



chicago jewish history

Return to Chikaming Township



Gordon Beach Inn, Union Pier, Michigan.

Photograph by Ed Mazur. Article begins on page 10.

Society's Next Public Program: "Chicago's Hidden Children" Sunday, October 26 Save the Date!

"Chicago's Hidden Children" will be the subject of the next open meeting of the CJHS on Sunday, October 26, at Temple Sholom of Chicago, 3480 North Lake Shore Drive. The program will begin at 2:00 p.m. following a social hour with refreshments at 1:00 p.m.

The term "hidden children" refers to children who were hidden in Europe during the Holocaust.

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Walter S. Mander: The Jewish Cowboy Philanthropist

BY WALTER ROTH

When the Chicago Stockyards, once the core of Chicago's business, closed operations and its gates in 1971, only one large beef slaughterhouse remained in business in our city. Its name was Lincoln Meat Company, and it was located near the intersection of 38th and Halsted Streets. It was majority owned and controlled by Walter S. Mander, a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany. Mander, ironically, was prominent at the time of the closing of the Chicago Stockyards while another Jew of German birth, Nelson Morris, was one of the principal creators of the original Stockyards almost a century earlier. (See my article, "Nelson Morris and 'The Yards'" in the Spring 2008 issue of *CJH*.)

Mander was born Walter S. Mandelbaum in Aub, Germany, in 1922. A book lovingly written by his mother, Lina Mandelbaum, in German, and edited and translated into English by his sister, Hilde Mandelbaum Wolf, entitled *My Life* (self published, 1982) presents an interesting biography of Walter and his family, his life in a small town in southern Germany and the looming



Walter S. Mander. Painting in the collection of Lincoln Provision Inc. Photograph by Walter Roth.

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President's Column



Walter Roth.

THE *SENTINEL* HAS BEEN DIGITIZED.

The *Sentinel* was founded in 1911 by Louis Berlin and Abraham L. Weber as an English language Chicago Jewish weekly. Publications established earlier were the *Chicago Israelite* (1884) and the *Reform Advocate* (1891). The *Chicago Chronicle* was founded in 1919 by H.L. Meites to compete with the *Sentinel*.

There were many unsuccessful attempts to issue a Yiddish language paper in Chicago as early as 1879. The *Chicago Forward* was founded in 1920, and an older publication, the *Jewish Courier*, was revived that year. For a period of time, two Yiddish dailies existed here: the *Forward*, advocating socialism, and the *Courier*, representing religious views.

The middle class English language *Sentinel*—with its broad coverage of national and international news of Jewish interest as well as happenings in the local community—outlasted all the others.

In 1943, J.I. Fishbein became the publisher. He was a colorful figure, an independent man with strong liberal views, who fought anti-Semitism in the pages of the *Sentinel* and in the courts.

By 1986, I had come to know Jack Fishbein well through my leadership role in the American Jewish Congress, so when he was compiling *The Sentinel's History of Chicago Jewry 1911-1986*, a 330-page anniversary book, he asked me to contribute an article on the history and activities of the AJCongress in Chicago.

J.I. Fishbein died in 1996 at the age of 83, and the financially strapped magazine was forced to cease publication soon thereafter.

Bound copies of the *Sentinel* are available for study at the Asher Library, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, but with difficulty, as there is not a comprehensive index.

Happily, the Chicago Jewish Archives at Spertus has received a grant to digitize issues of the *Sentinel* to 1949 and make them available in an online database. (These ads are from 1948.)

Archives Director Joy Kingsolver will be previewing this much anticipated resource in a public program in January.

Best Wishes for a Healthy and Prosperous New Year—*shana tova!*



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Founding President of the Society Returns to “Active Duty” on Board

Muriel Robin Rogers, the founding president of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society, and her husband Fred Rogers have moved back to Chicago from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where they have lived for many years.

It will come as no surprise to those who know her that Muriel Rogers is already enthusiastically involved in the cultural, political, and Jewish communal life of Chicago, and has resumed her active participation in the work of our Board of Directors.

Exhibition in Evanston: “Drawn from Memory: Holocaust and History in the Art of Samuel Bak”

Northwestern University’s Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art is presenting an exhibition of paintings and drawings from the six-decade career of artist and Holocaust survivor Samuel Bak in the Block’s Print, Drawing, and Photography Study Center, September 19 through November 30.

Born in Eastern Europe in 1933, Samuel Bak suffered the ravages of the Holocaust as a child. His paintings and drawings continually address the traumas experienced by Bak and other European Jews of the time. The exhibition focuses on the artist’s incorporation of iconography from historical and modern art, such as his frequent invocation of the brooding winged figure from Albrecht Dürer’s 1514 print “Melencolia.”

On Wednesday, October 29 at 6:00 p.m., Jeffrey Diefendorf, Pamela Shulman Professor in European and Holocaust Studies at the University of New Hampshire, will deliver the lecture “Dialogues with the Past and Present: the Vivid World of Samuel Bak.”

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art
40 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston, Illinois

CJH Corrects Article’s Mention of Irving Kannett—Eight Years Later

In the Spring 2000 issue of *CJH*, in Sam Kweskin’s “Memoir: A Northwest Side Boyhood,” he mentions the names of his friends and the careers they pursued as adults. “Irving Kannet (later a Hollywood producer)...” is incorrect. Mr. Kannett’s son saw this bit of misinformation online in our website’s publication archive. The fact is that Irv Kannett, a new member of the Society, has enjoyed a long and successful locally-based career in the premium and specialty advertising business.

October 26: “Hidden Children”

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Several local hidden children, along with other child Holocaust survivors, have formed an organization, the Hidden Children’s Group/Chicago and Child Survivors. Five members of the organization will discuss their experiences as hidden children and how they rebuilt their lives in Chicago.

