buildings they examined. They were particularly impressed with the brand-new library in St. Louis, designed by well-known architect Cass Gilbert.

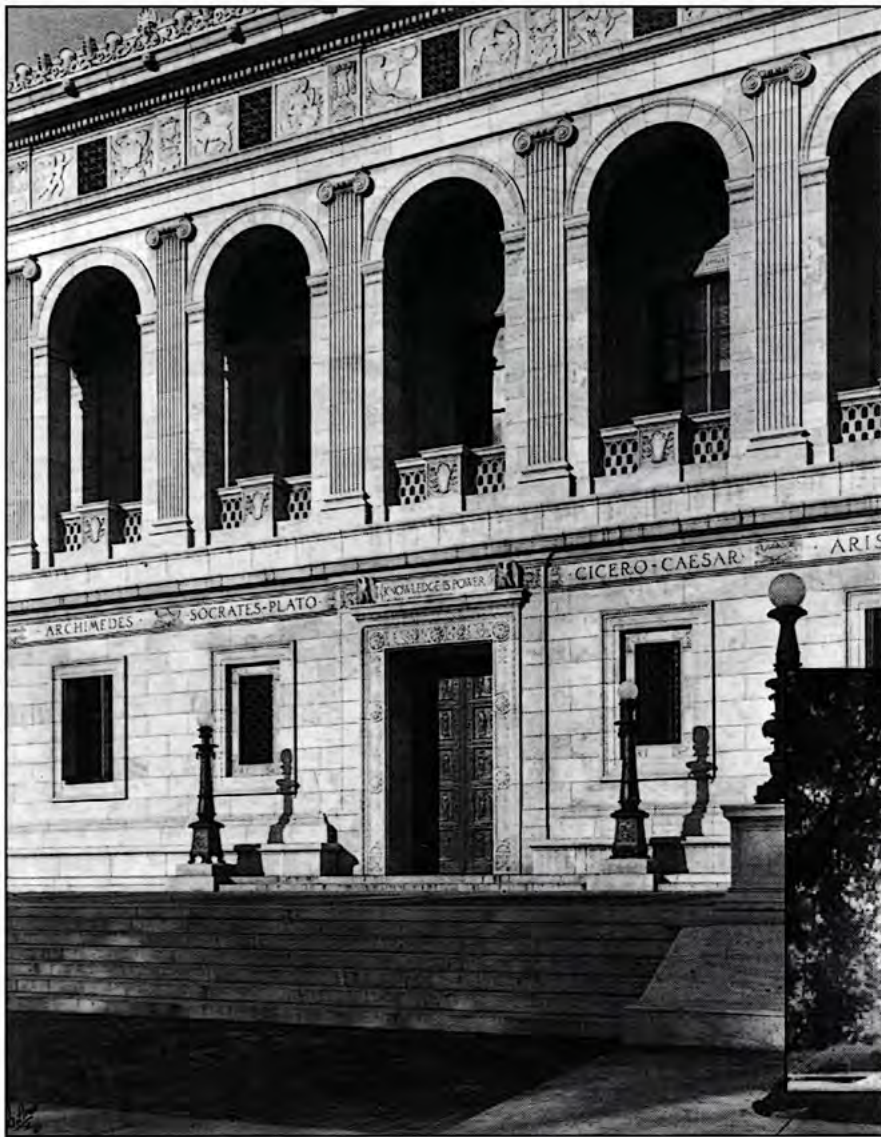


*Bernard Ginsberg*

Cass Gilbert, known as “the father of the skyscrapers,” had just finished the sixty-story Woolworth Building in New York. He won the competition to design the Detroit Public Library, which took six years to build (1915-1921) and cost \$2.7 million. Ginsburg also wrote the gift agreement from Clarence Monroe Burton which secured the contents of Burton’s private library for the City of Detroit, and placed the trove of valuable documents and books in custody of the Detroit Public Library. Burton, one of Detroit’s first historians, had a remarkable collection of material dating back to the 1700s on Detroit, Michigan, and the old Northwest.



*Ginsburg was lauded by the Detroit Public Library in 1916 when the Bernard Ginsburg Branch was opened at Brewster Street and Hastings. This was a popular branch within the Jewish community, and story time was a well-attended activity for children.*



Designed by Cass Gilbert, the main branch of the Detroit Public Library, located on Woodward Avenue in Detroit, was completed in 1921. Inspired by the Italian Renaissance, the building remains one of Detroit's most beautiful architectural jewels. As a member of the commission and the committee charged with selecting the words that would appear above the library's main entry doors, Heineman suggested, "Knowledge is Power." The committee agreed, and the saying remains etched above the entryway today.



### David Heineman

The contributions of David Heineman (1865-1935) are remarkable for many reasons. He was the son of Emil and Fanny Butzel Heineman (his uncle was Magnus Butzel), German immigrants who came to Detroit in 1851, at a time when the population of Detroit was 21,000 – sixty of whom were Jews. After graduating from the University of Michigan, he traveled throughout Europe, where he took particular interest in the European public parks movement. Heineman achieved many high points in his lifetime, including successful careers as an attorney, city controller, state legislator, and scholar. He had an intense interest in books, libraries, music, and the arts. His European travels led to his passion for the creation of an aquarium on Belle Isle, realized in 1902 (see

After his University of Michigan law school graduation in 1897, David Heineman became a Detroit city attorney and then, in 1899, was elected a state representative.

cover story in *Michigan Jewish History*, Vol. 51, 2011) and, in 1907, he designed the Flag of Detroit (formally adopted by the city in 1948). When he was fifty-three, he married Tessa Demmon.

Heineman served on the library commission from 1918 until 1920 and played an important role in securing the land for the Woodward building. In 1892, he had the remarkable foresight to arrive at an understanding with then-Senator Thomas Palmer that the city would have the first option to purchase Palmer's homestead, located at Woodward and Farnsworth. The Detroit Institute of Arts preempted the purchase so Heineman was successful in securing the property across the street for the library and thus helping to establish Detroit's premier Cultural Center. He also was instrumental in securing an Andrew Carnegie gift of \$750,000 which enabled the city to purchase the land and begin construction.<sup>1</sup>

### **Rabbi Leo M. Franklin**



*Rabbi Leo M. Franklin*

Rabbi Leo M. Franklin (1870-1948) was born in Indiana and studied at the University of Cincinnati and Hebrew Union College. He served as rabbi of Temple Beth-El from 1899 until 1941 and served on the library commission from 1927 until 1948, including three terms as president. He had a deep love of books and was an advocate of making reading accessible to all. In the 1930s and '40s, as a wave of book censorship swept through the country, Franklin stood as the commission's greatest warrior in the battle against censorship, speaking out against the concept and promoting the public's freedom to read. On May 23, 1944, at a special open commission meeting, Rabbi Franklin, in his role as commission president, stood

his ground as the Detroit Police "censorship squad" attacked the library for purchasing Lillian Smith's *Strange Fruit*, which dealt with racial tension and frustrations in the segregated south. After the meeting, *Strange Fruit* stayed in the library and was circulated only to adults.

### **Henry Meyers**



*Henry Meyers*

The legacy of Henry Meyers (1895-1952) remains visible to library visitors today. Meyers was born in Detroit, graduated from the Detroit College of Law in 1916, and became an advocate for civic improvement through his positions as director of Detroit's Legal Aid Bureau and president of the U.S.O. He married Delia Imerman and had two daughters. Meyers was appointed to the commission upon the death of Rabbi Franklin and served for four years until his own untimely death in 1952 (the commission replaced him with Rabbi Leon Fram of Congregation Shaarey Zedek). Immediately after his appointment, Meyers exhibited an active interest in all phases of library work. He was particularly interested in the functioning of the library as a city institution and worked tirelessly to extend the library



*Joan Jampel, the daughter of Henry and Delia Meyers, stands behind the original copy of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution that was donated to the library by her father.*

to all parts of what was then the nation's fifth-largest city. Many branch libraries were opened during his tenure, including the Elisabeth Knapp, Sherwood Forest, Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, and Laura Ingalls Wilder locations. Funding and plans were started for the Thomas Edison and Bela Hubbard branches, and plans were completed for the addition to the main library.

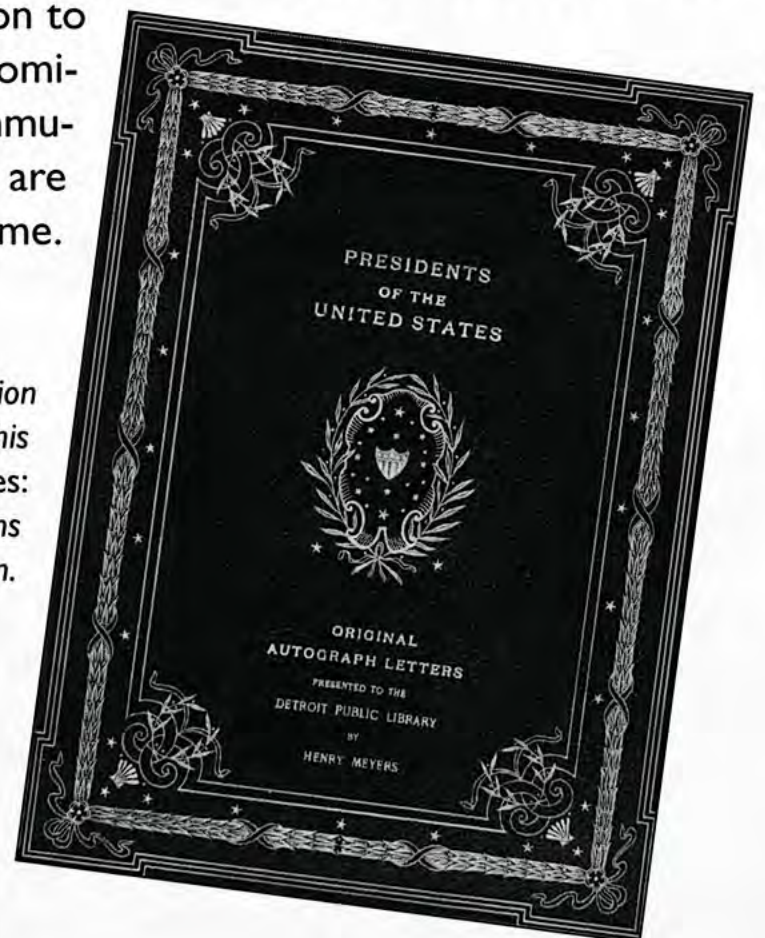
Meyers was solicitous of library staff and he took an interest in their welfare. In 1950, he acknowledged and fought for higher salaries for the staff after learning that their pay was not competitive with other local institutions. He was a member of the Friends Foundation (an organization that provides funding for programming, speakers, activities, special books, and other cultural amenities to the library and all its branches) since its inception in 1942 and was a strong supporter.

Meyers, like Rabbi Franklin, was a collector of rare books, letters, and documents. In 1950, he donated to the library an original copy of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitu-

tion (abolishing slavery). This important document was given anonymously by Meyers. After his 1952 death, it was revealed that the piece was given to honor the memory of his wife, Delia Imerman Meyers.

In looking at the early history of the Detroit Public Library and its branches, one has no doubt that the six Jewish men profiled in this article made significant contributions to the City of Detroit and the library. In addition to serving on the library commission, all were prominent leaders in both the Detroit and Jewish communities. Their many important accomplishments are felt today and will be for many generations to come.

*Henry Meyers donated his rare collection of presidential letters to the library. This book, Presidents of the United States: Original Autographed Letters, remains a part of the Burton Historic Collection.*



**Barbara Madgy Cohn** has a B.A. in art history, is a registered nurse, and a docent at the Detroit Institute of Arts. In 2013, she created the "Discover the Wonders: An Art and Architectural Tour of the Detroit Public Library" where she is the tour director. She is a board member of the DPL Friends Foundation. She is married to Sheldon and is the mother of Jonathan and Jeremy.

"Knowledge is Power."

All photos courtesy of the Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library

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Burton Historical Collection Gift, Gift Agreement, March 1, 1914  
Burton Historic Collection archives and letters

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>The negotiated, final agreement between the City of Detroit and the Carnegie funds is a bit confusing.

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# FEATURED ARTICLE

## DR. HARRY WEITZ: A JEWISH MEDICAL PIONEER IN MICHIGAN

by EDIE L. RESNICK

*Dr. Harry Leonard Weitz became fascinated with the emerging field of radiology while serving his internship in internal medicine at Detroit Receiving Hospital in the 1930s. After completing his residency in radiology, he accepted a position in Traverse City as the first “roentgenologist” at Munson Hospital – at a time when the community as a whole was not welcoming toward Jews and the value of his medical specialty was under-appreciated. During his long career in Northern Michigan, he established many firsts in radiology and medical practice as a whole, earned the respect and admiration of his fellow physicians and patients, became an integral part of the Traverse City Jewish and secular communities, and worked to erase religious and racial prejudice.*

IN 1938, twenty-nine-year-old Dr. Harry Weitz, who then lived in Detroit, responded to an advertisement for a “roentgenologist” at Traverse City’s first hospital. At the time, radiology – the current term for the science of using X-rays as a tool for the diagnosis or treatment of disease – was foreign. Considered by some to be a form of magic, many doctors saw no use for it.

In the 1930s, in the northern half of Michigan’s Lower Peninsula, most jobs were for farmers, woodsmen, and fishermen. During the summer, wealthy visitors traveled to the area for the fresh air and to escape the heat of the cities. The community as a whole was biased against blacks and Jews. Deed restrictions and signs like the one that hung at the entrance to the local country club read: “No Blacks or Jews Allowed.” It was in this environment that Weitz began his career at Munson/State Hospital. He would serve as the only radiologist north of Grand Rapids for the next eighteen years.

### LIFE BEFORE TRAVERSE CITY

Harry Leonard Weitz was born in lower Manhattan on October 6, 1909. His father, Samuel, who suffered from high blood pressure, was in the restaurant business. With no known medication to control his condition, it was recommended that he change to

a less stressful occupation. Harry was three years old when the family moved to Connecticut to live on a chicken farm. Raising several thousand chickens did not help his father's blood pressure, and after four years, the family moved to Pennsylvania and then to Detroit where his father and two cousins, Morris and Charles, opened a bar with a small restaurant in Eastern Market.

The family remained in Detroit. Harry graduated from Northern High School and then attended Detroit Central College, a section of the old Central High School. After completing his undergraduate work in 1930, he entered the Detroit College of Medicine (now known as Wayne State University Medical School). Starting his internship at Detroit Receiving Hospital in internal medicine and pathology, he was advised to take a course in radiology. He did and quickly became fascinated with the subject. Dr. Weitz accepted a one-year residency in the radiology department of Beth Israel Hospital in New York City. Upon his departure in June 1938, he was given a glowing written recommendation for his performance and personality.



*Harry Leonard Weitz as a baby in Manhattan*

Weitz returned to Detroit to marry Ellamari Pearlman, whom he had met when he was an intern at Receiving Hospital and where she was a dietician. Upon learning of the roentgenologist position in Traverse City – and liking the out-of-doors – he decided to apply. Weitz's son Charles recalled that his father had said that he felt like a pioneer in those days. He knew that he was forging new ground medically, but he also recognized that he was about to face a possibly unwelcoming situation. One can only imagine how Weitz's new bride must have felt.

### MAKING A HOME, MEETING CHALLENGES IN TRAVERSE CITY

In 1938, Munson Hospital, named in memory of Dr. James Decker Munson who was considered a pioneer in the treatment of the mentally ill, served as the hospital division of the State Psychiatric Hospital, a fifty-bed facility. The State Hospital superintendent instructed the new doctor to introduce himself to the twenty other physicians on staff and explain to them what he was to be doing: take X-rays, read them, and tell the other doctors what he thought was going on inside their patients.

Weitz was not met with open arms. Perhaps the other doctors were afraid they would lose patients to him, or maybe they had no understanding of the sci-



*At the end of Dr. Weitz's internship, he was only the second roentgenologist to graduate from Detroit Receiving Hospital.*





*Ellamarie and Harry Weitz with their first-born.*

ence or of the X-ray machines themselves. Perhaps they rejected him because he was a Jew. Weitz once shared an example of a typical reaction to his visits: Dr. James Gauntlet, a family practitioner, listened to Weitz's explanation of his X-ray services, then spat into the adjacent spittoon and said: "I never used one, and I don't know why I would ever use one now."

Weitz persevered and his patient load slowly grew. Doctors began to see that Weitz was not a competitor but was there to help and support them. At first he had only two machines: a diagnostic unit and 100KB therapy unit. Through the influence of Dr. Jerry Jerome, an orthopedist who saw the advantages of the new technology, Weitz was able to obtain a fluoroscope that was used with barium enemas for upper and lower GIs. Without any assistants or technicians, Weitz was a one-man show: He processed all of the X-ray films, donning red goggles in the darkroom to accustom his eyes to the lack of light. He also typed his own patient records, purchased his own supplies, and paid for meetings and conferences. As the area's only radiologist, he was on call day and night, and even though he wore a leather apron to protect him from the radiation, in the end, the apron proved to have little value.

Weitz also had to determine who was responsible for paying him and how much he was to earn. He was seeing both private and state-hospital patients, and the rules governing such types of practices hadn't yet been clearly defined. There were often uncertainties as to his status, in particular, whether he was a civil servant (even though he took the exam).

Weitz handled the challenges intelligently and tactfully. Many problems were equitably solved when Munson Hospital finally separated from the State Hospital in 1948. By that time, he had been elected to the American College of Radiology (1941), and was providing services to other hospitals in Frankfort, Kalkaska, Northport, Cadillac, Char-



*Dr. Weitz early in his career at the State Hospital.*

levoix, and Petoskey. He eventually trained his own assistant technologist.

Just before World War II, Weitz was appointed a member of Medical Advisory Board No. 1 for the Selective Service of Michigan. He was given a temporary commission as captain in the medical corps of the U.S. Army. The government had other ideas. They felt that Northern Michigan's only radiologist would be more useful at home. He never served overseas and was honorably discharged in 1942. Ironically, he was then required by law to register for the draft.

### A PASSION FOR RESEARCH

Both during the war and in the years immediately following, the detection and treatment of tuberculosis (TB) became one of the most significant and critical national health concerns. Dr. Weitz spent much of his time dealing with the disease. Upon the request of the federal government, Weitz began examining all state hospital patients, using X-ray technology to determine if they were infected. In order to conserve materials, many of which were in short supply, he came up with a creative screening technique using minimal X-ray film. For three months, Dr. Weitz spent two days a week examining patients. In all, more than 2700 patients were looked at and some twelve to fifteen cases of tuberculosis and malignant tumors were diagnosed.

During these early years in his career, Dr. Weitz also found time to research the use of radiation on adenoids, acute pancreatitis, and pulmonary neoplasms. Doctors learned to trust and respect his abilities, for both human and non-human patients. He was once summoned by a doctor who brought his dog to the hospital after hours to get help in removing a bone from the dog's throat. An internist, trusting Dr. Weitz's talents and good nature, brought one of his horses to the hospital where Dr. Weitz examined the horse's injured leg.

In another unusual case, an internist asked Dr. Weitz to consult on the condition of a young boy who, it was thought, had infectious mononucleosis – known at that time

as glandular fever. To confirm the condition, the doctors needed sheep's blood. Wearing their white lab coats, the two left the hospital and headed to a nearby farm. The farmer agreed to their request and told them to get a sheep. That was easier said than done; the two doctors chased the animal around and around trying to get blood out of the jugular vein with a syringe and a beaker. The amused farmer grabbed the animal, placed it between his legs and cut off a portion of its tail. The blood flowed easily. Back at the hospital, they combined the sheep's blood with the boy's blood. The glutentation ratio proved a correct diagnosis.



*In addition to his acute diagnostic skills, Dr. Weitz conducted research on many conditions.*

In 1955, Weitz finally got permission from Munson Hospital to hire a second radiologist, who then worked with him for five years. Weitz later hired Dr. Robert Williams in 1960 and Dr. Maurie Pelto in 1963. The three doctors formed a partnership and incorporated in 1968 as Grand Traverse Radiologists. Pleasant and easygoing, Dr. Weitz began recruiting and training other radiologists. He helped to develop Munson Hospital's internship program. In 1970, he was elected a Fellow of the American College of Radiology for his work in the field, an honor afforded to only ten percent of the association's members. He retired from Munson in 1976 after thirty-eight years of service, but he did not retire from his interest in his private practice until 1984. He was then awarded a fifty-year pin by the Michigan State Medical Society for his half-century of service in medicine.

Dr. Weitz's legacy includes hundreds of stories, both heartwarming and exciting, about the people he helped and cured. One of particular interest came in the form of a letter from Dr. John R. Rodger of Bellaire, Michigan. He mailed it to Dr. Weitz's wife with a belated get-well card after she had been hospitalized in 1970. He wanted her to know that her husband was held in high esteem by his colleagues in the north. He wrote: "If I were to name one man who in the last third of a century was more responsible than anyone else for raising the standards of medical care in this part of the state, Harry would be the man." He also praised Mrs. Weitz, for he knew that she carried the burden of raising the children and running a household for a husband who was rarely there. It must have seemed a welcome gesture to her because she was terminally ill. Ellamarie died in 1973.

## BUILDING COMMUNITY, FIGHTING PREJUDICE

Outside of the field of medicine, Dr. Weitz was active with a number of community organizations, in particular Congregation Beth El, Traverse City's Reform congregation. Although he had never become a bar mitzvah or learned to read Hebrew, Weitz served as president of the congregation. He helped provide needed funds to maintain the building and sustain the congregation. Throughout the 1940s, '50s and '60s, Dr. Weitz occasionally served as a lay rabbi, sharing interesting and entertaining sermons. Seeing the need for a more permanent rabbinic presence, Dr. Weitz in 1952 made arrangements with the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York to have rabbinic students come to Traverse City to lead services (the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati began providing the congregation with student rabbis in 1965). One of his most important contributions to the congregation was in 1959 when he paid the legal expenses for and negotiated an agreement with Traverse City to maintain the "Hebrew" cemetery in perpetuity in exchange for a piece of the land. It was a large tract of land deeded to the town's Jewish community by Perry Hannah, a philanthropic lumber baron who also provided the lumber for the temple.

Weitz became deeply committed to working against hate and prejudice. When friends suggested that he join the local country club, he refused, citing the example of another Jewish individual who had applied for membership and was denied because of his religion. He would consider the application only when the other man got in and the sign barring entrance to "Jews and Blacks" was removed. Both of those milestones occurred in the late 1940s, and Dr. Weitz became a member of the Traverse City Country Club.

Blatant anti-Semitism was not all that Dr. Weitz fought in his gentlemanly way. When organizers of Traverse City's Cherry Festival invited Joe Louis, the famous boxer, to come to the fair to referee a ten-bout boxing match, none of the committee wanted to host a "Negro" in their home. Dr. Weitz stepped in and made arrangements for Louis to stay in a boarding house.

In one of the many letters he responded to concerning how to deal with the effects of prejudice, Weitz wrote: "Perhaps it is dogmatic that before one becomes tolerant, he must have suffered first and he must have understanding.... In a sense, the Jew reacts to evil, to narrowness of thinking, and to intolerance like a barometer. Having suffered, he can see more clearly the needs and strivings of the Negro minority and is likely to sympathize with the Negro's needs.... It is fitting that we pause briefly in this hectic, confused, scheming and suspicious world to evaluate the meaning of Brotherhood-Tolerance-Democracy."



*In 1977, Congregation Beth El was officially listed on the State Register of Historic Sites, due to its distinction as the oldest building in Michigan in continuous use as a synagogue.*

Dr. Weitz also served as president of the board of the Child Guidance Clinic and was active with The Rotary Club and the state and local chapters of the American Cancer Society, and was a founding member, trustee, and fellow of Northwestern Michigan College.

One has to wonder if this busy man ever had time to relax, take a vacation, or spend time with his children, Elliott, Sheryl, and Charles. His younger son, Dr. Charles J. Weitz, remembers few family vacations – and usually only to visit other family members. As his practice grew and he acquired more staff, Dr. Weitz devoted more time to indulging his interests. Often, he and Charles went hunting, bird-watching, and sailing together. Dr. Weitz, an avid birder and photographer, had a darkroom in his home. He enjoyed golf, tennis, and cross-country skiing – all interests he continued to pursue into his sixties and seventies.

Two years after Ellamarie's 1973 death, Dr. Weitz married Arlene Altricher Batdorff. Arlene brought her two children, Jack and Chris Batdorff, into the family. Dr. Harry L. Weitz died on February 5, 2009, six months before his 100th birthday. Until the very end, when he was in hospice, he continued to be physically active – even requesting a small exerciser and doing leg lifts the day before he died. Charles Weitz remarked that his father died as he lived, "always in control."

The Weitz legacy lives on. Charles followed in his father's footsteps by becoming a radiologist. There are now six radiologists in Dr. Harry Weitz's extended family, with another on her way. This giant of a man served the community well and is remembered as a pioneer in the development of both radiology and good medical practice.



**Edie Resnick**, one of Michigan Jewish History's regular contributors, is a member of the Advisory Board of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan.

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**FEATURED  
ARTICLE****BOWLING IN  
SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN**

by MARK VOIGHT AND SANDY HANSELL

*Two of Michigan's premier bowling center entrepreneurs take a look at the early days of the Detroit-area bowling business. Mark Voight and Sandy Hansell recount the fascinating and often surprising stories of the industry's growth, from its primitive "back-half-of-the bar" status to its emergence as an important and lucrative business across the American landscape. This article focuses on the Detroit-area Jewish entrepreneurs who became involved in the bowling business when bowling was in its prime, from the 1950s to the 1980s.*

PREFACE

**Mark Voight**

I was introduced to bowling in 1953, as a young boy in Flint, Michigan. In those days pin boys set the pins, kids threw smaller, lighter-weight bowling balls, and each game cost ten cents—half of which went to the pin boy. I soon made friends with a classmate whose father owned three small bowling centers in Flint, and he let me enjoy the sport for free. I learned the sport by throwing the ball down the lane. In high school, I sometimes accompanied my father to his Sunday morning B'nai B'rith bowling league, occasionally substituting for absent bowlers.

In those days I saw bowling as a fun pastime, never thinking about bowling center ownership or management as a career. I did not know what differentiated a good bowler from a bad bowler. After graduating from the University of Michigan, where I continued to bowl as a hobby inside the Michigan Union (the Union had lanes!), I moved to Detroit and became an accountant. Two of my clients were Eddie Pawl, a colorful and successful Detroit-area bowling proprietor, and Roger Robinson, who owned seven centers throughout the Detroit area.

More than a decade later, Sandy Hansell (co-author of this article) and I had lunch. He was a consultant brokering the sale of bowling centers. I casually mentioned that I might have an interest in getting into the business, largely due to the success of my prior clients. Four weeks later, in June 1978, together with twelve partners, I purchased a bowling center in Columbus, Ohio.



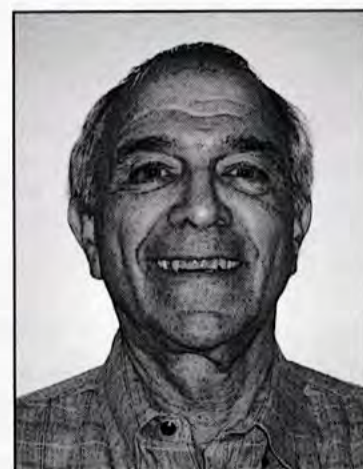
*Mark and Diane Voight, proprietors. In 2012, Mark Voight became the first Jewish member inducted into the Greater Detroit Bowling Hall of Fame.*

My wife Diane and I carved a lifestyle out of that investment, eventually owning a total of twenty-three bowling centers, positioning us as the third-largest bowling chain in the country and the largest independent chain (the larger two being Brunswick and AMF). Our company, Community Bowling Centers, had the honor of hosting many high-profile events over the years including several NCAA Women's Bowling Championships, the first annual NFL Super Bowl Charity Bowling Event, ladies' and senior men's Professional Bowling Association tournaments, and most other local, state, and national tournaments from bowling associations, fraternal organizations, unions, corporations, and religious organizations.

### **Sandy Hansell**

I had no exposure to bowling until I was an adult. After graduating from Harvard Law School, I practiced law in New York and Boston for a few years, then in 1965 moved to Detroit to serve as operations manager for the Great Lakes Bowling Corp. Five years later, I became a partner with the Robinson family in Ark Recreation, which we expanded from one center to five throughout Metro Detroit. In 1979, I changed course and began to appraise and broker bowling centers nationally. Since then, Sandy Hansell and Associates has sold more than four hundred bowling centers throughout the country and continues to operate today.

In the course of my years in the business, I not only have connected with more than half of all the proprietors of the larger centers (twenty-four lanes or more) across the country, but also spent fifteen honorable years writing a column for International Bowling Industry, a bowling trade magazine. I have served in various capacities with the Bowling Proprietors Association of America and recently served as a trustee for SMART, the National Youth Scholarship Funds.



*Sandy Hansell*

## THE DETROIT PRESENCE OF JEWS IN THE BOWLING BUSINESS

In approximately 1950, Detroit's population reached in excess of 1,850,000 people. Many of those were people who had migrated to Detroit over the prior thirty years seeking employment in the automobile industry. From the 1930s forward, many of the best-paying jobs in the country were in Southeast Michigan, specifically in the Detroit area. By the 1950s and 1960s, the area enjoyed one of the highest per-capita income rates in the country, leaving many people with substantial discretionary funds to spend and very few things to spend them on except for their homes and cars.

According to the Greater Detroit Bowling Association, since the 1920s, some 325 bowling centers of all sizes have been built within the counties of Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb. At the time of the publication of this article, only seventy-three bowling centers remain in operation; two within the city of Detroit.

During the heyday of bowling – the baby-boom years – a proprietor could literally open his doors and the center would fill with men and women, and later young families, looking to join the newest craze. Many Jewish entrepreneurs saw an opportunity and found bowling to be an exciting, blossoming business with a lot of potential. The growth wasn't unique to Detroit or Southeast Michigan; the same was occurring throughout the country.

This article focuses on the Detroit-area Jewish entrepreneurs who became involved in the bowling business when bowling was in its prime from the 1950s to the 1980s. What is neither mentioned nor explored at this time are the legions of prominent Jewish bowlers who grew up on Michigan's bowling lanes, or the leagues in which they bowled.

### JOHN L. BROWN – GREAT LAKES RECREATION

John L. Brown became such a prominent force in the bowling community that he earned the moniker, the "Baron of Bowling." Brown got into the bowling business after lending money to the owner of a small center in Detroit. The operator defaulted and Brown, in 1935, assumed ownership of Southeastern Recreation. The chance acquisi-



*John Brown constructed the Great Lakes Bowling Center on the corner of Woodward and Milwaukee, in the area now known as the New Center. Considered the showplace of its time, the magnificent marble-floored structure was the only bowling center in town that was "clear-span," a term indicating the center had no columns obstructing any views. Originally built with forty lanes, Brown soon expanded to sixty. Courtesy of a 1946 issue of Michigan Architect and Engineer.*



Saturday, June 21, 1958—THE DETROIT NEWS

## DETROIT SUCCESS STORY

**A Bowler's Million-Dollar Strike**

By WILLIAM T. NOBLE

Before he was 30 years old John L. Brown earned a million dollars. He lost it when the banks closed.

He thrived and in the depths of the depression started working on his second million. He succeeded and today likes to chide young men too obsessed with job security and 40-hour weeks to take full advantage of Detroit and the country's potential.

"It would be just as easy now to make a million as in the '20s," said the balding 57-year-old businessman who came to Detroit from New York as a penniless teen-ager.

**SCOFFS AT EXCUSES**  
"Too many people think opportunity is scarce and taxes too prohibitive to make a fortune today," said Brown of 19235 Strathcona.

"If just isn't so, he insists. He also asserts a recession is no excuse to give up the idea of building a business.

Brown proves his point with his own experiences. Almost singlehandedly he acquired two fortunes when all the odds were against him.

His father, a construction worker, decided to try the greener pastures of Detroit. John graduated from Northern High School and decided he wanted to be a lawyer. But he also wanted to marry Ada Victor, a Detroit beauty contest winner.

"Everyone thought I married her for the \$250 prize money she won," he said. "But it wasn't so. She hung onto it."

But if he wasn't able to talk his wife out of the money he did convince bankers they should lend him the money to buy the old Acme Theater on Oakland.

While retaining his in-

terest in the theater business, Brown took a minor job as a stock transfer clerk in a brokerage house.

**BARGAIN PRICE**  
It was being sold at bargain rates because the owners feared a flashy new theater being built nearby would ruin them.

Brown booked the Mary Carr movie, "Over the Hill to the Poorhouse," which some of his friends thought an appropriate opener for Acme.

But the cash from that success started Brown walking the opposite direction and silenced the skeptics. He decided to give up a law career and start in business. The most money seemed to be concentrated in the brokerage houses.

**RESTLESS MIND**  
The job was humble, but Brown's ambitions were not.



BOWLING KING JOHN L. BROWN  
A Man With Plenty on the Ball

Part of his secret is a restless mind. He feels methods always can be improved, thereby creating more money for himself and his employer.

