



# chicago jewish history

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## Isaac Rosenfeld: Humboldt Park's Troubled Literary "Golden Boy"

BY WALTER ROTH

**T**he Humboldt Park neighborhood has given us at least two great Jewish writers—Saul Bellow and Isaac Rosenfeld. They were friends in a group of intellectual boys who attended Tuley High School during the Depression. Bellow is world-famous. In 1976 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. He has won the Pulitzer Prize, three National Book Awards, and many other honors. Now, at age 89, he is a cultural icon. Rosenfeld had some early successes; he won a prestigious literary award from the *Partisan Review*, and a job at *The New Republic*. He wrote constantly—novels, short stories, poems, and many essays. Irving Howe called him the "golden boy" of the New York intelligentsia. But Rosenfeld died young, and today he is all but unknown outside of academia.

Isaac Rosenfeld was born on March 10, 1918. His young mother, Miriam, died when he was just 22 months old. His father, Sam, remarried, but the family tragedies continued. His second wife bore a retarded daughter; the wife died, and Sam married her much younger sister. They had a volatile relationship, and the marriage almost broke up several times.

The family lived in a two-story apartment building near Humboldt Park. Isaac's grandparents and his two unmarried aunts lived on the first floor. In a time of great unemployment, Sam had a job and was able to provide for the family. He took pride in his son's intellectual achievements, but was domineering and emotionally unavailable. Isaac, who suffered from frequent physical ailments, would retreat, alone, to his room and his many books.

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## Society Elects Board Members

The CJHS open meeting on October 31 was preceded by a brief business meeting. President Walter Roth offered a review of the Society's activities in 2004, noting our special May lecture celebrating the 350th year of Jewish life in America, "Haym Salomon in Chicago."

He then conducted the election of members to the Board of Directors. Edward H. Mazur was elected to a three-year term; current Board members Carolyn Eastwood, Clare Greenberg, David H. Heller, and Burt Robin were re-elected to three-year terms. ❖

## President's Column



Walter Roth

**I NEVER HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO EMBRACE AND KISS A CATHOLIC PRIEST** until my recent trip to northern Italy in the first week of September 2004. There, in the foothills of the Maritime Alps, on the border between France and Italy, I had that opportunity—and I acted on it. The priest in question was Don Francesco Brondello.

At the age of 84, Don Francesco, with the help of his assistants, had managed to bring himself to the foot of an Italian mountain path where sixty-one years earlier a group of Jews were crossing from Occupied France. They were seeking safety in Italy after the Badoglio government capitulated to the Allies in September 1943. However, in response to the Italian surrender, the German Army invaded the north of Italy, and these Jews, after their perilous mountain crossing, would need help in hiding from the Nazi invaders. Among the refugees were a mother and her two young daughters, Gitta and Chaya—my future wife.

The crossing is commemorated annually with a Walk of Remembrance. This year's commemoration was special. Through Chaya's great efforts in securing the necessary papers, Don Francesco had been awarded the title "Righteous Among the Nations" by Yad Vashem in Jerusalem for his courageous deeds in behalf of Jews during World War II. He was too infirm to travel to Jerusalem, so the ceremony was being held in his own country.

The scene was almost surreal; we were high enough that clouds surrounded us. Goats and cows with bells around their necks grazed in the distance, while mountain streams could be heard rushing by. And there sat the priest, a friendly smile on his face, welcoming Chaya and me, our children and grandchildren, Gitta and her family, and friends and relatives from America, Israel, and Germany.

The trek up the mountain was difficult. I walked about halfway up. Others continued further, and a few reached the top. (Next year the walk will start in France, where it began in 1943.)

At that time the young Don Francesco was assistant priest in the parish of Valdieri, a small town in the Italian border province of Cuneo. He was a flamboyant figure, an excellent skier, who could be seen skimming across the Alps with his red hair and black cape flapping in the wind. As a member of the Italian Resistance, he helped the Jewish refugees by bringing them winter clothes, providing false papers and financial aid, and

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### Officers 2004-2005

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Burt Robin	<i>Vice President</i>
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### Chicago Jewish History

*Chicago Jewish History* is published quarterly by the Chicago Jewish Historical Society at 618 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60605. (312) 663-5634. Single copies \$4.00 postpaid. Successor to *Society News*.

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## 1654-2004 Celebrate 350 Years of Jewish Life in America!

Visit these important American Jewish institutions via their web sites. You will find fascinating online timelines, virtual museums, and lots of links. Better yet, visit *in person* during this historic year.

### Milwaukee Jewish Historical Society

1360 North Prospect Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
(414) 390-5700

As a service to the community, the Milwaukee Jewish Federation established the Milwaukee Jewish Historical Society in 1986. All of the materials in the Society's vast and varied collections are available for examination and research.

—[www.milwaukeejewishhistorical.org](http://www.milwaukeejewishhistorical.org)

### Jewish Museum of Florida

301 Washington Avenue  
Miami Beach, FL 33139  
(305) 672-5044

Located in a restored historic Art Deco building on South Beach that was formerly an Orthodox synagogue, the Museum collects, preserves, and interprets the Florida Jewish experience since 1763.

**MOSAIC: Jewish Life in Florida** is the Museum's core exhibit.

**Jews of Broward County: Through January 30, 2005.**

Historic photos, sweeping murals, documents, and artifacts portray the story of the many roles Jews have played in developing the home to Florida's largest Jewish population.

—[www.jewishmuseum.com](http://www.jewishmuseum.com)

### Texas Jewish Historical Society

P.O. Box 10193  
Austin, TX 78766-0193  
(713) 723-1406

The Texas Jewish Historical Society, the Texas State Historical Association, and the Center for American History at the University of Texas are in the initial stages of compiling a history of the Jews of Texas, tentatively titled *Lone Stars of David: The Jews of Texas*. The book that the Society helped underwrite, *Jewish Stars in Texas* by Hollace Weiner, about rabbis who rose to prominence, is now available. Ordering information can be found on the Society's web site.

—[www.txjhs.org](http://www.txjhs.org)

### Southwest Jewish Archives

1052 North Highland Avenue  
Tucson, AZ 85721  
(520) 621-5774

The Leona G. and David A. Bloom Southwest Jewish Archives at the University of Arizona Library presents several educational exhibits confirming that pioneer Jews placed a priority on maintaining their beliefs, values, and traditions amid the hazards of the nation's frontier. The Bloom Archives is also a resource for historical research, such as the study of Crypto-Jews in the U.S. Southwest. Between 1992 and 1995, the Archives distributed a quarterly newsletter, *Southwest Jewish History (SJH)*. You will find selected *SJH* articles linked to pages throughout the web site.

—<http://dizzy.library.arizona.edu>

### Jewish Museum of Maryland

15 Lloyd Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
(410) 732-6400

**Weaving Women's Words: Baltimore Stories: Through 2004.**

This unique exhibition presents oral histories by Baltimore Jewish women with specially commissioned works of art by prominent artists from across the nation and portraits by renowned photographer Joan Roth. Weaving Women's Words is organized by the Jewish Women's Archive (Boston).