Olga Weiss, born in Belgium, is Curator emerita of Spertus Museum. She will moderate the discussion. The other participants will be:

Aaron Elster, born in Poland, is a retired MetLife insurance executive, co-chairman of the Speakers Bureau and Vice President of the Executive Board at the Holocaust Memorial Foundation of Illinois. Mr. Elster and Joy Erlichman Miller, Ph.D. are co-authors of the book, *I Still See Her Haunting Eyes: The Holocaust & a Hidden Child Named Aaron*.

Marguerite Mishkin, born in Belgium, was adopted by a Chicago rabbi and his wife, Leonard and Leah Mishkin. Ms. Mishkin became a teacher at Austin High School and later Marshall High School.

Ava Kadishson Schieber, born in Yugoslavia, has been living in Chicago for the past twenty years. She is an accomplished writer and artist, and the author of *Soundless Roar: Stories, Poems, and Drawings*.

Henry Stark, born in Belgium, is Professor emeritus at Armour College of Engineering, Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), having served as Chair of the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department from 1988 to 1997.

The program is free and open to the public. For information phone the Society office at (312) 663-5634 or e-mail info@chicagojewishhistory.org.

Annual Society Meeting to Review Year’s Work, Elect Board Members

The “Hidden Children” program will be preceded by the Annual Meeting of the Society at which the past year’s activities will be reviewed by President Roth.

The following names will be presented to the Society membership for election to a three year term on the Board of Directors. The voting will be conducted by Nominating Committee Chair Dr. Adele Hast, a past president of the CJHS. The nominees are:

**Leah Axelrod, Dr. Irving Cutler,
Elise Ginsparg, Dr. Rachele Gold,
Melynda Lopin, Dan Sharon,
and Dr. N. Sue Weiler.**

Mander *continued from page 1*

calamities that were faced by German Jews as Hitler rose to power. The town in which Mander was born and raised included a well established and prosperous Jewish community that had lived for generations in the area. His family was religious and active in raising and selling cattle, the business of many German Jews at the time.

When disturbances against Jews increased after enactment of the infamous Nuremberg Laws in 1935, Mander was not allowed to go to school in his hometown. His family sent him to an agricultural school in East Prussia, operated by a Jewish owner, where students were trained in agricultural trades which they could pursue if they could emigrate to Palestine, the United States, or elsewhere. It was apparently the only school Mander ever attended. While he was there, he was hospitalized for a time with a serious illness.

Then, suddenly, in November 1938, the rampage and destruction of “Kristallnacht” struck Aub, and the Mandelbaum family was given a month to leave the town, with most of their property confiscated by the Nazis. The story is told in great detail in *My Life*, including how the family managed, with the help of friends, to leave Aub and escape to Switzerland. From there they obtained visas and affidavits for entry into the United States. Walter and his brother Hans (renamed John), through the efforts of their family, managed to escape from Germany to England in 1939.

The *Chicago Sun Times*, in its Walter Mander obituary on December 23, 1999, reported that “his name was changed from Mandelbaum to Mander because he was subject to the British draft, and England wanted no German names in their armed forces.” Lina Mandelbaum, in her book, offers a different version of her son’s name change. She writes that it was changed in America so that he would not immediately be identified as a Jew if he fought in the U.S. Army and happened to be captured in battle.

The Mander brothers managed to obtain visas and sailed from England to America prior to our entry into World War II. They arrived in Chicago in July 1940. The Mandelbaums had friends and relatives here, and they rented an apartment in Hyde Park, at 5304 South Woodlawn Avenue. As was the case with many of the German refugees, the family was almost penniless, with only the property that the Germans allowed them to keep and ship in a “lift,” a large container of household furniture and goods.

Walter Mander began to work in the meat business with which he was familiar. He began at the lowest

rung, working for the Armour Company as a floor-cleaner or sawdust sweeper. In December 1942, at the age of twenty, he joined the U.S. Army and served in the Pacific in Guadalcanal, New Guinea, and the Philippines. With great pride, his mother writes that he became a First Sergeant.

After the War, he returned to Chicago, and worked for a number of meatpackers, including, as his mother writes, “The Bonems”—Leo and Morris Bonem—who operated their businesses under the names B&B Packing and Cee Bee Packing.

In 1952, after Walter Mander had learned a great deal about the American meat business, he decided to leave employment with the Bonems and seek his fortune as an entrepreneur. He became a minority shareholder in the Lincoln Meat Company, a slaughterhouse formerly owned by the Johnson family. Later he purchased Central Packing Co. from S. Manheimer, also a German Jewish refugee.

James Stevens became Mander’s partner in the slaughterhouse as well as a meat packing business, Lincoln Provision Inc. Both the Lincoln Meat Company and Lincoln Provision Inc. were located next to the Chicago Stockyards.

Mander became extremely successful in buying cattle from ranches near and far from Chicago. His range of activity was such that he also purchased and developed a large ranch of his own, called Lakeland, in Lowell, Indiana, near Crown Point. Here he spent a great deal of his time dressed as a cowboy riding his horses and herding his cattle. He also purchased a single engine plane and learned how to fly it. He used the plane to fly solo or with a pilot to remote ranches to purchase cattle.

For many years, Mander continued to live in Hyde Park with his mother in their apartment at 5460 South Cornell Avenue. When Lina moved to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, to live with her daughter Hilde and her husband, Walter purchased a condominium on 59th Street overlooking the Museum of Science and Industry.

Over the years, Lincoln’s business grew and Walter’s own cattle trading activity became enormously successful. His stock ownership in Lincoln increased when Johnson retired from the business and Walter became a majority owner.

Mander’s longtime partner, James Stevens, told me, “Long after other slaughterhouses closed down—the result of the 1971 closing of the Chicago Stockyards—Mander hung on to his company for the pure love of the business. His whole life was Lincoln Meat. He

thought about that seven days a week. He never married, but he was married to the business.”

With increased competition and large companies introducing new methods of boning, cutting and preparing meat, Mander eventually closed Lincoln Meat Company and its slaughterhouse business in 1990. To this day, James Stevens continues to operate Lincoln Provision Company, which sells dressed and packaged meat and does not engage in slaughtering.