He convinced brokerage officials they could make more money on the handling of the old Liberty Bonds, which fluctuated in price almost hourly. If they established direct telephone lines to local banks and dealt with the bonds in volume.

It worked. When banks had a hatch to sell they called the firm on the direct line.

Profits in the department—once considered only a public service—leaped from \$200 a month to \$4,000.

**MILLION IN ASSETS**  
Brown offered a 500 a month raise, bringing his salary to \$175. He resisted the temptation to team with a J. B. Curry and set up a brokerage

house. Curry put up the \$10,000 capital.

By helping to organize such companies as the R. G. Dun Cigar Co., breweries; merging three out-board motor boat companies into one giant concern the anticipated sensational popularity of this sport in Detroit, Brown soon had assets of a million dollars.

The bank failure trapped his funds. He was left with nothing more than a few unsold bonds on an old bowling alley at Charlevoix and St. Jean.

But before he could claim the crumbling building and warped alleys he had to pay off mortgages and taxes.

He convinced the state and creditors it would be wiser to let him try to put the place on a "renting basis" than seize it for hills.

Brown knew nothing about bowling, but reasoned that Detroit was the nation's top sport center and bowling was an inexpensive sport that would appeal to depression-weary people.

The bowling equipment manufacturers were induced to outfit the place—and take their chances on getting paid.

**NEW SUCCESS**  
Brown was back in business. He organized leagues, learned to bowl himself and offered special inducements to get the fans into his alley.

They came in droves. It started Brown on his second million.

As soon as all debts were cleared on this place he started new ones. Today he is considered the "bowling king" with 60 first class alleys under his jurisdiction.

He is building more and has no qualms about making new investments. "You can't beat Detroit," he says.



Cloverlanes on Schoolcraft Road in Livonia was one of John Brown's many bowling centers.

tion launched his spectacular career as a bowling entrepreneur and businessman that would eventually encompass more than sixty centers.

Like all bowling centers before the advent of automatic pinsetters, Great Lakes used pin boys to service the lanes. Brown, keenly aware of the problem of obtaining and retaining reliable pinsetters, provided bunk beds, showers, and a small cafeteria in rooms behind the lanes to ensure he always had enough pin boys on hand to take care of his customers.

In 1959 as the bowling industry boom

was beginning, Brown constructed Bowlerama, a forty-lane center on 7 Mile Road near Lahser Road in Detroit. Over the next few years, he would build nine more large centers and two motels, including: Northlanes on Greenfield Road near 8 Mile Road, Yorba Linda on Woodward Avenue near 13 Mile Road in Royal Oak, Strike 'N Spare on Maple Road near Telegraph Road in Bloomfield Hills, Southlanes on Trenton Road in Southgate, Fairlanes on Stephenson Highway in Madison Heights, and centers in Livonia, Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, and Flint.

Brown's company, originally named Great Lakes Bowling Corp. and later Great Lakes Recreation Company, was listed on the American Stock Exchange for many years. His son-in-law James Buhai was CEO of the company in later years. Two bowling centers remain in the Great Lakes chain, and John Brown's daughters are the owners. James Buhai and his son currently own a small chain of bowling centers in California and Arizona.

## AGRANOVE FAMILY – LUCKY STRIKE LANES

Nathan Agranove owned a movie theater on Grand River near Grand Boulevard in Detroit, just two blocks from Olympia Stadium, then the home of the Detroit Red Wings. In 1942, Agranove converted the structure into Lucky Strike Lanes, a twenty-four lane, two-story bowling center; each floor with twelve lanes. Nathan's son Jerry began working with his father while in high school. Later, Jerry and his wife assumed

management of the business. For years, this busy center enjoyed three shifts of leagues every night, mostly thanks to the Big 3-based industrial leagues, all of whom had plants in the vicinity. In the years before Olympia Stadium closed (in 1979), the Red Wings players would frequently come to Lucky Strike to bowl after their morning practice. It was one of those afternoons that the great Gordie Howe met Colleen Jaffa, who would become his wife. Nathan's son-in-law Burt London eventually took over ownership and management of the center.

### ARNOLD EINHORN – REDFORD LANES

Arnold Einhorn built Redford Lanes on Grand River and Inkster Road on a parcel of vacant land. The center had thirty-two lanes, a bar, snack bar, and billiards. Very few Jewish customers were among the primarily blue-collar clientele. Arnold was quite active in the neighborhood and hosted a number of B'nai B'rith bowling tournaments. He died in 1993.

### ELY ROSE – CREST LANES AND OAK PARK LANES

In 1942, Ely Rose opened Crest Lanes, a thirty-two-lane center on Fullerton Avenue in Detroit. The active center was notable for its many professionally ranked bowlers and for its extraordinary entertainment business in the lounge. Rose was friends with many celebrities who entertained at the center, including Pee Wee Hunt, a notable Ragtime pianist, and The Four Freshmen, who not only got their start at Crest Lanes but treated it as their home base. Rose wrote many articles for the local bowling newspaper and served as president of the local Bowling Proprietors Association.



*Danny Thomas visited Detroit in 1973 for a charity bowling event. Thomas is pictured here with various Detroit-area bowling dignitaries including Ely Rose (far left).*



*Heavy-weight champion Jack Dempsey with Ely Rose, circa 1940.*

Rose sold Crest Lanes and became a co-owner of Oak Park Lanes, located at Coolidge and Nine Mile roads in Oak Park. As the Detroit-based Jewish community began leaving the city and heading into the northern suburbs, Oak Park became a predominantly Jewish community. Oak Park Lanes catered to its neighbors with many leagues and services, but the center did not have a bar because Oak Park was a dry city.

During the time that Rose was in the bowling business, the renowned Eddie Lubanski and his wife Betty gave lessons at his centers. Eddie Lubanski, considered the nation's greatest bowler of his time, bowled back-to-back perfect games (a score of 300 or 15 strikes) on national television in 1958 (or 1959). Among Lubanski's students were Rose's children, Debbie and Marty.

Rose gained national notice in the bowling industry with one creative innovation. In the early days of his career, bowlers kept score on paper sheets that they turned in to the main counter when they finished bowling. The cashier took the score sheet and used it to tally up the amount due. As a result, bowlers had no way to keep a record of their scores. Rose developed carbon-copy score sheets, enabling customers to take home a copy of their achievements. Rose retired from the bowling business in 1976.

DAVID GOLDMAN, HYMAN HARRIS AND LARRY SISSON, SR.—  
WY-7, THE ANNEX, WEST BLOOMFIELD LANES

In 1941, three employees of the *Detroit Times* decided to leave the newspaper and build a bowling center. They borrowed \$100,000 from Manufacturer's Bank at a one-percent interest rate and built Wy-7, a twenty-lane bowling center on 7 Mile Road near Wyoming in Detroit. Throughout their first decade, it was a common sight to see a line of bowlers waiting outside the door, ready to bowl when the center opened. In 1951, the partners opened a second twenty-lane center across the street and called it The Annex. Shortly after, they installed the newly developed automatic pinsetters in both centers.

Harris died early in the partnership and Goldman and Sisson Sr. continued to run Wy-7 and The Annex until 1982. After selling their centers in 1982 and 1984, Sisson Sr., Sisson Jr., and Goldman built West Bloomfield Lanes, a forty-eight-lane center, on Orchard Lake Road,. Although West Bloomfield Lanes was sold in 1994, Larry Sisson Jr. still proudly displays several of his favorite bowling mementos including a plaque that was given to Sisson Sr. and David Goldman that commemorates their long friendship and business relationship. The plaque is entitled "The Jew and The Gentile." Larry Sisson Sr. was the gentile.

ROGER ROBINSON, KEN ROBINSON, ARTHUR ROBINSON –  
ARK RECREATION

The Robinsons got their start by owning both indoor and drive-in movie theaters. In 1957, they acquired property on Dequindre Road in Warren to build another theater. When they ran into a zoning problem that blocked them from building a theater, they realized the spot would be ideal for a bowling center, the up-and-coming business of the day. They opened ARK Lanes, a thirty-two-lane bowling center, in 1958. ARK stood for Arthur, Roger, and Ken and was the first of seven centers they accumulated.

Roger was the Robinson involved in all aspects of the bowling business. He not only oversaw center operations, but he also was very active with the local bowling proprietors' association, serving as president and as chair of many committees. He was also



*Robinson probably had more degrees than any other person in the bowling business.*

*He graduated from Harvard University in 1947, then went on to earn a master's degree in psychology in 1949. In 1975, Robinson earned an MBA from Michigan State University and a Ph.D. from Walden University in 1978.*

active in – and passionate about – the educational aspect of the business. With multiple degrees, Dr. Robinson taught at dozens of universities and ran Brunswick Corporation's management seminars from 1984 until 1988.

In 1996, the group sold their remaining centers to Mark Voight of Community Bowling Centers.

Robinson and his wife reside in Paradise, Arizona, where Robinson continues to teach.

HARRY ROTH, JOE FRIEDMAN,  
BERNIE FRIEDMAN,  
AND ROBERT HARRISON

The Detroit-area Jewish bowling story wouldn't be complete without discussing Harry Roth's contributions. During World War II, Roth served in Europe in the U.S. Army as a sergeant. He was an excellent athlete and in particular an outstanding baseball player; at one point the army sent him to Panama to play in a league that included many major league ballplayers. Upon his discharge in 1946,



*Harry Roth's (l) knowledge of the bowling business coupled with Joe Friedman's (r) construction expertise made for a perfect partnership. They had a deep mutual respect and fondness for each other and never had a business contract but instead relied on trust and a handshake. Both men were devoted to the business, working long and hard hours. The two families developed a friendship and trust that endures to this day.*

Roth went into the produce business. He opened and ran a successful grocery store on Dexter Avenue and he later opened a meat market in Wyandotte.

Roth launched his bowling career in 1955 when he purchased a sixteen-lane center, Ritz Recreation, on Wyoming at Fenkell in Detroit. Four years later, together with partners, he built Shore Lanes on Harper Avenue in St. Clair Shores, which continues to operate today under the ownership of David Roth, Harry's son.

In 1962, Roth opened Cherry Hill Lanes in Dearborn Heights, and in 1965 he built Wayne Bowl in Wayne with his brother, Lou, and Joe Friedman. In 1969, the partners purchased the Shenandoah Golf Club in West Bloomfield and, in 1972, Roth and Friedman built Parkway Lanes in Trenton, Michigan. In 1974, they purchased Trentwood Lanes in Trenton. In 1979, Roth added new partners to his team: Joe's nephew, Bernard "Bernie" Friedman (who would later be appointed a federal judge) and Bob Harrison (Bernard's non-Jewish law partner). They built and opened Avon Recreation in Rochester.

Joe Friedman and Harry Roth met in the early 1960s when their parents attended events at the Shalom Aleichem Institute in Detroit. By then, Roth was already in the bowling business and Joe Friedman was in the home-building business with his father, Morris. In 1965, Joe Friedman joined Harry and Lou Roth in the Wayne Bowl project. Lou Roth would stay on as manager of Wayne Bowl until his death in the late 1980s. Friedman spent most of his time running the two Trenton locations, Parkway Lanes and Trentwood. One of Joe Friedman's four sons, Dr. Harold Friedman, recalled how he and his brothers would take turns going to work with their dad on weekends and holidays. Although getting up at 5:30 a.m. was "torture," those days remain as some of his favorite memories. He also recalled "the insane number of miles" his father drove going from center to center.

Bernard Friedman's entry into the bowling world began when Harry Roth asked Friedman — who was then practicing law with Bob Harrison — about some legal work. Rather than send a bill for the services, Friedman negotiated an equity share in the business. The two attorneys would provide legal assistance when needed, and work in the center. For at least one week every month, the two attorneys took turns doing whatever needed to be done — picking up trash, filling vending machines, and counting the registers. Bernard Friedman spent at least one or two evenings working behind the lanes "chasing pins," more commonly called fixing the machines.

Friedman and Harrison, after looking into sites in Novi and Madison Heights, eventually helped build Avon Recreation, a forty-eight-lane center on Rochester Road in Rochester, Michigan. In 1982, when Friedman was appointed to his first position on the bench, he left the partnership (per Michigan liquor laws, a person who is in law enforcement or is a judge is not allowed to own a liquor license). The group sold Avon Recreation to the Langan family, another multi-center operator located in the Detroit area.

Harry Roth died in 2002. Interestingly, to this day, Judge Bernard Friedman has never bowled.

## NATE HARRIS AND LEONARD HERMAN

Nate Harris was born in Poland. While a young boy, he worked in the family business as a baker. At age fourteen, during World War II, Harris was sent to an internment camp. He was liberated in 1944. In 1950, Harris and his wife, Marianne, immigrated to America. Harris's first job was working at a Chrysler plant. The baker didn't enjoy factory work at all and left two weeks later. Instead, he got a job at a bakery and, in 1954, he opened his first of two bakeries. He also became the secretary-treasurer of the Detroit Bakers Union. In 1970, he sold his bakeries because he had developed baker's asthma, a form of flour allergy. In December 1971, Nate married Ann, his second wife, who was also a survivor.



*Leonard Herman,  
pictured at Novi Lanes.*



*Ann Harris remembers how much her husband Nate loved the bowling business and reveled in being around the customers and other proprietors. The couple also were members of several bowling leagues, as shown here.*

In the early 1970s, Harris' accountant, Sol Moss, introduced Harris to Leonard Herman, a local attorney, and the two became involved in several ventures together. In 1973, Harris and Herman built Drakeshire Lanes in Farmington Hills. In 1978, they built Novi Lanes in Novi, and in 1983, they built 700 Bowl in South Lyon. While Harris served as the general manager of all three centers, his son Jerry had begun to follow in his father's footsteps. In 1974, Jerry worked at the 700 Bowl, then in 1977 went to work for General Motors. He returned to manage the 700 Bowl in 1987. After Nate Harris' death in 1994, Jerry Harris took over as general manager, along with Ann Harris. The 700 Bowl was sold in 1995; Novi and Drakeshire Lanes continue to operate.

## OTHERS

Other Jewish bowling proprietors were identified but information on them was not found. These included: Joe Wister of the Wister Brothers, who also owned approximately thirty movie theaters; Herman Fenton who owned Dexter Bowl; Ted Rebain who owned Hall's Recreation and Log Cabin Lanes; Harold Eisner who owned 20 Grand; Fred Alpert who owned State Fair Lanes; and "Mac" Goldman who owned Merri-Bowl Lanes.

## THE NATIONAL PRESENCE OF JEWS IN THE BOWLING BUSINESS

**PRIOR** to the mid-1950s, bowling was a “back-half-of-the-bar” type of business. Bars and clubs would often have a few lanes in the “back” or the second floor or basement of a nondescript commercial building. There were few stand-alone bowling centers. Part of the reason was the difficulty in getting and dealing with pin boys (more often, these were adult males with drinking problems). The advent of the semi-automatic pinsetter eliminated this problem. The first center in the nation to install these machines — whose size and bulk resembled that of an airplane engine — was in Mount Clemens, Michigan, sometime in 1951.

In those post-war years, bowling boomed. To satisfy the building demand, banks and bowling manufacturers such as Brunswick made financing available. Brunswick and its chief competitor, the AMF Corporation, seized on the opportunity and often leased the expensive equipment to these new proprietors so they could avoid hefty bank loans.

Many industry leaders were Jewish, beginning with John Moses Brunswick, an immigrant from Bremgarten, Switzerland, who came to the U.S. in 1834 at the age of fifteen. Brunswick began his business with a machine shop that made carriages but he soon became fascinated with billiards and billiard tables, which became his main product. He founded the JM Brunswick Company in 1845. His son Moses would take the lead in developing the company’s bowling dominance in the 1890s when the company began manufacturing wooden bowling lanes, pins, and balls. The Cincinnati-based company ultimately became part of a group of companies that formed the Brunswick Corporation. It would go on to become the largest bowling company in the world. In the early 1980s, Jewish brothers Bernie Rudo, president, and Milt Rudo, vice president, ran the Brunswick Corp.

Many others achieved national prominence in the industry, including Sydney Freedberg, who founded the Fair Lanes Corporation. For many years, Fair Lanes was the all-time largest privately owned independent bowling chain in the country. The Freedberg family managed this chain of approximately 110 bowling centers throughout the U.S. and Puerto Rico. The company often lent its managers and executives for national initiatives to promote and professionalize the industry,

and many of them held national positions in the Bowling Proprietors Association of America (BPAA). In 1995, AMF purchased the chain.

The King Louie bowling chain of nine centers and four manufacturing plants was owned by the Lerner family. Located predominantly throughout the Midwest, with headquarters in Kansas City, the company was best known for its line of clothing and bowling equipment. Victor Lerner, who served as BPAA president from 1966 until 1968, was at the company's helm and was an industry stalwart. He was so highly regarded by his peers that the BPAA named its most prestigious award in his memory. The Victor Lerner Memorial Award is awarded annually to bowling center owners and managers who have given a lifetime of service to the industry. The award represents the recipient's induction into BPAA's Hall of Fame located at the International Bowling Hall of Fame and Museum in Arlington, Texas. The last president of King Louie was Bob Palen, a prominent leader in the Kansas City Jewish community.

## OTHER NATIONALLY PROMINENT JEWISH LEADERS IN THE BOWLING INDUSTRY

**Conbow – Jack Gellman and Harold Dautch** – The duo of Gellman and Dautch owned this chain of approximately forty-five bowling centers in the U.S., Canada, Italy, and Germany. Headquartered in Niagara Falls/Buffalo, the centers were sold to AMF in the late 1990s.

**Bowl America – Eddie Goldberg** – Goldberg operated a chain of approximately twenty centers located mostly on the East Coast in Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. Les Goldberg, Eddie's son, and Ruth Macklin, Eddie's niece, remain involved in the company.

**Active West – The Spiegel Family** – The Spiegel family owned approximately twenty centers, most of which were located in California. They eventually sold their centers to AMF in the late 1990s.

### **Jewish Past Presidents of the BPAA**

Benjamin M. Berinstein (1953-55) Syracuse; Nat Kogan (1960-62) Cleveland; Manny Levy (1964-66) Los Angeles; Victor Lerner (1966-68) Kansas City; Don Hillman (1988-90) San Francisco



## INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

Jerry Agranove  
 Terry Dobbins (Conbow)  
 Bernard Friedman  
 Harold Friedman (son of Joe Friedman)  
 Ann Harris (wife of Nate Harris)  
 Jerry Harris (son of Nate Harris)  
 Wendy Harris  
 Leonard Herman  
 Ruth Macklin (niece of Eddie Goldberg)  
 Roger Robinson  
 Martin Rose (son of Ely Rose)  
 Debbie Rose Chimovitz (daughter of Ely Rose)  
 David Roth (son of Harry Roth)  
 Larry Sisson Jr. (son of Larry Sisson Sr.)  
 David Spiegel  
 Barbara Travis Wachstein (daughter of John Brown)  
 Joe Zainea (proprietor of Garden Bowl)

## INTERNET

DetroitYES, <http://www.detroityes.com/mb/showthread.php?1881-Detroit-Bowling-Alleys>;  
 Kofi Myler, <http://www.freep.com/interactive/article/20130723/NEWS01/130721003/detroit-city-population>  
 Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J.\\_M.\\_Brunswick](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._M._Brunswick)

Many thanks to Laurie Clower, of Bowling Proprietors Association of America, and Mark Martin, of Metro Detroit USBC, for their assistance.

## HISTORICAL TIDBITS

1654

**Twenty-three Dutch Jewish refugees from the Portuguese colony of Brazil arrive in New Amsterdam, today's New York City.**

1864

**A lodge of the Free Sons of Israel "Montefiore Lodge No. 12" was organized in Detroit on December 4, the first and only lodge of the order in Michigan. Its mission, among other items, included that the lodge would relieve members in case of sickness and assist widows and orphans of lodge brethren to give them "decent burial upon the burying grounds of the corporation."**

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**FEATURED  
ARTICLE****FROM CRAZY IDEA TO  
WORLD CLASS PHENOMENON:  
THE HISTORY OF THE JCC  
ANNUAL JEWISH BOOK FAIR**

by ELIZABETH APPLEBAUM

*When the world's first Jewish Book Fair came on the scene in 1952, in the Jewish Community Center at Davison and Dexter in Detroit, few people could have predicted what an enormous success it would become. Today, more than sixty years after its modest inauguration, the annual Jewish Book Fair, held every November at the Jewish Community Centers in West Bloomfield and Oak Park, has expanded in scope, size, and attendance to be the largest, best-known, and most prestigious event of its kind in the country.*

**LIFE** was good in 1952.

Harry Truman was president, and Elizabeth II became queen of England. Unemployment was just 3.3 percent.

Japan developed the first pocket-sized transistor radio, and the United States created the first artificial heart valve. "Singin' in the Rain" was in theaters, the "Today Show" debuted on television, and Hank Williams and Fats Domino were kings of the airwaves. The first Holiday Inn opened its doors; telephone area codes and car seat belts were introduced. It cost three cents to mail a letter, \$1,700 to buy a new car, and the average working man's salary was \$3,890 a year.

In Detroit, Albert Cobo (for whom Cobo Hall is named) was mayor. The Lions won the NFL championship. The Caucus Club restaurant opened its doors, and brothers Pete and Jerry Cusimano tossed an octopus onto the rink of the Olympia, home of the Red Wings, starting a weird tradition that continues to this day. And, along Woodward Avenue, the world's largest American flag was on display at the J.L. Hudson department store.

But for Pauline Jackson of Huntington Woods, life was all about books, books, and more books.

Jackson – or “Mrs. Harry L. Jackson” as she was referred to in all newspaper articles – had just been appointed chair of the world’s first Jewish book fair. It would be held November 29 and 30, 1952, at the Jewish Community Center on Dexter at Davison, and it would feature authors Morris Brande and Sol Liptzen, and singer Ruth Rubin.

Just two days – but what a lot of work, and what a beginning.



*From its inception the Annual Jewish Book Fair captured the hearts and attention of the community. By 1960 (top photo), the fair was declared by the Jewish News as “one of the outstanding events on our community calendar.” More than 60 years later, the event endures, attracting some 100,000 every year (bottom photo, 2012). Photos by Benyas-Kaufman and Grayson Beras*

Today, the JCC’s Annual Jewish Book Fair is the largest and best-known event of its kind. Held each November at the JCCs in Oak Park and West Bloomfield, it includes an entire bookstore, workshops, and luncheons, and it hosts authors from every field — from politics to entertainment.

Among those to whom the Annual Jewish Book Fair owes its success is Pauline Jackson. Jackson, a social worker, graduate of Washington University in St. Louis, and native of Arkansas, moved to Huntington Woods with her husband, Harry. Pauline served as

the first director of the Jewish Federation's Women's Division and established Operation Friendship, which helped adults released from mental institutions integrate back into society. The couple had three children, including a daughter, Marj, who went on to become a well-known writer for the *Detroit Free Press*.



*Pauline Jackson before her launch of the Jewish book fair. In addition to her service to the Jewish Federation and community, she and her husband were founding members of Temple Israel.*

Soon after moving to Metro Detroit, the Jacksons became friendly with Irwin Shaw, who had this crazy idea: How about if Detroit hosted a Jewish book fair?

Irwin Shaw was a Detroit native who grew up on Belmont Street, and his favorite place in the world was the Detroit Public Library. In an interview many years later, he said, "When I was young, we couldn't borrow more than two books at a time, and we were only allowed to borrow them for twenty-four hours. A friend and I went five days a week; we'd take out two books, read them, switch with each other, and read the other two."

Shaw also was devoted to the Jewish community. After serving with the navy during WWII, he worked as assistant director of the Jewish Federation, and then as executive director of the JCC. As Irwin Shaw and Pauline Jackson began planning the book fair, they recruited Mrs. George Rubin, Milton J. Doner, Charles Feinberg, Bernard Isaacs, Irving I. Katz, Louis LaMed, Milton Marwil, Janet Olender, Mrs. Daniel Rappaport, Jay Rosenshine, Mrs. Joshua S. Sperka, and Mrs. Leonard H. Weiner to help with the project. Stories about the event began filling the pages of the *Jewish News*, sometimes next to ads for gefilte fish, sometimes next to ads for Dwight D. Eisenhower, a man who, as president, would be "SURE to drive Communists out of the Federal Government."



*Among the many creative elements of the early book fair events was the creation of a children's poster contest sponsored by seemingly every Jewish group in town, from Workmen's Circle to Yeshivath Beth Yehudah. First-place winners received a twenty-five-dollar prize. Photos by Benyas-Kaufman*



*Irwin and Lillian Shaw at the JCC Annual Jewish Book Fair, 1992.*

Shaw traveled to New York, where he visited about sixty publishing houses. His goal was to convince them all to send, on consignment, books of Jewish interest to be sold at this wonderful new event. He wasn't always successful, but Shaw was a man of considerable charm, and in the end he secured a nice collection, including titles from Doubleday, Prentice-Hall, the Jewish Publication Society, and Farrar, Straus & Young.

The first fair was a tremendous success. Freddie Shiffman was a close friend of Pauline Jackson, who said of the first Annual Jewish Book Fair chair: "She didn't look for glory. She worked to bring out the best in everybody."

"There's no doubt that the quality of book fair is set by standards she set right from the beginning," Irwin Shaw added of Jackson.

It would only get better. Just one year later, the JCC Annual Jewish Book Fair lasted three days, and involved 260 volunteers and thirty-four local organizations. In addition to the bookstore and speakers, the event now included workshops, a luncheon, and a "Ladies' Day Program" sponsored by the JCC and League of Jewish Women.



*The Annual Jewish Book Fair's success is dependent upon the resources of volunteers. These women, all volunteers for the 1953 event, participate in one of the programs. Can you identify them? If so, please contact the Jewish Historical Society! Photos by Benyas-Kaufman*

In 1956, the JCC opened a second branch in Oak Park and was making plans (complete three years later) to make another move to a larger facility on Meyers at Curtis. Meanwhile, the book fair continued to grow, expanding to four days and including even more Jewish organizations. The Annual Jewish Book Fair "has justifiably become one of the outstanding events on our community calendar," *Jewish News* editor Philip Slomovitz wrote in 1956.

In 1959, the Annual Jewish Book Fair incorporated a bit of impressive new technology. Abba Hillel Silver, author of "Where Judaism Differed," wanted to attend but had a previous commitment. So the JCC arranged with Michigan Bell to connect with the rabbi in his study in Cleveland, and then have his voice transmitted over the public address system in the Hymen C. Broder auditorium, so that all could hear. That same year, the book fair opening night included a dedication of the Henry J. Meyers Memorial Library, named in memory of the former president of the JCC, the Detroit Library Commission, the Metro Detroit USO, the Jewish Federation, and more.

## THE SIXTIES

The 1960s may have been some of the most tumultuous times in American history, but the JCC Annual Jewish Book Fair continued on its steady, ever-growing, and certain path. In 1960, the event, now chaired by Morris Garvett, expanded to include exhibits about bookbinding, children's illustrations, the Jewish Braille Society, and Jewish art and theater. Three years later, a *Detroit Jewish News* headline (in that curious style that omitted subjects) announced: "Plan 'Hadassah Day' for Opening of JCC Annual Jewish Book Fair." To attract interest to their event, the women even set up a Hadassah booth on the corner of Livernois and W. Seven Mile roads. One of the guest speakers that year was Edward O. Berman, author of *Cast a Giant Shadow*, pictured holding a pipe and wearing thick glasses. Books in Hebrew, English, and Yiddish would be presented; there was a Young People's Bible Contest and a lunch program. "Mrs. Carl Schiller," the *Jewish News* announced, "is assisting in the luncheon arrangements and the menu."

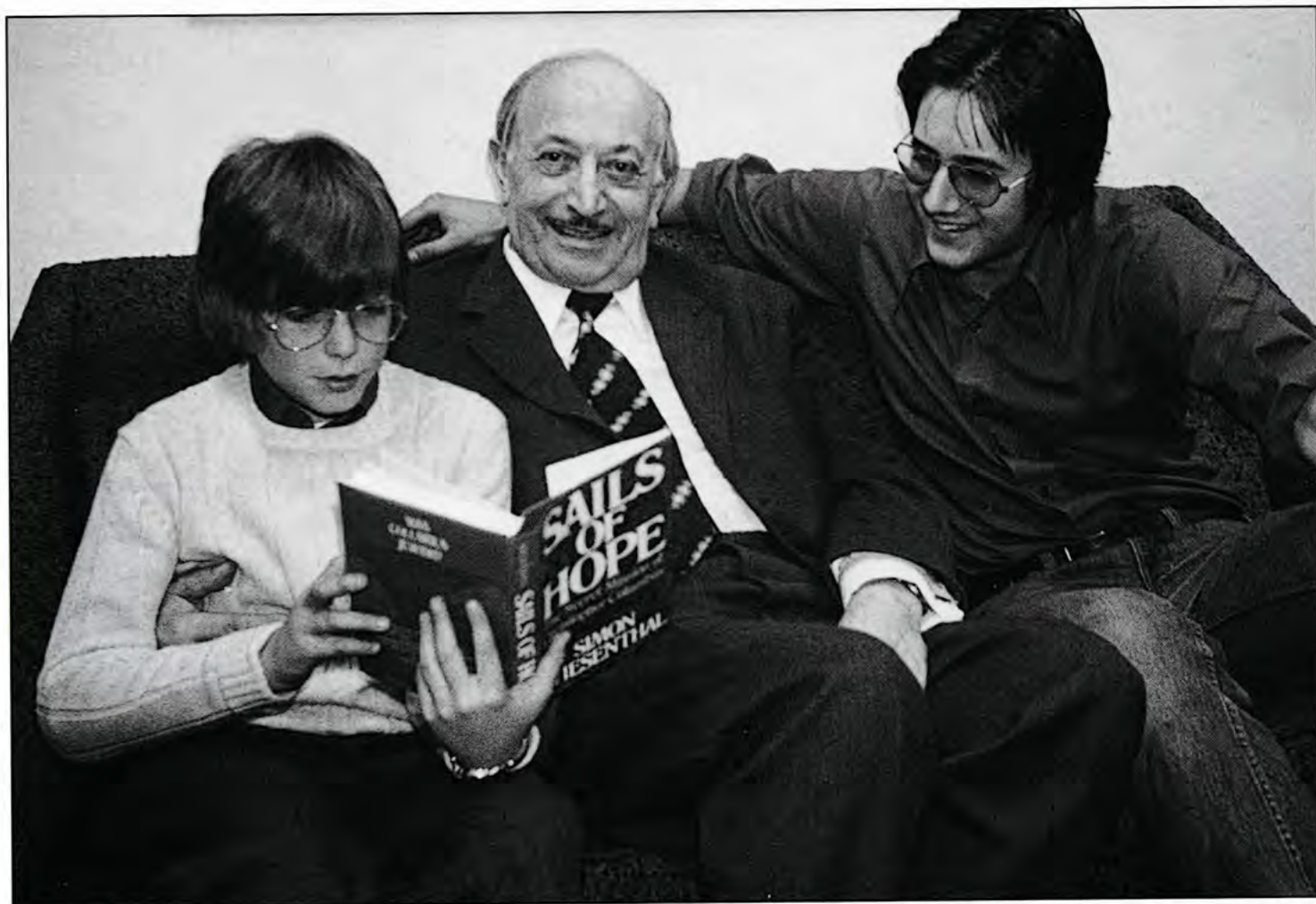
In 1964, there were 1,000 titles for sale and the fair presented a show that featured the Mildred Berry Puppets performing "David and the Giant." In 1965, the event presented authors Leo Schwarz and Chaim Grade, along with a performance by the Center Symphony Orchestra under the director of Julius Chajes.

On its fifteenth anniversary in 1966, the JCC Annual Jewish Book Fair lasted nine days with more than 6,000 books for sale. Chaired by Mrs. Julian Tobias, the program included authors Irving "Yitz" Greenberg of Yeshiva University, and Temple Israel's Rabbi M. Robert Syme speaking on "If My Grandfather Were Living Today, What Would He Think of Us as Jews?" Evelyn Orbach presented the play "Mottel the Cantor's Son." In 1967, book fair guests included the Yiddish Theatre, Elie Wiesel, and Immanuel Jakobovits, chief rabbi of the United Jewish Congregations of the British Commonwealth.

Among those who saw Elie Wiesel that evening was Julie Solomon, who, as a little girl, often came to the book fair with her grandmother and mother, a librarian at the JCC's library. Julie loved seeing Irwin Shaw "He was always MR. Shaw to me," she said. "It was hard for me to call him 'Irwin,' even as an adult." Later, she took her own son, Daniel, to the book fair. Daniel was especially impressed by Elie Wiesel. He purchased

one copy of Wiesel's book for the author to sign, then ran to the library, located inside of the Jewish Community Center, and grabbed all Wiesel's books and asked that those be signed as well. Wiesel graciously agreed.