**Lives Lost, Lives Found: Baltimore's German Jewish Refugees, 1933-1945: Through April 2005.**

This original JMM exhibition breaks new ground in telling the story of the German Jewish refugees who found haven in Baltimore during the Nazi era. The exhibition brings to life a dramatic, compelling tale of dispossession and adaptation and explores how the local Jewish community assisted the newcomers.

—[www.jewishmuseummd.org](http://www.jewishmuseummd.org)

**CORRECTIONS:** On page 8 of *CJH* Summer 2004 we published an incorrect street address, web site, and exhibition opening date. The Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington is located at 600 I Street NW, Washington, DC. Web site is [www.jhsgw.org](http://www.jhsgw.org). "Jewish Washington: Scrapbook of an American Community" opens Sunday, December 5, at the City Museum, 801 K Street NW.

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## Celebrate 350!

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### Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience

Since 1986, the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience has worked to preserve, interpret, and document the long and rich tradition of Jewish life in the South. The Museum currently uses two contemporary and historically significant properties:

#### Natchez Site

Temple B'nai Israel  
213 South Commerce Street  
at Washington Street  
Natchez, MS 39120  
(601) 362-6357

Temple B'nai Israel houses the oldest Jewish congregation in Mississippi (1843). Sephardic Jewish traders first settled in Natchez in the 1700s.

**Current Exhibit: Of Passover and Pilgrimage: The Natchez Jewish Experience**

#### Utica Site

Henry S. Jacobs Camp  
near Jackson, Mississippi.  
See web site or phone for  
directions. (601) 362-6357

Beautiful rural setting on a 300-acre site that offers innovative programming to hundreds of Henry S. Jacobs campers each summer as well as groups of all ages throughout the year. The Museum has a self-guided tour and is open by appointment.

**Current Exhibit:  
Alsace to America**

—[www.msje.org](http://www.msje.org)

## Isaac Rosenfeld *continued from page 1*

Many of the Jews who lived in the Humboldt Park neighborhood were of East European origin. They were secular Yiddish speakers for whom philosophy and politics replaced traditional Jewish religious observance. Ceshinsky's Music and Book Store, at 2750 West Division Street, was their meeting place. There they might read and discuss the works of Eliot, Bakunin, and Tolstoy—in the Yiddish language.

Isaac attended after-school Yiddish classes at the neighborhood Sholom Aleichem Institute. As a young man, he published stories in Yiddish as well as English, and wrote a hilarious Yiddish translation of Eliot's *Prufrock*.

Young Isaac earned a reputation for being a "genius"—precocious and serious, interested in philosophy and politics. Bellow wrote of Rosenfeld "holding forth" on Schopenhauer at Tuley High, "with perfect authority and seriousness—a thirteen-year-old wearing short pants." Isaac, as well as some of his Tuley High School friends, were active in the Trotskyite Spartacus Youth League and the People's Socialist Youth League.

After graduating from Tuley in 1935, Isaac entered the University of Chicago. He later wrote: "Politics was everywhere...one ate it, drank it, and sleep gave no escape, for it furnished terror to dreams; Hitler, Mussolini, the Moscow Trials, the Spanish Civil War, Stalinism...NRA, WPA, and the New Deal, and the approach of inevitable war."

Isaac left home during his college years and lived in shabby Hyde Park rooming houses, perhaps in rejection of his father's *petit bourgeois* emphasis on neatness and correctness. Later, his bohemian habitats became scenes of squalor. But his student work was brilliant. He studied philosophy and politics and wrote fiction and poetry. In 1937 he received the prestigious John Billings Kisk Award for a group of lyric poems. A critic wrote that "two subjects that haunt Isaac's work first appear here; his interest in Jews and Judaism...and the possibility or impossibility of love and community."

Isaac graduated from the University of Chicago in 1941 with an M.A. He married a fellow student, Vasiliki Sarantakis, and moved to New York to work on a Ph.D. in logic at N.Y.U. During his first year, he changed his major to the humanities.

It was at this point that his writing career blossomed. His poetry, essays, reviews and short stories were being published in leading magazines. He was also an editor for a time of *The New Republic*. In 1944, the *Partisan Review* had published his story, "The Hand that Fed Me," to great acclaim. In the same year, Saul Bellow had published his first novel, *Dangling Man*. Because the heroes of their stories were "underground men," the two young writers came to be known as "The Chicago Dostoyevskians." Rosenfeld and Bellow were friends, but they were also rivals. Bellow felt at that time that the younger man, Isaac, was besting him in talent and recognition.

By 1945 Isaac and Vasiliki had two children, George and Eleni. That year he won the *Partisan Review's* Novelette Award for "The Colony," a chapter from a novel he never completed. It is set in a Jewish summer resort in Michigan, based on Schwartz's in Benton Harbor, where he and his father had vacationed. The following year he succeeded in equalling his friend Bellow's accomplishment in getting a novel published.

*Passage from Home* is a first-person narrative told from the viewpoint of an alienated, book-smart, 14-year-old Humboldt Park boy. Isaac's family members were the models for some of the characters. There are leavening bits of Yiddish humor, but the hero's deliberate emotional distancing from those around him—written in the existential style of the day—begins to alienate the reader, too. Although the novel received good reviews, it did not sell well. It was overshadowed by the popularity of a very different book about family life in the Depression, also narrated by a teenager, the best seller, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, by Betty Smith.

Saul Bellow's next book, *The Victim*, appeared in 1947. His great novel, *The Adventures of Augie March*, a first-person narrative of a Jewish boy coming of age in Chicago, was published in 1953.

When Isaac's writing dropped off in the late 1940s—Bellow has written that his friend was "severely blocked"—he turned to the theories of the psychiatrist and biophysicist Wilhelm Reich, who seemed to offer a vision that explained the link between unreleased sexual energy and neurotic behavior, and even irrational social movements. He preached "redemption in the power of the unblocked libido," and invented the orgone box, a device that he claimed would restore energy to the person sitting inside it. Isaac had a homemade version. For a time Bellow, too, was a Reichian. Both writers eventually gave up on the theory. (The orgone box was declared a fraud by the Food and Drug Administration in 1957.)

Isaac's second novel *The Enemy*, a Kafkaesque story, was not accepted for publication, and he worked with unsuccessful results on a book about Gandhi. Isaac's marriage broke up in 1951, and he left New York.

He was on the University of Minnesota faculty for two years, then returned to his home town to teach at the Downtown Center of The University of Chicago. He lived for a time in a wretched room on Woodlawn Avenue in Hyde Park, then moved to an apartment on Walton Place. He died there, alone, of a massive heart attack on July 14, 1956. He was 38 years old. He is buried in the Workmen's Circle Cemetery in Waldheim next to the grave of his mother.