Lincoln Provision Inc., 824 West 38th Place, Chicago.
Photograph by Walter Roth.

James Stevens also told me that Mander was an active leader in the International Livestock Exhibition, a once-thriving part of Chicago's Stockyards history. He began judging cattle at the show in 1959 and was a member of the Board of Directors.

(The show was held at the International Amphitheatre, which was built for that purpose, adjacent to the Stockyards at Halsted and 42nd Street. The huge amphitheatre is also well-remembered as the site of sports events, concerts, and five national presidential nominating conventions, the last of which was the riotous 1968 Democratic National Convention. The building was demolished in 1999.)

An avid and apparently highly successful investor in securities and other assets, Mander often used the services of Julius Bachenheimer, also a German refugee and a stockbroker with Bear & Stearns Co.

Walter Mander died of cancer on December 21, 1999. His nephew, Charles Wolf, a prominent Chicago attorney, summed up Walter's life. "He was an American ideal. He came to this country with nothing and made himself a multimillionaire." Walter Mander is interred at the New Light Cemetery, as is his mother.

After Walter's death, James Stevens and his son acquired from Mander's estate his interest in Lincoln Provision, which continues in the meat business at 824

West 38th Place with a subsidiary, the Chicago Gourmet Steak Company. Lincoln Provision is said to be the largest non-kosher beef distributor in the Chicago area.

Mander left a substantial portion of his multi-million dollar estate to the Walter S. Mander Foundation, which has been actively engaged in making substantial gifts to Jewish charities.

Among these gifts there were grants to New Light Cemetery, for the construction of the Mander Chapel (Walter Mander and his mother are interred at New Light); Congregation Rodfei Zedek, to fund the Mandelbaum Atrium in its new synagogue building; the Mander Sacred Music Fund at KAM Isaiah Israel Temple; the Selfhelp Home, a retirement facility originally established to aid German Jewish refugees; and The Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago. In addition, the Mander Foundation has made substantial grants to the Northwestern Memorial Foundation and many community organizations.

While it is true that Walter came to America penniless, it may be an oversimplification to characterize him as an "American ideal." He also represents a kind of deep-rooted German Jew who witnessed the loss of all the material wealth that his family owned when they left Germany. He strove through his compulsion for work to restore their assets and social status. Walter Mander remained close to his family for his entire life. He did not marry, possibly because of that closeness. He lived much of his American life in Hyde Park, where German immigrants, much like himself, came to live and remake their lives. Some people have said that in his later years, he was tough and hard. Yet his longtime friend and business partner, James Stevens, testifies to his friendship with many people, some of prominence in politics and business. Walter Mander was undoubtedly a unique person of great talent and resourcefulness. ❖

WALTER ROTH is president of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society. In 1938, he arrived in the Hyde Park neighborhood with his parents and brother as refugees from Nazi Germany. A graduate of the Law School of the University of Chicago, he is a practicing attorney with Seyfarth Shaw LLP. He and his wife, psychologist Chaya H. Roth, Ph.D., are the parents of three grown children and seven grandchildren.

Walter Roth has authored three books: *The Accidental Anarchist* (with Joe Kraus); *Looking Backward*, the first compendium of his articles published in our Society quarterly; and the forthcoming *Avengers and Defenders*, a collection of his more recent articles in CJH.

Report on the Society's Spring 2008 Open Meeting

“Award-Winning Essays on Chicago Jewish History”



CJHS Award Winners Vera Kauder Pollina (left) and Susan Breitzer.
Feinberg Theater, Spertus Institute, May 18, 2008. Photograph by Ed Mazur.

When Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies relocated to its architecturally innovative building at 610 South Michigan Avenue from its former home at 618 South Michigan, our Society office was included in the move. As it was in the old building, our new office is located in close working proximity to our colleagues at the Asher Library and the Chicago Jewish Archives.

Our Board of Directors was eager to present a public program in the new building, and the first CJHS event to be held in the commodious Feinberg Theater in the new Spertus was our open meeting on Sunday afternoon, May 18, at which we presented “Award-Winning Essays on Chicago Jewish History.”

Back at the start of the 2006-2007 academic year, the Society had announced an annual award for research on Chicago Jewish history done by an undergraduate or graduate student. The award would be one thousand dollars for an outstanding paper on a topic in Chicago Jewish history.

The paper was to be twenty-five to forty pages in length, with documentation and endnotes. An independent committee of experts would judge the entries. The winner would be invited to present the research at a meeting of the Society, and the winning essay would be considered for publication in our quarterly journal, *Chicago Jewish History*.

Adele Hast, Awards Committee Chair and past president of the Society, welcomed our audience and described the award selection process.

Three notable local historians: June Sochen of Northeastern Illinois University, Elizabeth Loentz of the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), and Paul Green of Roosevelt University, judged the papers.

To our delight, we received two very different entries that the judges deemed worthy of winning, and the Society decided to award a thousand dollars to each of them—Susan Breitzer and Vera Kauder Pollina. Dr. Hast introduced the two winners.

Susan Breitzer was awarded a PhD in History at the University of Iowa in 2007 for her dissertation, “Jewish Labor’s Second City: The Formation of a Jewish Working Class in Chicago, 1886-1928.” She has won many prizes and has achieved much for such a young person. She is currently an Adjunct Lecturer in History at Fayetteville State University, North Carolina.

Vera Pollina, MA, is a Teaching Assistant at UIC. She is German-born and fluent in a number of languages. For her master’s degree in Germanic Studies she undertook to research the life and work of an immigrant Yiddish writer who lived in Chicago—“Rewriting One’s Life: Dora Schulner’s *Ester*. Introduction and Selections from the Translation.”