## THE SEVENTIES



*Among the many dignitaries who visited in 1970 was Simon Weisenthal, founder of the Simon Weisenthal Center, a global Jewish human-rights organization that confronts anti-Semitism, hate, and terrorism, promotes human rights and dignity, and teaches the lessons of the Holocaust for future generations. Photo by Benyas-Kaufman*

In 1975, you might have watched the impeachment trial of President Richard M. Nixon, caught a new TV show called "Saturday Night Live," or headed to the theater to see the biggest film of the year: "The Godfather Part II." Or, perhaps you made it to the JCC Annual Jewish Book Fair, which was being held, for the first time, at the Jewish Community Center at the corner of Maple and Drake in West Bloomfield. The event included an impressive collection of authors: Detroit native Rabbi Lawrence Kushner, Holocaust expert Lucy Dawidowicz, and Chaim Herzog, Israel's new ambassador to the United Nations. More than 2,000 guests came to hear the ambassador, who spoke at length about the U.N.'s history of anti-Israel activity.

Apparently, the book fair idea was catching on elsewhere. In 1977, as Detroit's JCC Annual Jewish Book Fair celebrated its silver anniversary, the *Jewish News* reported that Houston, St. Louis, Toronto, and Minneapolis were "beginning to evaluate the Detroit format" as they contemplated establishing their own Jewish book fairs.

Toward the end of the decade, on November 10, 1978, the *Jewish News* had a great deal to announce on its front page: Sen. Carl Levin had just been elected the state's first

Jewish senator; the Jewish Federation Apartments in Oak Park were breaking ground for a one-hundred-unit addition; El Al flights had been arranged for more than four hundred Jews who were being evacuated from Iran, where mobs were rioting against the Shah; the Israeli cabinet rejected the draft of a peace treaty with Egypt. And the Jewish Book Fair would open on Saturday night, with guest speaker attorney Louis Nizer.

## THE EIGHTIES

Ludwig Pfeuffer was born in Germany and immigrated to Jerusalem when he was eleven. He was a member of the Haganah, fought with the British army during WWII, and served in the Sinai and Yom Kippur wars. He changed his name to Yehuda Amichai and was considered by many to be Israel's greatest poet, a man who used language to paint pictures of loneliness, fear, love, yearning, and wonder.

In 1980, Yehuda Amichai was one of twenty-three authors – including Arthur Kurzweil and Sadie Rose Weilerstein – who spoke at the Jewish Book Fair in Detroit. The 1980s also saw guests Roman Vishniac, Stephen Birmingham, Chaim Zeldis, Edwin Black, Howard Cosell, Sen. William Cohen, Chaim Potok, Conor Cruise O'Brien, Wolf Blitzer, George Will, Belva Plain, and an up-and-coming mystery writer named Faye Kellerman. There also would be a sign-language interpreter. The year 1988 brought controversy when the book fair hosted former Miss America Bess Myerson (who had just been indicted for conspiracy, mail fraud, and bribery) and the American Jewish Committee's Hyman Bookbinder with former Sen. James Abourezk, an outspoken supporter of the PLO, to discuss their book, *Through Different Eyes*.

As the book fair grew, so too did the number of sponsors who supported the event. The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan's involvement dates back to the mid-1970s and continues to this day. The crowds also continued to grow and, by the end of the decade, at least 30,000 guests were typical. The Local Authors Event which in 1989 included a book called *Through the Ice* started by a bright young Bloomfield Hills Andover High School student named Robert Kornwise, who loved judo and politics and had a dog named Chips. His favorite author was Piers Anthony. In 1987, when Robert was sixteen, he was killed in a car accident. His friends discovered the incomplete manuscript and asked Anthony to finish the book. To their astonishment, he agreed.

## THE NINETIES

Book fair co-chairs Ellen Yashinsky and Shirlee Sachs worked with more than one hundred and fifty volunteers to present the 1990 JCC Annual Book Fair featuring twenty-six authors. The biggest task was "the inventory, stocking, shipping, and billing of the books which were not sold," Sachs said. So that year, for the first time, the team decided to try a new way to manage this massive project: They used computers.

Guest authors in the '90s included Diane von Furstenberg, Shimon Peres, and Dr. Ruth Westheimer. In 1996, the book fair presented "An Evening with Neil Simon," with *Detroit Free Press* columnist George Cantor interviewing the famed playwright. And in 1999, the event's co-chairs Sylvia Gotlib and Carrie Kusner, along with consultant Andi



Wolfe, secured Alan Dershowitz and Nathan Englander as guests.

Interviewed in 1998 in the *Jewish News*, Irwin Shaw remembered the early days of this now exceptionally popular event, back when everyone was sure that an annual Jewish book fair was a crazy idea, “mostly because no one had done it before.”

Sarah Friedman loved Yiddish. She and her husband, Morrie, lived in Detroit on Tyler Street and later Sussex Street, where they often hosted writers like Chaim Grade and Isaac Bashevis Singer. Sarah had grown up in a *shtetl* and came to Detroit after WWI, where she taught Yiddish and acted in the Yiddish theater. For more than fifty years, Friedman chaired the Yiddish book section of the fair, and she worried about who would carry on after she was gone. But no one could replace Sarah Friedman, who died in 2000.



*Author/actor Tony Curtis speaks at JCC Annual Book Fair in 1993.*

## THE 21ST CENTURY

The continued growth of the JCC Annual Jewish Book Fair would have been impossible without the work of hundreds of volunteers and three chairs: Gail Fisher, Amy Hammer, and Susan Lutz. “I am amazed at all the cultural, political, and literary icons that I have met over the years,” Fisher said. “This experience has enriched my life immeasurably by giving me the opportunity to briefly interact with authors that I admire. I hold authors in very high esteem because of their ability to eloquently convey emotion, information, and entertainment through the written word.”

Fisher remembers driving Ambassador Dennis Ross to the 2004 book fair patron event as he was in the middle of a phone interview with CNN to discuss breaking news in Israel; seeing Peter and Dagmar Schroeder, German journalists and authors of *Six Million Paper Clips*, lighting a candle and saying *Kaddish* to commemorate the anniversary of Kristallnacht; and picking up the late Jack Klugman from the airport “looking disheveled and tired, and, only a couple hours later, witnessing the consummate actor address the crowd appearing dapper, engaging, and funny” in 2005. She also recalls working with co-chair Amy Hammer to establish the Annual Irwin Shaw Night “to give tribute to the man who started Jewish book fairs throughout the country”; seeing Elie Wiesel speak to more than 2,000 guests in 2006; picking up Pulitzer Prize winner Michael Chabon from the airport and “driving VERY slowly (I did not want the ride to end) as we conversed

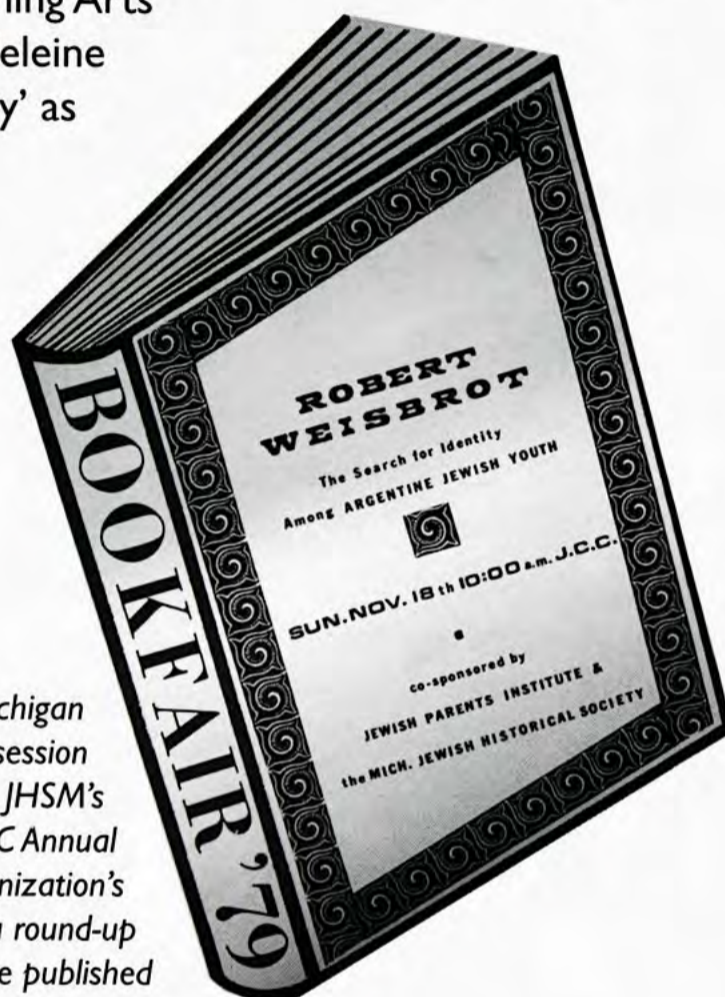
about everything from family to writing to planning his son's bar mitzvah," and having dinner in 2009 with Father Patrick Debois, author of *The Holocaust By Bullets*, "feeling overwhelmed by his commitment and dedication to uncovering evidence of the Holocaust in the Ukraine."

"It is so significant for our community to have access to authors who speak all over the world," said Susan Lutz. "The opportunity to host a first-time author who goes on to an internationally acclaimed literary career is thrilling. We can say: 'We heard them first!' To be able to see someone like legal analyst Jeffrey Toobin walk off the TV screen and into the JCC Berman Center for the Performing Arts to discuss his book, *The Oath*, is very special. Madeleine Albright continued to be the 'diplomatic secretary' as she was interviewed by our own Sen. Carl Levin for her spectacular book, *Prague Winter*.

"What do a Rockefeller, a Rothschild, and a Sharon all have in common? They have all spoken at the Annual Jewish Book Fair of Metro Detroit," Lutz added.

*Many thanks to the Jewish Community Archives for supplying the photographs for this article.*

*The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan sponsored a 1979 Jewish Book Fair session featuring author Robert Weisbrot. JHSM's continued involvement with the JCC Annual Jewish Book Fair includes the organization's sponsorship of Local Authors Event, a round-up of authors from Michigan who have published works in the previous year.*



**Elizabeth Applebaum** is a native of Missouri who has lived for the past 25 years in Metro Detroit, where she has worked at the Detroit Jewish News and the Jewish Community Center. She and her husband, Phillip, a past president of JHSM, have four children: Adina, Yitzhak, Talya, and Shoshana. When not writing, Elizabeth loves reading (preferably history) and watching films from the 1940s.

## HISTORICAL TIDBIT

1924

**Hebrew Free Loan becomes one of the founding member agencies of the Jewish Welfare Federation. The association enables Hebrew Free Loan to provide loans for up to \$200.**

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# FEATURED ARTICLE

## THE JEWISH PRESENCE ON DETROIT'S CHENE STREET

by MARIAN J. KRZYZOWSKI

*The Chene Street History Study began in 2002 when Marian Krzyzowski, director of the Institute for Research on Labor, Employment, and the Economy (IRLEE) at the University of Michigan, began collecting the stories, names, and histories of the families who lived in the working-class neighborhood anchored by the Chene-Ferry Municipal Market. Young Krzyzowski spent his days playing with myriad kids from a variety of cultures. He remembers the businesses that lined the streets, all owned, it seemed, by first- and second-generation Polish and Jewish immigrants. It was the kind of place where no one locked their doors, where everyone was family. Krzyzowski never imagined that those days were the end of an era. By the time his family left Detroit in 1972, Chene Street was fast becoming one of the most blighted areas of the city.*

### INTRODUCTION

I launched the Chene Street History Study with the hope of documenting what was once a vibrant and multi-ethnic near-eastside Detroit neighborhood centered on Chene Street that had for all practical purposes disappeared. It was the neighborhood I had lived in as a child, after my arrival to the U.S. from Poland. Chene Street was where I “learned” to become an American, as had thousands before me. My family lived in the part of the neighborhood that was predominantly Polish Catholic and it wasn’t until I began to conduct the study that I realized the extensive presence of Jewish families and businesses on Chene. This once-vibrant neighborhood was home to hundreds of small and medium-sized businesses, many of them run by Polish, Jewish, Italian, and Arab immigrants, as well as by African Americans who had migrated from the South.

The goal of the Chene Street study is to develop a comprehensive social and commercial history of this neighborhood whose boundaries run from the Detroit River to Hamtramck and is bounded by Mt. Elliott on the east and Russell Street on the west. The area is centered by Chene Street.

The project team includes the University of Michigan’s Institute for Research on Labor, Employment, and the Economy (IRLEE) and the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies. To date, our team has accumulated nearly three hundred oral histories from Polish, Jewish,



*A photo taken by the Hoffman Photo Studio of Joseph Cohen's jewelry store on Chene.*

and African-American residents and business owners; scanned tens of thousands of photographs and other documents, including ethnic newspapers, church bulletins, personal papers and photographs, and other ephemera; and tracked individual real-estate parcels to provide the foundation for a revealing and richly detailed portrait of Chene Street and its arterial residential and mixed-use neighborhoods from 1890 to 1990.

We have been able to identify 165 Jewish-owned businesses that were located on or near Chene. They include furniture stores owned by the Margolises, the Booksteins, the Loewenberg brothers, and Sam Raimi; bakeries owned by the Gedalkas and Martin Weiss; food stores, shoe stores, and dry goods and clothing stores owned by the Raimis and Sam Schwartz. We've identified jewelry stores owned by Sam Rosenbaum and Joseph Cohen, doctors (Bloch, Bloom, Friedman), dentists (Bittker), and a large number of Jewish fruit-and-vegetable vendors (Arbits and Fleischmans), as well as live-poultry sellers (Silverman and Whites) at the Chene-Ferry Municipal Market, including the market's best known and beloved vendor, Diana (Blondie) Tobin.

Our objectives are to convey what it was like to live and work there over the course of the century and to discover the reasons why these Jewish families chose to settle and operate businesses in this Polish-Catholic neighborhood. We are exploring the nature of their relationships with the Polish Catholic majority that constituted their customer base, and how these families and business owners managed to sustain their Jewish identities in this environment and pass them on to their children.

The following stories are but four among the many compelling family narratives that have been preserved and have come to characterize the Jewish presence on Chene Street.

### The Levensons

At the end of 1993, while sitting *shiva* (a period of mourning) for their beloved 83-year-old aunt, several of Jennie Levenson's nieces stumbled upon an old Winkelman's department store box that had been stored in her Southfield apartment. To the ladies' amazement, the box contained more than one hundred letters and postcards written more than fifty years earlier in Yiddish, Polish, and German, most of them by a man named Jozef Perla in Poland. The box also contained photographs from Poland taken in 1939 of Jennie with a wide range of individuals unknown to surviving family members. And so began the unfolding of a family mystery, a poignant story of love, perseverance, loss, and grief.

The letters (translated largely by Saul Hankin, a University of Michigan Judaic studies student) allowed us and the family to unravel the mystery and expose the tragedy that shadowed Jennie's life from 1939 on. Jennie's surviving family members were aware that Jennie had gone to Poland just prior to WWII and had married, but were unclear as to what had happened to her husband. Jennie Levenson never remarried, never had children, and never talked about her husband or the circumstances under which her marriage ended.



The last piece of correspondence that reached Jennie Levenson on Chene from her husband Jozef Perla in Poland.

Jennie Levenson, along with her father, Louis, owned and operated a paint-and-wallpaper store on Chene Street, opening it in 1916 and finally closing it in 1984.

Their story begins in the Russian partition of Poland where Louis (Lewi) and Anna (Chana) Levenson were married and where all five of their daughters, including the middle child Jennie (Jenta), were born. As was the case for many immigrants from Eastern Europe, Louis came first, alone, and established Levenson Wallpaper on Chene.



*Jennie Levenson in Warsaw during March 1939, with her husband Jozef Perla (to right of Jennie) and his brothers.*

Four years later he brought his wife and daughters to join him. Louis himself was at best moderately successful in business, but his middle daughter Jennie was a natural businesswoman. Red-haired, smart, with an outgoing personality, she took over the business on Chene and made it flourish. She renamed it Ferry Wallpaper and Paint and ran the store until the early 1980s, well after almost all of the businesses on Chene had closed and disappeared.

In March 1939, while on a visit to Poland, Jennie Levenson married Jozef Perla, a Polish Jewish educator and social activist from Siedlce, not far from Warsaw. It was love at first sight between Jennie and Jozef, and his entire family warmly welcomed the young lady. But with the imminent threat of war descending on Poland, Jennie returned to Detroit, expecting to send for her new husband once she was in the U.S.

The correspondence that was uncovered documents Jozef's love for Jennie, his attempts to get a U.S. visa, the beginning of the Nazi occupation, and his forced resettlement into the Siedlce Ghetto. Correspondence ceased completely in late 1941. There are other letters from Jozef's siblings and friends. It is clear that Jennie and her family did what they could to get Jozef out of Poland: unsuccessful interventions with the U.S. Department of State, boat tickets for transport out of Lisbon to New York that were never used, and repeated correspondence to postwar Jewish survivor organizations trying to obtain some information on the fate of her husband, to no avail.

Then in May 1946, Jennie received a letter in Yiddish from a friend of family members in Cleveland that stated that Jozef "was unfortunately lost to the German murderers during the first exterminations –action 22/VIII-1942." Not until Hankin translated this letter did surviving family members learn the fate of Jozef Perla.

### The Blochs

Around the time that Jennie took the fateful trip to Poland, the Levenson Paint and Wallpaper store had relocated to its third storefront at 5450 Chene, next door to Leo Bloch's shoe store. Leo and his wife Jeannette were Jews from Hungary and Galicia, respectively, and had four children: two boys and two girls. Their older son, Raymond, served in World War II and was killed at the very end of the war. The Jewish War Veterans Post in Oak Park is named in his memory. Their younger son, Erwin, became one of the study's major chroniclers. While many of the other Jewish business owners lived outside the neighborhood, the Blochs lived behind their store at 5444 Chene until it closed in the latter part of the 1940s.

Erwin Bloch grew up in this neighborhood and attended the neighborhood schools of Ferry Elementary, Greusel Middle, and Northeastern High. An exceptionally perceptive individual with an incredible memory, he wore his heart on his sleeve. During more than twelve hours of interviews, Erwin recited the names of more than eighty students from his elementary and middle schools, recounting something about every one of them. He hand-drew maps of the houses and stores in the area, identifying their occupants and telling stories about each of them. Erwin also had a crush on his much older and vivacious neighbor, Jennie Levenson.



*A photo of Erwin Bloch and Jennie Levenson taken in front of her store on Chene in the early 1940s.*

Erwin was not afraid to talk about the pain and humiliation he encountered as a Jew in this Polish-Catholic neighborhood. He provided first-hand accounts of the anti-Semitism he experienced as a student, as a child, and as a young man on the street, and as a witness to incidents against others, including his father. These ranged from subtle attempts at humiliation to outright physical violence.

On a hot summer evening in the early 1930s, Erwin, then six or seven, was standing alongside his father outside the Bloch store on Chene. Leo Bloch was relaxing and smoking a cigar, not letting the noise of the jukebox in Stanley's Café directly across the

street interrupt his enjoyment. Then, without any provocation, a tall drunk (a foot taller than Mr. Bloch) emerged from Stanley's, walked across the street, and hit Mr. Bloch in the head, knocking him down. Hearing the commotion outside, the Blochs' next-door neighbor, Mr. Herman, came out and with one punch knocked the drunk out cold. According to Erwin, the owner of Stanley's was a "Jew hater" and the Blochs believed that the drunk was encouraged to go out and attack Mr. Bloch that evening.



*Erwin Bloch and schoolmate Joe Kawecki, circa 1939. Kawecki excelled in baseball, football, and wrestling. One Christmas, Kawecki invited Bloch over to try out his new boxing gloves. Assuming that Kawecki would reign superior, the entire Kawecki family and Bloch himself were surprised when Bloch "cleaned his clock."*

### **The Gedalkas**

Not all of the Jewish merchant families we interviewed characterized their relationships with their Polish neighbors as problematic or hostile. The Gedalkas, owners of the American Bakery on Chene, spoke positively of the neighborhood Poles their business served. Kiever and Golda Gedalka were a married couple from Zamosc, Poland. Like Louis Levenson, Kiever Gedalka arrived in the U.S. first, to be joined later by his family. He first lived in New York City, sending for his wife and two daughters two years later. Golda had a brother in Detroit, Louis Schlander, who was a baker but wanted to move to California, and Golda was disenchanted with New York. So the Gedalkas came to Detroit and took over her brother's American Bakery on Chene. The Chene Street study interviewed Ruth Gedalka (later Reistman-Karabenick), a younger daughter who was born in Detroit. Ruth worked at the store and was socially active among the young Jewish girls in the neighborhood.

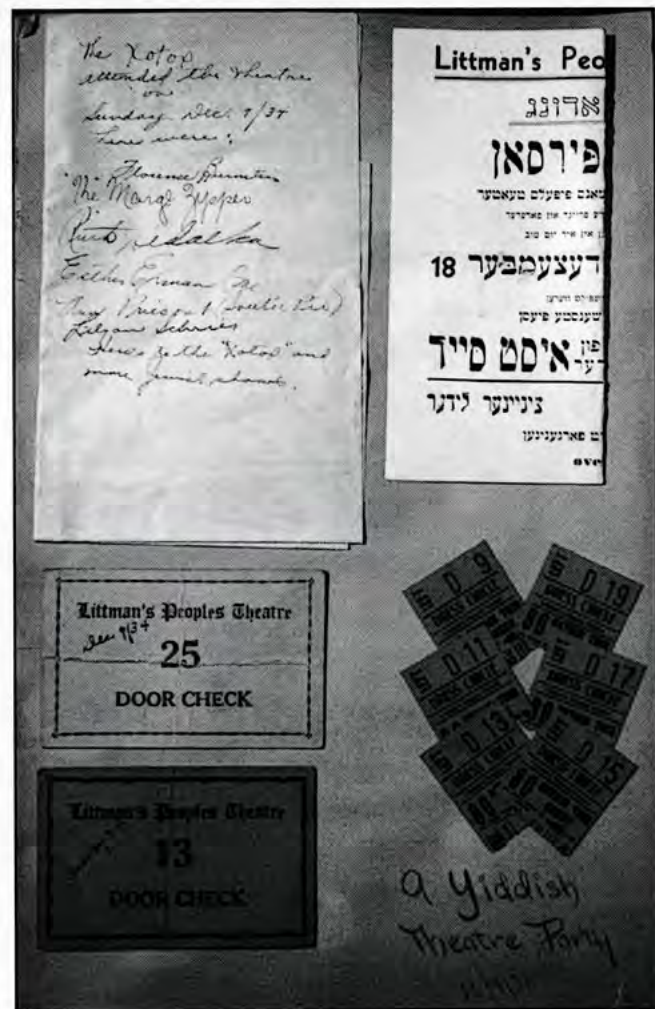
When Ruth was fifteen or sixteen, and traffic in the store was slow at night, Mrs. Gedalka would go upstairs to bed and leave Ruth alone to handle any customers who might come in. On many evenings, there were a lot of "young Polish fellows" who would be outside the bakery because they didn't want to go home. Mrs. Gedalka trusted them enough to ask them to "keep an eye" on her daughter in the store. "And they did."

Ruth joined a group of young Jewish girls in the neighborhood who attended Northeastern High School and who formed XOTOX, a Jewish girls' club, to help maintain a sense of Jewish community and identity. The club put together a scrapbook that listed their names and included souvenirs from their outings such as a menu from Boesky's Deli, tickets to Littman's People's Theater, and a program from a Detroit Tigers baseball game with Hank Greenberg on the cover. The scrapbook was preserved by Barbara





A photo of Ruth Gedalka, daughter of Kiever and Golda, owners of the American Bakery on Chene.



A page from the XOTOX Chene Street Jewish girls' club scrapbook.

Moretsky, daughter of Lillian Schrier, one of the XOTOX members. Years after they had all moved out of the neighborhood and lived apart, the women periodically would get together for family celebrations and reunions, sustaining the friendships they had established through the XOTOX club.

### The Friedmans

Virtually all of the Jewish storeowner families that were interviewed indicated that their grandparents or parents had come from Eastern Europe, primarily the lands of partitioned Poland. In most cases, they spoke Yiddish, Polish, Russian, and/or German. They were poor and mostly uneducated. However, within one generation of being in the United States, the children and then grandchildren had completed college and many went on to achieve significant status and accomplishments in America. Typical of this family trajectory is the Friedman family that settled in Detroit on East Milwaukee Ave., three buildings west of Chene.

Morris (Moishe) Friedman arrived in New York in 1912. Born in David-Horodok in the Russian partition of Poland, he left to avoid being drafted into the Russian army. After arriving in Detroit, he went to work at the Ford Motor Co., running a machine. Utilizing his mechanical skills, he suggested an innovation that led to a cash reward. With the windfall, he opened a shoe-repair business on East Milwaukee. Friedman was entrepreneurial, an inventor, and mechanically very skilled. He was a socialist and atheist and a member of the Workmen's Circle in Detroit. When he married into an Orthodox family, his in-laws considered him an outsider. His grandchildren, Judge Bernard Friedman and Dr. Howard Friedman, whom we interviewed, believe this was the reason he opened his business and lived in the Chene Street neighborhood – to stay away from the in-laws.

Friedman and his wife Esther (Wolok), and later their two children, resided in one of four apartments in the building that housed the Friedman Shoe Repair Shop on East Milwaukee (he later would join his two sons, David and Joseph, in a building business). Their son David went on to get a medical degree at Wayne University and opened a medical practice above the shoe-repair store. His patients were predominantly the Polish Catholics and African Americans who resided in the neighborhood. His office staff and nurses, including his long-term head nurse, Mary Taylor, were Polish Catholics.



*Morris Friedman's shoe-repair store at 2429 E. Milwaukee Ave.*



*Dr. David Friedman, Morris's son, at his medical office above the shoe-repair shop at 2429 E. Milwaukee.*

Dr. Friedman eventually followed his father's entrepreneurial bent and went on to convert a large building on Virginia Park into his own private hospital and he practiced medicine until his eighties. He and his wife had three children, Bernard, Howard, and Susan. Bernard chose to get a law degree and became a Michigan District Court judge, then was appointed by President Ronald Reagan to serve as a U.S. District Court judge in Michigan.

### STATUS OF STUDY / WORK TO BE DONE

The stories of Chene's Jews are part of a broader and more elaborate weaving that encompasses and is intertwined with Chene's Polish, Italian, and African-American residents. Together, they form one strand of the multi-varied and complex history of Detroit.

There are still gaps to fill, including the oral histories from several families of significant Jewish-owned stores. We also have added several prominent urban historians, including Professor Deborah Dash Moore, director of the University of Michigan's Frankel Center for Judaic Studies; Thomas Sugrue of the University of Pennsylvania; Dr. Karen Majewski, who also serves as mayor of Hamtramck; and others. A national team of consulting faculty has been recruited including professors Lila Corwin Berman of Temple University, John Bukowczyk of Wayne State University, and Angela Dillard of the University of Michigan. University courses and research proposals are being developed based on the Chene Street archive. The project is ongoing and continues to collect interviews and photos. In so doing, it is enriching our understanding of the extensive Jewish presence in Detroit.

**Marian Krzyzowski** has worked for nearly 40 years at the University of Michigan, where he now directs the Institute for Research on Labor, Employment and the Economy (IRLEE) under the U-M Office of Research, and is presently serving as an associate with the U-M's Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, where he lectures on twentieth-century Detroit history. Marian has bachelor's degrees in mathematics and economics from the University of Michigan and Wayne State University and a Masters in Social Work degree from the University of Michigan. He is a board member of Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County and serves on the advisory council for JFS's Amster Center.



#### SOURCES

##### Interviews:

Among the interviews I conducted early in the study were several with Levenson family members, including Goldie (Golda) Levin, Jennie's youngest sister, and Linda Ashley and Debra Rottman, two of Jennie's nieces. We made digital copies of the correspondence, preserved by Linda Ashley, and over the following years translated those hundred letters with the help of Saul Hankin, a University of Michigan Judaic studies student.

Interviews with Erwin And Julia Bloch in Royal Oak, Michigan, on January 28 and June 23, 2003

Interview with Linda Ashley in Huntington Woods, Michigan, on April 16, 2005

Interview with Goldie Levin and Debra Rottman in West Bloomfield, Michigan, on February 26, 2005

Interviews with Ruth Reistman-Karabenick and Earl Samuels in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on September 30, 2003, and Ruth Reistman-Karabenick in Boca Raton, Florida, on February 23, 2004

Interview with Judge Bernard Friedman and Dr. Howard Friedman in West Bloomfield, Michigan, on September 15, 2013

Interview with Barbara Moretsky in West Bloomfield, Michigan, on November 8, 2003

##### Photos:

Photos from the Chene Street History Project Archive courtesy of: Linda Ashley, Erwin and Julia Bloch, Ina Cohen, Judge Bernard Friedman, Dr. Howard Friedman, Barbara Moretsky, Ruth Reistman-Karabenick

##### Other:

Ancestry.com

Fourteenth Census of the United States 1920

Fifteenth Census of the United States 1930

Sixteenth Census of the United States 1940

List or Manifest of Alien Passengers for the United States, SS Noordam, August 20, 1920

Bresser's Cross-Index Directories of Detroit, Michigan 1946-1990

Jewish Records Indexing – Poland

Polk's Detroit City Directories 1890-1941, 1957, 1963, 1965, 1967, 1968, 1970, and 1974

Proquest's Digital Sanborn Maps 1915-1951

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Shera Avi-Yonah, Cranbrook-Kingswood

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Amanda Plisner, University of Michigan

For additional information regarding the Jennie Levenson story, readers can visit the family website maintained by Linda Ashley at: [http://www.and2design.com/jennie\\_home.html](http://www.and2design.com/jennie_home.html)

# FEATURED ARTICLE

## JEWISH FEDERAL JUDGES OF EASTERN MICHIGAN

by ROBERT DAVIDOW

*This article provides an overview of the personal and professional biographies of eleven Michigan Jewish federal judges. The article seeks to determine the relative impact of their Jewish upbringing on their later performance in the judiciary arena. In so doing, the author provides fascinating examples of some of their most complex and challenging cases.*

WHEN President Woodrow Wilson nominated Louis Brandeis to the Supreme Court in 1916, the substantial opposition to his nomination was based not only on his supposedly radical law reform efforts, but also on his Jewishness, though the latter was seldom mentioned publicly.<sup>1</sup> It is also true that the Court itself was not free of anti-Semitism. For instance, Justice McReynolds famously (or infamously) would leave the conference room whenever Justice Brandeis spoke.<sup>2</sup> Times have indeed changed. Three of our nine current U.S. Supreme Court justices are Jewish<sup>3</sup>, and eight of the living twenty-one federal district court judges of the Eastern District of Michigan appointed before 2014<sup>4</sup> are also Jewish.

Certainly the Jewish federal judges of eastern Michigan profiled in this article have differed in many respects – including the political party of the president who nominated them. However, explicitly or implicitly, they all seem to have been influenced by the Jewish values of justice and fairness, as embodied in the American scheme of justice.

### THE DISTRICT JUDGES

#### **Charles Casper Simons**

Despite the anti-Semitism in Michigan, as illustrated by articles in Henry Ford's *Dearborn Independent*,<sup>5</sup> President Harding appointed Charles Casper Simons to the district court in Detroit in 1923,<sup>6</sup> the first Jewish judge on the federal bench in eastern Michigan. Like many 19th-century immigrants, Judge Simons's father, David, left an area of Poland that was then part of Tsarist Russia to escape religious persecution. Eventually settling in Detroit, the father went into the business of buying and selling scrap metal. Charles earned two degrees from the University of Michigan, including an LL.B. He devoted much

of his professional time to public service; he was the youngest state senator when he served from 1903 to 1904 and later was a member of the Michigan State Constitutional Convention that wrote the constitution of 1908.<sup>7</sup> In his practice of law he represented the indigent and the immigrant, always sensitive to the plight of the less fortunate.<sup>8</sup>

When Simons was appointed to the district court, he became only the second federal district court judge in southeastern Michigan. There he remained until President Hoover appointed him to the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.<sup>9</sup>

One of his notable cases was *Jones v. Kentucky*,<sup>10</sup> in which he wrote for the court in a habeas corpus proceeding that a conviction of murder and sentence of death had to be set aside for two reasons: Defense counsel was offered too little time to prepare the defense, and it appeared that the conviction was based on perjured testimony. In regard to the first reason, Judge Simons relied on a famous U.S. Supreme Court case (the first *Scottsboro* case<sup>11</sup>) in which that Court had found insufficient time for preparation of the defense, despite the general problem of delay in the administration of the criminal laws. Said Judge Simons: "But we progress little if [in] freeing the administration of justice from one evil we permit it to become enmeshed in a second, and in our effort to achieve promptness go forward with such haste as to close the door upon the 'calm spirit of regulated justice.'"<sup>12</sup>

Judge Simons remained on the Sixth Circuit until his death in 1964. During his lifetime, he "greatly valued his ancestry and religion," serving for many years as a member of the board of trustees of Temple Beth El of Detroit and of the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati.<sup>13</sup>

### **Theodore Levin**

Judge Theodore Levin was born in Chicago, but received the first of his two law degrees from the University of Detroit in 1920. He became a partner in the law firm of Levin, Levin, Garvett, and Dill and was well known for his work in the area of immigration and naturalization law.<sup>14</sup> President Truman's appointment of Levin to the federal district court in 1946 was controversial; he was opposed by some Democrats because he had not been active in Democratic politics and because of religious prejudice. He did eventually gain the support of Congressman John Dingell Sr.<sup>15</sup>

The case of *Carver v. Kropp* illustrates Judge Levin's determination to require the State of Michigan to adhere to constitutional constraints in the area of search and seizure.<sup>16</sup> In this case, police stopped a vehicle being driven by the defendant, requiring him to exit the car, whereupon he was arrested. The police likely had probable cause to arrest the defendant for assault and attempted rape, although the opinion does not make this clear. In any event, the problem for Judge Levin was that the police's opening of two envelopes (which clearly did not contain weapons but which did contain heroin) revealed evidence unrelated to the reason for the arrest. Judge Levin found the search of the envelopes to be beyond the scope permitted by the Fourth Amendment, which prohibits unreasonable searches and seizures. The state relied on a provision of the Michigan constitution that purported to allow introduction into evidence of narcotics. As Judge Levin pointed out, however, the Fourth Amendment's limitations had been made applicable to the states, and under the U.S. Constitution (Article VI, Section 2) that Constitution is the supreme law of the land. Accordingly, Judge Levin determined that

the defendant was being held in violation of the Constitution.

