

# Generations:



Visitors had the opportunity to travel back in time and sit in an original Lincoln Del booth.

SPRING 2023

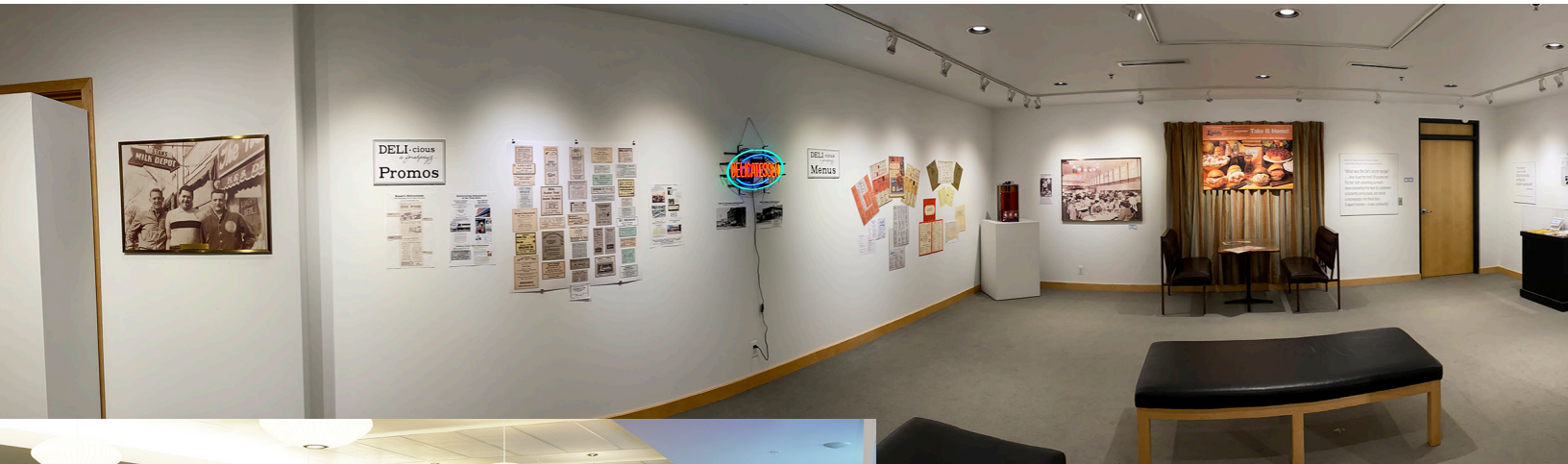
## DELicious History — The Appetizer



As JHSUM began to gather stories for an exhibit on Jewish delicatessens in this region, it became apparent almost immediately that the stories to be gathered were as abundant as the deli foods we remembered. For that reason, we decided to take small steps and the resulting exhibit, DELicious History: The Appetizer, was just that, an appetizer to a larger exhibit which is planned for later this year. The exhibit ran at the Minnesota JCC in

St. Louis Park in January and February of this year.

Many long-time locals, as well as expats, shared their recollections and unique stories which were featured in the appetizer exhibit. A delightful video entitled *DELicious History, a Forshpayz*, can be viewed on JHSUM's website. One especially sweet story tells how two teenagers working at Bernie's Delicatessen, then located on Minnetonka Boulevard and



Panoramic view of the exhibit.



Community members heard from BernBaum's owners and chefs, Andrea Baumgardner and Brett Bernath, before sampling delicious deli fare at Cornerstone Cafe at JHAP in Golden Valley.



More than 100 attendees turned out for our screening of *The Deli Man* at the Minnesota JCC Sabes Center Minneapolis.