Susan Breitzer

Uneasy Alliances: Hull-House, the Garment Workers' Strikes, and the Jews of Chicago

Excerpts from the Presentation

Hull-House, for over a century regarded as a venerable Chicago institution, has recently come under more scrutiny, as has its often lionized founder, Jane Addams. Hull-House's relationship with Chicago's Jewish community has become a source of particular interest, especially when in regard to how Addams related to this community compared to other immigrant communities. One scholar, Rivka Shpak Lissak, has argued that while Hull-House's cooperation with the Jewish labor movement is justly famous, it should be seen "more in the context of Hull-House's industrial relations policy than an expression of its relationship with the Jewish community as such." Yet, given that most of the clothing manufacturers against whom the mostly Eastern European Jewish workers took to the streets were German Jews, ethnic issues were never far below the surface, whether or not Addams and her colleagues were able to see them.

Also, given the division by class, language, and culture within Chicago's Jewish community, Hull-House residents could not but have related to each community differently—to the German Jewish community as a partner in the defense and Americanization of the Eastern European Jewish community, and to the Eastern European Jewish community, for the most part as a beneficiary. The purpose of this essay, therefore, is to examine the role of the two key labor actions on the part of Chicago's Eastern European Jewish working class during the early decades of the twentieth century—the 1911 and 1915 men's garment workers' strikes—in bringing about a shift in the alliances between Hull-House and Chicago's two Jewish communities, both of which had played significant roles in making Chicago an important center of the garment industry during this period.

Most German Jews in nineteenth century America became part of the merchant class and a few transformed small businesses into highly profitable and widely known corporations, usually in dry goods or the clothing industry, including Chicago's phenomenally successful men's clothing manufacturers, Hart Schaffner & Marx; Alfred Decker and Cohn, and Kuppenheimer and Company.

Unlike the German "Second Wave" of Jewish

immigrants who gravitated to small towns as well as major cities, the Eastern European "Third Wave" by and large favored the larger cities, such as Chicago, and the vast majority were involved in making clothes.

When the Chicago Fire struck, Jews from all sectors of the community suffered, with five hundred Jewish families left homeless and five of the seven synagogues in Chicago at that time destroyed, to say nothing of the loss of lodges, businesses, and institutions. It was as a result of the fire, however, given the limited resources and inordinately great need of the time, that major tensions first arose regarding how much the established German Jewish community should assist the more recent arrivals from Russia and Eastern Europe, and in what ways.

Over time the benefactor-beneficiary relationship would become inextricably tied to the employer-employee relationship between the two communities, which from the beginning were visibly divided by class as well as by ethnicity.

In the era following the Great Fire, the German Jewish community increasingly settled on Chicago's South Side. The Eastern European Jewish community made its first home on the West Side in what became Chicago's own distinct Jewish ghetto, Maxwell Street, where housing was crowded and frequently substandard, with inadequate (and in some cases nonexistent) outside lighting, ventilation, or plumbing.

These unhealthy dwellings served not only as living spaces for large numbers of immigrants, but also frequently as workspaces for a number of Chicago's industries, most infamously the clothing industry. Although these sweatshop conditions at first applied fairly equally to all sectors of the clothing industry, notable advances were to take place within the men's clothing trades. By the 1890s, there was an increased demand for "quality tailoring," which facilitated the increased move of men's clothing manufacturing to the factories, or "inside shops." Even among inside shops, however, some clothing firms emerged as "better," and the one regarded as the best by any measure was Hart Schaffner & Marx, which by 1905 had bought out the sweatshops to which it had been contracting out business, and unprecedentedly moved all operations under its supervision.

What made working at HSM more bearable and even comparatively desirable was that it was vastly superior in terms of wages, hours, and working conditions, especially at a time when most clothing houses were going in the opposite direction, moving

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FROM THE
CHICAGO JEWISH
archives

Archives Intern Meets Architect Walter H. Sobel

By Boris Ran

I first heard Walter Sobel's name upon starting my internship at the Chicago Jewish Archives, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies. Over the past year, the archives has acquired a large collection of architectural files for buildings which Mr. Sobel built or worked on, specifically synagogues and other Jewish community buildings, schools, residences, and some Jewish-owned businesses. (Records for other types of buildings are being collected and archived by other repositories, including the University of Minnesota.)

As part of my Lewis Summer Internship Program, sponsored jointly by Hillels of Illinois and the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, it would be my responsibility to document and catalogue the files we received into a comprehensible database.

Mr. Sobel has been a practicing architect since 1949. Over the course of his career he has worked on over a hundred projects, including courthouses, commercial buildings, apartment complexes, chain stores (The Fell Company, The Cotton Shop), and about twenty different temples and synagogues.

Opening the box and going through the files of the first temple I documented, I was impressed by the great amount of legal paperwork contained in the files (enough to make any architectural student think twice about his major). There were contracts, legal correspondences, bids from different companies for work, and payment calculations. However, as an art student, what

really inspired me were the precise and beautiful drawings. Here were sketches, sections and elevations (the architectural terms for different kinds of views) of everything from the building façade to the piping to the

doorknobs on the side entrance. There were also plans: detailed overheads views of what a floor or room is supposed to look like when it is constructed. As I carefully unfolded and looked over the big blueprint plans (some of which were as large as the table I worked at), I became curious. What thoughts went through the mind of this architect as he designed and drew up these massive works, equal parts art and calculations?



From left: Boris Ran and Walter Sobel. Photograph by Joy Kingsolver. Courtesy of Chicago Jewish Archives, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies.

One afternoon in July, I got a chance to meet Walter Sobel at his home and studio in Wilmette. His longtime office was located on the top floor of the old Daily News Riverside Plaza building in downtown Chicago. Around the year 2000, Walter Sobel moved his home and studio here to the Frank J. Baker House. Built a hundred years ago by Frank Lloyd Wright, it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The exterior has a distinguished, aged look. The inside of the home is charming, decorated with art from around the world and study drawings that former students have done of the house over the years. Before meeting Mr. Sobel, we went into the room where his architectural files are stored. It seemed to me that the files were physical metaphors for all the time and labor that was put into constructing these buildings.

Walking into his office, I shook hands with Mr. Sobel. He is in his 90s and technically retired, but both times I visited he was busy working with two interns from South Korea. As soon as I got a chance to sit down and speak with him it was clear that despite his age, the passions of a young man still flow within him.