Judge Levin's approach was entirely consistent with the logic of the then-controlling U.S. Supreme Court decisions.<sup>17</sup> The defendant was fortunate that his case was considered by the district court in 1969 and not in 1973 or later because the Supreme Court abandoned the earlier logic and adopted a rule that would have permitted the police to search under these circumstances.<sup>18</sup>

Judge Levin retired from the bench in 1967 and died in 1970. On May 1, 1995, Law Day, the U.S. Courthouse in Detroit was named the Theodore Levin Federal Courthouse.<sup>19</sup> At the dedication ceremony, family, friends, and colleagues gathered to celebrate the occasion. Among the tributes paid to Judge Levin was Congresswoman Collins's statement that Judge Levin "had more than an outstanding ability as a judge. He had a sense of compassion and fairness."<sup>20</sup> Said Rabbi Irwin Groner, "The law, for Judge Levin, was the guardian of individual right....It was the prophetic ideal that shaped his career. 'Let justice roll down like the waters and righteousness as a mighty stream.'"<sup>21</sup>

Judge Levin was a member of both the Detroit Round Table of Catholics, Jews, and Protestants and the Jewish Welfare Federation of Detroit.<sup>22</sup>

### **Lawrence Gubow**

Born in Detroit in 1919, Judge Lawrence Gubow received a bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan in 1940, then began his legal education at the University's law school. In 1941 he joined the U.S. Army, serving until his discharge in 1948.<sup>23</sup> While in the army he was seriously wounded and spent time in a German prisoner-of-war camp. Upon release he weighed about ninety pounds.<sup>24</sup> He graduated from law school in 1950 and was admitted to the practice of law in 1951. After two years of private practice, he was appointed to the Michigan Corporations and Securities Commission, eventually becoming commissioner. He gained national recognition in 1960 when he introduced regulations to end the screening system that brokers had used to keep African-American buyers from being shown houses in Grosse Pointe. A year later he was appointed U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan by President Kennedy.<sup>25</sup> He loved being a U.S. attorney, but his wife urged him to seek judicial office.<sup>26</sup> In 1968 President Johnson named him to the U.S. District Court in Eastern Michigan, where he remained until his death in 1978.<sup>27</sup>

In the early 1970s Judge Gubow presided over the non-jury trial of five members of the Ku Klux Klan who were charged with having destroyed or damaged thirteen school buses in reaction to a decree designed to undo the results of intentional segregation of Pontiac schools. Judge Gubow found all the defendants guilty of conspiracy to "injure, oppress, threaten, and intimidate Negro students of the Pontiac, Michigan School District, in their right and privilege as citizens secured by the Constitution, to attend school without regard to race or color" in violation of provisions in Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The convictions were upheld on review by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit.<sup>28</sup>

Upon assuming the bench, Judge Gubow curtailed some of his outside activities, but remained active in several Jewish organizations, including Jewish War Veterans and the Jewish Community Council of Metropolitan Detroit. According to his son, his religion provided him with a moral compass. His judgeship was characterized by compassion

and fairness. He took pleasure in swearing in new citizens. Judge Gubow died at the age of fifty-nine after a life that was probably shortened by the wounds he received during World War II and by diabetes.<sup>29</sup>

### Stewart Newblatt

Judge Stewart Newblatt thought he would become an engineer, but his service in the U.S. Army from 1946 to 1947 changed his mind. He was assigned to find a deserter who had left his assigned unit, a psychiatric hospital, not because he was trying to avoid combat, but rather because his request to be transferred back to his combat unit had been three times denied. The deserter was nevertheless court-martialed and spent ten years in prison. The unfairness persuaded Newblatt to become an attorney so he could right societal wrongs.<sup>30</sup>

Newblatt received both his bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Michigan, the latter in 1952. He practiced privately in Flint from 1953 through 1962 and was described as "a terrific litigator scholar."<sup>31</sup> He began serving as a circuit judge in Genesee County in 1962. Leaving the bench in 1970, he resumed his private practice until 1979 when President Carter appointed him to the U.S. district court. Though he may have intimidated some new attorneys who did not know him, he disliked formality. The current Chief Judge, Gerald Rosen, has described how he observed Judge Newblatt's cat on the conference table in the latter's chambers.<sup>32</sup>

One of Judge Newblatt's sons has said that his father "took principled stands even though they were sometimes unpopular."<sup>33</sup> In 1953, for example, he represented some witnesses called before a subcommittee of the House Un-American Activities Committee. He also signed petitions to put on the ballot some radical political parties, including the Socialist Workers Party. When he appeared before a sub-committee of the Senate Judiciary Committee for his confirmation hearing in 1979, Senator Dole asked him about his having signed those petitions.<sup>34</sup>

Dedication to principle is also apparent in his ruling in an affirmative-action case decided in 1984.<sup>35</sup> A counselor from a Flint school had been demoted to the position of classroom teacher pursuant to a collective-bargaining agreement with a teachers union that required that the racial composition of the counselors and librarians be equal to the racial composition of the secondary teaching staff, which in turn had to be equal to the racial composition of students in the school. This system of racial quotas was implemented in response to the fact that for over twenty years "black people [had] been substantially underrepresented in the teaching and counseling sectors of the Flint school system."<sup>36</sup> Early in his opinion, Judge Newblatt described his approach to constitutional interpretation: "This Court does not believe in strict historical interpretivism. . . . Instead, it is inclined toward a modified interpretivism with basic original principles as the guide but allowing for reasonable and natural expansion over time."<sup>37</sup> Thus, he rejected the most rigid form of original intent (or understanding) which is espoused by some members of the present U.S. Supreme Court. Stating that he was bound by a decision of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit, Judge Newblatt upheld the demotion. In doing so he said, "The Court simply cannot – and will not – allow its profound and unrelenting personal doubts about the wisdom and constitutionality of race based employee promotion practices to dictate the disposition of this case."<sup>38</sup> Thus, Judge Newblatt did

what he perceived to be his duty despite his own personal reservations, and despite substantial public opposition to affirmative action.

Judge Newblatt assumed senior status in 1993 and is presently inactive.

### **Avern Cohn**

Judge Avern Cohn has said that he grew up in a “golden Ghetto,” that is, in a “largely Jewish environment” in which he had “almost no non-Jewish friends or associations.” His father was a well-known attorney who initially specialized in bankruptcy work and whose busy practice allowed the family to escape the travails of the Great Depression. Born in 1924, Avern Cohn graduated from Detroit’s Central High School in January 1942, then began his studies at the University of Michigan. In 1943, his sophomore year, he was drafted. After thirteen weeks of infantry basic training, he was accepted into the pre-engineering program of the army’s Specialized Training Program and was sent to John Tarleton Agricultural College in Texas. When the program collapsed at the end of 1943, most of the young men were sent to combat units. A few, Cohn included, were assigned to a pre-med program at Stanford. He was then assigned to medical school at Loyola University of Chicago. After his March 1946 discharge, Cohn went back to medical school, thinking he’d become a doctor. He changed his mind about six weeks later, returning to the University of Michigan and enrolling in its law school. He had no undergraduate degree, but Michigan’s returning veterans (with at least 90 credit hours) were permitted to enter law school.<sup>39</sup>

In 1961 Judge Cohn and his father joined the firm of Honigman, Miller & Schwartz, which then added his father’s name to the firm. Judge Cohn, prior to becoming a judge, was active in Democratic Party politics and held a number of public positions, including member of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission and member of the Detroit Board of Police Commissioners. He was never interested in a state court judgeship. In 1979 he was appointed to the federal bench by President Carter at the recommendation of Senator Donald Riegle.<sup>40</sup>

Over his years on the federal bench, Judge Cohn has been involved in a number of important civil-rights cases. Though the Detroit school desegregation case, *Milliken v. Bradley*,<sup>41</sup> began before he became a federal judge, he presided over the conclusion of this almost twenty-year-old case.<sup>42</sup>

Responding to incidents of racism and racial harassment, the University of Michigan adopted a policy that subjected to discipline those who, among other things, engaged in “any behavior, verbal or physical, that stigmatizes or victimizes an individual on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, creed, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, handicap or Vietnam-era veteran status.”<sup>43</sup> Judge Cohn held in *Doe v. the University of Michigan* that the policy was both vague and overbroad, on its face and as applied, and thus in conflict with the First Amendment. Judge Cohn has noted that this case “became one of the seminal cases on speech codes and is frequently cited” and that it was ironic that the case was decided “by a judge who was an alum not only of the university but of its law school.”<sup>44</sup>

Judge Cohn has been called “feisty, opinionated, and forceful,”<sup>45</sup> a description the judge doesn’t disagree with. He has admitted that he doesn’t “suffer fools lightly or gladly”<sup>46</sup> but also feels it’s important to “make the parties feel that they had an opportunity



to talk to the judge, that the judge listens and pays attention.”<sup>47</sup> He is not afraid to admit he has been wrong.<sup>48</sup> And, as his decision in the Doe case shows, he has no hesitancy to enforce the Constitution even when it means invalidating an action of his alma mater.

Although the judge assumed a senior status in 1999, the decision to head toward retirement has not resulted in a lessening of his caseload.<sup>49</sup> Judge Cohn acknowledges that his Jewish faith has influenced his approach to the law: “My Jewish upbringing gave me a certain sensitivity. Brandeis’s great asset . . . was his concern for the other fellow. I think Jewish philanthropy is bottomed on that principle.”<sup>50</sup>

### **Bernard A. Friedman**

Bernard A. Friedman was born in 1943 in Highland Park, Michigan. His father instilled in him strong Jewish values – in particular, the need to do the right thing.<sup>51</sup>

Judge Friedman served on active duty in the U.S. Army from 1967 to 1968 and thereafter in reserves until 1972. He received a law degree in 1968 from what was then the Detroit College of Law (now part of Michigan State University). He was an assistant prosecutor in Wayne County from 1969 to 1970, after which he entered private practice, including with the firm of Lippitt, Harrison, Friedman & Whitefield in Southfield, Michigan. Unhappy with the demands of private practice, he thought of a judgeship, and in 1982 was appointed by the governor to a 48th District Court judgeship. In 1988 President Ronald Reagan appointed him to a position on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. He served as chief judge from 2004 to 2009, when he took senior status.<sup>52</sup>

One of his most notable cases was the University of Michigan Law School affirmative action case<sup>53</sup>, which involved the constitutionality of the school taking into account the race or ethnicity of applicants in an effort to achieve diversity (the undergraduate affirmative action case was tried separately). The trial was held before Judge Friedman, who ruled that the achievement of a diverse student population was not a compelling state interest and that, in any event, the plan was not narrowly tailored to achieve the law school’s goal of diversity. Therefore, according to Judge Friedman, the law-school plan for selection of its student body was inconsistent with the guarantee of equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment. The full Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit disagreed.<sup>54</sup> The case was finally decided by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Grutter v. Bollinger*,<sup>55</sup> which agreed with the Sixth Circuit. (*Fisher v. University of Texas*,<sup>56</sup> decided by the Supreme Court in 2013, has affirmed the principle that race may be taken into account as one factor, but has made it clear that the University of Texas admissions plan can be upheld only if it is shown that affirmative action is the only way to achieve diversity.)

Another of Judge Friedman’s cases involved a *habeas corpus* petitioner who claimed that his counsel at trial in state court had been ineffective in failing to interview eight witnesses who could have called into question the state’s contention that the defendant was guilty of premeditated murder following a heated argument in a barroom.<sup>57</sup> Judge Friedman ruled in favor of the petitioner (the defendant), and his decision was affirmed two-to-one by a panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.<sup>58</sup>

The two cases – affirmative action, on the one hand, and *habeas corpus*, on the other – perhaps suggest the inappropriateness of trying to apply political labels to judges, who

may not conform to the stereotypes that seem so popular in the media. Labels also fail to account for Judge Friedman's decision in *DeBoer v. Snyder*,<sup>59</sup> in which he recently found the Michigan constitutional prohibition of same-sex marriage unconstitutional under the federal Equal Protection Clause because "highly credible" social-science evidence presented at trial showed that the prohibition did "not advance any conceivable legitimate state interest."

### **Gerald Rosen**

Chief Judge Gerald Rosen is a busy man. In addition to fulfilling his judicial and administrative duties, he publishes articles for professional journals and teaches as an adjunct professor of law at the University of Michigan Law School, Wayne State University Law School, University of Detroit-Mercy Law School, and Thomas M. Cooley Law School. He is often asked to lecture around the world, included to Chinese judges at the Supreme People's Court in Beijing, Egyptian judges in Cairo, and at Hebrew University in Jerusalem.<sup>60</sup> Presently he is serving as the chief judicial mediator in the Detroit bankruptcy case, the largest municipal bankruptcy in U.S. history.<sup>61</sup>

Judge Rosen, who grew up in post-WWII Oak Park, Michigan, was a bar mitzvah at Congregation Beth Shalom.<sup>62</sup> Following graduation from Kalamazoo College, he worked as a legislative assistant to U.S. Senator Robert P. Griffin of Michigan from February 1974 through January 1979. While in Washington, he attended night classes at the George Washington University Law School from which he received his J.D. degree in May 1979. Before his appointment to the bench in 1990 by the first President Bush, he was a senior partner in the firm of Miller, Canfield, Paddock & Stone.<sup>63</sup>

Judge Rosen has handled a number of notable cases. In *Kevorkian v. Thompson*,<sup>64</sup> Jack Kevorkian (known as "Dr. Death," although not a doctor at that time since his license to practice had been revoked) sought declaratory and injunctive relief against prosecutions of him for assisting terminally ill persons to commit suicide. The court ruled against the claim that assisting others to commit suicide was constitutionally protected. The court also ruled that the Equal Protection Clause was not violated by the criminalization of assisted suicide even though the statute distinguished between the situation of a person on life support, who had a right to discontinue that support, and the situation of a terminally ill person who was not on life support. The court nevertheless decided that the Michigan law prohibiting assisted suicide could not be constitutionally applied to a 1992 assisted suicide because a 1983 decision of the Michigan Court of Appeals had made it unclear whether assisted suicide could be prosecuted. Not until 1994 did it become clear that assisted suicide was a crime in Michigan; thus there was an absence of fair notice.<sup>65</sup>

Judge Rosen also presided over *United States v. Koubriti*, the first post-September 11 terrorism case in the U.S. After the conviction of three of four defendants, Judge Rosen ultimately vacated the guilty verdicts following receipt of evidence of possible prosecutorial misconduct and an ensuing investigation that included Judge Rosen's visit to the C.I.A. to review highly classified documents. (He is believed to be the only judge ever to visit the C.I.A. in connection with official duties.)<sup>66</sup>

### **Nancy Edmunds**

Judge Nancy Edmunds earned a B.A. from Cornell, an M.A.T. from the University of Chicago, and a J.D. from Wayne State University, where she served as editor-in-chief of the Wayne Law Review. Prior to joining the firm of Dykema Gossett, she clerked for Judge Ralph Freeman, U.S. Senior District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan. In 1991 she was nominated by President George H.W. Bush for the position of United States District Judge, a post she assumed in 1992.<sup>67</sup>

Among the many interesting cases she has handled was the federal prosecution of former Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, who was convicted of numerous charges, including extortion, bribery, mail and wire fraud, and income-tax evasion. In March 2013 she denied his request for bond pending sentencing, citing, among other things, his failure to abide by all the state parole conditions and his “lying to and misleading the courts about his assets and ignoring the direction of his probation and parole officers to report income and gifts.”<sup>68</sup> On October 10, 2013, she sentenced Kilpatrick to twenty-eight years in prison.<sup>69</sup>

She also presided over the trial of Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, the so-called “underwear bomber.” In denying the defendant’s motion to suppress statements made by the defendant at the University of Michigan hospital where he was being treated for burns,<sup>70</sup> she dealt with two issues: First, she found, based in part on the testimony of his primary-care nurse, that the painkilling drugs that had been administered to him did not deprive him of his ability to make a voluntary statement (an issue independent of the possible need to give Miranda warnings). Second, she concluded that, because of the defendant’s previous admission that he was acting on behalf of al-Qaeda and because it was not known who else might be planning an attack, it was not necessary to give the defendant the Miranda warnings because of a public-safety exception to Miranda, recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court.<sup>71</sup> After Abdulmutallab pleaded guilty, Judge Edmunds sentenced the defendant to life without the possibility of parole.<sup>72</sup>

Judge Edmunds has said that Judeo-Christian values have been her moral compass. A congregant of Temple Beth El in Bloomfield Hills, Edmunds served as a trustee from 1990 to 1997.<sup>73</sup> She also served on the board of trustees with the Jewish Community Relations Council from 2005 to 2007. She is involved with the Michigan Members of the Stratford Festival (chair and member of executive committee), American Judicature Society (member), Committee of Visitors of Wayne Law School, and Cranbrook/Kingswood Schools (board of governors 1999-2004).<sup>74</sup>

### **Paul Borman**

Judge Paul Borman has had a varied professional career. With degrees from the University of Michigan (bachelor’s and law) and an LL.M. from Yale, he has served as a staff attorney for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, assistant U.S. attorney, an assistant county prosecutor (Wayne County), special counsel to the mayor of Detroit, professor of law and assistant dean at Wayne State University Law School, adjunct lecturer at the University of Michigan Law School, co-author of the casebook “White Collar Crime: Law and Practice,” and chief federal defender at the Legal Aid & Defender Association of Detroit. Judge Borman was nominated by President Clinton for the position of judge of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan in March 1994 and was confirmed by the Senate in August of that year.<sup>75</sup>

Judge Borman was involved in an interesting First Amendment case, *Saieg v. City of Dearborn*.<sup>76</sup> The case was later reviewed by a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit. Of particular note is the fact that Judge Borman and the three appellate judges were all appointed by President Clinton. The case involved the issue of the validity of a city limitation on the distribution of literature in an area of the City of Dearborn during the Arab International Festival. The plaintiff was "the founder and former director of ACP (Arab Christian Perspective), a national ministry established for the purpose of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to Muslims." He sought a declaration that his First Amendment rights were violated by city-imposed limitations.<sup>77</sup> The legal principles, stated at a high level of abstraction, were clear, but their application was far from it.

In this case the city provided support for the festival, which occupied a number of blocks. There was an "inner perimeter,"<sup>78</sup> as well as an "outer perimeter," the latter designed to provide "a safe, controllable buffer between the bulk of the Festival activities and the outside world."<sup>79</sup> Under this arrangement the plaintiff could distribute literature at a fixed location within the inner perimeter, but could not hand out literature while walking about on the sidewalks. The question for the court was whether this limitation was consistent with the First Amendment. Judge Borman concluded that the limitation met the constitutional test. The 6th Circuit Court of Appeals disagreed and, in a two-to-one decision, reversed Judge Borman's decision.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, the dissenting judge concluded that Judge Borman's opinion was "thoughtful and well documented" and "has provided a masterful explanation for judgment in the defendant's favor."<sup>81</sup>

Somewhat unusually for a federal judge, Judge Borman became involved in a state adoption proceeding when two state circuit courts purported to revoke an order of adoption that one of these courts had previously issued. Judge Borman found a clear violation of due process when no notice of the revocation proceeding was given to the original adopting parents.<sup>82</sup>

### **Arthur Tarnow**

Probably not many American judges have had the kind of experiences that Judge Arthur Tarnow has had. After receiving a B.A. and a J.D. from Wayne State University, he taught as a tutor in contracts and torts at the University of Melbourne Law School (1965-66) and as a lecturer in contracts and sales at the University of Papua, New Guinea Law School (1967-68). More traditionally, he also served as a clerk for Michigan Court of Appeals judges John Fitzgerald, Louis McGregor, and Timothy Quinn (1967). In 1973, he was a partner in the law firm of Cilluffo and Tarnow, then began practice as a solo practitioner (1974-98). He has also been chief deputy defender (appeals) for the Legal Aid and Defenders Association of Detroit (1969-70), and foundation appellate defender for the State of Michigan (1970-72). In addition, he has been an adjunct professor in criminal procedure and constitutional law at the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law (1970, 1980-2009). Judge Tarnow was appointed by President Clinton in 1997 and assumed the office in 1998.<sup>83</sup>

Judge Tarnow's work has been influenced by his dedication to the values of fairness and justice,<sup>84</sup> a dedication that is sometimes tested in the handling of petitions for writs of *habeas corpus* from state prisoners. In one such case, *Williams v. Birkett*,<sup>85</sup> Judge Tar-

now first granted an unconditional *writ of habeas corpus* because the petitioner had been denied his rights to effective assistance of counsel and due process of law – denials that were clearly unconstitutional under previous decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court. The petitioner, who suffered from attention deficit hyperactive disorder and was seventeen years old at the time of the crime, pleaded guilty to unarmed robbery, which involved punching the victim in the stomach and taking ten dollars. The judge sentenced him to two years of probation, but with the requirement that he serve ninety to 120 days in a boot-camp program. Less than two months later, the petitioner was sentenced to one-to-fifteen years in prison for violating the terms of the boot-camp program. He was not given a written statement of the charges against him; indeed, it was not clear what the supposed violation was. Neither his new attorney nor the judge advised him of his right to a probation violation hearing and of his right to confront witnesses against him. It was not clear that counsel even knew of these rights. Judge Tarnow found that counsel's performance was so deficient that it was the equivalent of no counsel at all.

All of this was not the end of the story, however. On review, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit vacated Judge Tarnow's decision and remanded on the ground that the petition for *habeas corpus* had not been timely filed.<sup>86</sup> That court left open the possibility that Judge Tarnow could find that the failure to comply with the time limitations set forth in the statute was, in essence, excused in this particular case. (The court of appeals itself could have made that determination in this case without remanding it to the district court.)<sup>87</sup> When the case was returned to Judge Tarnow, he did indeed find that the failure to file the petition in a timely fashion was excused. Among the factors he considered were "petitioner's history of long standing learning disabilities and untreated A.D.H.D." and the fact that the trial judge at re-sentencing had arguably led the petitioner to believe that it was counsel's duty to file the appeal.<sup>88</sup> Judge Tarnow then once more granted petitioner an unconditional *writ of habeas corpus* for the reasons that he summarized in his first opinion: "the egregious nature and number of the constitutional violations ranging from: no notice of charges, no notice of right to hearing, no hearing, no allowance of Petitioner's right to speak, absence of meaningful counsel and ineffective assistance of counsel."<sup>89</sup>

### **Mark Goldsmith**

Probably more than a few lawyers and judges do not like to handle tax matters, but Judge Mark Goldsmith does.<sup>90</sup> A graduate of the University of Michigan (1974) and the Harvard Law School (1977), Judge Goldsmith was a litigation associate with a well-respected New York law firm from 1979 to 1980, before he practiced law as a solo practitioner in the Detroit area from 1980 to 1987. He then joined the Detroit firm of Honigman, Miller, Schwartz, and Cohn, first as an associate (1987-1988) and then as a partner (1988-2004). In 2004, he was appointed a Michigan circuit court judge in Oakland County by the governor.<sup>91</sup> He never had to run in a contested election.<sup>92</sup>

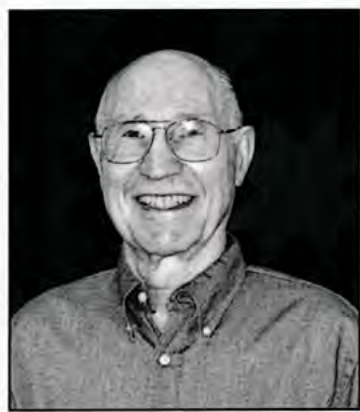
In February 2010 President Obama nominated Judge Goldsmith for the position of district court judge for the Eastern District of Michigan. He assumed the bench in July of that year. Comparing his time as a state court trial judge to his time as a federal court judge, he notes that a federal judge spends more time in chambers working on complex issues.<sup>93</sup>

A case that illustrates that complexity is *Hills v. McQuiggin*.<sup>94</sup> Judge Goldsmith denied a petition for writ of habeas corpus even though he found arguable merit in the petitioner's claim that he was denied his right under the 6th Amendment to confront witnesses against him. The petitioner had to surmount many procedural obstacles. First, his trial counsel had failed to raise the issue, and in this case that failure could be excused only if his attorney had provided ineffective assistance of counsel. To establish ineffectiveness, the petitioner had to show both that the performance of counsel was below an objective standard of reasonableness and that there was a reasonable probability of a different outcome if counsel had performed properly. The problem here was the petitioner's failure to show the probability of a different outcome because "the majority of the evidence against Petitioner was separate from the Confrontation-Clause-related testimony."<sup>95</sup> Judge Goldsmith did, however, grant a certificate of appealability in regard to this issue, apparently because he found that reasonable jurists could disagree with his resolution of the constitutional issue. (There is no automatic right to appeal to the Court of Appeals from a denial of a petition for *habeas corpus*; a certificate of appealability is required.)

In dealing with the wide variety of his cases, Judge Goldsmith is influenced by Jewish values, which in his view encompass the importance and dignity of the individual – values that are incorporated in U.S. law.<sup>96</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Michigan's Jewish community has good reason to be proud of the Jewish federal judges of the Eastern District of Michigan. This review of their work has shown the importance of their Jewish backgrounds in shaping their character. To a considerable degree they have consciously sought to act in accordance with what they believe to be the Jewish (and American) values of justice and fairness.



**Bob Davidow**, a retired law professor, taught for three decades, most recently at George Mason University School of Law. He also practiced criminal law for ten years as a JAG officer, U.S. Army; as a special assistant public defender in Tallahassee, Florida (in connection with his teaching at Florida State University College of Law); and as an assistant public defender with the Cook County (Chicago) Office of the Public Defender. He has taught a course in judicial administration and has published five articles relating to the judiciary, three of them dealing with judicial selection. The most recent of these is "Judicial Selection in Michigan: A Fresh Approach," 58 *Wayne Law Review* 313 (2012).

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# Remarkable JEWISH MUSICIANS & ARTISTS

## HARRY AND MARY JORDAN: YIDDISH THEATER ACTORS

by LEAH JORDAN BISEL

WHEN a friend of his family offered to send young Harry Jordan to Italy to train his lovely voice into that of an opera singer, his parents replied: "We just came from Europe. You're not going back to Europe." And so it was.

We will never know whether the creative urge that came to define Harry Jordan was borne of this incident, but the actor would come to be one of Michigan's most beloved Yiddish actors, performing at theaters throughout the region.



*In the late 1930s Harry Jordan performed at Littman's People's Theatre wearing this costume, which appears to be "Little Lord Fauntleroy." The name of the play for which he was photographed is not known.*

Jordan came to America through Philadelphia in 1906 when he was eleven. Genealogical information available indicates that the name Jordan was originally Zerdanowski in Russia. By 1913, the young actor was performing sketches in local variety shows, mostly within the Jewish community, and over the next few years doing the same in English-speaking vaudeville and dramatic clubs.

Jordan began his legitimate-theater career in Baltimore, and then perhaps in Peoria. The 1920 census lists his address as a hotel in Peoria, Illinois, and his occupation as "a performer." By 1930, the in-demand actor had graced stages throughout the region including in Toronto, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and perhaps New Orleans. A postcard addressed to his parents seems to indicate this.

It was during the 1928-29 theater season that Harry first came to Littman's People's Theatre in Detroit. In the autobiography of Yiddish actor Herman Yablokoff, *Der Payatz*, a story was told about a play starring Bertha Kalish. The production experienced many problems including several actors who succumbed to the flu and were hospitalized. Jordan was asked to assume the role of the main male actor on short notice for the evening performance, which he did successfully. Two years later, in 1931, Jordan had moved on to a performance in Brooklyn at the Hopkinson Theater. Perhaps he ventured east with hopes of landing on Broadway. An old crumbling telegram among his family photos wishes him success on opening night at a theater in New York, but unfortunately the play closed soon after.



*Abraham Littman*

and it was shortly after that her friend Rose Glassman rushed over to the Hoffmans' house on Blaine Street to tell her that the Yiddish theatre needed chorus girls. Ida and Mary went right away and began working. Despite their father's displeasure with their work, this was during the Depression and the girls wanted to help the family. They earned \$1.50 a performance.

Harry and Mary married in 1935 and continued working in Yiddish theater. Throughout the early years of their marriage, Sundays were spent at their apartment on Pingree Street in Detroit with their theater friends. The three-room apartment became a



*Harry Jordan*

Harry met his bride-to-be, Mary Hoffman, at Littman's People's Theatre on 12th Street in Detroit. Born in Toronto, Ontario, in 1914, Mary and her family came to Detroit in 1924. Her parents immigrated to Canada from Poland in 1913 after the tragic death of their first child who lived only seventeen days. Three more siblings were born in Canada by 1922, including Mary's red-headed sister, Ida.

Mary graduated from Northern High School in 1932,

gathering place for actors, both the locals who lived in the area and the many others who came through the city. They entertained on next to nothing and each week Mary lovingly prepared home-cooked meals (except cakes, because as Mary would recall, the apartment's oven was unreliable).

Mary often recounted for her children the stories of the actors and those Sunday dinners. "The actor Michal Mikhalesko was gorgeous! Michal was a leading man, or the love interest in a play. Celia Pearson was a glamour girl. In one play she was going to marry Michal. He was blamed for killing someone. She was pregnant by him but he was in jail. She was ready to marry another man, but at the last minute Michal is freed from jail upon being found innocent. She tells him, 'We have a child.' In Yiddish she means to tell him that the child is in an orphanage, but she got the words mixed up and mistakenly said, 'He's in an old folks' home.' There was a moment of silence as the audience digested these words!"

Continued Mary: "Michal's wife, Anju, who came from Russia, divorced her husband to marry Michal. She stayed in New York while he was in Detroit. Mikhalesko came to our apartment upon Harry's invitation and I fed him. He had to have his grapefruit broiled."

The Jordans enjoyed the simple pastimes of living in Detroit. The streetcar cost six cents and a transfer cost a penny. Their apartment on Pingree was thirty-five dollars a month. The actors from New York who came to call thought the Jordans were millionaires because they had grass and trees.

One of their favorite Sunday guests was Jack Bernardi. His sense of humor was like no other and often he would have friends rolling on the floor with laughter from his antics. Bernardi's sister Faigi was also a friend. "Faigi was going to marry a man by the name of Charlie Haberman," said Mary. "Some of the theater girls had a shower for her up at Haberman's house on Blaine. Friends Dorothy Baldwin and Dinah Bialik were there as well. The girls gave Faigi a black nightgown as a gift. Then one night in the theater, there was a wedding scene on stage, as there often was in Yiddish plays. Faigi came out on stage dressed in the nightgown as if it were an evening gown. All the girls who knew laughed."

After the shows many of the actors and theater-goers, including Harry and Mary Jordan, would frequent The Russian Bear, a restaurant on 12th Street near Clairmount. It was a wonderful place with Russian food and dancing. Mary "borrowed" a recipe for Bavarian cream and made it for years to come. Serving it always brought back memories of this favorite restaurant and the Yiddish theater.

The Jordans were also regulars on Weinberg's Yiddish Radio Hour, heard every Saturday morning beginning in the 1930s. The program featured a five-piece orchestra and a chorus and presented Jewish music and news, as well as poetry, writing, and humor. (Beginning in 1944, the Weinbergs' daughter, Bette Schein, managed the radio program, which went off the air in 1958.) The Weinbergs welcomed a variety of guests, including



*An artist by the name of Rappaport painted this portrait of Harry, which hung in the lobby of a New York theater at one time. Leah Jordan Bisel had it restored and it now hangs in her home.*



The Jordans encountered some of the Yiddish theater greats while working at Littman's People's Theatre: Paul Muni, Michal Michalesko, Celia Pearson, Aaron Lebedeff, Lucy German, Menashe Skulnick, Samuel Goldenberg, and Joseph Buloff, to name a few.



(Left) Ida Hoffman pursued her career in New York, performing regularly at the New Folks Theatre, a Yiddish theater. In 1940, she married Morris Honig who also dabbled as an actor and went by the stage name Morris Zaar. Ida performed at Massey Hall in Toronto sometime in the 1940s and in 1954 she appeared in "Velen Zey Gedenken?" (Will They Remember?) and "Di Tsveyter Khasene" (Second Marriage).  
(Right) Ida, left, and Mary, right, and their dog Elmer.