Isaac's writings on the Holocaust in the 1940s indicate a profound personal identification with the destruction of European Jewry that "undermined and nullified all previous conceptions of man or morality." For him, the new categories were "terror beyond evil" and "joy beyond good." The latter reflects Isaac's belief that a moment of ecstatic joy—of the kind enjoyed by a

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**Isaac Rosenfeld and his daughter Eleni, 1945.**

*Collection of Miriam Passin.*

### Writings By and About Isaac Rosenfeld.

*Out of print listings can be found at the Chicago Public Library and the Asher Library, Spertus Institute.*

**PASSAGE FROM HOME.** By Isaac Rosenfeld. (New World, 1946; World/Meridian, 1961.) Out of print.

**ALPHA AND OMEGA: Stories.** By Isaac Rosenfeld. (Viking, 1966.) The collection includes "The Hand That Fed Me" and "King Solomon." Out of print.

**AN AGE OF ENORMITY: Life and Writing in the Forties and Fifties.** By Isaac Rosenfeld. Edited and Introduced by Theodore Solotaroff. Foreword by Saul Bellow. (World, 1962.) Out of print.

**PRESERVING THE HUNGER: An Isaac Rosenfeld Reader.** Edited and Introduced by Mark Shechner. (Wayne State University Press, 1988.)

**HIM WITH HIS FOOT IN HIS MOUTH AND OTHER STORIES.** By Saul Bellow. Includes "Zetland: By a Character Witness." A portrait of Rosenfeld—here called "Zet." (Harper & Row, 1984; Penguin, 1998.)

**"First Loves of Isaac Rosenfeld."** By Stephen J. Zipperstein. (*Jewish Social Studies*; Volume 5, Numbers 1 & 2; online at <http://iupjournals.org/jss>.)

**"Profrock Shmufrock."** By Gene Bluestein. (*Yiddish*; Volume 7, Number 1; Queens College Press, 1987.)

## Isaac Rosenfeld *continued from page 5*

Hassidic rabbi—is all that we can expect, rather than the general good we long for.

Some of his essays on Jewish subjects carried harsh criticism of religious observance. In one piece he characterized the kosher laws as symbolic of sexual taboos; for example, the separation of meat and milk meant the separation of male and female and the prohibition of sexual intercourse.

In a 1952 *Commentary* review of Abraham Cahan's, *The Rise of David Levinsky*, Isaac criticizes the book's main character, an assimilated American diaspora Jew, who is "bound to endless yearning after yearning." Jewish and American culture and character share a "similar play on striving and fulfillment," Isaac wrote, and this made for Jews' "virtually flawless Americanization."

His last published essay was "Life In Chicago." It appeared posthumously in the June 1957 issue of *Commentary*. It is a home town boy's reply to A.J. Liebling, an outsider, who had published a series of uncomplimentary articles about Chicago, called "The Second City," in *The New Yorker*. However, 1956 was not a great year for our city; Isaac despaired our lack of theater, predicted the demise of our new Lyric Opera, and ridiculed the Kimpton regime at the University of Chicago. He did hold out hope for the city's cultural awakening under its newly elected mayor, Richard J. Daley.

Isaac's last fiction, the short story "King Solomon," was also published posthumously. The old King is living in a messy house, dressed in an undershirt, thinking about his death. He lives in a city that is a cross between Jerusalem and the Lower East Side. He is unmoved by the Queen of Sheba, but does contract a 99-year oil lease with her before she leaves town. "The counselors vouch for it, they swear they have seen the proof. That King Solomon now takes to bed, not with a virgin, as his father, David, did in his old age, or even with a dancing girl, but with a hot water bottle to warm him...."

I recently attended a gathering in Hyde Park for the noted editor, Ted Solotaroff, who spoke of the importance of Bellow and Rosenfeld in the shaping of American Jewish literature. He was in Chicago to give a talk on his two memoirs, *Truth Comes in Blows* and *First Loves*, as part of the excellent Nextbook Writers Series. You can order free tickets for future programs at [www.nextbook.org](http://www.nextbook.org) or phone (888) 621-2230. ❖

**WALTER ROTH** is the president of CJHS.

*T.S. Eliot (1888-1965)*

### ***The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* (excerpts)**

Let us go then, you and I,  
When the evening is spread out against the sky  
Like a patient etherized upon a table;  
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,  
The muttering retreats  
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels  
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells;  
Streets that follow like a tedious argument  
Of insidious intent  
To lead you to an overwhelming question...  
Oh, do not ask, "What is it?"

Let us go and make our visit.

In the room the women come and go  
Talking of Michelangelo.

...

I grow old...I grow old...

I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.

Shall I part my hair behind? Dare I eat a peach?

I shall wear white flannel trousers and walk upon the  
beach.

I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.

I do not think that they will sing to me.

*Isaac Rosenfeld (1918-1956)*

### **A Yiddish "Translation" of the *Prufrock* excerpts**

Nu-zhe, kum-zhe, ikh un du

Ven der ovnt shteyt unter dem himl

Vi a leymener goylem af tishebov.

Lomir geyn gikh, durkh geselekh vos dreyen zikh

Vi di bord bay dem rov.

Oyf der vant

Fun dem koshern restoran

Hengt a shmutsiker betgevant.

Un vantsn tantsn karahod. Es geyt a geroykh

fun gefilte fish un nase zokn.

Oy, Bashe, freg nit kayn kashe, a dayge dir!

Lomir oyfefenen di tir.

In tsimer vu di vayber zenen

Redt men fun Marz un Lenin.

...

Ikh ver alt, ikh ver alt

Un der pupik vert mir kalt.

Zol ikh oyskemen di hor,

Meg ikh oyfesn a flom?

Ikh vel onton vayse hoyzn

Un shpatsirn bay dem yom.

Ikh vel hern di yam-meydn zingen Khad Gadyo.

Ikh vel zey entfern, Borech-abo.

## CJHS Publications

*These books, unless otherwise noted, may be ordered directly from the Society office at (312) 663-5634.*

### **CHICAGO JEWISH HISTORY: INDEX 1977-2002.**

Compiled by Adele Hast. 2002. *Chicago Jewish Historical Society*. 23 pp. Index of the Society's quarterly journal. Reference copies can be found at Asher Library, Spertus Institute. *Limited quantity available from CJHS office.*

### **SYNAGOGUES OF CHICAGO.**

Edited by Irving Cutler, Norman D. Schwartz, and Sidney Sorkin. Project supervised by Clare Greenberg. 1991. *Chicago Jewish Historical Society*. Computerized compilation of synagogue listings in Chicago city directories since 1851. Every year's complete listings; a one line summary of each congregation; its active years; street address; name of rabbi; name of president if available. *Reference copies can be found at the Chicago Public Library and Asher Library at Spertus Institute.*

### **HISTORY OF THE JEWS OF CHICAGO.**

By Hyman L. Meites. 1924. Facsimile Republication with Introduction. 1990. *Chicago Jewish Historical Society*. The original 1924 edition and the 1990 facsimile are both now out of print. *Copies of both books can be found at the Chicago Public Library and Asher Library, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies.*

### **A WALK TO SHUL: Chicago Synagogues of Lawndale and Stops on the Way.**

By Bea Kraus and Norman D. Schwartz. 2003. 159 pages, paper, \$19.95. Offers a street-by-street stroll past the Jewish institutions and businesses of long-ago Lawndale. Illustrated.