“One of the things I’ve always admired about my father is his ability to look to the future,” says Richard Sobel, who helped set up our meeting. Perhaps it is this aspiration to look ahead that keeps Mr. Sobel so passionate. Showing a keen awareness of current architectural trends, he spoke to me about green architecture and the kind of innovations that he believes will be made to buildings in the coming years, as well as his own architectural experience from the past century.

He started from the beginning, telling me that he went to Senn High school which offered a course in architectural drawing. He got his first real assignment when the school wanted to make additions to the building and let its students do some of the drawings. He was inspired further by the example of his father’s cousin, Herbert Sobel, sitting at his

office table doing architectural work whenever young Walter’s parents would take him there for a visit.

Walter Sobel received a scholarship to Northwestern University, but transferred to the Armour Institute (later IIT) in his sophomore year because Armour had an architecture program. He continued his education at the firm of a family friend, Ernst Benkert, in Winnetka.

He worked his way up the ladder from unpaid apprenticeships to paid jobs, until he established his own architectural firm, Walter H. Sobel, FAIA & Associates.

When I asked him if he felt a connection between his Jewish heritage and the fact that he is an architect, Walter thought for a bit and said “I’ve given some thought to that....” As he spoke it struck me how proud this man was of the Jewish congregational buildings he has worked on and his seemingly spiritual connection to them. ❖

BORIS RAN *describes himself as a Russian-born Jew. He has lived in Israel, North Carolina, Texas, and Chicago. He is currently a junior at the School of the Art Institute studying Architecture and Animation.*

Following is a partial list of the Chicago area temples and synagogues Mr. Sobel worked on (not necessarily from the ground up). Please note that the records are still in the process of being catalogued and are not yet available for public research.

Beth Emet The Free Synagogue
1224 Dempster Street
Evanston, Illinois

Oak Park Temple B’nai Abraham Zion
1235 North Harlem Avenue
Oak Park, Illinois

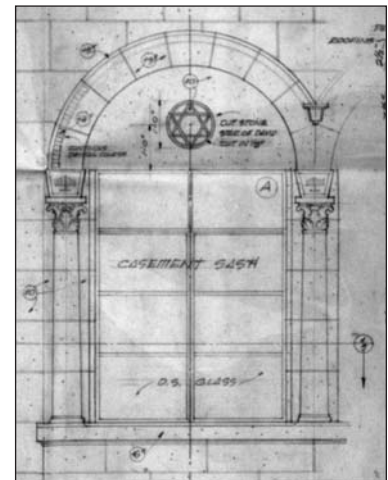
Niles Township Jewish Congregation
4500 West Dempster Street
Skokie, Illinois

Temple Beth El
1203 Comanche Drive
Rockford, Illinois

Sinai Temple
3104 West Windsor Road
Champaign, Illinois

KAM Isaiah Israel Congregation
930 East 50th Street
Chicago, Illinois

B’nai Israel of Austin
5433 West Jackson Blvd.
(no longer Jewish congregational buildings), Chicago, Illinois



Left: B’nai Israel of Austin and addition. Above: Walter H. Sobel, FAIA & Associates: Window detail, addition to B’nai Israel of Austin.



Photograph and drawing courtesy of Chicago Jewish Archives, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies.

Family Memoir

Return to Chikaming Township

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDWARD H. MAZUR

I WAS BORN IN 1942, at Lutheran Deaconess Hospital, located on the west side of Leavitt Street just south of Division Street (the forerunner of Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge). Following the end of World War II, and for the next decade, from 1946 to 1956, I spent every summer in Union Pier, Michigan. When my family moved from an apartment, second floor rear, in the Humboldt Park neighborhood to a ranch house in West Rogers Park, and stopped renting summer cottages, I never considered that I would return to the site of some of the best times of my life.

In 2006, my daughter Amanda and her husband Ben mentioned that they were thinking of buying a “cottage” in Lakeside, Michigan, in the popular vacation area now known as “Harbor Country.” My one-year old granddaughter Alden Lily (Chaya Davida) graciously allowed her parents to do the talking.

“It would be great for the three of you,” I remarked. Then my history professor/tour guide/nostalgia maven engine really revved up. “But let me tell you about ten summers of *my* life there.” After they had listened with increasing enthusiasm to my reminiscences, we all piled into their car and drove from the Near North side of Chicago to Union Pier/Lakeside. Within a few weeks, they had purchased their cottage, with my wife Myrna and I as minor investors and senior partners.

As soon as my Lafayette Elementary School year ended, in mid to late June, a yellow trailer would pull up in front of our apartment building at 913 North Francisco Avenue. The trailer was attached to my Uncle Norman’s Pontiac sedan—usually black or white. We would load the car and trailer with our bicycles, toys, and summer clothes. Then we would stop at Uncle Norman and Aunt Thelma’s and repeat the packing procedure. Their apartment was above their jewelry store at 2714 W. Division Street. After our labors, we would go to Joe Pierce’s delicatessen on the southwest corner of Division and Washtenaw for corned beef on rye (with seeds), dill pickles, and chocolate phosphates. Then the four parents, my cousins Neil and Barry, and I would squeeze into the car and head for “the country.” There were no expressways or Chicago Skyway or Indiana and Michigan toll roads and freeways to speed the trip. We drove along many streets and avenues for two to three hours before reaching our destination.

Over time, we stayed in several places: the cottages that were on the grounds of the Gordon Beach Hotel (now the Gordon Beach Inn), Pier Village, Paradise Villa, and Gunnard’s Cottages (now painted an unusual shade of blue) along Townline Road, past what we called “the three stores” on Lakeshore Road. These cottages were our home until Labor Day. Frequently, my family stayed on until the High Holy Days and worshipped in the synagogue that was located on Lakeshore Road slightly south and across the road from the Gordon Beach Hotel.