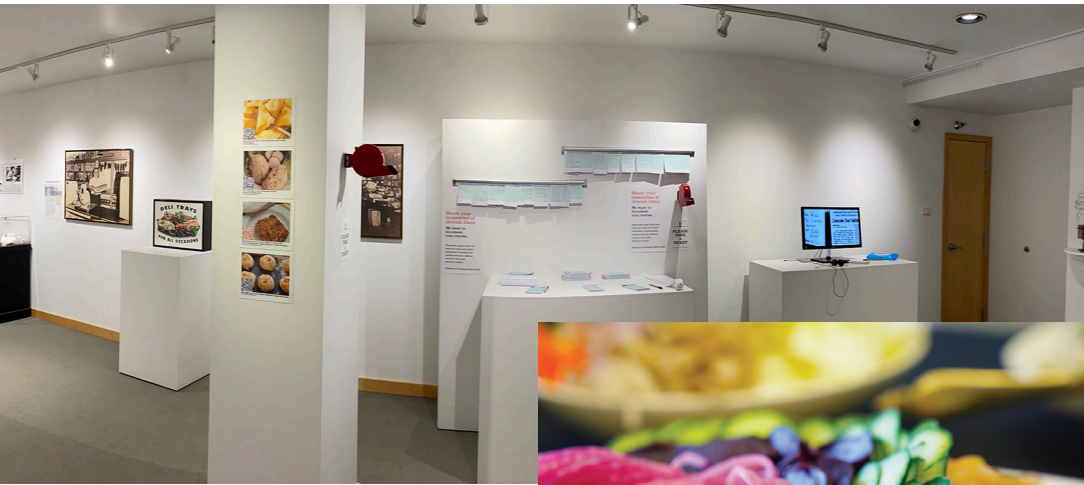
Joppa Avenue, met behind the counter. They eventually married and made a life together. Former deli employees recalled not only the many delicacies they served up, but also the important social function of the deli for all who gathered there.

A highlight of the exhibit was an original booth from the Lincoln Del, situated in front of vintage Del draperies in shades of orange and brown. An original light fixture from the Del was displayed nearby. The booth became a magnet where community members gathered and told stories. Many were heard making plans to go to Cecil's or Crossroad's for a bite.

Three events complemented the exhibit. The first was an opening reception with more than one hundred people in attendance. This was our first in-person event since COVID started. It was a special pleasure to come together and reminisce while nibbling on black and white cookies and sipping a Dr. Brown's soda.

The second event was a reception that featured heavy deli appetizers in a nod to the exhibit's name. The excellent food was created by BernBaum's owners, Andrea Baumgardner and Brett Bernath. BernBaum's is a Nordic-Jewish deli located in downtown Fargo, North Dakota, which celebrates the backgrounds of their owners. They traveled to the Twin Cities to serve up deli favorites including pastrami, latkes, knishes, pickles, and so much more. It was a deli-cious feast.

The film, *The Deli Man*, was the perfect event to wrap up our first deli exhibit. Part documentary, part personal story, it follows Ziggy Gruber, and has some unexpected twists. Popcorn and other



movie treats, as well as Dr. Brown's sodas were on hand for our nearly sold out crowd.

### Coming Soon — The Main Course

We asked Appetizer attendees to share their unique memories, photos and artifacts, and they are already responding. The magic of social media is allowing us to talk with people in other states and countries about their memories from decades ago.

Judith “Yehudit” Ogrinsky who grew up in St. Louis Park and has lived in Israel since the 1970s, has reached out with memories of the Boulevard Deli, owned and run by her parents, Sam and Lorraine Golden.

The Appetizer events were a big success and so much fun. We are looking forward to the Main Course! Contact us with your deli stories at [history@jhsum.org](mailto:history@jhsum.org). We want to hear from you.



**JHSUM President  
Jamie Heilicher**

From Summer Camps to making Dill Pickles, from the History of Jews in Aberdeen to Delicatessens. JHSUM continues to collect and tell the stories of Jewish families and culture in the Upper Midwest.

These and many other stories help to give credibility to the value of being part of a community. Part of our mission is to preserve these stories and find a way to bring them to life, so future generations can learn and be inspired by what has come before them.