### **VIDEO: ROMANCE OF A PEOPLE: 100 Years of Jewish History in Chicago, 1833-1933.**

Beverly Siegel, Executive Producer/ Director. 1997. 30 minutes, \$29.95. *Distributed by Ergo Media, Inc., P.O. Box 2037, Teaneck, NJ 10766. www.ergomedia.com.*

**THE ROMANCE OF A PEOPLE.** 2000. 80 pages (72-page facsimile plus 8 pages of new material), paper, \$15.00. Program book for the pageant-drama presented at Soldier Field on Jewish Day at *A Century of Progress*, the Chicago World's Fair of 1933.\*

### **THE CHICAGO JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY: A Ten Year History.**

By Irwin J. Suloway. 1988. 32 pages, paper, \$3.00. Illustrated.

### **THE GERMAN-JEWISH EMIGRATION OF THE 1930s AND ITS IMPACT ON CHICAGO.**

By Walter Roth. 1980. 24 pages, paper, \$3.00. Report on a symposium held at Congregation Ezra-Habonim on November 18, 1979.

### **Doris Minsky Memorial Fund Prize Winners:**

*Doris Minsky was a founder, director, and officer of the Society. The Fund was established in her memory for the purpose of publishing monographs on the history of the Jews of Chicago. Submissions were judged, and cash prizes awarded, by the CJHS Publications Committee.*

#### **1. CHICAGO JEWISH STREET PEDDLERS.**

By Carolyn Eastwood and **MEMORIES OF LAWDALE.** By Beatrice Michaels Shapiro. 1991. 103 pages, paper, \$5.00. Illustrated.\*

**2. THE CHAYDER, THE YESHIVA AND I.** By Morris Springer and **MEMORIES OF THE MANOR.** By Eva Gross. Memoir of the Jeffery Manor neighborhood. 1993. 95 pages, paper, \$5.00. Illustrated.

**3. THE CANTORS: Gifted Voices Remembered.** By Bea Kraus. 1996. 85 pages, paper, \$5.00. Illustrated,

**4. MY FATHER, MYSELF: A Son's Memoir of His Father, Rabbi Yehudah D. Goldman, America's Oldest Practicing Rabbi.** By Rabbi Alex J. Goldman. 1997. 120 pages, paper, \$5.00. Illustrated,

**5. THROUGH THE EYES OF THEIR CHILDREN.** By Myron H. Fox. 2001. 160 pages, paper, \$7.50. Dramatic tale of the Chicago Taxi Wars. Illustrated.

\* Books distributed by *Academy Chicago Publishers 363 West Erie, Chicago, IL (312) 751-7300 www.academychicago.com*

## Looking Backward

TRUE STORIES FROM CHICAGO'S JEWISH PAST



WALTER ROTH

### LOOKING BACKWARD: True Stories from Chicago's Jewish Past.

By Walter Roth. 2002. *Academy Chicago Publishers*; 305 pages, \$27.95. The unknown story of Jewish participation in Chicago's great fair of 1893 is only one of the fascinating nuggets of history unearthed and polished by Walter Roth in the pages of *Chicago Jewish History*. Now, for the first time, the material has been collected in a single volume, chronicling events and people from the late 1800s to the end of World War II. Illustrated.

**AN ACCIDENTAL ANARCHIST.** By Walter Roth and Joe Kraus. 1998. *Rudi Publishing*. Reissued by *Academy Chicago Publishers*; 211 pages, paper, \$16.95. The story of young Lazarus Averbuch's fatal 1908 encounter with Chicago Police Chief George Shippy. Illustrated.

**THE FLORIDA JEWISH HERITAGE TRAIL.** By Rachel B. Heimovics and Marcia Zerivitz. 2000. *Florida Department of State*; 44 pages, paper. Fully illustrated. \$10.50 each for one or two copies. if ordered from The Jewish Museum of Florida, 301 Washington Ave., Miami Beach, FL. 33139-6965. (305) 672-5044.

## Books by CJHS Members

*Many of these books are available at retail stores and online booksellers. Some can be ordered directly from the publisher or author. Those listed as OP (out-of-print) may be purchased from used book dealers. Some can be found at the Chicago Public Library and/or the Asher Library, Spertus Institute.*

**THE JEWS OF CHICAGO: From Shtetl to Suburb.** By Irving Cutler. 1996. *University of Illinois Press*; 315 pages, \$29.95. Vividly told history of Chicago's Jewish community, by a founding Board member of the Society. (His CJHS "Chicago Jewish Roots" tours always sell out!) Illustrated.

**JEWISH CHICAGO: A PICTORIAL HISTORY.** By Irving Cutler. 2000. *Arcadia Publishing*; 128 pages, paper, \$18.99. A sentimental snapshot of the city's Jewish community—its cultural, religious, economic, and everyday life. Includes 230 photographs and maps.

**WOMEN BUILDING CHICAGO, 1790-1990: A Biographical Dictionary.** Edited by Adele Hast and Rima Lunin Schultz. 2001. *Indiana University Press*; 1,088 pages, \$75.00. Of the over 400 individual entries in this invaluable reference, forty are Jewish women. Illustrated.

**BRIDGES TO AN AMERICAN CITY: A Guide to Chicago's Landsmannschaften, 1870 to 1990.** By Sidney Sorkin. 1993. *Peter Lang Publishing*; 480 pages, \$35.00. A thorough study of the hundreds of service organizations, named after their Old World origins, that were a significant part of the immigrant experience. Order directly from Mr. Sorkin (847) 541-2188.

**A TIME TO REMEMBER: A History of the Jewish Community in South Haven.** By Bea Kraus. 1999. *Priscilla Press*; 287 pages, paper, \$24.95. Covers the 1920s through the 1950s, when this town on the Lake Michigan shore was a thriving Jewish summer resort community. Illustrated.

**A PLACE TO REMEMBER: South Haven—A Success From the Beginning.** By Bea Kraus. 2003. *Priscilla Press*; 316 pages, paper, \$24.95. Companion to *A Time to Remember* ranges from early America to the present day. Illustrated. Order both online at [www.BKrausBooks.com](http://www.BKrausBooks.com).

**NEAR WEST SIDE STORIES: Struggles for Community in Chicago's Maxwell Street Neighborhood.** By Carolyn Eastwood. 2002. *Lake Claremont Press*; 355 pages, paper, \$17.95. Four extraordinary "ordinary" individuals who tried to save their neighborhood and the market that was at its core. Illustrated. Available on CD or audiocassette from Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic, 18 S. Michigan Ave., Ste. 806, Chicago, IL 60603.