**LITTMAN'S PEOPLES THEATRE**  
8210 TWELFTH ST

A. Littman ..... House Mgr.  
Misha Fishon ..... Company Mgr. and Director  
Isaac Arko ..... Stage Mgr.  
A. Grushkoff ..... Musical Director  
Sceneries by Harry Rothberg, Artist

**פ ר א נ ר א מ**  
**דער גלח ראספוטין**  
נעשענדיש פון אלטען רוסלאנד, אין 3 אקטען  
פון ש. וואגנער  
פערזאנען

גרינארד ראספוטין ..... מישא פישאן  
יעפים, זיין מאטער ..... דוד דיווידסאן  
פראסקאוויץ, גרינארד'ס ווייב ..... ווערא זאסלאווסקא  
פראדאר קוזמיטש, א שמיד ..... פעליקס פאנעלנעס  
דוניא, זיין מאכטער ..... שרה נינאלד  
סימאנאוויטש, ראספוטין'ס פערעטאר ..... ה. רושארדאן  
אנא ווירביקאווא, א גרעפינע ..... קלארא האנימאן  
מאריא ארקאדיעוונא ..... פאולין פאנעל  
אליענא, איר מאכטער ..... סאלי ווינאקאר  
העלענא פעטראווא ..... סילי פירסאן  
פיטרימ, א גלח ..... סעם פאנעל  
קניאז יוסיפאוו ..... יצחק ארקא  
פארישקעוויטש ..... שמש קלאס  
דמיטרי פאולאוויטש, א דאקטאר ..... דוד ד. דיווידסאן  
וויסליבסנא, א גויע ..... מאדאם בראגיןסקיא

פוערים—פוערמעס

**RASPUTIN**  
In 3 acts — by Wagner  
**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

Gregory Rasputin ..... M. Fishon  
Yefim, his father ..... D. Davidson  
Praskofia, Gregory's wife ..... V. Zaslavskaya  
Zusmitch, a blacksmith ..... F. Fogelnest  
Junia, his daughter ..... S. Gingold  
Simonitoh ..... H. Jordan  
Virbuva, a countess ..... C. Honigman  
Maria Arkadievna ..... P. Fogel  
Monka ..... S. Vinockur  
Helena Petrovna ..... C. Pearson  
Pitrim, a monk ..... S. Fogel  
Yusipoff, a count ..... I. Arko  
Purishkevitch ..... M. Kloss  
Dimitri, a doctor ..... D. Davidson  
Vasilisa ..... Madame Braginskaya

**דינסטאג אווענט, דעצ. 4**  
עדרען אווענט פאר אונזער דירעקטאר  
**מישא פישאן**  
א פרייליכע קאמעדיע פון ש. זאסלאווא  
ניוואלד דאס געלט

local and national Yiddish theater performers who were able to promote their shows while on the air. Rehearsals for the show were at the home of Harry Weinberg. No one was paid. Mary remembered the Weinberg children in their pajamas getting ready for bed while they rehearsed.

By the early 1940s, Harry had left the Yiddish theater and pursued a new career. A dapper dresser, he worked in the clothing business at Sam's Cut-Rate Department Store, which occupied the old Detroit Opera House building on Campus Martius. He later managed Crawford Clothes, which was located adjacent to this landmark. Harry passed away in 1960. Mary left Yiddish theater to raise her children, Leah and Stephen. Her new role as homemaker and mother was extremely rewarding to her. She was a kind and compassionate person and was a caregiver to many in her family. Mary passed away in 2005, but her stories live on.

Program from Littman's People's Theatre



**Leah Jordan Bisel** is the daughter of Harry Jordan. Although she was just fourteen when he passed away, his biography and his flair for the stage came to her from stories shared by her mother, others who knew him, playbills, photos, and books. For many years, Abraham Littman's portrait hung in the family basement. Bisel recently donated the portrait to the Rabbi Leo M. Franklin Archives in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

# ARCHIVED TREASURES

•  
2014

## THE JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN YEARBOOK COLLECTION

It has been said that the years we spend in school are the most important and memorable times of our lives. The yearbooks, photographs, newsletters, and other mementos from those years provide valuable memories and treasured information for families, friends, and researchers.

This year, Archived Treasures visits the archives of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan's Yearbook Collection, a trove of high-school yearbooks that date back to the early 1900s. All of the books in the collection – which number in excess of 2,000 – represent Michigan schools in which there was a Jewish presence.

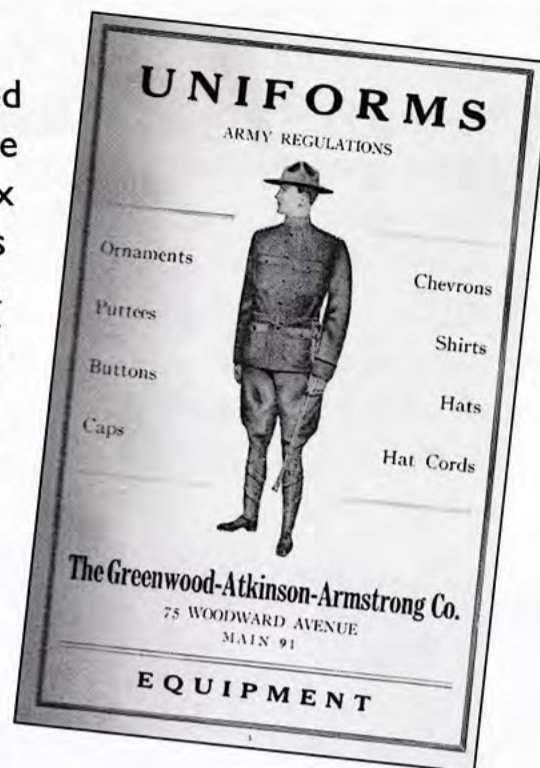
The collection is continuing to expand as volunteers seek to add books from public and private high schools across the state; religious schools, trade schools, and colleges. The collection includes significant school memorabilia such as class photos, newspapers, graduation programs, and prom invitations. Plans for the future include digitizing the collection to make it available world-wide. To donate a book, or to learn more, go to our website, [www.michjewishhistory.org](http://www.michjewishhistory.org) or call 248-432-5517.

### CENTRAL HIGH **CENTRALITE** 1920

Central High School dates back to 1858 when twenty-four boys attended classes in a one-room building. Known initially as the Detroit High School, girls were first admitted two years later. Soon after, the school moved to the old Capitol Building. In 1894, construction of a new school began on Cass Avenue, an area of town where Jewish families were relocating. Renamed Central High School, the school remained there until the board of education purchased a large parcel east of Linwood between Tuxedo and Lawrence avenues. That building opened in 1926. By the mid-1930s, Central High School was dubbed “the Jewish school,” as more than half of the graduating seniors were Jewish.



During World War I, Central High School formed a cadet corps, which later evolved into the ROTC. One thousand Central High boys fought in that war; forty-six died in combat. After the war ended in 1918, Congress established a "Regular Army" of roughly 500,000 and a training system that would permit quick expansion of the force to meet any urgent demands. Capitalizing on post-war patriotism, the Greenwood-Atkinson-Armstrong Company, manufacturer of military uniforms and accessories, appealed to Central High School's graduates.



### NORTHERN HIGH SCHOOL **VIKING**, June 1932

Northern High School was built in 1915 at Woodward and Owen, quickly became predominantly Jewish, and remained so into the 1930s. The school sat on the east side of Woodward, in an area where many Jewish homeowners could not purchase a home because of deed restrictions. To the west of Woodward was the opulent Boston-Edison District where many of the most prominent Jewish families lived, including Rabbi Leo M. Franklin who delivered the 1932 commencement address.



Compared to other books featured in this section, the 1932 Viking yearbook contained only a handful of ads. Of course, this was the height of the Great Depression, and it would be fair to say that many business owners simply couldn't afford such luxuries. The advertisement featured here hails the introduction of Stroh's ice cream, the successful attempt of Julius Stroh, the head of Stroh Brewery Company, to boost business during Prohibition. In 1920, he converted some of his beer-brewing facilities in Detroit to the production of non-alcoholic products

such as near beer and the successful Alaska brand ice cream.

***Stroh's***  
ALASKA  
**ICE CREAM**  
Makes Your Luncheon More Enjoyable

•

The Stroh Products Company  
909 E. Elizabeth Street  
DETROIT

Cadillac 5810

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### CASS TECH *TRIANGLE* 1951

Cass Technical High School (or Cass Tech as it is commonly known) dates back to 1862 when students of the Capital School in Detroit were transferred to the newly built Cass Union School, located on the “outskirts of town” along Grand River and Second Ave., near the Masonic Temple in Detroit. Across the street was King’s Cattle Yards, where many Michiganders came to buy and sell their cattle. The school quickly established itself as an educational powerhouse, known for employing the finest teachers and for the rigorous training of students. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the school relocated and implemented a new educational direction. Cass would become a “commercial and mechanical arts school.”



## *Caps and Gowns*

... AND TELEPHONES

What have telephones to do with caps and gowns?

That's a question you didn't find in your final examinations. But Michigan Bell has the answer, and it's one that could be mighty important to you. Michigan Bell's business is telephone service. And graduates from high schools like yours are the kind of young women the telephone company likes to have as employees.

Because the telephone is so important in the modern world, Michigan Bell girls find a real thrill in their jobs. They receive excellent pay, too, right from the start . . . have good opportunities for advancement . . . make congenial friends . . . enjoy vacations with pay and other advantages.

So if you're graduating this month, and looking for that kind of a job, Michigan Bell may have one for you—an important job as cashier, teller, switchboard operator, clerk or typist. Why not drop in now at our employment office, 1365 Cass Avenue, Detroit, for an interview?

**MICHIGAN BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY**

*"A Friendly Place to Work"*

This Michigan Bell advertisement is a want ad for female high-school graduates looking for “a real thrill in their jobs.” The phone company actively recruited young women as cashiers, switchboard operators, clerks, and typists. The Michigan Bell Telephone Company was established in 1881, one of the many licensed telephone switchboard companies of the American Bell Telephone Company. In 1951, calls were still primarily placed through switchboard operators; direct-dial telephones began appearing shortly after.



WEST BLOOMFIELD HIGH **EXODUS** 1975

The 1975 yearbook of West Bloomfield High School featured fourteen pages of color and sepia-toned scenic photographs taken by students. That year, the school radio station, WBLD, began its second year of broadcasting, the West Bloomfield Lakers basketball team won the league championships, and close to 400 seniors graduated from the school.

Among the many local advertisers, Jacobson's bought this quarter-page ad. Jacobson's, long a retail icon throughout the Detroit area, was established in Reed City, Michigan, in 1838 by Abram Jacobson. In 1939, brothers Zola and Nathan Rosenfeld purchased the chain, which flourished and eventually expanded to six states. The store in Birmingham, Michigan, was frequented by patrons from across the region, including many West Bloomfield families. The Jacobson's chain closed in 2002.

West Bloomfield  
High School

EXODUS 1975

Jacobson's miss J shop®

ARCHIVED  
TREASURES

# CELEBRITIES & *Celebrations*

## DETROIT TIGERS HIRE A JEWISH MANAGER

In early November 2013, during the baseball off-season, the Detroit Tigers held a press conference announcing the hiring of Brad Ausmus as the next team manager. Ausmus, who is Jewish, formerly played for the Tigers (1996 and 1999-2000) and was the manager of Israel's 2013 World Baseball Classic team. The news was well received by Tigers fans and the Detroit Jewish community.

The hiring of Brad Ausmus marks the first time the Detroit Tigers have had a Jewish manager. The only other Jewish men to manage a Major League Baseball team were Lipman Pike (in the 1800s), Lou Boudreau (Cleveland Indians, Boston Red Sox, Oakland Athletics, and Chicago Cubs), Bob Melvin (Seattle, Arizona, and Oakland), Norm Sherry (Los Angeles Angels), and Jeff Newman (interim for Oakland).



*Brad Ausmus at the Kotel, 2012.*

As soon as former Tigers manager Jim Leyland announced his resignation in October 2013, Ausmus was immediately thought of as a potential replacement for Leyland. Ausmus had interviewed in 2012 for the Red Sox manager position and he turned down an opportunity to interview with the Houston Astros.

Born in New Haven, Connecticut, to a Jewish mother and a Protestant father, Ausmus's career includes eighteen seasons as a catcher for the San Diego Padres, the Tigers, the Houston Astros, and the Los Angeles Dodgers. He won the Gold Glove Award three times and made the 1999 MLB All Star team. In 2007, Ausmus won the Darryl Kile Award "for integrity and courage" and was inducted into the National Jewish Sports Hall of Fame in 2004.

One of the first questions people ask



*Israeli President Shimon Peres (center) presents Brad Ausmus (left) with a commemorative shirt honoring his role as manager of the Israeli national baseball team in preparation for the 2013 World Baseball Classic. U.S. Ambassador Dan Shapiro (right), an avid baseball fan, also took part in the meeting.*

about Jewish Major League Baseball players is whether they play on Yom Kippur. Like most Jewish professional baseball players, Ausmus has a mixed record of Yom Kippur play. He did not play on Yom Kippur in 2001. At the time, he was quoted by Peter Gammons in *Sports Illustrated*, in a section titled “Everybody Needs a Little Sanctuary,” as saying he chose not to play on Yom Kippur because he “was trying to atone for my poor first half [of the season].”

Ausmus was raised in a non-observant home and without a strong Jewish identity, although he occasionally celebrated the High Holidays with his mother and her side of the family. Like other notable Jewish players such as Ryan Braun or Shawn Green, Ausmus came to embrace his Jewishness as his popularity grew and he became identified as a Jewish player. In a 2009 interview with the *Jewish Journal*, Ausmus explained, “I wasn’t raised with the Jewish religion, so in that sense I don’t really have much feeling toward it.... But, however, in the last ten or so years, I have had quite a few young Jewish boys who will tell me that I am their favorite player, or they love watching me play, or they feel like baseball is a good fit for them because it worked for me, or it worked for Shawn Green or other Jewish players at the major league level. It has been a sense of pride. If you can have a positive impact on a kid, I’m all for it.”

At the time he was hired, Ausmus had no managerial experience in the major leagues but he had demonstrated his baseball acumen in other positions. Many fans wondered if the Detroit sports media would mention Ausmus’s Jewish heritage. At least one sports columnist, Lynn Henning of the *Detroit News*, did mention it in his column, writing that Ausmus “is also Jewish, which will stoke a sense of kinship between Ausmus and the Tigers’ deep Jewish audience. In that context, there has been something of a void in the Tigers’ profile dating to the end of Hank Greenberg’s hallowed years in Detroit.”

– Rabbi Jason Miller writes for the *Detroit Jewish News* and several national and international publications. His website is [www.rabbijason.com](http://www.rabbijason.com).

## DANIEL PEARL MEMORIAL HUMANITY IN HARMONY CONCERT AND AWARD CEREMONY

In October 2013, the Flint Jewish Federation held its first Daniel Pearl Memorial Humanity in Harmony Concert and Award Ceremony. Held at the University of Michigan–Flint’s University Theater, with the assistance of the Flint Journal and MLive, the event featured radio and television host Michael Thorpe as master of ceremonies, and a diverse group of musical performers. The main event, however, was the presentation of awards to budding high-school journalists.

Daniel Pearl was a Jewish journalist who was abducted by Pakistani terrorists, accused of being a spy, and beheaded on February 1, 2002. Pearl was also an accomplished violinist who enjoyed bluegrass, classical, jazz, and country music. His family, committed to fighting back against an ideology of hate, established the Daniel Pearl Foundation, in hopes of fostering world understanding through dialogue, journalism, and music. The family also created Daniel Pearl World Music Day, which by 2011 had held 2,088 performances in more than eighty countries, including Russia, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.

The Flint Daniel Pearl Memorial Humanity in Harmony Concert and Award Ceremony uses music as a bridge to promote dialogue and understanding among persons of different ethnicities, religions, cultures, and nationalities. Toward that end, the planners seek a wide diversity of performers. The 2013 program included the Dort Honors String Quartet; the Heartland Klezmerim; the Flint Banjo Club; Michigan’s Troubadour, Neal



*The finale of the Humanity in Harmony concert.*

Woodward; Mariachi Gallos de Oro; and Jewish rock musician and educator Sheldon Low. The finale featured all of the groups gathered together to perform “Salaam”—Peace.

MLive and the *Flint Journal* sponsored a journalism essay contest for high-school students. The topic was “Why Journalism Matters in Today’s World.” Among the three winning essayists was first-place winner Ellie Cowger, a senior at Fenton High School, who received a \$500 check. For 2014, students may submit audio and video entries and organizers will add venues during the course of the weekend to expand the musical and educational offerings. The goal of the celebration is to use musical dialogue and collaboration to lead to a reduction in incitement, demonization, and violence and an increase in verbal dialogue – perhaps even collaboration – among previous opponents. As Flint Jewish Federation executive director Steven Low stated, “Music can sometimes help us bridge gaps and create relationships when words get in the way. Our love of music can bring us together. If we can get something positive out of his death, then we really will have achieved something.” – *Steven Low*

## GABE LELAND ELECTED TO DETROIT CITY COUNCIL

**On** November 5, 2013, Gabe Leland became the first Jewish member of the Detroit City Council since Mel Ravitz, who served from 1962 to 1974 and from 1982 to 1997.

Leland serves District 7 on the far west side of Detroit. This election cycle represented a change in how Detroiters select their city council representatives. Members were elected by districts rather than at large. Leland’s district runs from Livernois and Dexter on the east to Parkway and Rouge Park on the west, and is bordered by I-96 on the north and Tireman on the south.

Leland, 32, isn’t new to politics. He was a state representative for Detroit’s 10th District from 2004 to 2010 before term limits forced him to retire. He also is the son of Burton Leland, a Wayne County Commissioner who was a state representative from 1981 to 1986 and a state senator from 2000 to 2006.

Leland and his brother, Zachary, worked on their father’s campaigns, going door-to-door and helping to register voters. Leland says his political heroes, in addition to his father, include Bill Clinton, Ted Kennedy, and Carl Levin, who got his start in politics as a member of the Detroit City Council.

“I grew up in a household where I got to witness profound elected leadership,” said Leland. “A large Detroit constituency supported my father in politics for many years. I promised that if elected I would show that same level of support for the community, and it’s my life’s mission to provide that.”

Born in Detroit, Leland attended Detroit Public Schools in the early grades, then graduated from East Lansing High School. His family were members of Kehillat Israel Congregation in Lansing and Leland often spent summers at Habonim Camp Tavor in Three Rivers. He credits his camp experiences for teaching him leadership skills and *tik-*



Gabe Leland

*kun olam*, the Jewish philosophy of repairing the world. Leland graduated from Central Michigan University with a bachelor of science in community development.

His father is proud that Gabe is following in his footsteps. "He's very sincere. He's got a lot of 1960s passion in his heart," said Burton Leland. "He's a social worker in that respect because he kind of watched me."

The elder Leland taught his son to treat his constituents like family. "I told him you have two families: You have your mom, your dad, your brother, and your grandma, but you also have your constituents. And you always have to be very respectful and mindful of them.

You'd be nothing without them."

Leland is the first Detroit City Council member to live in District 7, which includes the Dexter-Davison and Russell Woods neighborhoods that were once heavily Jewish. He has lived in the area for more than eight years. As he campaigned, he would see an occasional mezuzah on a front doorpost. Some homeowners told him they weren't sure what it was, but they kept it to ward off evil spirits. He doesn't know of any Jewish residents who currently live in the district. Two, Sandy Sulkes and Ella Norman, moved out within the last few years.

Leland ran against five others for the seat, winning the November election by a slim margin of just fifty votes out of 16,800 cast. Eighty-six percent of his 103,800 constituents are African American.

Leland, a member of the Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue in Detroit, believes he is in a unique position to strengthen the relationship between Detroit's Jewish and African-American communities. He plans to create opportunities to bring together young Jewish professionals who are moving into Detroit and get them involved politically.

As chair of the council's Planning and Economic Development Committee, Leland is working to attract start-up businesses to Detroit's neighborhoods. "Detroit is on the mend, and I'm so honored to be a part of the decision-making during this very interesting and dynamic time in our city's history." — *Barbara Lewis*

## HISTORICAL TIDBIT 1934

**Max Ballin, M.D., died at the age of 65. He was a highly respected surgeon who gave devotedly of his time. One of the leaders of the campaign to build a Jewish hospital in Detroit, he spent many hours treating patients at the clinic in the Hannah Schloss Memorial Building and then at the North End Clinic. In 1908 he became an attending surgeon at Harper Hospital and was a leader in the field of thyroid and parathyroid surgery, publishing at least**

## A NEW DIGITAL ARCHIVE PUTS JN READERS IN TOUCH WITH THEIR PAST

**Detroit's Jewish News** has established a digital archive that will give community members free access to past issues of the weekly newspaper. The archive, at [www.djn-foundation.org](http://www.djn-foundation.org), is a project of the *Detroit Jewish News* Foundation, a nonprofit 501-c3. The site was launched in November 2013.

"A visit to the *Jewish News* digital archive is like discovering our community's DNA: the small building blocks of information about individuals, families, organizations, and businesses that, when linked together, paint a compelling and comprehensive picture of a community navigating America and attaining the American dream," said Arthur Horwitz, *Detroit Jewish News* Foundation founder and president.

The need to preserve the *Jewish News* archives became evident after a fire in January 2002 at the *Jewish News*'s Southfield office. The paper had microfilm of all editions offsite and, fortunately, the original bound volumes in the building escaped the flames, although some were damaged by water and soot. Said board member Lena Epstein Koretzky of Bloomfield Hills, "There's a tremendous amount of history in our community gone unrecognized and unspoken, and it's very important for us to have access to it and utilize it for generations to come."

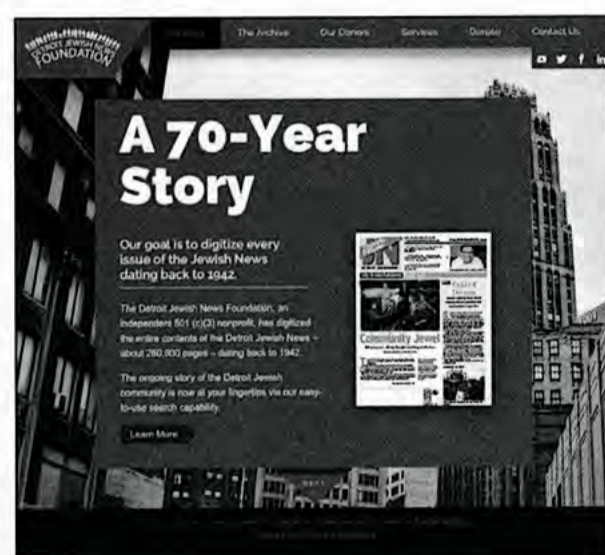
The available content starts with the first edition of the *JN* on March 27, 1942, and contains 267,832 pages. Many in the community have searched the archives to recapture a special event, such as a birth, bar mitzvah, or engagement, to commemorate an anniversary of the occasion. Others need proof of death dates to help settle an estate. Still others want to research big issues of the day — war, peace, the founding of Israel — as they affected and shaped this community.

"Imagine students being able to download stories about what was happening in Detroit during the time of the Holocaust, or someone being able to research their family tree from the convenience of their own computer," Horwitz said.

The *Detroit Jewish News* Foundation's focus is to support the educational mission of the *JN* and to make sure the community's history is known and accessible to students, researchers, and the community at large. The foundation has fifteen board members who are a cross-section of the community's emerging leaders, twelve of whom have no *JN* affiliation. The foundation is also looking into digitizing the *Detroit Jewish Chronicle*, which published from 1914 to 1951 before its assets were acquired by the *JN*. Plans are to provide a one-hundred-year archive of content available on the same digital platform.

An honorary foundation board also was created to advise the working board on its activities. The chairs are local leaders Eugene Applebaum, Mandell L. "Bill" Berman, the Hon. Avern Cohn, and A. Alfred Taubman, as well as Michael Steinhardt of New York.

- Jackie Headapohl, managing editor of the *Detroit Jewish News*



## JCC MACCABI GAMES® AND ARTSFEST®

**Steve** Robinson of West Bloomfield was a teen in 1982 when he heard about a new sports program for Jewish teens. He decided to sign up for the event, which was being held in Memphis and was expected to attract about two hundred participants from around the country.

Teen boy. Sports. It seemed like a fairly ordinary choice.

But Steve Robinson's decision would have a profound effect on Metro Detroit's Jewish community, and that new sports program would quickly become the world's largest organized event for Jewish teens.



*The team that represented Detroit at the 2013 Maccabi Games in Orange County, Calif.*

The JCC Maccabi Games®, a five-day, Olympic-style sporting competition held each summer, can trace its roots back to 1895, when the first all-Jewish sports club was formed in Constantinople. But it wasn't until 1982 that the games really began to take off. The Memphis event proved so popular that by 1997, more than 4,400 athletes were participating. Today, some 3,000 young men and women, ages thirteen to sixteen, are part of the JCC Maccabi Games every summer, and the program has expanded to include JCC Maccabi ArtsFest®.

Co-sponsored by the Jewish Community Center Association of North America, Maccabi World Union, Maccabi Canada, and Maccabi USA/Sports for Israel, Maccabi Games® and ArtsFest® are not just about sports and art. Jewish teens from around the world interact and attend cultural programs and events that stress Jewish identity and Israel. Participants are also given volunteer opportunities to give back to the host community.

Thanks to Steve Robinson, Detroit has a special connection to this event. Steve's father was Jay Robinson, whose passion for the games was renowned. He served as general chair of the games when they were held in Detroit in 1984 and 1990. He was set to chair the 1998 games as well, but he died in April of that year.

When the games made their Detroit debut in 1984, with the support of then-JCC executive director Mort Plotnick, about 800 attended. In 1990, when Detroit hosted the event for the second time, the JCC Maccabi Games attracted 2,200; 3,300 attended in 1998, and 3,000 in 2008. The 2008 opening ceremonies, held at the Palace of Auburn





*Maccabi leadership: From left, Ariella Monson, JCC Maccabi Games and ArtsFest director; Elaine Smith, managing director of the Berman Center for the Performing Arts and ArtsFest director, and Rachel Hoffheimer, assistant JCC Maccabi Games and Artsfest director.*



*The Maccabi torch is passed from representatives of Orange County, Calif., where the 2013 games were held, to Ariella Monson (left), director of the 2014 Detroit games.*

Hills, featured an appearance by Olympic great Mark Spitz.

The JCC Maccabi Games and ArtsFest returned to Detroit in 2014. Chairs Karen Sklar Gordon and Rick Zussman hosted more than 1,100 teens who came to Michigan from around the world, with opening ceremonies held at the Joe Louis Arena. “I have been fortunate to be in-

involved with the JCC Maccabi Games for a long time and it was a thrill to bring the games back to Detroit and for the first time with JCC Maccabi ArtsFest,” said Sklar Gordon. “It is an honor to chair in the city hosting more than any other and to be a part of the legacy that people like Mort Plotnick and Steve Robinson started.”

The 2014 event marked the first time that Detroit also hosted the JCC Maccabi ArtsFest, which began in 2006 in Baltimore. JCC Maccabi ArtsFest, for ages thirteen to seventeen, features workshops in a variety of specialties from theater and music to cooking and journalism. Artists-in-residence from every field, including Broadway star and Detroit native Eric Gutman, helped students develop their talents and focused on themes of Jewish heritage, community, and Israel.

While the core of the JCC Maccabi Games and ArtsFest – sportsmanship, meeting new friends, living Jewish values – remains the same, aspects of the event have evolved over the years. There is increased security since 9/11. Scores once posted on boards are now tweeted. Participants around the world stay with friends, thanks to social media. For all the participants, one of the most memorable aspects of the experience is remembering and honoring the eleven Israeli athletes murdered at the 1972 Olympics in Munich. The Kindness Project, a joint program of the JCC and Partners in Torah, presented eleven aspects of kindness as a tribute to the Israeli athletes.

The 2014 Maccabi Games ArtsFest came to the Motor City and strengthened our community with all of the nine hundred volunteers who hosted athletes, donated, and participated as athletes and artists to make the games a success.

## DON RIEGLE COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD®

**The Don Riegle Community Service Award** was inspired by Senator Donald Riegle's staunch support for freedom for Soviet Jewry, dating back to his early days in Congress and then the Senate. Originally the idea of Flint Jewish Federation Director David Nussbaum, the award recognizes outstanding community leaders who provide service on behalf of the greater Flint community. The event also raises needed supplementary funding for the resettlement in Flint of Soviet Jewish families by the Jewish Family and Children's Service.

In 1990, when the award was first conceived, Flint had coordinated one of the highest per capita resettlement efforts in the country, eventually resettling more than 450 people from the former Soviet Union. In 2005, Jewish Community Services resettled forty-three Russian-speaking Meschetian Muslim Turks from the FSU. The entire Jewish community came together to help these refugees with housing, food, employment, and acculturation to their new land.

At one time, the building that is now Blackstone's Restaurant in downtown Flint served as a warehouse and distribution center of clothing, furniture, appliances, and household goods collected for the new immigrants. Today, long after the flow of refugees has ceased, Jewish Community Services continues to secure resources to provide a variety of services including interpretation at medical appointments, document translation, linkage to community resources, senior programming, meals, transportation, and educational scholarships.

Since its inception, the Flint Jewish Federation and Jewish Family and Children's Service leadership have worked together to present the Riegle award. The first honorees were Ruben Burks, James McColgan, and Michael Pelavin. There are now seventy-two honorees, all selected based upon their long and distinguished commitment to improving the quality of life for the people of the greater Flint area, and within their respective faith and ethnic communities. Honorees also participate in the Federation's Community Interfaith Leadership Mission to Israel.

On September 16, the 2014 Don Riegle Award dinner was held at the Flint Institute of Arts. Honorees were Philip W. Shaltz, Ernelle Taylor, and Debra Golden-Steinman. As always, Senator Riegle and members of his staff and family attended. The award's twenty-fifth anniversary celebration included several special presentations and displays covering former award winners, Interfaith Israel Missions, and the resettlement programs.

*From left to right: Don Riegle Award winners Mitchell Weiss, Kay Kelly and Louis Hawkins.*



## THREE KEY JEWISH COMMUNITY PROFESSIONALS RETIRE

**This** year three outstanding Jewish institutional leaders retired. We salute their work and community contributions.

### SHARON ALTERMAN

Sharon Alterman, director of the Leonard N. Simons Jewish Community Archives, retired at the end of 2013. Alterman created the archives in 1990 and served as its director since then, except for a 1999-2003 break. Alterman noted that Detroit is one



*Sharon Alterman*

of the few communities in the country that has a Federation-sponsored archives. The archives includes 2.25 million documents from over 50 major collections and more than 100 smaller collections ranging from single file folders to hundreds of boxes. Most of these are stored at the Walter Reuther Library at Wayne State University, although some are kept at the Max M. Fisher Federation Building. The archives also includes over 25,000 photos, more than 100 oral histories, and a cemetery index with more than 66,000 recorded burials. Alterman first organized the archival materials of the Jewish Federation itself, then archived the collections of Sinai Hospital, Jewish Home and Aging Services, and the Jewish Community

Center. Other community agencies will follow, including Camp Tamarack and Jewish Vocational Services. Alterman was succeeded by Robbie Terman, who previously worked at the Walter P. Reuther Library and Cranbrook, and who hopes to make the Leonard N. Simons Jewish Community Archives more accessible to individuals and groups.

### SANDY SOIFER

Sandy Soifer retired as executive director of the Michigan Women's Historical Center & Hall of Fame (MWHOF) and the Michigan Women's Studies Association in December 2013. She served in this position for five years and during that time implemented many important changes. The Michigan Women's Studies Association (MWSA), an academic professional organization, was founded in 1973 on the campus of Michigan State University to change what is thought and taught about women, particularly Michigan women, in schools, colleges, and universities. As an extension of that mission, the organization established a museum dedicated to women's history, the first of its kind in the nation.

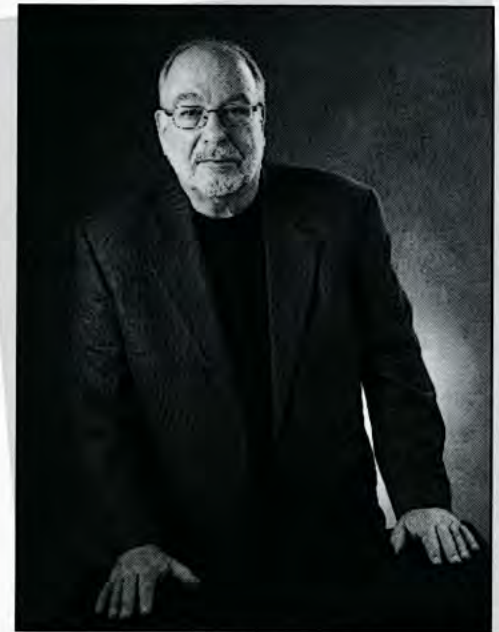
Soifer guided the transition of the organization from that of a largely volunteer-based entity to one in which a paid professional staff managed day-to-day operations and growth. Under Soifer's leadership, the organization adopted a business model for operations, upgraded its technology, accomplished facility improvements, and adopted

new procedural policies. One of Soifer's goals was to improve state-wide visibility for the MWHOF, which she accomplished while increasing visitor attendance by over 400 percent. Soifer traveled across Michigan speaking to groups about the MWHOF and educating the public about the importance of Michigan women's history. During her tenure the organization expanded press coverage, facilitated more-effective marketing, expanded networking across the state, and made the museum a destination for visitors.