From exhibits to our growing video series, we are doing our part in keeping our stories alive.

We still need your help to continue to collect and tell these stories. We are currently seeking sponsors who will help us create a sustainable organization for years to come.

*Please join us in realizing our mission!*

**Looking forward to the Main Course?  
So are we! Learn more:**

To keep up with the latest details on these special events, subscribe to our e-news at [www.jhsum.org](http://www.jhsum.org).

# On the road:

## Jews in Ely, Minnesota 1900–1945

By Tom Rose, PhD

Simon Bourgin, born to a Jewish family in Ely describes the town as “a village in the wilderness.” Jim Klobuchar, a columnist for the *Minneapolis Tribune* and Ely native of Slovenian descent, called Ely “a shantytown beginning, and disaster and conflict...the mingling of its ethnic clans, the lyricism of its languages and yearnings, and the clang of its colliding cultures...the struggles and ideas of the immigrant frontier, which lies at the soul of the American experience.”

Jews came to this melting pot of Catholic Slovenians, Serbians, Bulgarians, Croatians and Finnish Protestants. By the early 1900s, the expanding population included six Jewish families whose businesses and families struggled to become part of the Ely community. Ely’s Jews came from Russia, Poland and Lithuania via Superior, Wisconsin, Tower, Virginia, and Duluth, Minnesota, as well as New York City. By the end of World War II some had moved back to Virginia, Minnesota, and others to the larger cities of St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Chicago.

The Jewish families included those of Hyman Isaiah Kornfeld, Emanuel and Frannie Levy, Meyer Kaufman, Benjamin Horowitz, Joseph and Jennie Bloomenson, Samuel Cohen, Philip and Minnie Kasper Rosenbloom, Morris and Mary Bourgin, Isadore Louis and Sarah Gordon, and Harry and Sarah Burgin, George and Minnie Popkin Milavetz. (Yes, there were two Jewish families in town with similar names, the Bourgins and the Burgins).

In the late 90s I conducted in-depth taped interviews with the living children of these families, all of whom were already at advanced ages. These included Simon Bourgin, 87, Anita Gordon, 84, her brother Eddie Gordon, 73, her cousin Milton Gordon, 82, Dave and Dina Burgin, 74. I had shorter discussions with Philip Rosenbloom and Philip Milavetz. All interviewees have since passed on.

### How they earned a living

Most Ely Jews started as peddlers, making friends among their customers. Often, customers and relatives loaned them the money needed to open a store. The Burgins ran a hotel in town



Abe Bloomenson, third from right, as a young boy, with his parents, and sisters Esther and Rose.

that had seven rooms. They closed the hotel in 1946, and moved to Duluth, where Harry worked for Master Furriers which was owned by former Ely businessman, Abe Bloomenson.

Morris Bourgin sold carbide lamps, heavy clothes and boots suitable for mining, and penny candy. Louis Gordon, who moved to Ely in about 1900, and Mike Gordon each had a clothing store. The two Gordons were in business together for a short time after Mike Gordon came to Ely from Virginia, Minnesota, where he had worked in the Milavetz clothing store. Mike Gordon’s clothing store closed in 1932, after which he opened a liquor store which didn’t last long. Louis Gordon’s store sold shirts, hosiery, underwear, and neckwear.

The Depression was very rough on these families and contributed to them leaving Ely for new opportunities. Even in the best of times there were too many clothing stores in Ely, and all the Jewish businessmen did a lucrative business trading furs on the side. As Eddie Gordon remembered, “you might say it was



Bloomenson's Columbia Clothing store in Ely, circa late 1800s.

part of the business...when we went broke in 1932, furs became a living for us." The Burgins bought pelts for Master Furriers in Duluth run by former Ely businessman Sam Cohen. Simon Bourgin remembered that his dad sometimes had 80 mink, 100 muskrats, wolves, red and silver fox, martens, and weasel ready to go to Duluth and Canada. "My dad got into furs because Finns came in to the store with furs and asked dad if he could sell them." They bought and sold furs illegally, game wardens issued citations, and Dave Bourgin who had become a lawyer in Virginia, got them off.