"Street Vending" by Carolyn Eastwood. In **THE OXFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FOOD AND DRINK IN AMERICA.** 2004. *Oxford University Press*. For contents and price go to the publisher's web site: [www.oup.com/us](http://www.oup.com/us). Enter 24006 in the promo code box; it will take you to the OEFDA page.

**PRAIRIE DIRECTORY OF NORTH AMERICA: US & Canada.** By Charlotte Adelman and Bernard L. Schwartz. 2002. *Lawndale Enterprises*; 352 pages, paper, \$19.95. The first-ever guide for visits to the prairie, an ecosystem unique to North America. 50 pages devoted to Illinois prairie. P.O. Box 561, Wilmette, IL 60091-0561 or [www.Lawndaleenterprises.com](http://www.Lawndaleenterprises.com).



**CHICAGO'S GREAT WHITE CITY: A Postal History Panorama of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition.** By Dr. Harvey M. Karlen. 2004. *Berk-Hill Publishers*; 283 pages, \$83.00 + 4.00 s/h. The Parliament of Religions, Sol Bloom, Hannah Greenbaum Solomon, the first postcards! 480 illustrations. The author was inducted into the Philatelic Writers Hall of Fame in 2003. Order from Berk-Hill Publishers, P.O. Box 833, Oak Park, IL 60303.

**CANDLES BURNED IN CHICAGO: A History of 53 Memorial Commemorations of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.** The Midwest Jewish Council. Kenan Heise, editor; N. Sue Weiler, contributing editor. 2004. *Author House*; 132 pages, paper, \$18.00. The stirring memorial gatherings mounted by a group of Jewish Chicagoans and their friends from 1944 to 1996. Make checks payable to The Midwest Jewish Council, P.O. Box 59032, Chicago, IL 60659-0032.

**LEGACY: The Saga of A German-Jewish Family Across Time and Circumstance.** By Werner L. Frank. 2003. *Avotaynu Foundation, Inc.*; 926 pages plus CD of family history, \$49.00. A portion of the book deals with the author's immigration to Chicago, and growing up in Hyde Park. Order by phone or online: (800) 286-8296 or [www.avotaynu.com](http://www.avotaynu.com).

**MINYANS FOR A PRAIRIE CITY: The Politics of Chicago Jewry 1850-1914.** By Edward H. Mazur. 1990. *Garland*; 428 pages, O.P. (out of print), \$75.00. See page 14 of this *CJH* for an article on Dr. Mazur.

"Jewish Chicago: From Diversity to Community" by Edward H. Mazur. Pages 46-68 in **THE ETHNIC FRONTIER**. Holli and d'A Jones, editors. 1984. *Eerdmans Publishing Company*; paper, O.P., \$19.95.

**BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN MAYORS, 1820-1980.** Holli and d'A Jones, editors; Edward H. Mazur, contributing editor. 1981. *Greenwood Press*; 441 pages, O.P., \$49.95.

**JACK OF HEARTS—A FULL DECK.** By Jack W. Ardell. 2004. *Earth Star Publications*; 50 pages, paper, special *CJHS* members' price \$17.00 + 3.00 s/h. A collection of original, family-friendly short stories and poems. Illustrated by the author. Order from Ardell Art & Craft, 5140 S. Fairview, #8, Downers Grove, IL 60515.

**THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS AT TEMPLE SHOLOM.** By Norman D. Schwartz and Rolf Achilles. Photographs by Rich Master. Design by Dianne Burgis. 2001. *Temple Sholom of Chicago*; 20 pages, paper, \$5.00. Full color monograph describes and documents the twelve sets of beautiful windows. (773) 525-4707.

**BREAKING GROUND: Careers of 20 Chicago Jewish Women.** By Beatrice Michaels Shapiro. 2004. *Author House*; 137 pages, paper, \$15.50. Interviews with successful women—many of whom broke barriers in male-dominated professions—about balancing career and family, and the role of Judaism in their lives. At bookstores or from the publisher (888) 280-7715.

**ON YOUR OWN IN COLLEGE.** By William C. Resnick and David H. Heller. 1963, 1964, 1969. *Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc.*; 275 pages, O.P. (out of print). Advice for college freshmen, with selected readings.

**SHORT SEA SAGAS.** By Harold T. Berc. 2002. *Athena Press*; 190 pages, paper, \$17.95. Unusual tales of over two hundred ships—mutinies, unusual sinkings, mystery ships sailing for years without crews, piracy, wartime disasters and phenomena of the unknown. Concludes with a chapter on the author's experiences as a U.S. Navy combat officer in WW II. Illustrated.

● **THE ART OF THE YIDDISH FOLK SONG.** Sima Miller, soprano; Arnold Miller, piano. 4 CDs \$15.00 each; 5 audiotapes \$10.00 each. Splendid interpretations of beloved favorites. From Sima Miller, 8610 Avers Ave., Skokie, IL 60076, or phone (847) 873-6409.

## Other Books of Interest

**THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CHICAGO.** Edited by James R. Grossman, Ann Durkin Keating, and Janice L. Reiff. 2004. *The University of Chicago Press*; 1117 pages, \$65.00. The "Judaism" entry was written by Rabbi Arnold Jacob Wolf. Illustrated.

**FABULOUS SMALL JEWS.** By Joseph Epstein. 2004. *Mariner Books/Houghton Mifflin Company*; 340 pages, paper, \$13.00. Eighteen gracefully comic stories about Chicago Jewish men of a certain age who feel themselves adrift in the radically changed values of the day.

**MACHERS AND ROCKERS: Chess Records and the Business of Rock & Roll.** By Rich Cohen. 2004. *Norton*; 220 pages, \$22.95. How Leonard Chess, an enterprising Jewish immigrant from Poland, and Muddy Waters, a talented black immigrant from Mississippi, made music history in Chicago.

**ROSA RAISA: A Biography of a Diva with Selections from Her Memoirs.** By Charles Mintzer. 2001. *Northeastern University Press*; 342 pages, \$30.00. The Jewish soprano from Bialystok, Rosa Raisa (1894-1964), was a mainstay of Chicago opera. Adoring West Siders called her *undzer Reizeleh* (our Rosie). Illustrated.

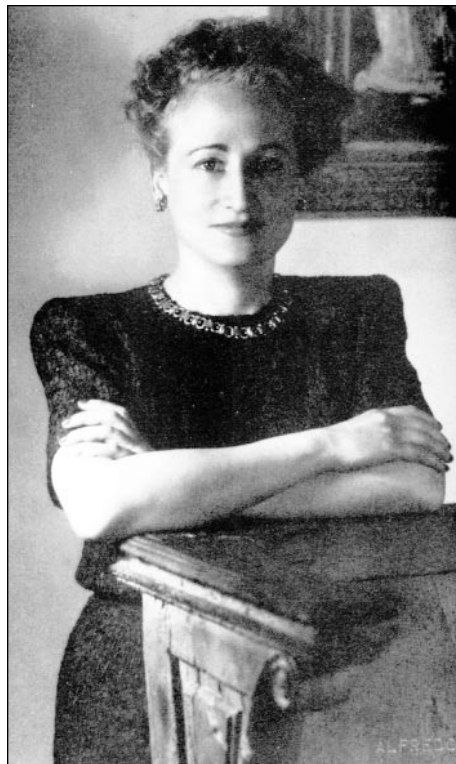
# Writer Vera Caspary: The Secrets of a South Sider in Hollywood

**H**ow did Vera Caspary, a sheltered Jewish girl born in an inhibited era, defy the conventions of her background to become an eminent and highly paid novelist (*Laura*), playwright, and screenwriter (*A Letter to Three Wives*, *Les Girls*)? She reveals the private details of her life in her autobiography, *The Secrets of Grown-ups* (McGraw-Hill, 1979).