My father, a silk spotter in a wholesale dry cleaning plant, would take the South Shore and South Bend train from the Randolph and Michigan Street Station to Michigan City, Indiana every Friday evening. Then he would board the bus that stopped in New Buffalo, Union Pier, Lakeside, Sawyer, Harbert, Stevensville, Bridgman, St. Joseph, and finally Benton Harbor. The buses were painted in the same orange and maroon colors as the South Shore trains.

My mother, aunt, cousins, and I would wait on the bench next to Irv’s Standard Oil Service Station, near the train tracks, until the bus carrying my father arrived. When he stepped off the bus, he was usually carrying a Chicago treat or two, such as kosher salami or hot dogs. After hugs and kisses, we usually went for an ice cream or into Kopack’s Variety Store for a toy or game that I deemed a necessity but had not been able to convince my mother to buy for me or my cousins—maybe a little rubber “pinkie” ball for playing pinners, or a Clincher softball, or pickup sticks, or a paint-by-numbers set.

My Uncle Norman, my zayde, and my older brother Sanford drove out on Saturday nights after Uncle Norman’s jewelry store closed. This meant that Sunday was a day filled with tumult and catching up on news from Chicago, going to the beach, cooking out, or eating out at Gilman’s Restaurant (just south of Townline on the west side of Red Arrow Highway), or driving to New Buffalo, Sawyer, or most often, to Three Oaks for dinner and a movie.

During our current visits to the Lakeside cottage (or Meshuga Manor, as we have dubbed it), I frequently go down memory lane, a trip that can be fraught with sentiment, anxiety, wistfulness, and a certain degree of physical stress. Since this trip involves

climbing the stairs from the beach, at age 65, I find going *up* memory lane to be most stressful.

The Royal Blue Store that was located at the Red Arrow Highway and Lakeshore Road is now Milada's Corner Market. Around the corner from the "Royal" and about half a block north along Red Arrow was Novak's grocery store. We visited the store daily, riding our bikes with their big baskets, while our parents walked. If memory serves, this is where the Union Pier Post Office was located. This is now the Union House Restaurant. (The Novaks had a farm along Union Pier Road toward Three Oaks and sold the freshest produce in Chikaming Township.)

Gilman's Restaurant, later the Casual Chef, unfortunately burned down in the summer of 2007. In the 1940s and 1950s, we generally ate out once during the week and once on weekends. At the cottage locations where we stayed you could always tell who was having what for dinner because of the tantalizing aromas from the open windows or open grills. Unlike Meshuga Manor, these cottages had no air conditioning or heat. People came for the fresh air—*frisher luft*, in Yiddish—and they received full value with rents that ranged from \$300 to \$500 for the season.

At the corner of Townline and Lakeshore Road were the "three stores." One was a delicatessen that made the world's best ice cream sodas and chocolate phosphates (we called them "Jewish beers") and served sandwiches and sold the Chicago newspapers. The second store was a fruit and vegetable market. The third was a kosher butcher shop.

I remember Rube and Lill's Fruit Market and the owners telling the primarily Jewish summer visitors to please not "smush" the peaches and other fresh fruit. To this day, I think there is nothing better than a fresh-picked Michigan peach, so ripe that when you bite into it, the sweet juice cascades down your chin.

Kopack's Variety Store in Union Pier store was a branch location; their main store was in New Buffalo. I remember that the nearest barbershop to Union Pier was in New Buffalo, so twice a summer we took the bus there for a crew cut that was never short enough to suit my mother. The Kopacks must have done very well in Union Pier; in the mid-1950s they built a very luxurious year-round residence just east of the store. Kopack's is now the site of On The Lounge Studio.

At Irv's Standard Oil Service Station, regular and ethyl sold for about twenty-five cents a gallon, the mechanics repaired flat tires on automobiles and bicycles and the pop machine held the coldest drinks in southwestern Michigan! There was a bench in front of

the station that provided a place to rest after a hike or lengthy bike ride, and as I've already said, to wait for the bus from Michigan City. (Irv's has now been replaced by Mike Schuler's Auto Repair.)

To the south of the filling station was Irv's Bowling Alley, which had ten manual lanes (35 cents a line), a restaurant counter where we could have tuna fish or grilled cheese sandwiches—but nothing with meat—and about six fantastic pinball machines. My last two summers in Union Pier, prior to my bar mitzvah, I worked as a pin boy at Irv's. (I had to practice my haftorah every day or NO BEACH). I was paid ten cents a line per bowler. After an introductory period, I mastered handling two lanes at once. I developed fantastic reflexes to avoid getting hit by the heavy bowling balls or the pins that were knocked into the pit. I learned to carefully venture onto the lanes to clear pins or a ball that could not make it all the way down.

Generally, my earnings were spent on Irv's nickel pinball machines and cold drinks and ice cream sodas. I developed the ability to shake those machines and thus avoided "tilting" and losing money. Another pinball emporium located in Union Pier was called the Palladium. That establishment also would lay claim to much of my earnings and allowance.

A special summer treat was taking the bus or driving with Uncle Norman, my parents, my Aunt Thelma, my Zayde, and my cousins to Michigan City. Yes, we all piled into one car, we sat on each other's laps, and we didn't wear seat belts. The visit to Michigan City usually included a movie at the Liberty or another theater followed by dinner at the main dining room of the Spaulding Hotel. I can still recall my mother and aunt ordering their "whitefish, Lake Superior, tail portion please, with extra lemons."

In the more than fifty years since I have been a regular visitor to Union Pier and Lakeside, I have been fortunate to have had a career that allowed me to work, live, and travel to many countries and continents. Little did I dream that I would ever return to the haunts of my youth and enjoy myself as much now as I did then. Change is a constant and presents us with novel opportunities and challenges, but it is good to be able to travel again along the familiar Red Arrow Highway and other byways of Union Pier and Lakeside in Chikaming Township. *See photo gallery on page 12.* ❖

DR. EDWARD H. MAZUR, *treasurer of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society and member of the Board of Directors, is an urban historian, professor emeritus at City Colleges of Chicago, member of the Illinois Historical Society Advisory Board, and consultant to the International Visitors Center of Chicago.*



Photo Gallery

Clockwise from bottom left:

On the Lounge Studio (store selling fabric and custom slipcovers), formerly Kopack's Variety Store.