### KEN WALTZER

Ken Waltzer, professor of history at Michigan State University's James Madison College, will retire in December 2014. Waltzer is a former dean and associate dean at James Madison and, for the last ten years, served as director of MSU's Jewish studies program. Waltzer was at MSU for more than four decades. He worked with multiple generations of students and won numerous teaching awards, including the State of Michigan Teaching Excellence Award (1990) and the Mid-Michigan Alumni Club Quality in Undergraduate Teaching Award (1998). In recent years, he has worked closely with other faculty at MSU to build and institutionalize a new Jewish studies program and to globalize Jewish studies with significant study in or about Israel.

Waltzer trained under Harvard immigration historian Oscar Handlin and has written often on issues related to labor, Americanization, and Jewish immigration and acculturation. In 2002, Waltzer co-curated a blockbuster museum exhibit at MSU with Kirsten Fermaglich entitled "Uneasy Years: Michigan Jews During Depression and War," which has since toured many sites in the state, including in Kalamazoo, Marquette, and Macomb County. He is now completing two books: *The Rescue of Children and Youths at Buchenwald* and *Children's Stories: Children in the Nazi Camps*. He served as a consulting historian on "Kinderblock 66: Return to Buchenwald," an award-winning, feature-length documentary based on his work.



Ken Waltzer

Waltzer will be succeeded as director of Jewish studies by Yael Aronoff, the Michael and Elaine Serling and Friends Israel Studies Professor at MSU and James Madison College faculty member.

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS  
IN POETRY AND MEMOIR:  
THE JEWISH EXPERIENCE IN MICHIGAN

# Reflections

*The* essayist and professor of non-fiction at Ohio University, Dinty W. Moore, reminds us that "the best writing also provokes an emotional reaction," and that "what we are looking for, in the exchange between writer and reader, is resonance."

This month we have included a poem by Peg Pegnos of Holland, Michigan, and an essay by Albert Gladner of Southfield. Both pieces express the joy of having found a Jewish community here in Michigan. "Eshkalot Anavim," Pegnos's stunning poem about conversion to Judaism, speaks of embracing Jewish identity to "take up the threads that stitched history/for the last five thousand years."

So too, after moving as a child to rural Dansville, Ohio, where he and his parents "brought the Jewish population to three," Gladner's essay articulates the significance and character of the Detroit Jewish community that gave him a sense of "place" and belonging he hadn't realized he craved until he got here. These two pieces are insightful, personal, and sometimes funny.

A number of people have told me how much they enjoy these personal stories, memoirs, and poems that reflect Jewish life in Michigan. Once again we have received wonderful submissions. We thank you for your contributions and look forward to more.

We welcome new submissions for inclusion in this section. Creative Expressions is a collection of poems and memoirs that reflect upon the Jewish experience in Michigan. Childhood escapades, falling in love, letters from camp, getting married, raising children, a first job, family holiday gatherings, and so on. Submissions should be sent to the editor or to Joy Gaines-Friedler ([wrbice@michjewishhistory.org](mailto:wrbice@michjewishhistory.org) or [caboti@yahoo.com](mailto:caboti@yahoo.com)). You can also mail them to JHSM – Creative Expressions, 6600 West Maple Rd., West Bloomfield MI, 48322-3003.

With gratitude,

Joy Gaines-Friedler, Editor, Creative Expressions

# Reflections

## *Eshkalot Anavim* For Judith

by Peg Pagnos

I.  
She thinks in bunches of grapes,  
words purling, tumbling, frothing  
into globes: I am I search  
for what why Who Am I—  
dunk, dip, change  
in the mikvah's swirling vines,  
treading water,  
treading wine.

She thinks:  
God dropped me off  
at the wrong doorstep,  
slipped me a Jewish soul,  
slubbed question marks  
between my catholic eyes,  
stamped the notion in my head:  
We do not need to die  
to live our lives.

She holds a family heirloom in her hand,  
an old tin pan that sifted gold from stones  
a century ago.

Family keepers of the pan  
tossed it on a shelf.

Now hers,  
this pan will keep the vintage faith  
with her enduring, ever-changing self.

She vows:  
I will live justly, love mercy,  
take up the threads that stitched history  
for the last five thousand years,  
grow toward the God  
Who has waited, waited  
for my Shema, cast across lake waters,  
like pebbles,  
whispering.

**Peg Pagnos** is a registered nurse and writer of poetry and essays. Her work has appeared in *The American Journal of Nursing*, *Poetry in Performance*, *Mediphors*, and *Bear River Review*. Mother of four and grandmother of five, she and her husband Jeff make their home in Holland near the Lake Michigan shore.



II.

The giyoret at the Ark  
answers questions earnestly.  
Yes. I will forswear other faiths.  
Yes. If blessed with children, I will raise them as Jews.  
Yes. I will frame my home in Jewish ways,  
light candles for Shabbat, chase away hametz  
with feather and flame before Pesach.

She takes the Torah to her chest,  
cuddling the awkward bundle of old scrolls.  
The rabbi wraps her in blessings,  
holds her head in his gnarled hands  
like a phrenologist feeling for bumps,  
or a nurse palpating the infant's fontanelles,  
finding the sutures not yet knitted closed  
so the brain can keep on growing.

III.

The rabbi decrees: It is wet enough in the pouring rain.  
No need to walk to the Lake Michigan shore  
to dip and dunk and dip again.  
It is enough to do it here,  
just off the porch  
where rain from the roof's gutters  
spills over, flows freely to the ground.

The giyoret crouches down  
three times as the warm harvest rain  
soaks through the thin white dress,  
soaks skin and hair, soaks through.  
Wrapped in towels, she comes inside  
smiling, crying. It is done.  
She is at last  
herself.

*Notes: The Hebrew eshkalot anavim means "bunches of grapes."  
Mikvah is the ritual bath that Jewish women visit for purification  
after their monthly period, and where converts to Judaism finalize their  
conversion. The Shema is the watchword of the Jewish faith: "Hear  
O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One." Giyoret means  
"convert" (female) and derives from ger, meaning "stranger."  
Hametz refers to leavened bread, forbidden during Pesach, or Passover.*

# Reflections

## TWO LIVES

BY ALBERT GLADNER

*Not* all Jews live and work in large cities or in suburbs. I call them “small-town Jews.” I was one and lived in two worlds, the Jewish and the Gentile. Sometimes they collided and sometimes they accommodated. My life was in both.

When I was older, my parents told me about the days leading to their decision to move the family to rural Dansville, New York (pop. 4,900). Someone said to my father, “They don’t want Jews here,” but we moved anyway, bringing the Jewish population there to three. As I grew up, very few anti-Semitic remarks were directed at me, but my piano teacher told her sister I was a “dirty Jew.” The end of lessons. Not all bad. There was the occasional off-hand remark such as “Jewed down.” This was usually followed by, “I didn’t mean that. Jesus was a Jew.” I didn’t reply but put the speaker on my list of possible anti-Semites.

In Dansville my father opened a scrap yard. I was the son of the local Jewish junk man, about the lowest rank in the pantheon of Jewish occupational stereotypes. I wanted to fit in.

My mother tried her best to make me aware of my religion. One attempt was to keep kosher at home. My father was not exactly supportive on this subject. Although he wouldn’t eat a ham sandwich on Yom Kippur, we did, at other times, go out for ham sandwiches. I ate my first lobster at his side. Mother continued to serve badly cooked kosher food on two sets of dishes and did her best to follow dietary laws.

In school I made Christmas decorations to hang on the classroom tree and learned Christmas carols in music class. I participated in Christmas concerts and went caroling with my friends. I remember the words and melodies to this day. My house was the only dark one on our street during the Christmas holiday.

My friends knew I was Jewish but knew nothing about my religion except that Jews didn’t believe in virgin birth, the trinity, or that Jesus was the son of God. Some did believe, for certain, that my ancient relatives nailed their savior to a cross. All of this sometimes led to strained relationships.

My parents pulled me out of school for the major Jewish holidays. I spent the High Holidays at relatives’ homes close to a synagogue and spent interminable, boring Passover weeks out of town. None of my friends knew why I was gone and I didn’t talk about it.



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# Reflections

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In preparation for my bar mitzvah I endured itinerant rabbis who sat once a week at our dining room table teaching me to read Hebrew. I learned my Torah and haftorah portions imitating chanting on phonograph records. I was sent to Camp Ramah for further bar mitzvah studies. Summer camp is supposed to be fun. To me, studying and laying *tefillin* were not. The camp didn't want me back. I told my friends about other summer camp experiences but not Ramah.

None of my friends, or for that matter no other person from Dansville, were invited to my bar mitzvah. My preparation didn't work as planned. My reading from the Torah was so dreadful that Rabbi Brevis must have cringed inside. He was blind and was spared from watching the debacle. Those in attendance told me I did a good job. I know they lied.

At thirteen, I realized that I craved for at least one Jew of my age with whom to share Jewish experiences. That never happened in Dansville, but things did begin to change when I became a freshman at Michigan State University.

Michigan State opened a whole new world for this seventeen-year-old from insular Dansville. My craving for "familiarity" and community was satiated by finding Jewish friends, joining a Jewish fraternity, and meeting Sharie Remeny, the woman who would become my wife. (A Jewish girl! My mother must have been relieved.)

Religion, however, remained an obligation without meaning. Then, my soon-to-be wife dragged me to High Holiday services at her Detroit temple. From that first visit to Temple Israel I understood the liturgy and participated in the service, and things became relevant to me and to my life. I slowly became active in temple activities, including the Oral History Project which documents the history of Temple Israel using video interviews of members. Nor did I forget my allegiance to Michigan State where I served on the Jewish studies advisory board. That's a long journey from Dansville to Michigan.

Now my two secret lives have merged into one not-so-secret life. I feel more comfortable living in one life, not two.



*Albert Gladner participated in the Memoir Writing Workshop, a program created by JHSM and sponsored by the Office Connection in 2014. Albert and Sharie live in Southfield, Michigan.*

# BOOK REVIEW

## The Oreckovsky Family (Opexobckar Cemor)

### From Russia to America

Published by the Oreck Foundation, 1994

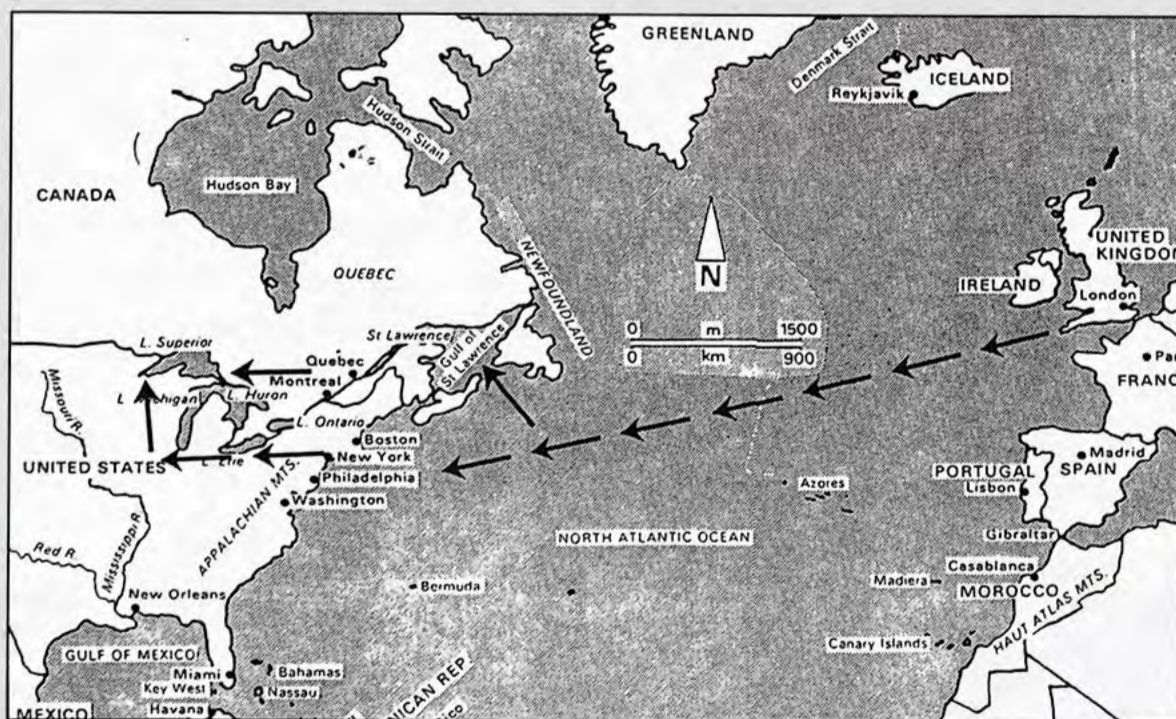
*In 2014, Marjorie Alpern contacted JHSM past president Judith Levin Cantor and gave her a book of her family history. Cantor found the story to be compelling and has submitted this brief review for Michigan Jewish History's readers.*

*Cantor has donated the book to the JHSM library.*

This genealogical book traces seven generations of the Oreck family back to their roots in the Ukraine, and to their arrival and settlement in America. The book includes over 5000 individual entries.

Joseph, at 19, was the first of the family to leave the Ukraine with his brother Israel around 1882 or 1883. Their epic story documents their journey from Montreal to Duluth, Minnesota, and their hazardous, seventy-five-mile trek across the ice of Lake Superior.

Starting from Montreal, the two brothers filled their packs with dry goods to peddle. As they worked their way toward Lake Superior along the construction path of the then-Canadian-Pacific railway spur, they sold clothing and watches to the workers.



Arriving at Fort William on Thunder Bay in Ontario, Canada, they set out in winter by foot for Duluth along the shores of frozen Lake Superior. Suffering from frostbite after walking for several days, they recuperated for the winter in Grand Marais, Minnesota – a portaging outpost for Lake Superior travelers. That winter, they might have been cared for by Native Americans. When the ice melted in the spring, Joseph and Israel

traveled by boat to Duluth, their ultimate destination.

Marjorie Alpern represents the first of three generations of the Michigan branch of the family. Marjorie, one of the four children of Abram and Anna, was born in 1920 and grew up in Duluth. Joseph, the plucky pioneer and trader, was her grandfather. Marjorie attended the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and married Robert Alpern, a prominent attorney. At the time of the publication of the book, Marjorie, a horticulturalist, resided in Southfield.

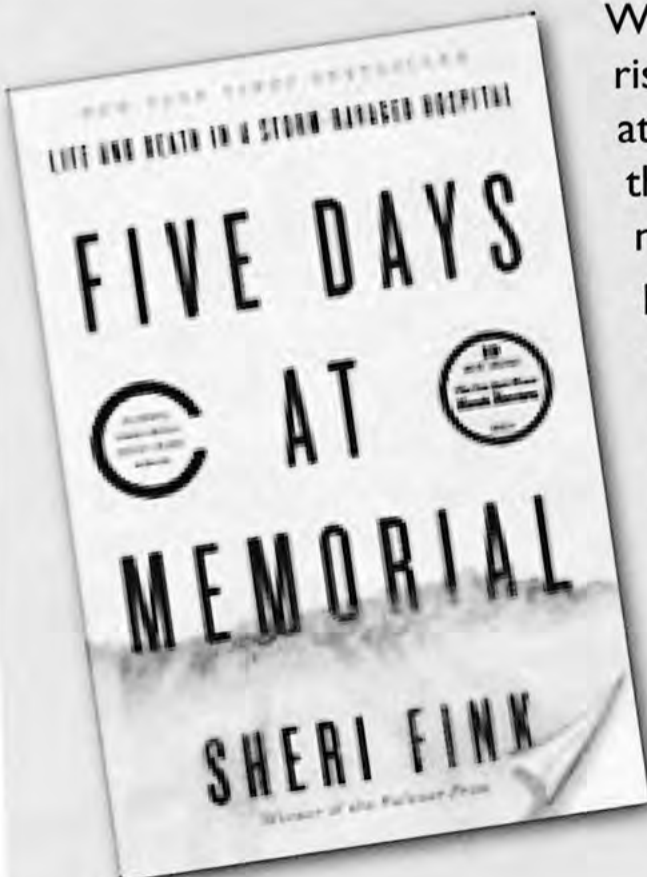
The children of Marjorie and Robert Alperns are listed as having been born in Detroit: Harlan (1945); Wayne (1948); Nancy (1951); Carolyn (1953). They are the grandchildren of Abram, great-grandchildren of Joseph. In addition to Marjorie, Nancy is the only direct descendant known to remain in Michigan, having married Jonathan Levin (1983).

The late 19th-century Ukrainian pogroms against the Jews, and the arrival and successful establishment in America of this family, coincide with the major immigration of Eastern European Jews to the United States. Unfortunately, the 1924 Immigration Restriction Act and the 1925 National Origins Act forcibly cut short this migration. This anti-immigration legislation by Congress later resulted in denial of visas to so many who applied to escape the Nazi regime and who subsequently perished in the Holocaust. On the other hand, the earlier arrival of the millions of Eastern European Jews has greatly enriched our country. The Oreck family story illustrates this legendary American-Jewish success story.

## **Five Days at Memorial: Life and Death in a Storm-Ravaged Hospital**

*By Sheri Fink*

Crown Publishing Group – 576 pages



When the floodwaters from Hurricane Katrina started rising in August 2005 and the power went out, the staff at New Orleans's Memorial Medical Center realized they were woefully unprepared for a crisis of this magnitude. After the storm, the bodies of forty-five adult patients were found at the hospital, more than at any other comparable New Orleans hospital.

What the hospital staff did during the five days of the storm – and the resulting years-long legal battles and ethical debates – is the subject of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Five Days at Memorial*, a riveting book by Detroit native and Pulitzer Prize winner Sheri Fink.

Named one of the 10 Best Books of 2013 by the *New York Times* Book Review, *Five Days at Memorial* is a compelling narrative of what happened during

and after the storm, based on more than 500 interviews with doctors, nurses, executives, attorneys, and more. Fink uncovered a great deal of previously unreported information.

Hospital staff, for example, faced agonizing questions concerning who should be rescued first: the oldest, the sickest, the healthiest. After the storm, investigators learned that at least twenty patients had been injected with morphine and Versed, a fast-acting sedative. A year later, a doctor and two nurses were arrested for second-degree murder, though they were not indicted.

Fink told an interviewer from the *New York Times* that the most difficult part of the project was describing the medical workers' decision to inject those patients. She found it to be both emotionally and technically challenging.

Fink grew up in the suburbs of Detroit and graduated from Andover High School in Bloomfield Hills. She is a University of Michigan graduate who earned an M.D. and a Ph.D. in neuroscience at Stanford University. She has done health and science reporting for Public Radio International, the BBC's news magazine *The World*, and other national publications.

Reviewers have praised Fink's masterly reporting and fine writing. *Entertainment Weekly*, which also named *Five Days at Memorial* one of the best books of 2013, described it as "an elegant narrative...with all the page-turning pull of a novel."

— *Carla Schwartz is the director of community affairs and advocacy at William Beaumont Health System and a freelance journalist.*

## **Living Beyond Terrorism: Israeli Stories of Hope and Healing**

*By Dr. Zieva Dauber Konvisser*

Gefen House Publishing, 2014 356 Pages

In *Living Beyond Terrorism: Israeli Stories of Hope and Healing*, Dr. Zieva Konvisser tells readers how forty-eight people living in Israel, who were either direct targets of terrorists or relatives or friends of those killed by terrorists, were able to move beyond their trauma to live productive and meaningful lives.

Konvisser is by nature, training, and experience an excellent listener, problem solver, and scientist. Konvisser has a Ph.D. in human development along with extensive education in trauma and psychoanalytic and logotherapy studies. She is a resident of Orchard Lake Village, Michigan, and is a member of Congregation Beth Shalom.

Konvisser distills and defines the common qualities that enabled the survivors to thrive. The wounded do not forget their injuries; the bereaved do not forget their losses. They recognize what cannot be changed and how they might "live next to" and "move forward with" their feelings of grief, pain, and helplessness. They see themselves as survivors, and not victims of terror. She writes of the support these individuals continue to receive both from family and friends and from professionals in the mental-health and social-service arenas.

According to Konvissor, many survivors are helped by their religious beliefs and values. Through the vehicle of sharing their stories, both with Konvissor and others, they are able to better understand and remember. The book includes descriptions of the terrorist events along with a chronology, and a description of the research methodology and findings. Also included is a list of the organizations that provide support for terror survivors and their families.

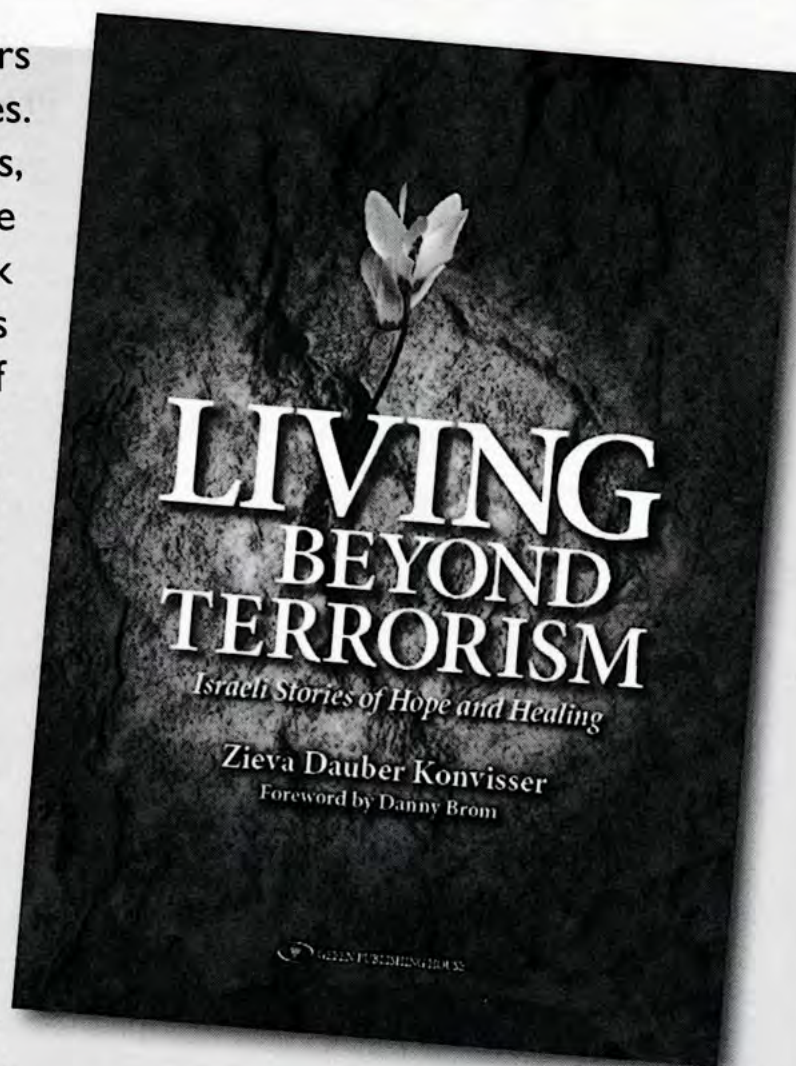
Thirty-six stories gleaned from the survivors, as well as the survivors' strategies for emotional recovery, form the heart of this book. For me, as a psychologist, one of the most potent qualities was that of "finding the silver lining and creatively giving back — moving forward with action." The Roths, for example, wanted to do something that would associate the life of their

deceased daughter with acts of *chesed* (kindness). They created Keren Malki "to provide solutions for the special needs of families in Israel — Christian, Muslim, Druze, and Jewish alike — who wanted to give the best possible home care to their child with severe disabilities."

Konvisser hopes that the lessons derived from these stories can help all of us "meet the challenges in our lives and make choices that will help us live healthier, more purposeful, and more fulfilling lives."

*-Barbara Goodman, Ph.D., is a retired professor, researcher, and consultant and is also a past president of the United Hebrew Schools of Metropolitan Detroit and Congregation Beth Shalom.*

*Living Beyond Terrorism: Israeli Stories of Hope and Healing, is available at Amazon.com or on Konvisser's website: [www.zievakonvisser.com](http://www.zievakonvisser.com).*



# TIMELINE

A timeline of significant dates  
in Michigan Jewish history  
mentioned in this year's journal.

1881

Levi Lewis Barbour becomes the first Jewish member of the board of the Detroit Library Commission.

1916

Louis Levenson and his daughter Jennie open a paint-and-wallpaper store on Chene Street in Detroit.

1923

President Harding appoints Charles Casper Simons to the district court in Detroit, who thus becomes the first Jewish federal judge in Southeast Michigan.

1928

Harry Jordan first appears at the Littman's People's Theatre in Detroit, in an autobiographical play about Yiddish actor Herman Yablokoff.

1932

Mary Hoffman graduates from Northern High School and begins to work as a chorus girl, for \$1.50 a performance, at Littman's Peoples Theatre.

1938

Dr. Harry Weitz becomes the first radiologist in Traverse City.

1940

John Brown, "The Baron of Bowling," constructs the Great Lakes Bowling Center on the corner of Woodward and Milwaukee, in the area now known as the New Center. The forty-lane center was the showplace of its time.

1944

Army nurse Annetta Miller of Detroit ships out for Europe.

1944

Bette Schein begins her tenure as manager of Weinberg's Yiddish Radio Hour. She remained at the helm until the program went off the air in 1958.

1946

President Harry Truman appoints Theodore Levin to the federal district court.

1950

June 25, the North Korean army makes a hostile invasion of South Korea in a brutal attempt to reunite the two countries.

# TIMELINE



- 1951 March 16, soldier Mandell Yuster is killed in Korea, one of the first two Jewish Detroiters to perish in the Korean War.
- 1952 November, Detroit's Jewish Community Center hosts the world's first Jewish book fair.
- 1960 November, the JCC Annual Jewish Book Fair expands to include exhibits about bookbinding, children's illustrations, the Jewish Braille Society, and Jewish art and theater.
- 1968 President Lyndon Johnson appoints Lawrence Gubow to the U.S. District Court in Eastern Michigan.
- 1975 November, the JCC Annual Jewish Book Fair takes place at the newly built Jewish Community Center at the corner of Maple and Drake in West Bloomfield.
- 1978 June, Mark, and Diane Voigt, with several partners, purchase their first bowling center. The couple will eventually own twenty-three centers that form the largest independent bowling center chain in the U.S.
- 1979 President Jimmy Carter appoints both Stewart Newblatt and Avern Cohn to the U.S. District Court.
- 1995 July 27, exactly forty-two years after the Korean War ended, the Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., is dedicated.
- 1995 May 1, the U.S. federal courthouse in Detroit is named the Theodore Levin Federal Courthouse.
- 2013 November, the Detroit Tigers hire the team's first Jewish manager, Brad Ausmus.
- 2013 November, the *Detroit Jewish News* launches a digital archive.

## 2014 VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

### HARRIET F. SIDEN AND MYRLE LELAND

For more than a decade this dynamic duo have served as JHSM's programming leaders. Together, Siden and Leland have invested their creative energies and ingenuity to oversee a plethora of distinctive JHSM programs and tours. They were the team that brought together tours of Detroit's Boston-Edison District and Albert Kahn's architecture in Ann Arbor and Detroit, and they led a tour to Fort Wayne to see the tall ships. They also developed programming that allowed JHSM to build fans and friends, including Sunday afternoon Detroit River cruises and sponsorships of JET Theater productions.

Siden credits her father, Walter Field, who always had a great interest in Jewish history, as being the impetus behind her involvement. "My father invited me and my husband to meet Allen Warsen at dinner some years ago. Mr. Warsen was the founder of the Jewish Historical Society," she recalled.

If every generation brings new energy and direction to an organization, Siden and Leland differed in their approach from the seeds laid by Warsen and the other early JHSM founders. Says Siden, "I had a strong sense of place and the importance of local history. We began creating tours of distinct locations which were different than the regular bus tours."

Always by Siden's side is her dear friend Myrle Leland. Leland says that her husband, Richard, a former teacher and historian, first got her involved. Then, she teamed up with Siden and ...the rest is history. "Make a difference," said Leland. "That has been my motto for years. It is how I live my life and I encourage others to do the same."

Certainly the 2014 JHSM Volunteers of the Year have made a difference in JHSM and are part of why the organization has enjoyed such a healthy period of growth.



*JHSM Volunteers of the Year Harriet Siden and Myrle Leland were honored at the 55th Annual Meeting of the Jewish Historical Society.*



# JHSM

## 2014 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### GERALD S. COOK

I am pleased to report that the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan is in strong condition. We can all take pride in the thirty-seven events – tours, lectures, and programs – presented in the twelve months ending May 2014, when we held our annual meeting. Many of our programs and events held since then are described in further detail on these pages.

In June, I completed my second one-year term as JHSM president, passing the gavel to Michael W. (Mickey) Maddin, who is eminently qualified to lead our society. Mickey has presided over many important organizations and has laid out an impressive agenda for our future. It was inspiring to be at a luncheon attended by ten of our past presidents, hosted by our new president. Mickey thanked us for our service, asked for our mentorship, and encouraged our continued support. Each past leader took justifiable pride in steps taken during his or her term of office and expressed approval of how JHSM has advanced. We have accomplished so much since our founding in 1959, with your help!

### PAST PRESIDENTS

In June 2014, JHSM's new president, Michael Maddin, gathered ten of the organization's past presidents together for a luncheon. The gathering, the first of its kind for JHSM, provided an opportunity for these leaders to reflect upon the successes of their tenures and share visions for JHSM's future.



*Pictured are (back row, l to r): Ellen Cole, Gerald Cook, Joan Braun, Stanley Meretsky, Michael Maddin, Jeffery Borin, James Grey, Adele Staller. (seated, l to r): Robert Kaplow, Arnold Collens, Judith Levin Cantor.*

## AGREE TOUR OF THE WHITTIER

Mike Kasky, JHSM vice president and adult tour chairperson, together with Greg Piazza, one of the area's leading experts on the architectural history of Charles Agree, led a June tour of the Architecture of Charles Agree. Among the sites visited was the Whittier Hotel, located on the Detroit River waterfront and designed by Agree in 1922. The Whittier is now a residential building.



*Aaron Lupovitch, Paul and Barbara Goodman, and Linda Bell admire the Whittier lobby.*

*Harriet Siden, Shosh Hoffman and Patricia Becker enjoy the tour.*



*Mickey Maddin, Greg Piazza, and Judy Lighty, Whittier manager.*

My fellow past presidents led me to remember the goals I set when first elected JHSM president in mid-2012. First, I planned to focus on our existing strengths, particularly our tours highlighting past and current Jewish contributions to Michigan. Second, I wanted to ensure JHSM's continuity by bringing in new members, donors, and volunteers while retaining the loyalty of our existing supporters, and by strengthening committees, officers, and board in order to help identify and train future leaders. We made substantial progress in these areas.

## PRESENTING JEWISH HISTORY BY BUS, BIKE, RIVERBOAT, ROAD TRIPS, AND THE IMAGINATION

As in recent years, we conducted a large number of tours. Each tour participant received an attractive booklet or other high-quality document, with photos and facts useful during that tour and for reference afterward. Our core Settlers-to-Citizens Tour added more Jewish women's histories and grew geographically. A new bus tour that focused solely on Northwest Detroit included a short walk past homes of former and current Jewish Detroiters in the Palmer Woods neighborhood. Other public tours of-

## DETROIT PUBLIC LIBRARY

On Friday, March 21, JHSM, together with the Detroit Public Library Friends Foundation, held a tour of the Art & Architecture of the Detroit Public Library... with a Jewish Twist. Nearly 60 people attended this first-ever tour created by DPL Friends member Barbara Cohn (see related article in this issue on page 22).

*Ruthe Goldstein and Barbara Coden sit next to a sculpture created by Samuel Cashwan located in the Children's Room.*



*Barbara Cohn stands in front of a Pewabic tile fireplace. The map of Michigan, located above the fireplace, depicts many of the state's natural resources and the routes traveled by the state's early settlers.*

ferred for the first time featured the main branch of the Detroit Public Library, the architectural work of Charles Agree, and Detroit's two oldest Jewish cemeteries, Temple Beth El's Elmwood Cemetery and Shaarey Zedek's Beth Olem Cemetery.

Most of our tours sold out. Some brought people from Ann Arbor and Lansing to Detroit, while others took members and guests from the Detroit area to see the Jewish sights and meet Jewish residents in Benton Harbor, South Haven, and Windsor, Ontario.

We provided complimentary bus tours for hundreds of fifth- and sixth-grade Jewish religious-school students. These youth tours were revised in cooperation with the Michigan Board of Jewish Educators and funded by the Madge and Bill Berman family and other donors.