She was born in 1899 on the South Side of Chicago into a family of German and Sephardic heritage. The first grown-up secret in her story is her mother's. A woman well over the age of forty when she became pregnant with Vera, she kept her "shameful" condition concealed under loose house dresses and tea gowns. Eventually she adjusted to what had seemed a horror, and regarded the baby as something of a miracle. The rest of Vera's family—her father, two grown brothers, and a sister—loved, spoiled, and bossed the little girl.

Vera credits Dr. Emil G. Hirsch of Sinai Congregation for giving her an adult, broad-minded education in Sunday School, and later in Saturday confirmation class.

Her family lived in half of a double house on Rhodes Avenue. When the other half was rented to



**Vera Caspary, 1946.**

Photograph by Alfredo Valente.

black people—Judge Reginald Barnett and his wife, Ida B. Wells, the lawyer and social activist—there was an outcry from the neighbors. Vera's father led a small faction against the protesters; he had grown up as an Abolitionist in Wisconsin. Yet the Casparys' contact with the Barnetts extended only to greetings—nothing more neighborly.

Vera opted for secretarial school instead of college after graduating from Phillips High. She claimed that she did not want to burden her elderly father, a buyer of millinery trimmings for a State Street store, with the expense. Her secret reason, she tells us in her memoir: she was a very thin girl, dark-haired, with a sallow complexion—and weren't all co-eds fair beauties, confidently pursuing their Mrs. degrees?

With her intelligence, talent, and spirit, Vera moved quickly from stenographer to advertising copywriter. At night, at home, she was writing her first novel, *The White Girl*. She had been writing stories and plays as far back as she could remember. The mother of one of her girlfriends was a published author, role model, and advisor.

Vera and her friends went to the movies and theater as often as possible. Vera and her first lover, her office boss, spent weekends at the Indiana Dunes (another secret).

She left Chicago for New York and a job with Bernarr McFadden's publishing house, and looked back only in the pages of her second novel, *Thicker Than Water* (1931), about a Chicago Jewish family much like her own.

Her play of that year, *Blind Mice*, was adapted into the movie *Working Girls*. Her 1932 play, *The Night of June 13th*, was adapted into a movie of the same name. Throughout the '30s, her stories about women juggling romance and independence were adapted into films. Her 1943 novel, *Laura*, was made into a memorable movie. She became a well-paid screenwriter.

Her misguided two-year membership in the Communist Party in the mid-1930s later caused much anguish. Marriage, in her forties, to film producer Isadore Goldsmith, brought happiness. She retired from the movie business in 1961, moved to New York, and continued writing novels until her death in 1987.

You can find copies of Vera Caspary's lively autobiography and her many novels at the Chicago Public Library.—*Bev Chubot*

## The Society Welcomes New Members

Barbara Bernstein

Judith Dash

Norman Edelstein

Leo J. Krupp

Robert Packer

Marilyn Block Ruskin

Lisa Thaler

# Sociologist Marshall Sklare: A Study of North Shore Suburban Jews

Some people are familiar with only two books on Chicago Jewish history—*History of the Jews of Chicago* by H.L. Meites (1924) and *The Jews of Chicago: From Shtetl to Suburb* by Irving Cutler (1996). There are other wonderful books that deserve to be read. One of my favorites is *Jewish Identity on the Suburban Frontier: A Study of Group Survival in the Open Society* by Marshall Sklare and Joseph Greenblum (The University of Chicago Press, 1967, 1979).

This is a sociological study that explores the state of American Judaism in 1957 by examining a suburban community the authors call “Lakeville.” The American Jewish Committee sponsored the Lakeville Study.

You have to know a few things about the main author. Marshall Sklare (1921-1992) was born in Chicago. He graduated from both Northwestern University and the College of Jewish Studies (now Spertus College), received his M.A. from the University of Chicago, and Ph.D. from Columbia University. He was Professor of Sociology at Yeshiva University from 1966 to 1970 before going to Brandeis University (1970-1990), where he founded the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, the first research center devoted to social scientific study of contemporary American Jewry. Marshall Sklare was the acknowledged “dean” of American Jewish sociology.

He chose Chicago, his home town, as his sample community, and called it “Lake City.”

For his suburban subject, he looked for a community where “vocationally successful individuals” with a high level of secular education were to be found, where “Jews were accepted as participants and supporters of cultural enterprises,” and where “different strands of the American Jewish population were represented: the descendants of both ‘uptown’ Jews and ‘downtown’ Jews.” The suburb he chose, and called “Lakeville,” was actually Highland Park.

The book can be dry reading. It has lots of tables that only a sociologist could love (and I’m not

a sociologist). I suggest that you skim over the tables and most of the book, and read Chapter Four: “The Synagogues of Lakeville: Institutional Analysis.”

Sklare describes five congregations, four in Highland Park and one in Glencoe. All five grew dramatically in the 1950s, all are still around today, and none have merged. (There are two breakaways, though, Am Shalom in Glencoe and Moriah in Deerfield.)

Nathan Glazer reviewed the book in *Commentary* magazine in 1968, and lauds the specialness of the synagogue institutional analysis. He writes that “the most original part of the book is its study of the five temples and synagogues of Lakeville. Nowhere, so far as I know, in the literature of American religious sociology do we have an analysis in such depth of the congregational pattern of an American community, and there is certainly no such account of the congregational pattern of an American Jewish community.”

Twenty years after the 1957 study, another survey was made in Lakeville/Highland Park, and a second edition of the book was published, with an added chapter describing changes in the community following the Yom Kippur War. I think you’ll find the synagogue analysis so interesting, you may end up reading the other chapters of the book.—*Mark Mandel*

Sklare disguises the names of the institutions and personalities in his analysis. Mark Mandel tells us who’s who in the 1957 study.