Entrance to Paradise Villa summer cottage resort on Lakeshore Road north of Townline Road.

Typical Cottage in Paradise Villa.

"The Three Stores"—formerly a delicatessen, a fruit and vegetable market, and a kosher butcher shop.

Michigan Historic Site Sign at Gordon Beach Inn, 16220 Lakeshore Road. The sign reads: "Built in 1924 by Louis and Lena Gordon, and expanded four years later, Gordon Beach Inn was the centerpiece of the Jewish resort subdivision of the same name. The Gordons operated the Inn for a decade before losing it in the Great Depression. Robert Miller, an African American and a former Chicago alderman, purchased the property in the 1960s as Gordon Beach was integrating. The Inn was restored in 1991 to its 1920s appearance." (See photo of the Inn on front page.)

Red Arrow Division Shoulder Patch.

Red Arrow Highway

In 1917, during World War I, National Guard units from Michigan and Wisconsin were combined to form the 32nd Infantry Division. Their insignia was a red arrow. The unit fought bravely in France on five fronts and in three major offensives, and was honored with the nickname "Les Terribles" by the French.

During World War II, the 32nd Division was the first to go to the Pacific Theater of Operations following the attack on Pearl Harbor. They participated in many hard-fought, bloody battles in New Guinea and the Philippines.

After the war, a plan was devised to designate US 12 through southern Michigan, and US 32 in Wisconsin as the "Red Arrow Highway" in honor of the heroism of the 32nd Division. In March 1953, dedication ceremonies were held across Michigan in communities from New Buffalo, Union Pier, Lakeside, Jackson, and Albion. The posted signs proclaimed the route as the Red Arrow Highway.

In 1960, Interstate 94 was completed and the US 12 signs along Michigan Avenue came down, and with them the commemorative Red Arrow signs. However, the route along Lake Michigan from New Buffalo through Union Pier, Lakeside, Harbert, Sawyer, Bridgman, Stevensville, St. Joseph-Benton Harbor, and all the way to Paw Paw, was allowed to keep the Red Arrow designation as it does today.—E.M.

Uneasy Alliances

continued from page 7

work to “outside shops” at the same time that immigrants were increasingly replacing “native-born” workers in the workforce.

Although the German Jewish owners were apparently responsive to the prophetic call of Reform Judaism and Ethical Culture before 1911, this translated mainly into charitable giving on behalf of the Eastern European Jewish workers who could not support their families on what they were paid.

Also, rather than looking critically at themselves, most chose to feel comfortably superior to the Eastern European Jewish sweatshop bosses, many of whom were genuinely more exploitative in how they treated those below them. These conditions would make

questions concerning work, poverty, and charity more urgent for Chicago’s Jewish community, and this urgency only increased with the onset of the economic downturn that became known as the Panic of 1893. It came hard on the heels of the World’s Columbian Exposition, a time when Chicago was showing its best face to the world.

The Panic hit Chicago hard, leaving massive unemployment, with twenty percent of the city’s population threatened with starvation. The 1893 Panic also triggered an upsurge in labor unrest that reached a peak with the Pullman Strike of 1894. Its eventual defeat was a serious trial for the Chicago labor movement. One important result was the creation of a new movement that became known as Progressivism. Although the Progressive movement was decidedly middle to upper middle

class in both origin and focus, it differed from previous reform movements in its ability to form and maintain at least “on-again, off-again” alliances with labor and the working class, including the Jewish working class. And Hull-House, often regarded as the grandmother of social settlements, was often in the forefront of these efforts, although strategies and tactics would vary among its residents.

Hull-House, founded in 1889 by Jane Addams, a well-to-do, college-educated, Protestant woman from downstate Illinois, was an answer for women who were seeking alternatives to marriage and uses for their education. It was also a center of both social services and Americanization that welcomed the broad spectrum of immigrants who flocked to Chicago in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. ❖

Conclusion to come in the Fall issue

Vera Kauder Pollina

Rewriting One’s Life: Dora Schulner’s *Ester* Introduction and Selections from the Translation

Excerpts from the Presentation

I decided to translate excerpts from the work of Yiddish author Dora Schulner (1889-1962) as my master’s thesis project after reading the first chapter of her novel *Ester in Found Treasures: Stories by Yiddish Women Writers*, translated by Henia Reinhartz and published in 1994. It was the first time a translation of Schulner’s work had ever appeared in print, and in such illustrious company as Chava Rosenfarb or Ester Singer Kreitman.

When I looked through the authors’ biographical information in the front of the book, I found that there was no death date for Dora Schulner. It seemed nothing short of atavistic to read a twentieth century

woman writer and run into biographical lacunae of the Shakespearean sort—and yet in many ways it was not surprising. Schulner represented several marginalized groups all rolled into one—she was Jewish; she was a woman; she was an Eastern European Jewish immigrant writer in the United States; and on top of it all, she wrote in Yiddish.

Schulner’s heroine Ester shares many traits with the author.

The novel opens in the year 1922 in the Soviet Union. Ester, the youngest daughter of a poor Jewish family from Ukraine, is now in her late twenties and the mother of four children. Her husband was taken prisoner in World War I. Ester

works full-time at a maternity home and is a happy, if somewhat lonely, single woman.

Her happiness is destroyed when she falls in love and is forced to decide between her new lover and her children. She chooses the latter, but that decision is only the first in a series of disappointments and setbacks in her personal life.

Ester discovers that her husband is alive, in America, which should be happy news—but isn’t. She and the children join him in New York. They emigrate with her sister-in-law Sheyndl, whose imperturbable optimism provides a counterpoint to Ester’s negative outlook on life. ❖

Conclusion to come in the Fall issue

FROM THE
CHICAGO JEWISH
archives

The Michael Reese Collection

By Joy Kingsolver

Founded in 1881 by the United Hebrew Relief Association, Michael Reese Hospital endured for more than a century as a Jewish hospital. Its records show the breadth of its mission; the hospital was an essential resource for immigrants—Jews and non-Jews alike—who came to Chicago in great numbers beginning in the 1880s. That history has now come to an end.