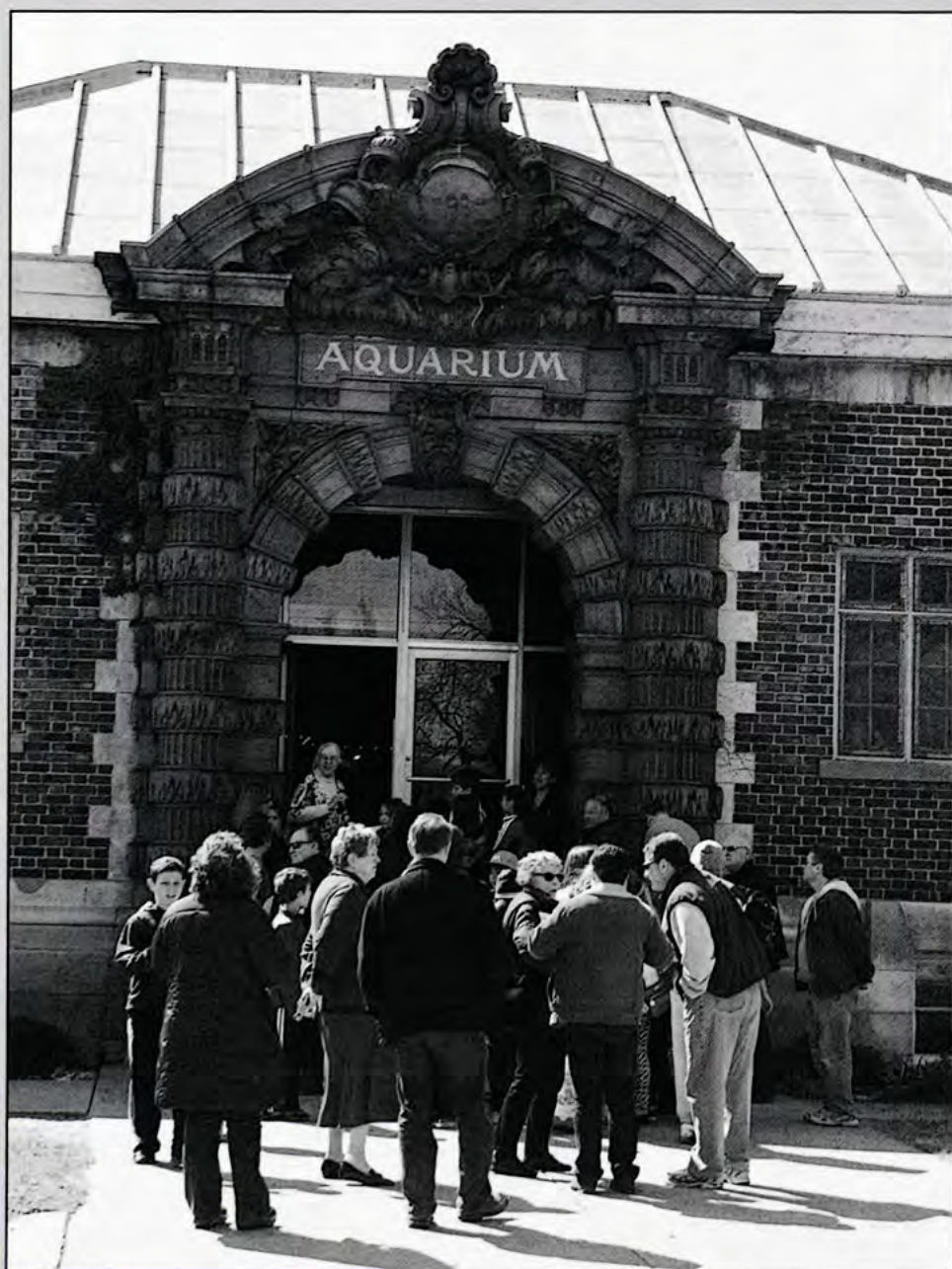
We continued our virtual tours at several Jewish seniors apartment buildings, transporting the participants – through narrated photo shows – to Detroit's Hastings Street, Oakland Avenue, 12th Street, Linwood, Dexter, and the Northwest section. These virtual tours were free of charge, thanks to a grant from the David Horodoker Society and your gifts to us.

Much effort was devoted to laying the groundwork for our newest tour and soon-to-be-released booklet, *Michigan Women Who Made a Difference*, funded by the Jewish Women's Foundation. We also were hard at work creating a new religious-school history lesson, funded by the Hermelin-Goldman Fund for Congregational Excellence, that will prepare middle-school students for their bus tours.

Families and agencies received private tours tailored to their requests. For example, recently I was privileged to lead a bus tour enjoyed by three generations of one family – their surprise gift to their patriarch. We included his former homes, schools, synagogues, and places of employment, the former residences of his parents and other relatives, and the synagogue in which he and his wife were married.

## YOUTH TOUR

During the 2013-2014 school year, JHSM hosted approximately 300 religious-school students on tours of historic Jewish Detroit. These important tours, offered to religious schools at no charge, not only provide students with an understanding of Detroit's Jewish history, but also emphasize the important contributions that the Jewish community continues to make in the revitalization and development of the city.



Students visit the Belle Isle Aquarium (left), which opened in 1904 thanks to the efforts of Jewish Detroiters David Heineman, and remains open to the public largely through the efforts of JHSM vice president Jennifer Boardman.



Students also visit the Chase Building where they hear from young entrepreneurs and community leaders such as Sam Hamburger (right). Hamburger is one of the many young adults working with businessman Dan Gilbert to retain and attract new businesses to the city.



The Fisher family on a private tour in honor of Father's Day 2014. The family is posing in front of Arnie Fisher's childhood home on Buena Vista near Lawton in Detroit. His immediate family lived in the downstairs flat, and his aunt and uncle's family lived upstairs.



### OTHER RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Other JHSM programs and publications were continued and strengthened, including our superb journal, *Michigan Jewish History*. Our yearbook committee organized our large collection of yearbooks after we purchased additional shelving. Some duplicate books have been moved to the Holocaust Memorial Center's library for accessibility, and we provided copies of requested pages to many grateful individuals. We assisted in the clean-up of B'nai David's cemetery in Detroit and gave each volunteer a short written history with photos and a map regarding that congregation and its cemetery. We also launched a Memoir Writing Workshop, led by author and instructor Joy Gaines-Friedler.

JHSM achieved greater visibility both within and outside the Jewish community. For example, our past president Judy Cantor was inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame in Lansing last fall. She spoke eloquently to a distinguished audience about JHSM and Michigan's Jewish history. A recent issue of *Michigan History* magazine featured a long interview about JHSM with our executive director, Wendy Rose Bice. Wendy also represented JHSM as keynote speaker at the Women's Philanthropy division of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit's annual meeting, where she spoke about the *Michigan Women Who Made a Difference* project.

All of these events and programs have led to a higher-than-ever number of new members. I regard this growth in membership as one of the most gratifying parts of my tenure as your president.



*Kenneth Lipson volunteered to help clean up the cemetery. He is shown here at the David Gilbert gravesite.*



*David Goldman organized the clean-up and founded the B'nai David Cemetery Care and Preservation Project.*

### **B'NAI DAVID CEMETERY CLEAN-UP**

When thirteen-year-old Eva Goldman led her family and friends in a one-day cleanup of the B'nai David Cemetery, where her great-great-grandmother is buried, the family was shocked. The burial land, which dates to 1898, was in a state of terrible disrepair...weeds growing up and around the headstones, tires littering the pathways, and garbage strewn along the fence line.

The Goldman family decided to take action. They created the B'nai David Cemetery Care and Preservation Project, a fund and clean-up corps that will help keep the grounds clean and maintained.

## HISTORICAL TIDBIT

1914

**Members of the Phoenix Club, considered Detroit's premier Jewish social club, opened the Redford Country Club, a golf course for Jewish members. In 1926, the Redford Club relocated to 400 acres in Franklin, Michigan, and the entity was renamed Franklin Hills Country Club.**

## MEMOIR WRITING WORKSHOP

The award for *Michigan Jewish History's* first "selfie" goes to Joy Gaines-Friedler, the editor of the Journal's Creative Reflections section and a JHSM advisory board member. Thanks to a grant from the Office Connection, JHSM conducted a three-week Memoir Writing Workshop, led by Friedler, an award-winning author, poet, and instructor.



*Gaines-Friedler (front) with her students.*

*Back row (l to r): Robert Segal, Judy Blumeno, Ruthe Goldstein, Al Gladner, Saul Saulson.  
Front (l to r) Estelle Davidson, Phyllis Schwartz, Esther Posner, and Jennifer Boardman.*

## EXPRESSING APPRECIATION

I thank all who helped JHSM during my presidency. We could not have achieved recent successes without our officers, board of directors, advisory board, committee chairs, volunteers, and partnering organizations. Wendy Rose Bice, our creative executive director and journal editor, and Liz Kannon, our talented administrative assistant, produced so much fine work that it was hard to believe theirs are part-time positions. Wendy joined us as director when I began my first term as president, and Liz was hired soon afterward. We worked as a team to develop office procedures, budgets, and better ways to communicate with our members. I also commend Aimee Ergas, our research director, for the women's history project.

I am grateful for our generous donors, whose funds have sustained our programming and helped build our endowment fund. Some not mentioned above include A. Alfred Taubman, Dr. Isaac Schaver, and Aviva and Jack Robinson, and the foundations created by William Davidson, Eugene Applebaum, James and Nancy Grosfeld, and Patrice and Dr. Eric Morris.

My beloved wife Barbara provided major support during all my years of JHSM activity, before and during my presidency.

## J-CYCLE 4

On Sunday, August 24, 2014, more than 200 Metro Detroiters rode twenty-two miles through the streets of Detroit to explore many of Detroit's most exciting areas and neighborhoods and learn about the Jewish history of those areas.

Presented by the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan; Reconstructionist Congregation of Detroit, Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue, and Hillel Metro Detroit, J-Cycle is a bicycle tour event designed to celebrate the exciting developments happening in and around Detroit and to explore the city's Jewish history in an up-close-and-personal way. J-Cycle 4 featured six docent-narrated stops including Belle Isle Aquarium, Elmwood Cemetery, the Chabad House, Hitsville USA (Motown Museum), and the Chase Building in Campus Martius. At the conclusion of the ride, participants enjoyed lunch at Milliken State Park.

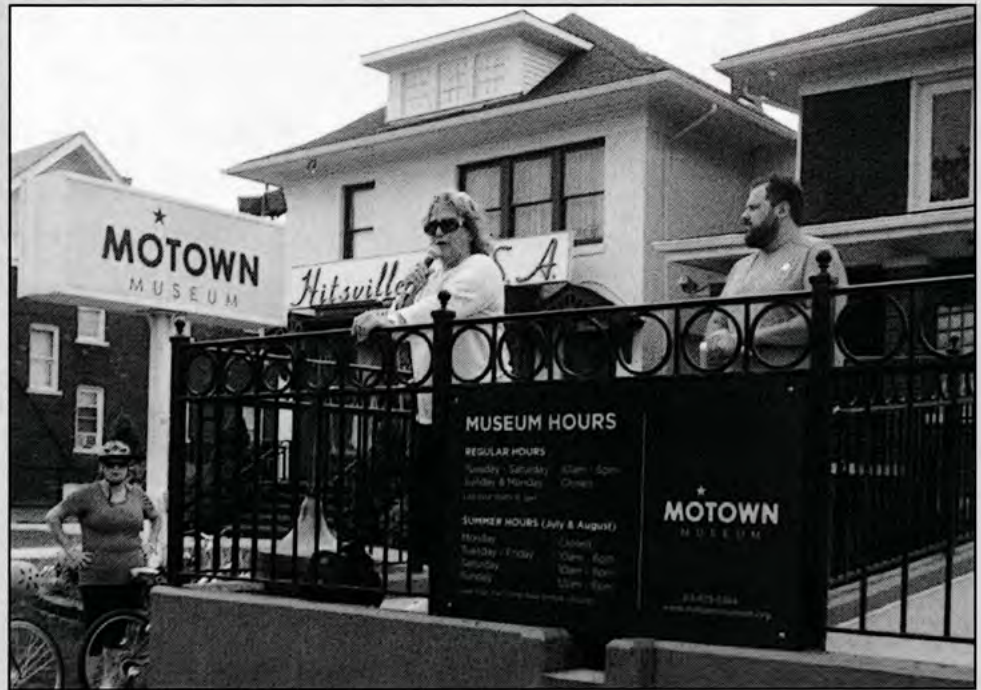
*Glenn Lapin, a member of the J-Cycle route committee, gets ready to ride.*



*Al and Harriet Saperstein donned their 18th-century costumes to greet riders and introduce them to Detroit's first Jewish resident, Chapman Abraham.*



*Gary Snyder rides across the finish line of J-Cycle 4.*



*Risha Ring and Noah Purcell welcomed riders to the Motown Museum where they provided a brief history of Motown's many Jewish connections.*

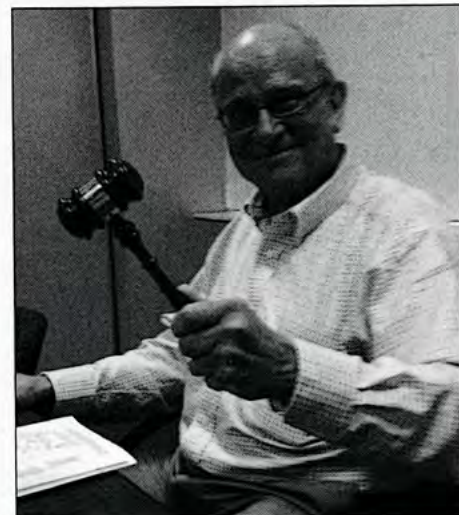


## WE CAN ALL HELP JHSM FULFILL ITS MISSION

Fortunately, we have a steady stream of requests and ideas for tours, events, and programs. You can help JHSM as a volunteer or financial supporter. If interested, please contact Wendy Rose Bice or Mickey Maddin. You can also help ensure our future through a gift to our endowment fund or by including JHSM in your estate plan, thereby becoming a member of our Heritage Council or Joshua Society. I encourage each reader of this message to become a goodwill ambassador by introducing new people to JHSM.

I promised our new president Mickey Maddin and the board that I will remain an active volunteer and donor, following the model set by other past presidents. Together, with help from each of you, may we go from strength to strength!

— Jerry Cook



## HISTORICAL TIDBITS

### 1954

**Congregation Ahavas Achim of Detroit initiated 9 p.m. Friday evening services, the first late-Friday-night services offered by a Conservative congregation in Detroit. The service, conducted by Rabbi Chinitz mainly in English, attracted many worshippers who were previously reluctant to attend.**

### 2014

**William Cohodas celebrates his 100th birthday! Bill Cohodas, a frequent contributor to Michigan Jewish History, is one of Northern Michigan's most highly regarded philanthropists and leaders. The sixth child of Harry and Lillian Cohodas, young Bill worked with his father in the family wholesale produce company, which Harry launched in Houghton, Michigan, in 1915. It grew to become the third-largest wholesale produce company in the region. Among Bill's many achievements in the Jewish community are the founding of Temple Beth Shalom, in Ishpeming, and the establishment of an annual Holocaust Memorial Service at Northern Michigan University in Marquette. Not only is Bill becoming a centenarian, but his dear wife Lois will also celebrate her 97th birthday. Happy birthday to Bill and Lois.**

## THE JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN DEBUTS THE MICHIGAN WOMEN WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE PROJECT

The JHSM “Women’s Project,” as it has come to be known, made its official debut in 2014 with the launch of the bus tour and the release of the book, *Michigan Women Who Made a Difference*.

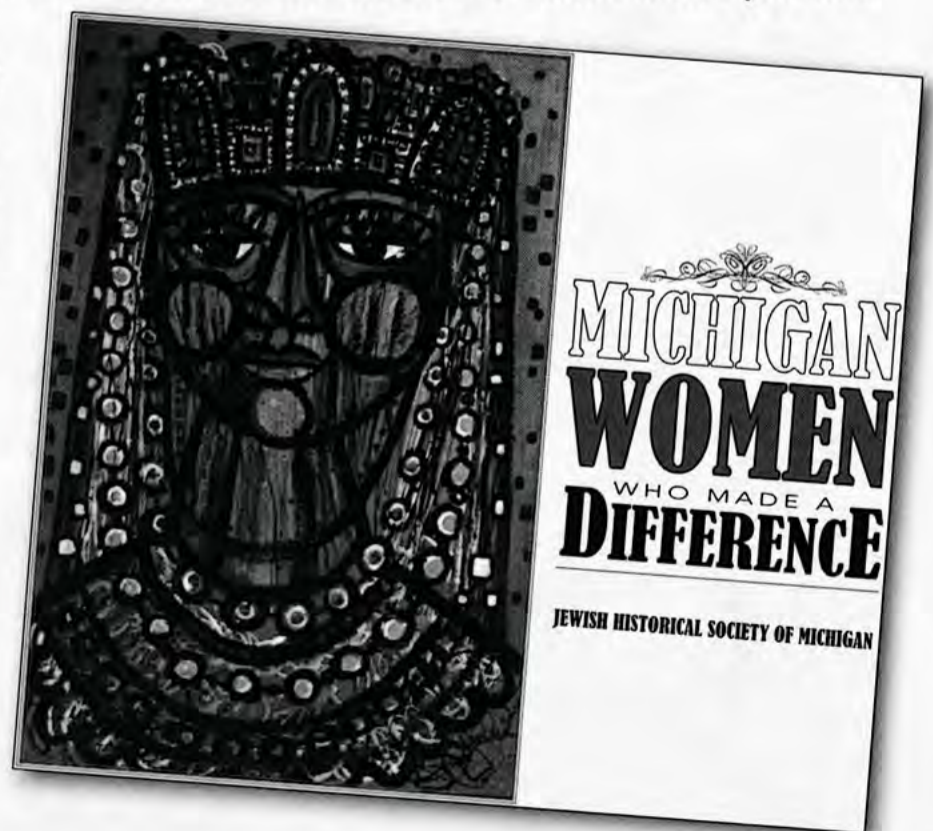


The project, “Michigan Women Who Made a Difference,” began in 2012 with a generous grant from the Jewish Women’s Foundation of Metropolitan Detroit. The purpose was to research and highlight important female builders of Detroit’s Jewish community. The research covers the 1850s to the late twentieth century and includes Jewish women of all educational, social, and religious backgrounds who made notable contributions in all aspects of life—from community service to business, from the arts to law and politics.

A committee, which included Sharon Alterman, Jennifer Boardman, Judy Cantor, Charlotte Dubin, Edie Resnick, Sheri Schiff, Sandy Soifer, Carol Weisfeld, and Linda Yellin, helped to establish the scope of the project. This included developing a template for a new JHSM bus tour, which, rather than trace the footsteps of these women chronologically, explores their contributions by their vocations. The accompanying booklet would not only add breadth and depth to the tour content, but also be a stand-alone publication, available through JHSM.

Under the expert guidance of Ruthe Goldstein and Jeannie Weiner, a three-session docent-training course was held in the spring of 2014. More than a dozen women are among our first “graduates” and have begun hosting tours. Groups can book a private Women’s Tour or join one of the tours that will be offered to the public through JHSM.

Materials for the tour script and the booklet were gleaned from wide-ranging research led by JHSM research director Aimee Ergas. It



was decided from the beginning that only women no longer living would be included in the project. Archives, publications, and personal memories were scoured to create an impressive list of women and women's organizations whose stories deserve telling. The amount of information gathered is too great for one tour or one booklet. Thus, this project will continue as a work in progress, with the goal of establishing an interactive archive of Jewish women from southeast Michigan, and eventually from across the state. All of the information gathered is being archived at JHSM and is being incorporated into other tours, programs, and publications.

The newest aspect of this project is the development of a speakers bureau, which will take our research on the road to groups and organizations. Outreach around the state is a major goal, and in the course of that outreach we will be able to gather information about women in those Jewish communities.

The JHSM website, [www.michjewishhistory.org](http://www.michjewishhistory.org), will have updates on the project and also a gallery of some of the photos used in the book and on the tour. Reservations for tours and copies of *Michigan Women Who Made a Difference* are available through the office of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan.



*Some of the volunteers who are on the docent and speakers bureau team of the Michigan Women Who Made a Difference Project. (l to r) Cindy Daitch, Sharon Alterman, Margery Jablin, Jeannie Weiner, Risha Ring, Sheri Schiff, Fran Hildebrant, Judy Blumeno, Aimee Ergas*

## THE JHSM MICHIGAN WOMEN WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

### DOCENT TEAM:

**Ruthe Goldstein**  
**Jeannie Weiner**  
**Sharon Alterman**  
**Judy Blumeno**  
**Ellen Cole**  
**Cindy Daitch**  
**Susan Friedman**  
**Eileen Glogower**  
**Barbara Grant**  
**Fran Hildebrandt**  
**Risha Ring**  
**Adele Staller**  
**Margery Jablin**  
**Sheri Schiff**

# THE JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN 'MICHIGAN MAP PROJECT'

## JEWISH SETTLEMENT IN MICHIGAN

COMMUNITIES WHERE JEWS ESTABLISHED  
HOMES, PLACES OF WORSHIP OR CEMETERIES



*This map of Michigan depicts the cities which did or do have a Jewish presence. A widely used JHSM illustration, the map depicts the state-wide presence of Jewish communities. Many of these small communities of Jewish settlers were formed in the 1850s through the 1880s when these pioneers moved across the state wherever they saw economic opportunity: In Detroit, the emerging industrial industry drew peddlers and entrepreneurs and led to the establishment of the state's first congregation, Temple Beth El, in 1850; the lumber, copper, and fishing industries drew families to the Upper Peninsula in the 1880s; and, at the end of the century, farmers and resort owners had begun to establish communities along Michigan's western coast.*

*The original map was created by Judith Levin Cantor for her book, *Jews in Michigan* (Michigan State University Press, 2001). In June 2014 JHSM volunteers Arnold Collens, Michael Kasky, and Gerald S. Cook updated the map to include more communities, many of them in the Metropolitan Detroit area.*

## THE JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN ANNUAL MEETING

The 55th Annual Meeting of the Jewish Historical Society made a historical impression of its own by bringing two icons of the Detroit Jewish community together to share their perspectives. A. Alfred Taubman, recipient of the Leonard N. Simons History Award, and Judith Levin Cantor took turns on the podium to reflect on the history, the stories, and the people that helped shape their lives and Michigan's Jewish community. Taubman was honored by JHSM for his commitment to sharing and preserving his own life accomplishments and memories, as well as those of other community leaders. Joining him on the stage was Scott Kaufman, CEO of Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit. Close to two hundred JHSM members and friends witnessed the candid, talk-show-style conversation the two shared. As host, Kaufman asked Taubman questions about his childhood, lessons he learned along the way, and who his own heroes are and were. Taubman's frank, honest, and often-humorous answers provided a rare chance to see this important philanthropist and business legend as relaxed and reflective as he would be in his own living room.

When asked which individuals from the Jewish community are historic stand-outs, Taubman noted architect Albert Kahn "as one of the most talented and influential people of the twentieth century. He doesn't always get credit for it, but he really was the father of the horizontal assembly line. And that manufacturing innovation drove the success of Ford, Detroit, and, in many ways, the consumer markets we enjoy today." He added that the list would have to include "my great friend Max Fisher. Max was a successful business man and a champion of our community. He personified the generosity and faith that distinguish Detroit's Jewish community."

The thirty-minute conversation ended with a rousing chorus of "Happy Birthday" for Taubman, who celebrated his ninetieth birthday earlier that month.

Although she did not found JHSM, the organization could not have grown and thrived without the leadership and passion of Judith Levin Cantor. This past president, former JHSM journal editor, and endowment chair emeritus is also an impeccable historian. In 2013 she was inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame for her work in sharing Michigan's Jewish and state history with audiences throughout The Mitten.

*Judy Cantor spoke of the many ways JHSM shares and celebrates Michigan's Jewish history. "The annual journal, Michigan Jewish History, initiated by our original founders to tell our stories, is one way we accomplish our mission," she said. "We stand on their shoulders and pay special tribute to Philip Applebaum and his colleagues, who had the foresight in the early 1960s to meet with original Jewish settlers and record the history of the Jews in small towns all through Michigan, including the Upper Peninsula." The meeting was held at Congregation Shaarey Zedek in Southfield.*



Cantor spoke of JHSM's collaboration with the Michigan Historical Commission to identify, place, and maintain Michigan Historical Markers throughout the state. "These are highly vetted so that every word, every statement, is historically accurate," she remarked.

Each of the eight markers involved two years of work with the historical commission and JHSM volunteers. The last marker was erected in 2007 and is located along the Detroit riverfront in Milliken State Park. One side tells of the arrival of Fort Detroit's first Jewish fur trader and first Jewish resident, Chapman Abraham. The other side commemorates the 181 Jewish sons and fathers who left Michigan to fight in the Civil War. At the time, there were only 151 Jewish families in the state.



*JHSM's first historic marker, dedicated in 1964 at Fort Michilimackinac, tells the story of the arrival in Michigan of the earliest Jewish fur trader, Ezekiel Solomon, in 1761. Attending the event were many of JHSM's earliest leaders. Pictured, from l to r: Leo F. Boissineau, descendant of E. Solomon; Walter J. Murray, Chairman, Mackinac Island State Park Commission; Jerome Murray; Irving A. Edgar, President, JHSM; Mrs. Irving Edgar; Lewis Beeson, Executive Secretary, Michigan State Historical Commission; Dr. Eugene T. Peterson, Director of Historic Projects, MISPC; Jonathan D. Hyams, Treasurer, JHSM; Allen A. Warsen, Founder and Honorary President, JHSM; Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence A. Rubin and son David, JHSM members (Rubin was director of the Mackinac Bridge Authority).*

Cantor shared many stories, but her message was clear: "Why do we do it?" "Look, and you will not find a word about Jewish contributions to the history of our state in the textbooks of our public schools or universities. Our motto comes from the book of Joshua: 'When your children shall ask their parents in times to come....' The Jewish Historical Society is there to provide us with the answers.... From generation to generation."

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# JHSM 2014

## LEONARD N. SIMONS HISTORY AWARD

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### A. ALFRED TAUBMAN

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Mary Lou Zieve, the daughter of Leonard N. Simons, presents the Leonard N. Simons History Award to A. Alfred Taubman. Zieve was honored to present this award to an individual who not only shared many of the same values as her father, but who also was a friend of her father's.

In recognition for his love of history, devotion to community, and commitment to the preservation of Michigan's Jewish history, it was with great honor that, on Tuesday, May 20, 2014, JHSM presented A. Alfred Taubman with the Leonard N. Simons History Award. This annual award honors those who have made outstanding contributions to the enrichment, preservation, and dissemination of Michigan Jewish history.

Taubman, whose memoir *Threshold Resistance* was published in 2007, was selected for his commitment to sharing and preserving his own life accomplishments and memories, as well as those of other community leaders. He has supported the mission and work of JHSM through his philanthropy, helping to endow the continued publication of *Michigan Jewish History* and JHSM's youth and adult tour programming — and, through a 2008 four-year challenge grant, inspiring others to support JHSM's work.

Following the presentation of the award, Taubman spent close to thirty minutes reflecting on his upbringing and Detroit history. In the conversation, led by Scott Kaufman, CEO of Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit, Taubman talked about why JHSM has been important to him. "The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan plays a critical role in helping today's community build on the successes and sacrifices of the past . . . and helps assure we don't repeat the mistakes. Plus, there is a real sense of pride in knowing you're a part of a continuing story of human achievement . . . knowing you have roots in a very special place."

A friend of the late Leonard N. Simons, Taubman gave some insight into the man for whom the award is named. "He was one of the most intelligent, well-read men I have ever known. He obviously had a keen interest in history, and left a tremendous legacy with the establishment of the Jewish Community Archives. He was also charming. I enjoyed every minute I spent with him, and that makes the award created in his honor that

much more meaningful to me.”

Taubman grew up in Detroit, attended the University of Michigan, served in WWII, and finished his education at Lawrence Institute of Technology (now Lawrence Technological University) in Southfield. He is a pioneering real-estate developer and is considered the father of the modern shopping mall. He is also admired as one of the nation’s great philanthropists. Among the many initiatives and causes he supports are the A. Alfred Taubman Medical Research Institute at the University of Michigan Medical School, a program he established, and he is the principal benefactor of the University of Michigan’s College of Architecture and Urban Planning, health-care center, and medical library — all of which bear his name. He also contributes generously throughout the United States



and Israel.

Taubman remains active in our region’s civic and cultural life, focusing much of his creativity and resources on the University of Michigan’s Taubman Medical Research Institute. He currently serves as president of the City of Detroit Arts Commission and is a trustee of Detroit’s College for Creative Studies.

*The Leonard N. Simons History Award, presented annually by JHSM, recognizes the efforts of one individual who has made outstanding contributions to the community and furthers JHSM’s mission to educate, celebrate, and promote awareness of the contributions of the Jews of Michigan to our state, our nation, and the world.*

*JHSM’s work ensures that future generations will know their heritage and history. It is named in honor of Leonard Simons who founded the advertising agency Simons Michelson Zieve in 1929. Simons was an active leader with the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit and had a deep passion for the preservation of Jewish and community history. His desire to ensure that the Jewish community of Detroit would retain a sense of pride in knowing who they are and where they came from was influential in the establishment of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan and the Jewish Community Archives, named in his memory.*

## LEONARD N. SIMONS HISTORY AWARD RECIPIENTS

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <b>1991</b> Philip Slomovitz                    | <b>2003</b> Matilda Brandwine  |
| <b>1992</b> Avern L. Cohn                       | <b>2004</b> Susie Citrin       |
| <b>1993</b> George M. Stutz                     | <b>2005</b> Edith L. Resnick   |
| <b>1994</b> Irwin Shaw                          | <b>2006</b> Gerald S. Cook     |
| <b>1995</b> Emma Lazaroff Schaver               | <b>2007</b> Sharon L. Alterman |
| <b>1996</b> Leslie S. Hough and Philip P. Mason | <b>2008</b> George M. Zeltzer  |
| <b>1997</b> Mary Lou Simons Zieve               | <b>2009</b> Mandell L. Berman  |
| <b>1998</b> Judith Levin Cantor                 | <b>2010</b> James D. Grey      |
| <b>1999</b> Michael W. Maddin                   | <b>2011</b> Charlotte Dubin    |
| <b>2000</b> Alan D. Kandel                      | <b>2012</b> Michael O. Smith   |
| <b>2001</b> Sidney M. Bolkosky                  | <b>2013</b> Irwin J. Cohen     |
| <b>2002</b> Adele W. Staller                    | <b>2014</b> A. Alfred Taubman  |

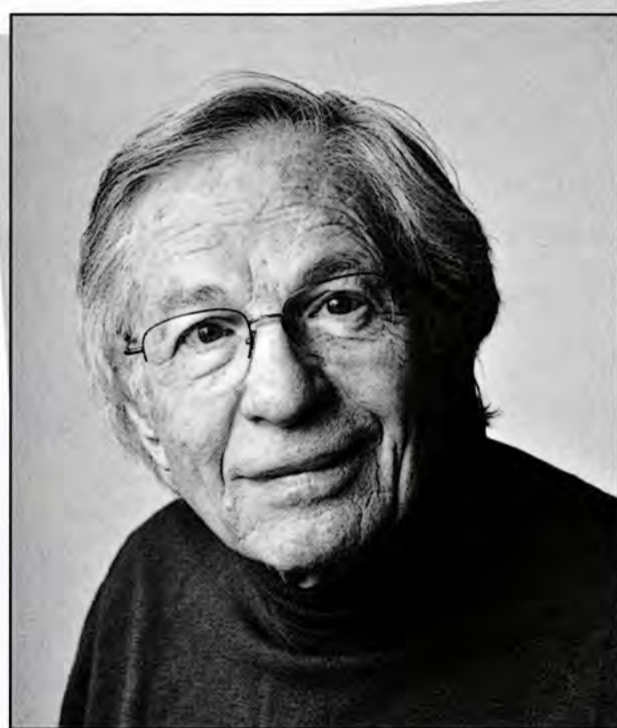


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# IN MEMORIAM

## ROBERT “BOB” BENYAS 1923 – 2014



By his own estimation, Robert “Bob” Benyas took “millions of pictures” in his seventy-year career as a photojournalist and people photographer. At his funeral in April 2014, dozens of his special photographs – many of them taken for Jewish organizations – lined the hallways of Southfield’s Ira Kaufman Chapel.

“Bob and his camera documented the history of the Detroit Jewish community,” said Charlotte Dubin, who worked with Benyas. His contributions can be seen in the archived *Detroit Jewish News* and in his photo collection at the Jewish Federation’s Leonard N. Simons Jewish Community Archives.

For many years, Benyas gave the gifts of his time and talent to the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan by photographing the annual meeting and presentation of the Leonard N. Simons History Award. In 2012, he created an event photograph journal, which sits in the JHSM offices in West Bloomfield.

The eldest child of Pearl and Saul Benyas, Bob Benyas was born in Omaha, Nebraska. The family stayed in Omaha only a short time, returning to Detroit when Bob was two months old. He received his Jewish education at United Hebrew Schools and was a bar mitzvah at Congregation Shaarey Zedek. It was upon this occasion that Benyas received his first camera, a gift from his uncle. When babysitting his siblings, he often would wake them to have them pose for pictures.