## SYNAGOGUE/RABBI

North Shore Congregation Israel  
*Edgar Siskin*

North Suburban Synagogue Beth El  
*Phillip Lipis*

Lakeside Congregation  
*(Don't know rabbi's name)*

Congregation Solel  
*Arnold Jacob Wolf*

Congregation B'nai Torah  
*Sholem Singer*

## PSEUDONYMS

Isaac Mayer Wise Temple  
*Herbert Greenberg*

Solomon Schecter Synagogue  
*David Ginzberg*

David Einhorn Temple  
*Edward Isaacs*

Samuel Hirsch Temple  
*Samuel Aaron*

Max Lilienthal Temple  
*Joshua Cohen*

## Also mentioned:

Chicago Sinai Congregation

KAM [Isaiah Israel] Congregation

Samuel Holdheim Temple

Samuel Adler Temple

FROM THE  
CHICAGO JEWISH  
*archives*

## My Kind of Town: Jewish Immigration to Chicago in the Twentieth Century

BY JOY KINGSOLVER

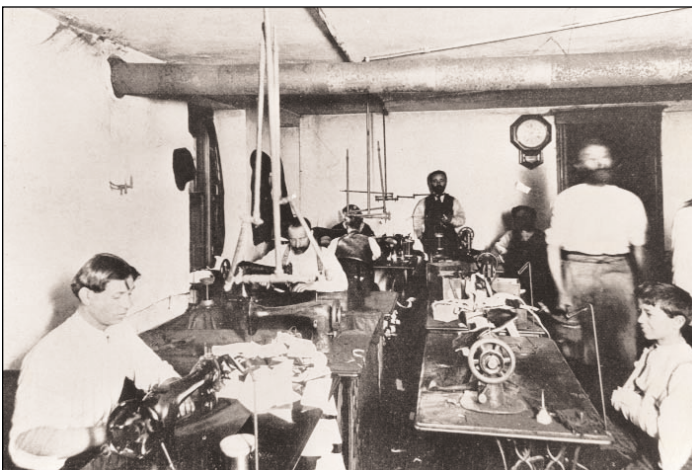
*Digital images by Tina Nauba*

**P**ictured here are a few of the items on exhibit in the Gallery of Chicago Jewish History, on the sixth floor at Spertus Institute, 618 South Michigan Avenue. This exhibition includes documents, photographs, and artifacts selected from the collections of the Chicago Jewish Archives to give an overview of the Jewish immigrant experience in Chicago.

Historians divide early Jewish immigration into three waves, or periods. The first wave (1654–1820) occurred before Chicago was settled; Sephardic Jews came from Brazil, Holland, and elsewhere to settle in New Amsterdam and elsewhere in the colonies. The second wave lasted from 1820 to 1880; during this period, thousands of German Jewish immigrants came in search of economic opportunities. Many were single men who established themselves as peddlers or in small businesses, and Midwestern cities such as Chicago offered promising business opportunities. The third wave spanned the years 1880–1924. Russian and Eastern European Jews flocked to the United States not only for the economic opportunity, but also because of oppression and anti-Semitism. Chicago's Russian Jewish community swelled, and by 1920, the total number of Jews in Chicago had grown to 250,000.



*Caroline and Marcus Spiegel, c. 1850, around the time of their marriage. Marcus, a German immigrant, was killed in the Civil War; Caroline was the first recorded Jewish convert in Chicago.*



*A sweatshop on the West Side of Chicago, 1903.*



*Rae Glickman and Celia Rubenstein in the Glickman Deli, c. 1925.*

In the 20th century, there were two additional periods of significant Jewish immigration. As the Nazi threat spread fear across Europe, Jews began to seek safety in the United States and in many other places around the world. It is estimated that about 150,000 Jews from German-speaking Europe came to the United States in the 1930s and 40s.

A wave of Soviet Jewish immigration took place in the 1970s; over 100,000 Russian Jews came to the United States during this period. This was possible because of an organized campaign to aid Soviet Jews which caught the attention of the U.S. government and of the international community. Chicago was a center of activity through groups like NITFOS (National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry) and through the Jewish Federation, which helped many Soviet immigrants find jobs and housing.

The Chicago Jewish Archives is looking for photographs, artifacts, passports, letters, and other material to add to its collections. Our special mission is to document the history of Jewish Chicago; your donation of archival material helps us to preserve this history and make it available for research. Call Joy Kingsolver, Archives Director, at (312) 322-1741 or email archives@spertus.edu. Letters can be addressed to the Chicago Jewish Archives, 618 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago IL 60605.

We appreciate your support!

### “My Kind of Town: Jewish Immigration to Chicago in the Twentieth Century.”

Gallery of Chicago Jewish History, Sixth Floor, Spertus Institute, 618 South Michigan Avenue. The exhibition is free and open to the public during library hours: Monday through Wednesday 9–6; Thursday 9–7; Friday 9–3; on Sundays see the reference librarian on the fifth floor for access. *Through February 13, 2005.*



*Paul and Gabriella Rosenbaum's extended family, Czechoslovakia, c. 1938, just before the family fled.*



*German passport of Karl and Irma Nussbaum, August 1939. Note that they were assigned the mandatory middle names “Israel” and “Sarah” to indicate their Jewish identity.*



*Chicago's labor leaders at the Vigil for Soviet Jewry, Civic Center Plaza, 1973.*

# October 31 Open Meeting: The Politics of Chicago Jewry, 1850-2004

Election Day was less than a week away when we presented our program in the sanctuary of Temple Shalom, 3480 North Lake Shore Drive. Vice-President Burt Robin introduced our speaker, Edward H. Mazur.

Dr. Mazur began by noting that “any analysis of Jews, elections, and politics must begin with a short history of the Jewish *experiences* in Chicago—*plural*.” First, there were the so-called German Jews, immigrants, or children of immigrants, from Bavaria, Prussia, Bohemia, Western Poland, Holland, and Western Austria. Until about 1880, the American Jewish population of 250,000 was almost entirely German-speaking. Second, there were the East European Jews, who arrived in great numbers from 1880 to 1920.



1850 to 1893 was a period of divided allegiances. Agitation over slavery, the Civil War, and Reconstruction, and the rapid rise of industrialization led most Chicago Jews into the Republican Party. (Democrats like Ald. Henry Greenebaum became Republicans in the 1860s, and remained lifelong Republicans.) In 1870, Edward Salomon, a native of Schleswig-Holstein, a Civil War hero, was elected Clerk of Cook County. Between 1880 and 1900, the Republicans rewarded Chicago Jews with minor appointive and elective offices.



The first Jews of any significance in the Democratic Party were Yiddish speakers from Bohemia who appealed to both Czechs and Jews. Three figures—Adolf Kraus, William Loeffler, and A. J. Sabath—organized the East European Jewish electorate, delivered the votes, and received personal and group status, power, patronage, and influence.

While the German Jews fought for “honest and economic men” who were non-partisan if not Republican, the East European Jews were interested in jobs, lower license fees (important to the many Jewish peddlers), and repeal of Sunday blue laws. The East Europeans were actually more independent than the German Jews in this period, as they voted Democratic in local elections but Republican in state and national contests.

The Progressive Era (1890-1914) found many advocates of municipal reform among the members of the Standard Club. These prosperous, acculturated Jews lived in

Woodlawn or Hyde Park, and were uneasy about the growing political power of the West Side.