Sad as it is to see Michael Reese Hospital close for good, we are pleased to be able to preserve the archival records of the hospital at Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies. The Michael Reese collection is housed in the Chicago Jewish Archives, part of the Asher Library Special Collections. The collection was given to the archives by the hospital in 1992.

The collection consists of more than two hundred boxes and includes founding documents; Superintendent's Books (1883-1907); administrative records; records of Mandel Clinic, the School of Nursing and other departments; auxiliary organizations; Crystal Ball fundraisers; hospital publications; photographs; and memorabilia. The collection does not include patient records other than the Superintendent's Books.

There is a separate collection for the Woman's Board consisting of twenty-five boxes of minutes, photographs, and other records.

The Archives is actively collecting additional material from Michael Reese Hospital and welcomes donations of archival material. In addition, we have conducted a few oral history interviews and welcome calls from those who would like to share their stories and preserve them as part of the historical record.

Contact Archives Director Joy Kingsolver
(312) 322-1741 or archives@spertus.edu.

Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies
610 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago IL 60605

Cutler and Axelrod's Successful Summer Sunday Bus Tours

The CJHS bus tour on Sunday afternoon, July 13 was Irv Cutler's "Chicago Jewish Roots." We started out from the Bernard Horwich JCC on Touhy Avenue and headed downtown to South Clark Street, pausing at the site of the first synagogue in Chicago, Kehilath Anshe Maariv (Congregation of the Men of the West), marked by a plaque on the Federal building which stands there. We proceeded west and then north through former Jewish neighborhoods, most of them transformed by teardowns and new construction.

The special feature was a visit inside the former Anshe Sholom synagogue on South Independence Boulevard at Polk Street. We were invited to enter the sanctuary on Sunday because the *shul* is now a Seventh Day Adventist church with services on Saturday. The handsome building is well-preserved, most of the original stained glass windows are in place, but there is a void; the *oren kodesh* and the *bima* are gone.

Our tour on August 17 was Leah Axelrod's "Jewish Milwaukee," a daylong bus excursion.

After a visit to the Milwaukee Art Museum, where docents showed us the work of major Jewish artists in the collection, and then a buffet lunch at the nearby Pieces of Eight Restaurant, we set out for the featured stop on our tour, the new Jewish Museum Milwaukee.



Located in the Helfaer Building on Prospect Avenue, home of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation since 1973,

the museum tells the story of the community through handsome exhibits of photographs and artifacts. Guided by docents, we learned about two strong-willed Milwaukee Jewish women—philanthropist Lizzie Kander, who first compiled the unique *Settlement Cook Book* a hundred years ago to benefit immigrant girls (see photo of the 1943 edition), and Golda Meir, the immigrant girl who became Prime Minister of Israel. ❖

Welcome, New Members of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society

Daniel Azulay, H.J. Ballis, Germaine Bolber, Howard & Beverly Jacobson,

Irving Kannett, Eric & Cynthia Singer, Pearl Young

New memberships beginning after July 1 of the initial year extend through December 31 of the following year.

ED MAZUR'S PAGES FROM THE PAST

My source for these selections is the Chicago Foreign Language Press Survey Microfilm Collection at the Chicago Public Library, Harold Washington Library Center.

In the autumn of 1936 the Chicago Foreign Language Press Survey was organized under the Works Progress Administration (WPA) of Illinois. The purpose of the Survey was to translate and classify selected news articles appearing in Chicago's foreign language press from 1861 to 1938.

Financial curtailments in the WPA program ended the Survey in October 1941. The Chicago Public Library published the work in 1942. The project consists of a file of 120,000 typewritten pages from newspapers of 22 different foreign language communities in Chicago.

Yiddish is the foreign language of the Jewish press in the Survey. English language periodicals are also included, as well as the publications of charitable institutions, communal organizations, and synagogues.

TRAINING SCHOOL FOR NURSES

The new training school for nurses, which was built as an addition to the Michael Reese Hospital, was opened this week. It contains accommodations for forty nurses and six patients, besides having a lecture room and reception room. The present staff consists of a superintendent, an assistant, twenty-four nurses and two orderlies.

There are still accommodations for sixteen ladies, who may wish to become nurses. The Directors are especially desirous of obtaining applications from Jewish young ladies, as the schooling afforded would be of great benefit to them.

The rules require applicants to be between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-five. The allowance for the first year is \$8.00 per month and \$12.00 for the second year. Board and lodging is furnished free.

—*Reform Advocate*,
March 19, 1892.

See Ed Mazur biographical notes on page 11, following his memoir.

RAISING MONEY FOR MICHAEL REESE HOSPITAL

This evening a meeting will be held at Café Liberman, 211 West 12th Street, of all Presidents of all Synagogues in Chicago. The meeting is to be held for the purpose of discussing matters pertaining to raising of funds for the Michael Reese Hospital.

The Orthodox Jews can now get all they wish at the hospital, and it is only right that this group of Jews should show their appreciation by cooperating with the Directors of the Institution and contribute most liberally to this worthy cause.

There will also be a discussion at this meeting on the subject of organizing a separate Michael Reese Committee. All money taken in for the hospital should be turned over to the committee. Every synagogue should make separate collections and send the money directly to the Directors of the Hospital.—*Courier*, February 4, 1907

CALLING ALL AUTHORS!

November is Jewish Book Month. Every year, the fall issue of *CJH* features a list of the Society's own publications as well as other published works by our members. And the list grow longer every year! If you have published a book or recording (music or spoken word), we want to publicize it. **If you were listed in 2007, you will be included this year.**

If there has been any change in price, format, or ordering information, please indicate it on this form.

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Information must be received by **October 31, 2008.**