Benyas attended Central and Northwestern high schools and enrolled at Wayne University. A year later, he was drafted into the U.S. Army and became an aerial photog-

rapher, stationed at Greensboro, Colorado. He later served in the China-Burma-India Theater with the Army Air Corps.

In 1949, Benyas graduated from the Institute of Design in Chicago, which he attended on the G.I. Bill. He married Shirley Zaft in 1951 at Temple Israel in Detroit, and they had two sons. Shirley Benyas taught music in the Detroit Public Schools and became an opera singer and actress.

In 1951, after years of experience as a freelance photographer with the *Detroit Free Press* and the *Detroit News*, Benyas and his college friend Jack Kaufman launched Benyas-Kaufman Photography Studio on Linwood, two blocks north of West Grand Blvd. in Detroit. Eight years later, Benyas-Kaufman relocated to spacious quarters on Nine Mile Road at Rosewood in Oak Park. The two remained partners until the building's sale in 1995.

Benyas had a knack for capturing the essence of special community events, especially within the Jewish community. The JCC Annual Jewish Book Fair honored Benyas for his fifty-seven-year record of taking a photograph of every author. He also served as the de-facto photographer for Jewish Senior Life's "Eight over 80" tribute luncheon; he became an honoree in 2012.

Other organizations he photographed for include the Sholem Aleichem Institute, American Jewish Committee, Holocaust Memorial Center, United Way, Alzheimer's Association, and the Michigan Sports Hall of Fame.

Among Benyas's famous subjects were Israeli leaders Golda Meir and Moshe Dayan, and musicians Bob Dylan and John Lennon. One of his most moving images was part of a photo exhibition that covered the 1967 Detroit riots. His groundbreaking candid photographs that captured prison life at Michigan's Jackson State Prison were featured in a sixteen-page spread in *Coronet*, a national magazine.

Bob Benyas is survived by his wife Shirley, sons Mark and Edward and their wives, and four grandchildren.

— Esther Allweiss Ingber



Robert Benyas, circa 1960

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# HUGH GREENBERG

## 1930 – 2013

If a life could be judged on a scale of one to ten, Hugh Greenberg assuredly would have rated a ten.

Honored by the community he wholeheartedly supported – and beloved to the family in whom he took such pride – Mr. Greenberg passed away at age eighty-three on Oct. 19, 2013.

Greenberg was the descendant of pioneering forebears who settled in the north of Michigan's mitten in the 1800s. After a short period of homesteading in North Dakota, Mr. Greenberg's great-grandfather Abraham returned to Traverse City, co-signing a mortgage (and earmarking a gift of \$250) with four other men to establish the first synagogue there. His grandfather Jacob Greenberg did the same in Petoskey, where Hugh's father Samuel was born. Years after moving to Detroit, Samuel served as president of the Jewish Home for the Aged.

Detroit is where Greenberg was born, reared, and educated at both Central and Highland Park high schools. He continued his education at the University of Michigan, where he served on the student legislature, was named to the prestigious Druids honor society, and headed the Pi Lambda Phi Jewish fraternity.

Detroit is also where he met and married his high-school sweetheart, Carolyn Kaplan. For the record – and for those who recall growing up in Northwest Detroit – Carolyn lived south of Curtis on Roselawn; Hugh lived north of Curtis on Northlawn.

For the sixty-two years of their marriage, the Greenbergs shared lives of leadership, service, and philanthropy to many organizations. Their travels took them to Israel and other countries on behalf of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), which assists Jewish communities at risk. Together, they received the American Jewish Committee's 1977 Human Relations Award, and in 2000 they jointly received the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit's highest honor: the Fred M. Butzel Memorial Award for Distinguished Community Service.

A longtime member of the Federation Board of Governors, Greenberg served as vice president and as chairman of the Capital Needs Division. The award also recognized his presidency and forty-plus years of support for the Jewish Community Center, as well as his chairmanship of the Neighborhood Project Advisory Committee, which re-energized Oak Park and Southfield as centers of Jewish life.

An officer of the National Jewish Welfare Board, Greenberg was the first national chairman of the North American Maccabi Youth Games Committee and chaired the first Maccabi games to be held in Detroit, in 1990. He was president and CEO of Detroit Gauge & Tool Co., Ekman Machine Tool Co., and DataNet Quality Systems.

His son Daniel said that all parts of his father's life – his family, his civic activities, and his work – benefited from Greenberg's personal qualities of level-headedness, kindness, and sense of humor. He was revered for his quiet-yet-generous philanthropy and his peerless fundraising abilities.

Greenberg is survived by his wife Carolyn, sons Daniel (Illana) and Ned (Elisa), daughter Amy Draizen, seven grandchildren, and his sister, Barbara Fleischman.

*Charlotte Dubin*

## SHIRLEE ROSE IDEN

### 1931 – 2014



Well-known Detroit-area journalist Shirlee Rose Iden died peacefully on May 22, 2014, at the age of eighty-three.

After graduating from Central High School, Shirlee Rose married her high-school sweetheart, Jack Iden. She remained at home to raise their five children. When the children were older, she returned to school to earn a bachelor's degree in journalism from Wayne State University. A few years later, she completed a master's degree in history, also from WSU.

Iden began her career as a freelance writer.

A few years later, in 1973, she became a full-time reporter and Suburban Life editor at the *Southfield Eccentric*. Three years later she began writing a weekly column which she continued until her retirement more than two decades later. She was quiet and unassuming, but told her stories with flair. Her peers took note: Iden won more than thirty writing awards. In addition to her writing career, she taught at Macomb County and Oakland County community colleges.

In 1996 and 1997, she wrote two important articles chronicling the contributions of Michigan's WWII veterans for *Michigan Jewish History*. She also wrote several articles on Michigan schools that are named for Jewish leaders, the last of which appeared in 2002.

Iden was a strong supporter of the Jewish War Veterans. She served as president of the Department of Michigan Auxiliary and as president of the Robert J. Rafelson Auxiliary, and she edited several JWV publications. She was a member of Women in Communications International, and in 1980 received their Headliner Award in recognition of her life's work.

Shirlee Rose Iden is survived by her children Tzviah Iden, Elaine Cheshin, and Bruce Iden, six grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

## SYLVIA GITTLEN KRISSOFF

### 1919 – 2014

“The creation of art, whether as a practicing artist or an art historian, has been a prime interest for me all of my life,” Sylvia Gittlen Krissoff told MLive.com in 2013. Her life was filled with art and many other activities as an artist, teacher, journalist, volunteer, and fundraiser. Best known as a watercolorist, Krissoff showed in many solo and group exhibitions over the years, and her works are part of several public and private collections. She wrote art reviews and criticism for the *Grand Rapids Press* for more than twenty-five years and lectured widely on a variety of topics in art history and visual arts.

A life-long resident of Grand Rapids, Krissoff was the daughter of Ruth (Armour) and Alex Gittlen. She graduated from South High School in Grand Rapids, then studied art and art history at Grand Rapids Junior College, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the University of Michigan. It was at U-M that she met her husband, Abe Krissoff. They married in 1940 and had two sons. Later in life, Krissoff earned two master’s degrees – one in teaching and another in art history. Her career as a teacher and lecturer in fine arts and art history included service at the Grand Rapids Public Schools, Aquinas College, Grand Rapids Community College, Grand Valley State University, and the University of Michigan extension, as well as at numerous civic clubs and organizations. She also taught painting privately at her home.

Krissoff was an active member of Temple Emanuel in Grand Rapids and of other Jewish organizations, including Hadassah. The Sisterhood of Temple Emanuel benefited for many decades from her work in program planning and budgeting and as president (1963-1964). Her artistic skills were evident in the line drawings she created for the temple’s 150th anniversary book published in 1954 and republished in 2007. As part of the Arts and Ceremonials Committee, Krissoff curated and acquired objects for the temple’s Judaica collection. Over the years she shared her knowledge of Jewish art with the wider community through lectures and classes. Krissoff supported an assembly called “Panel of Americans,” an interfaith group reaching out to educate groups about different religions.

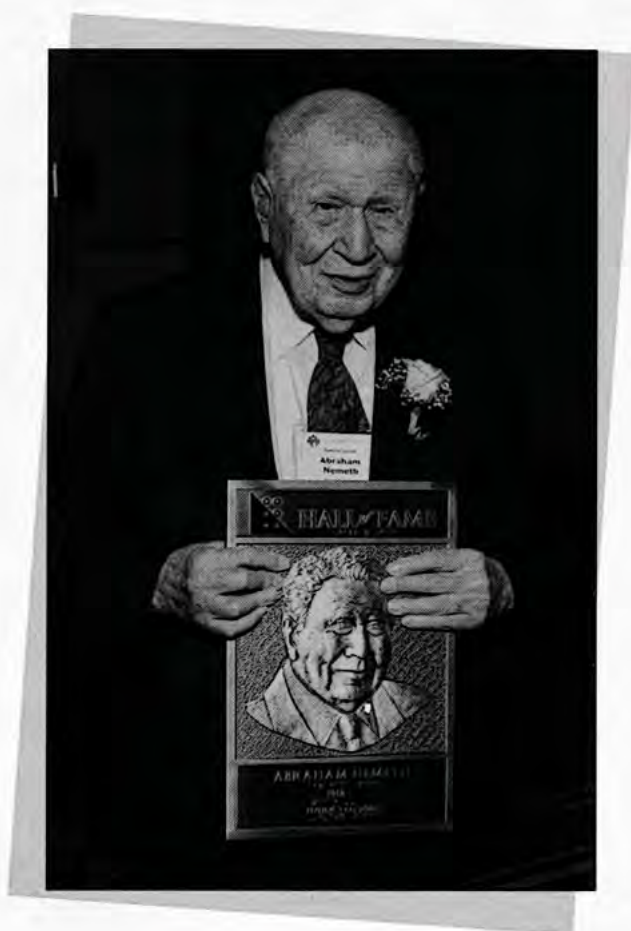
Sylvia Krissoff will be remembered for her important influence on the regional art community of the Grand Rapids area and for her service to the Jewish and education communities.

–Aimee Ergas. Thanks to Barbara Robinson for contributing to this article.



## PROFESSOR ABRAHAM NEMETH

### 1918 – 2013



Blind from birth, Dr. Abraham Nemeth lived a life of passion, whether in regard to science, music, Judaism, or his devotion to the blind community. He epitomized the Talmud's *Sagi Nahor*, meaning a great light, a term that usually refers to someone whose eyes lack light to see the concrete world, but who are endowed with the great light to see the spiritual world. Nemeth was even more than that; he exemplified a *Me'or Einayim*, "one who has vision even without sight."

Nemeth was a man of accomplishment. He taught people how to live with one another even as he acknowledged his closeness to G-d. He was good, kind, and fair with everyone, no matter what their status in life. He was a *mentsch*.

"My parents raised me in a very close and loving family," he wrote. "We led a very happy life."

He was born on October 16, 1918, on Manhattan's Lower East Side, where he lived until the family moved to Brooklyn. Highly proficient in Braille, he entered Brooklyn College, where he received a bachelor of arts degree and had his first experience teaching college mathematics, as a substitute instructor. During these years, he wrote, "I also designed and organized itineraries in braille so that they could be read by Helen Keller."

Nemeth created the internationally recognized Nemeth Braille Math Code, a system that has never been duplicated or replaced. He was invited by governments and by international organizations to teach what became known as the Nemeth Code. Through this code and other inventions, this humble man enabled blind people to pursue their interests in mathematics, science, and engineering.

For thirty years, he taught mathematics at the University of Detroit Mercy, rising to become a full professor. In 1991, Nemeth was appointed chair of the Michigan Com-

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mission for the Blind by Governor John Engler. President George H.W. Bush designated Nemeth as one of his "Thousand Points of Lights" in the program recognizing outstanding volunteers.

When Nemeth received the Louis Braille Award in 2006 from the International Braille Center for his lifetime of work researching and developing braille codes, chairman Harold Snider said, "Only Louis Braille himself has had more influence on braille."

This multi-faceted man was also an accomplished pianist. He kept a sculpture of Louis Braille on his piano. "That way, when I play the piano, the two of us can see eye-to-eye," Nemeth often joked.

When he retired from his tenured professorship at University of Detroit Mercy in 1985, Nemeth continued his active schedule by working closely with the Jewish Braille Institute. He translated High Holiday prayer books for Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform Jewish worship into braille. He gave lectures on his work with the title, "The Oldest and Newest Languages," referring to the oldest language of Hebrew and to the newest one, braille.

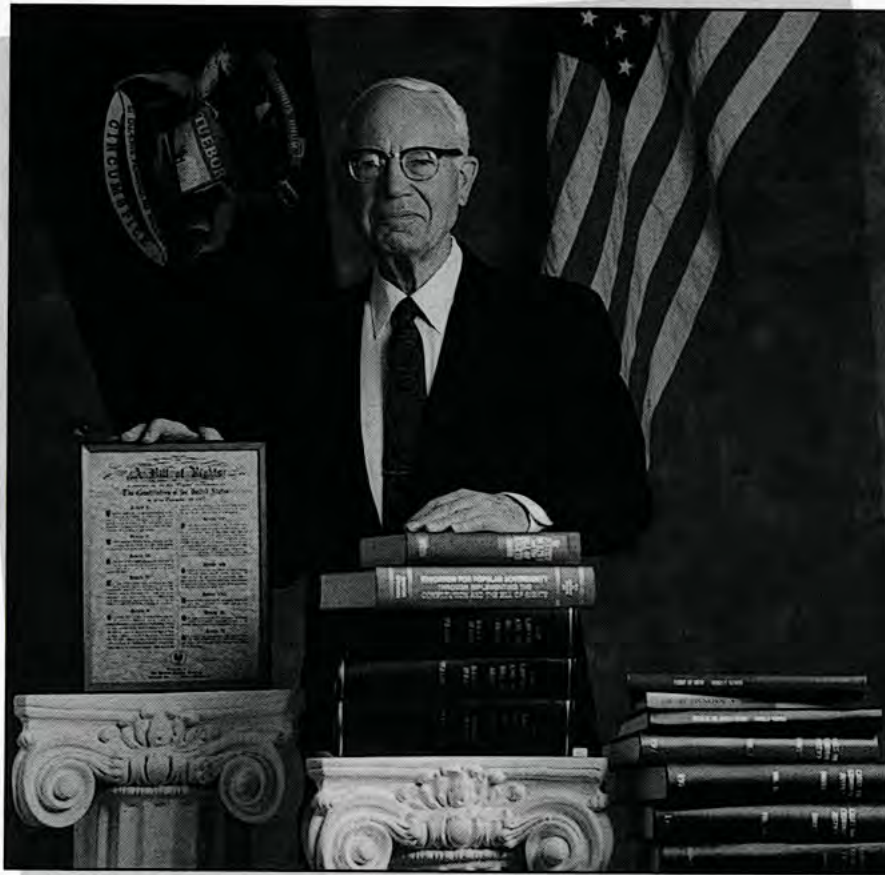
For more than twenty years, he sat in the front section of Adat Shalom Synagogue, just a few yards from the bimah where the rabbis sat, and he sang the prayers by heart or from his siddur, which he had translated into braille. He prayed with passion.

For those who gathered at the Adat Shalom Cemetery on October 3, 2013, for Professor Abraham Nemeth's graveside service, one Biblical verse will likely never be forgotten. On a piece of paper, written in Hebrew and in English by Nemeth's teacher, Abe Pasternak, were the words of Psalm 51:17: "*Adonai, open my lips so I may speak your praise.*" This verse is said quietly by the leader of the service and by congregants like Nemeth as an introduction to the *Amidah* – literally the "standing" prayer – asking G-d for the power and ability to pray. The paper got caught in a gentle wind gust and was swept through the air with the grace of a butterfly and fluttered into the open grave. This divine message was interred with Nemeth's remains. Was this a mystical sign that his praise of G-d would continue in the world to come?

Nemeth was preceded in death by his first wife, Florence Weissman, who died in 1970, and by his second wife, Edna Lazar, who died in 2001. He is survived by stepchildren, nieces, and nephews. – *Rabbi Herbert A. Yoskowitz*

# HAROLD NORRIS

## 1918 – 2013



Professor Harold Norris taught constitutional law, criminal law, and women and the law classes to more than 5,000 students during his thirty-five years at the Detroit College of Law (now Michigan State University College of Law). He also taught what he had accomplished in his law practice, using law as a tool to achieve justice against abusive government practices.

Norris graduated from Detroit's Central High School in 1935. He served in the U.S. military before and during WWII, and, after receiving his law degree in 1946, returned to Detroit to enter the practice of law.

In 1961, he was elected a delegate to the Michigan Constitutional Convention, representing Detroit. Recognized as a principal architect of the Michigan Bill of Rights, Norris authored the provisions of the 1963 Michigan Constitution prohibiting racial and religious discrimination, elements that remain essential portions of our constitution.

Norris wrote seven books, including a volume of poetry. He is widely known for "The Liberty Bell," a poem chosen by the National Park Service to hang near the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. A copy is on display at the main branch of the Detroit Public Library.

Norris received the inaugural John W. Reed Michigan Lawyer Legacy Award, as a law-school professor whose influence on Michigan lawyers has elevated the quality of legal practice in the state.

A proud Jew, Norris was active in the Michigan chapter of the American Jewish Congress. Norris died in October 2013 at age ninety-five. He was the beloved husband of the late Frances Norris, and is survived by Dr. Barbara and Victor Norris, three grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. – *Gerald Cook*



# DAVID K. PAGE

## 1933 – 2014



David Page was a highly respected lawyer and a deeply regarded corporate and nonprofit-board leader. When he won the prestigious Fred M. Butzel Memorial Award in 1999, he was lauded for “integrity, strength, wisdom, creativity, and responsibility” by his friend and fellow community leader Joel Tauber. Accepting that award, Page spoke of previous awardees’ “commitment to service and desire to help others give back to our community and make a difference in the world around us.” Page displayed those same qualities throughout his adult life.

A Detroit native, Page graduated from Dartmouth College and Harvard Law School and was a Fulbright Scholar at the London School of Economics. Returning to Detroit, he joined the law firm Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn, where he served for fifty-five years as a key partner, advisor to clients, and mentor to other attorneys.

Page was president of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit (1992-1995), The Jewish Fund, Temple Beth El, and Detroit Men’s ORT. At Federation, he co-chaired the Strategic Planning Committee and promoted The Detroit Initiative to reconnect suburban Jews with needs in the City of Detroit.

Page personally devoted tremendous energy to Detroit projects, especially in his presidency of Children’s Hospital of Michigan and vice-chairmanships of both the Kresge Foundation and the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy. He played a critical role in securing funding for Detroit’s River Walk. He was instrumental in the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan’s successful effort to place a Michigan Historical Society Marker along the River Walk, commemorating the first Jews in Michigan and military service by Michigan Jews in the Civil War.

Besides the Butzel Award, Page’s many honors included the national ORT Man of the Year Award, the Learned Hand Human Relations Award from the American Jewish Committee, and Wayne County’s Winning Ways Award for Community Leadership.

David Page died July 1, 2014, leaving his beloved wife Andrea, his three children and their spouses, and his grandchildren. At Page’s funeral, Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit CEO Scott Kaufman eulogized Page as “a man of immense wisdom and impeccable integrity...and a trusted mentor and advisor to countless other leaders, including an entire generation of emerging leaders who hope to help fill his giant shoes.”

## DR. GERSHON WEINER

### 1935 – 2013

Dr. Gershon Weiner was a runner, a historian, a man of faith, and a man of justice. He also had a tremendous sense of humor and a great love of teaching and reading.

The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan advisory board member and tour docent passed away in October 2013. His life was cut short by an aggressive form of ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. But, as Weiner said after his diagnosis, his was a blessed life, a life well lived.

Gershon Weiner was born in Detroit in 1935, the son of Phyllis and Morris. A graduate of Cass Technical High School at age sixteen, Weiner went on to receive his undergraduate degree at Wayne State University. Before he could pursue a definitive career, Weiner, like so many of his generation, served his country, becoming an air force pilot. He returned to Wayne State University to get his prerequisites for medical school and ultimately became a doctor of osteopathy in Des Moines, Iowa, where he practiced family and emergency medicine for a short time. Weiner returned to Wayne State for a fellowship in physical and rehabilitation medicine, the first D.O. in the program. For the next thirty years, Dr. Weiner was a physiatrist. His reputation for excellent care was well known. He often spent hours with a single patient, making sure the patient understood his or her diagnosis.



In 1973, Weiner met Jeannie Mann and they were married on December 31, 1975. They shared a passion for social justice, inter-faith relations, and history. He served on the board of the Anti-Defamation League for several years, and together with Jeannie traveled the world, including nineteen trips to Israel. Weiner especially enjoyed discussions about old synagogues in such places as Toledo, Spain, or St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands. It was that interest in history and historic buildings and communities that led Weiner to the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan.

Arnold Collens, JHSM past president, recruited his long-time friend to become involved with the society. Weiner joined the board in 2008 and began a "second" career as a JHSM docent. "I asked Gersh and Jeannie to do a bus tour with me and they loved it," recalled Collens. "Shortly after that, Jeannie, the navigator, and Gersh, the docent, led a tour of the central city and the Dexter-Davison area."

Weiner's zeal for physical fitness was well known. He began running while at Cass Tech and was on the cross-country team at Wayne State University. He stopped running when he began practicing medicine, but took it up again about fifteen years ago. At age seventy, he joined a Detroit Marathon relay team and, on his seventy-seventh birthday, he ran a 10K race at a 9:15 pace.

Weiner is survived by his wife Jeannie, three children, five grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. One son preceded him in death.

—With assistance from the Rev. Dr. Mark Jensen

## 2013 CORRECTIONS

*The editors of Michigan Jewish History make every attempt to present accurate information. We are grateful when readers contact us to point out errors or omissions.*

### THE LEGACY OF MEYER PRENTIS

The Endnotes of this article mention a few other prominent Jewish executives at Ford Motor Co. We omitted Mark M. Schloss who, as vice president and treasurer, is following in the footsteps laid by Prentis. Mark Fields, who at the time of the article's publication was listed as chief operating officer, became president and chief executive officer on July 1, 2014. We also misspelled Mr. Fields's name in that section.

### MEMORIES OF SOL & ZYGIE'S AND OTHER JEWISH GAS STATIONS

Morris Schwartz (page 17) passed away in June 2013. JHSM extends our condolences to his family and hope that our article stirred comforting memories. He was the husband of Sara Welton Schwartz and the late Eleanor Schwartz and the father of Gary Schwartz. He is also survived by Sara's children and their children.



The photo at left shows Zygie Allweiss holding his baby girl, Esther. We erroneously printed that Esther's uncle Sol was holding her. A typo early in the article indicates that Sol Allweiss passed away in 1984. The correct year is 2004. Zygie Allweiss passed away in August 2014. He was eighty-seven. In the months before his death, Allweiss was honored at an event held at the Holocaust Memorial Center in Farmington Hills. The incredible story of the Allweiss brothers' courage and resilience during their escape and subsequent rescue from the Shoah is the subject of a chapter in a newly released book, *They Were Just People: Stories of Rescue in Poland During the Holocaust*, by authors Bill Tammeus and Rabbi Jacques Cukiekorn. Zyga "Zygie" Allweiss is survived by his wife Irma, his children Esther (Mike) Ingber, Irene Wise, Janice (Loren) Young, Elizabeth Allweiss, and Michael Allweiss, seven grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

### CELEBRITIES AND CELEBRATIONS

In the photo at right, which is on page 75 of Vol. 53, Rabbi Sherwin Wine of the Birmingham Temple is pictured on the right.

JHSM member Jeffrey Chase wrote to thank us "for another wonderfully informative issue of *Michigan Jewish History*. However, at least just for the record, I would like to make a correction to the spelling of a last name on page 78 of volume 53.

"When I was growing up we lived across the street from George Seaton's brother, who was the head of audio visual education (as it was then called) at Wayne State University (as it is



now called) and Mr. Seaton would visit his brother once or twice a year. It was always a big treat for the neighborhood children to spend time with Mr. Seaton. My correction is in the spelling of Seaton's former last name: it is spelled Stenius and not Stenuis."

### IN MEMORIAM

*We extend our deepest apologies to Julie Rodecker and the family of Arthur Rodecker. There were numerous errors in the memoriam article published in Vol. 53. Below is a revised and updated Memoriam to Arthur Rodecker, 1926-2012.*



Arthur Rodecker was born in Detroit in 1926, the younger of two children of Alvin and Catherine Rodecker. Arthur's paternal great-great-grandfather, Reuben M. Rodacher (whose children changed the name to Rodecker), was one of the founders of B'nai B'rith.

"Art," as he was called by friends, grew up in Detroit, and earned a bachelor's degree in business from Michigan State University. During World War II, he served in the U. S. Navy and then, in 1950, became an investment broker. He founded his brokerage firm Rodecker & Company in 1976, then RAC Advisors, Inc., in 1979, and he co-founded the investment counseling firm DeRoy & Devereaux Private Investment Counsel, Inc., in 2002. He was a member of the NASD for twenty-eight years and was an allied member of the New York Stock Exchange. He also served as a board member of Comerica Bank's Ambassador Funds and Munder Funds. Michigan State University's Broad College of Business presented Rodecker with a lifetime achievement award in 1996.

It was Rodecker's business acumen, noticed at an early age by his great-aunt Helen DeRoy, that led to his work with the Helen L. DeRoy Foundation soon after its inception in 1946. He served as president of the foundation (which became the DeRoy Testamentary Foundation in 1977) from 1998 to 2012. In 2009, the DeRoy Testamentary Foundation, under the direction of Rodecker, provided significant support to JHSM's fiftieth anniversary blockbuster exhibit, "From Haven to Home: Jewish Life in America." The Foundation has also supported JHSM's award-winning Settlers to Citizens youth tours of historic Jewish Detroit.

It was also in the 1950s, as his career was gathering steam, that he was introduced to the lovely Joan Simmers. After a first date at Detroit's London Chop House, the couple saw each other steadily and were wed in 1955. They had a loving and devoted marriage that lasted forty-two years, until Joan's death in 1997. In 1999, Rodecker married Susan Dones, who brought much happiness into his life. She passed away eight years later in 2007.

One of Rodecker's greatest contributions to Michigan's history and to the greater community was his work with the Jewish Hospice & Chaplaincy Network. The foundation was one of the initial funders of this incredible organization which partners with hospices, hospitals, and health-care agencies to provide patient advocacy and support services to meet the cultural and spiritual needs of Jewish patients and their families. Rodecker took an active interest in guiding the organization and was a friend and mentor to JHCN's executive director Rabbi E.B. (Bunny) Freedman and to many of the other chaplains who work within the organization.

Rodecker also enjoyed a variety of other passions. He was a superb golfer who played two or three times a week. He gave of his time and talent as a member of the board of directors of the Rose Hill Foundation, which raises funds for and provides financial support to the Rose Hill Center. The Rose Hill Center is a psychiatric treatment and rehabilitation center in Holly, Michigan. He served for twenty-six years as a board member of Providence Hospital's Providence Health Foundation, and in 1993 was awarded the Providence Health Foundation Order of Charity Award in recognition of his continued support and exemplary philanthropic efforts on behalf of the hospital and community.

In his eulogy, Rabbi Daniel Syme of Temple Beth El said Arthur Rodecker passed from this world with a divine kiss, a "*b'neshika*," which, in Jewish tradition, means a death reserved for those who have made a difference in the world.

Arthur Rodecker is survived by his daughter Julie and four grandchildren.

### **DeRoy Testamentary Foundation**

Aaron and Helen L. DeRoy were both from Pennsylvania. In 1911, Aaron started the Aaron DeRoy Car Co. and opened a Studebaker dealership, becoming the first Jewish auto-dealership owner. The couple came to Detroit in 1923, where Aaron opened a Hudson-Essex dealership and eventually other branches in the area. DeRoy, who gave generously to the community, served as chairman of the Allied Jewish Campaign, 1931-1933. After his death in 1935, Helen DeRoy took over the Aaron DeRoy Motor Car Company, carrying on the business with great financial acumen.

Helen DeRoy was also a philanthropic soul. She knitted slippers and blankets for local hospitals and sent some overseas before WWII; she also 'adopted' several eastern European families to help them get safe passage to the U.S. After her husband's death, she donated funds in his memory as the catalyst for the construction of the Jewish Community Center, creating a lasting legacy. When she passed away in 1977, the DeRoy Testamentary Foundation was founded, as per her will.

Since its founding, the DeRoy Testamentary Foundation has provided funding for thousands of projects that improve the quality of life and promote the well-being of individuals, primarily in the greater metropolitan Detroit community. Grants are given in the areas of human services, mainly programs that benefit the elderly, youth, and disadvantaged, and those who are physically, developmentally, or emotionally challenged. Other areas of focus are health care, education, culture, and the arts.

Among the many organizations supported by the DeRoy Testamentary Foundation are the Helen L. DeRoy Residence Hall and the DeRoy Auditorium at Wayne State University, the main sanctuary and the Rabbi Leo M. Franklin Archives of Temple Beth El in Bloomfield Hills, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Michigan Opera Theatre, Interlochen's Center for Film Studies, and The Lester and Jewell Morris Hillel Jewish Student Center at Michigan State University, JARC, JVS, The Community House in Birmingham, Oakland Family Services, and the Detroit Zoo, a tradition that began in 1928 when Aaron DeRoy purchased the first two giraffes for the zoo. Today, the DeRoy Testamentary Foundation is under the guardianship of Arthur's daughter, Julie Rodecker.

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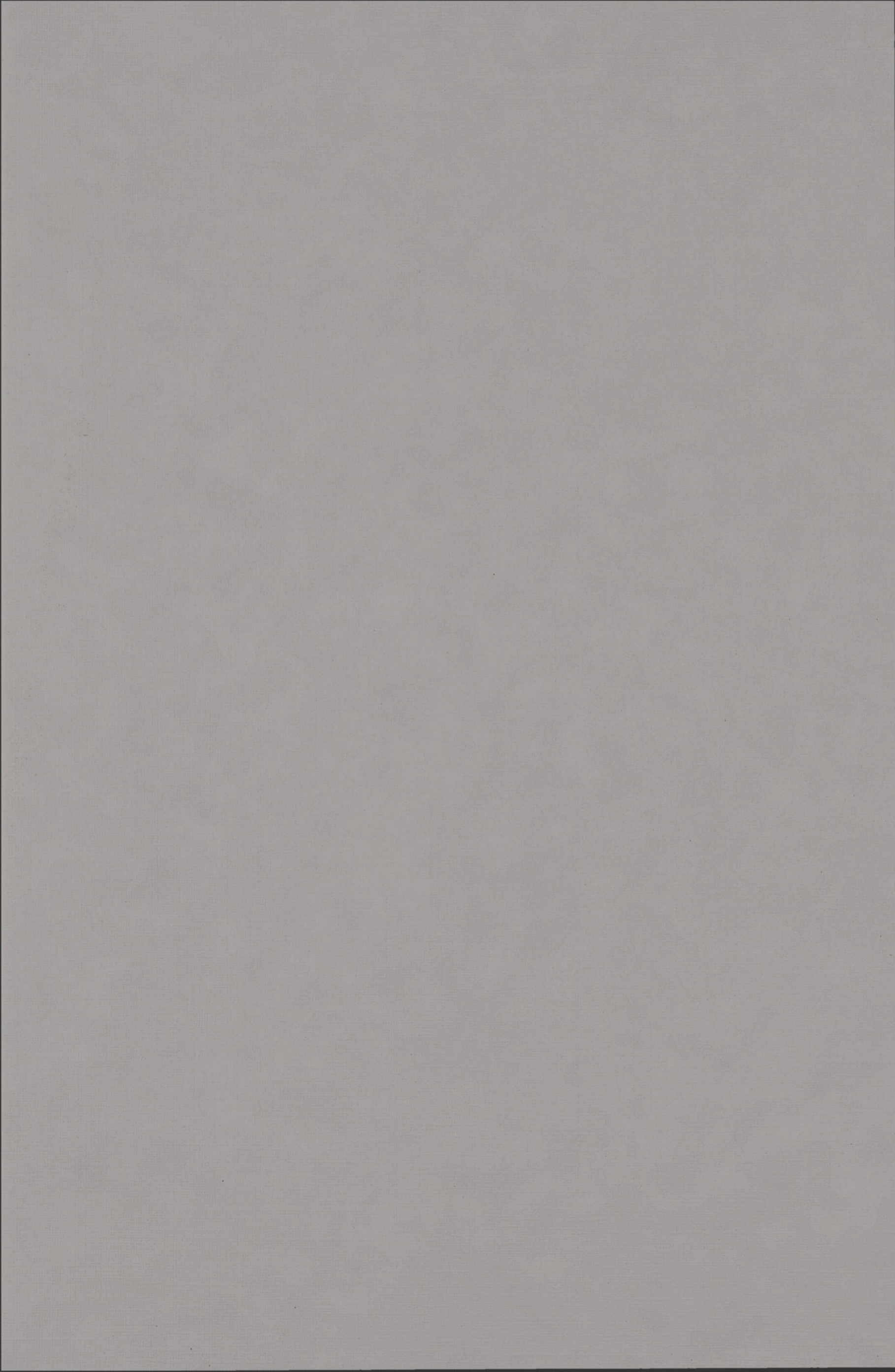
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