The battle for control of Chicago’s Jewish electorate peaked in the 1911 mayoral race between U. of C. professor Charles Merriam and Carter Harrison II. German Jews led by Julius Rosenwald, the Greenebaum family, and Dr. Emil G. Hirsch, supported Merriam. Harrison’s Jewish supporters included Adolph J. Sabath; his protégé, Harry Fisher; and future governor Henry Horner.

Sabath came to Chicago in 1881. He became a lawyer, a successful real estate speculator, and in 1906 was elected to the U.S. Congress, representing the West Side. He served until his death on election night in 1952. He had just been re-elected.

Young Henry Horner worked for Mayor Harrison’s election in 1897, and political good fortune followed. By 1930 he was a five-term jurist who led the Democratic ticket in votes. Two years later the Party nominated him for governor, and he was victorious. Dr. Mazur stated that the candidacy of Henry Horner for governor in 1932 and 1936 was one factor in Chicago’s Jewish voters becoming “a rock solid bloc in the Democratic Party.”

West Side boss Jacob Arvey amassed great power in the Democratic Party. His last success came in 1948 when he “anointed” candidates Adlai Stevenson and Paul Douglas, and they were winners. Dr. Mazur discussed many other Chicago Jewish politicians before concluding his talk with a cautious look ahead to November 2. ❖

**Above: Adolph J. Sabath.** (1866–1952). Democrat; represented the West Side of Chicago in the U.S. Congress, 1906–1952.

**Below: Henry Horner.** (1878–1940). Democrat; Judge of the Probate Court of Cook County; Governor of Illinois, 1933–1940.

Photos from History of the Jews of Chicago, 1924.

## Marian Cutler, A Founding Board Member of CJHS

Marian Horovitz Cutler died on September 18, after a long struggle with cancer and heart disease.

When the Chicago Jewish Historical Society was formed in 1976, Marian and her husband, Dr. Irving Cutler, were among the founding members. As the Society grew, Marian was an active member of our Board of Directors. During the the 1980s, the Society's years of greatest growth, she served as Membership Committee chair, and also on our Editorial Board.

Marian had worked for suburban newspapers; and her editing, proofreading, and typing skills were invaluable in the preparation of Irv Cutler's books.

Her baking expertise was known to everyone who took Irv's "Chicago Jewish Roots" bus tours. About halfway through the old neighborhoods, Irv would bring out a large tin, from which he would offer Marian's delicious, freshly homemade chocolate chip cookies.

("The Cookie Lady" was given an award by the Geographic Society of Chicago, recognizing her efforts in baking countless cookies for tours organized in its name.)

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## Anthony Eastwood

Anthony Eastwood, husband of Dr. Carolyn Eastwood, recording secretary of the Society, died on August 20 of pneumonia and cancer at the age of 82.

Tony was born in Cheshire, England. He and Carolyn married in 1950 and had four children.

When she became a member of the CJHS Board, he would accompany her to our open meetings. It was a pleasure to listen to Tony's mellow, British-accented voice. After his retirement from Borg Warner Research in the mid-1980s, he employed his fine voice to record readings for the blind.

Other survivors include his sons Christopher and Peter, daughters Wendy Collier and Victoria Sumner, and two grandchildren. ❖



**Marian and Irv Cutler.**

*Image courtesy of The Chicago Jewish News.*

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Marian and Irv were married for 53 years, and together they traveled to all the continents, except Antarctica. In addition to her husband, Marian is survived by son Daniel, daughter Susan (Joab Silverglade), four grandchildren, a brother, two sisters, and many nieces and nephews. ❖

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### President's Column *continued from page 2*

delivering letters from Jews in Italy across the mountains to their families remaining in France. He was caught by the Nazis, imprisoned for a time and tortured (and he has the scars to prove it). Many of the Jews who crossed the mountains from France into Italy were later captured and sent to their death in Auschwitz in cattle cars, some of which are now on exhibit at a railroad station near Valdieri.

At the ceremony we also met with the family of Andreina Blue, who had helped Chaya, Gitta, and their mother by supplying food and safe haven in the caves of the mountains. Andreina was one of the many resisters to the Nazis when they invaded northern Italy. She is deceased, but her daughter Anna, though 78 years of age, is hale and hearty. Anna's daughter, granddaughter, and their spouses were also with us.

The story of this miraculous escape is not mine and should be told by my wife. I have been assured that she is doing so, in the form of a book. Let me add, however, that if you visit Italy, do plan to spend a few days up near the city of Cuneo and town of Valdieri. There are still small communities of Jewish survivors of the Holocaust who will welcome you.

The spirit of Don Francesco Brondello seems to permeate the area, and I found nothing but welcome for Jews from these Italian people who helped other human beings, risking their own lives in doing so. That is why I was glad to embrace this priest with all my gratitude. He had helped to save the life of my wife, the mother of my children, and the grandmother of my grandchildren. Without him, none of them would be alive today. ❖

# About the Society

## What We Are

The Chicago Jewish Historical Society was founded in 1977 and is in part an outgrowth of local Jewish participation in the American Bicentennial Celebration of 1976. Muriel Robin was the founding president. The Society has as its purpose the discovery, preservation and dissemination of information concerning the Jewish experience in the Chicago area.

## What We Do

The Society seeks out, collects and preserves written, spoken and photographic records; publishes historical information, holds public meetings at which various aspects of Chicago Jewish history are treated; mounts appropriate exhibits; and offers tours of Jewish historical sites.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Would you like to become more involved in the activities of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society? We invite you to take part. Please contact any of the committee chairpersons listed here.

### ■ Membership Committee

Dr. Rachelle Gold  
(773) 338-6975 and  
Mark Mandle  
(773) 929-2853, Co-Chairs

### ■ Oral History Committee

Dr. N. Sue Weiler, Chair  
(312) 922-2294

### ■ Program Committee

Charles Bernstein, Chair  
(773) 324-6362

### ■ Tour Committee

Leah Axelrod, Chair  
(847) 432-7003

## Membership

Membership in the Society is open to all interested persons and organizations and includes a subscription to *Chicago Jewish History*, discounts on Society tours and at the Spertus Museum store, and the opportunity to learn and inform others about Chicago Jewish history and its preservation.

## Dues Structure

Membership runs on a calendar year, from January through December. New members joining after July 1 are given an initial membership through December of the following year.

Life Membership .....	\$1000
Historian .....	500
Scholar.....	250
Sponsor.....	100
Patron/Family .....	50
Individual/Senior Family .....	35
Synagogue/Organization.....	25
Senior Individual/Student.....	20

Make checks payable to the Chicago Jewish Historical Society, and mail to our office at 618 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60605. Dues are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

## [www.chicagojewishhistory.org](http://www.chicagojewishhistory.org)

The Society is now online! Browse our Web site for information about our upcoming programs. Read past issues of our quarterly journal.

Discover links to many interesting Jewish sites. Use the printable membership application. We welcome your inquiries and comments.

**e-mail: [info@chicagojewishhistory.org](mailto:info@chicagojewishhistory.org)**

Look to the rock from which you were born  
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