Many of these families lived upstairs above their businesses. Their children attended Ely public schools and Ely Junior College where many were influenced by Professor Sigurd Olson who came to Ely Junior College in 1923 and became a renowned environmental writer. Olson had a major life-long influence on Simon, Dave, and Frank Bourgin. Simon said, "He was the lone star of my life...he was worldly...and we were kindred souls." When Simon came back from Europe after the war, he had long talks with Sigurd at Listening Point on nearby Burntside Lake. Listening Point also was the title of Olson's most famous book. Frank Bourgin taught at Ely Junior College before he left to work on his PhD at the University of Chicago. He also worked in the Bourgin family store in Virginia after they left Ely.

The Bourgins, Burgins, Rosenblooms, two Gordon families, and Milavetz families were the six Jewish families living in Ely at

one time. Their social lives included endless games of pinochle, poker and bridge, fishing and picnics, and sometimes a Seder at the Bourgins. The Burgins had a menorah and lit candles on most Fridays and Jewish holidays. The Bourgins spent many holidays walking in the woods just outside of town, sometimes with friends Sam and Eleanor Passin, who owned Lippman's Department Store in Duluth. Those who were born in Europe spoke Yiddish, but those born in the US did not. Sisters, Sarah and Leona Albert, married the Gordon men, and having been born in Duluth, they did not speak Yiddish. The Albert sisters' father was a floorwalker at the Ignatz Freimuth Department Store in Superior, Wisconsin. Simon Bourgin felt that the six Jewish families were separated from the rest of town, whereas Anita Gordon felt very comfortable with non-Jews. Simon said they were separate because they were not going down in the mine, and said, "My mother's kitchen created my sense of Jewishness." Trying to keep Kosher was a struggle because Kosher meat arrived on the train from Duluth and was often spoiled.

### Anti-Semitism in Ely

Anti-Semitism was part of daily life for the Ely Jewish families. Simon Bourgin said that if you didn't run into it this week, then you would the next. According to some interviewees, the Ely priest Father Mahelscic said that the Jews killed Christ, but on the other hand he spoke Hebrew with Morris Bourgin. Robert Milavetz, one of the younger Jewish kids remembered



Dr. Sutherland and Abe Bloomenson.

by Bourgin, said that his friend told him that he killed Jesus Christ. Forty years earlier, Abe Bloomenson said a group of kids said, "Let's beat up that Jew boy and steal his stuff," while he was selling notions door to door after school.

Bloomenson, a born salesman, moved to Texas and then back to Duluth, but never forgot Ely, donating \$100,000 to help create the Ely-Bloomenson Hospital in 1958.

Dave Bourgin, who had become an attorney in Virginia, moved back to Ely to run unsuccessfully for mayor. His brother said that somebody put a banner across Camp Street saying, "Watch Out for Jews." The editor of the *Ely Miner* ran an editorial saying, "we can't have that sort of thing in Ely" and it did not happen again. Anita Gordon did not have problems with antisemitism and stayed friends with other Ely girls for the rest of her life. Some

of the boys felt that anti-Semitism was not personal. When they were called dirty Jews or kikes or Sheeny, they felt it was not directed personally at them.

Eddie Gordon delivered the paper to the baker, and every time he would say that the kike wants his money. He said, "One day I came in to collect and the baker didn't say anything, and then the baker's brother tells me... 'a guy comes into the bakery and says his name is Bill Bernstein...and I work for Pillsbury in Minneapolis, and we want you to be a customer of ours,' and the baker said, 'I don't do business with kikes.' Bernstein grabbed him by the shoulders and pulled him and said, 'I am the toughest kike you ever saw and I am going to send you to the hospital if I ever hear you say that again,' and the funny thing was that the baker never said another thing to me again."

The great Depression, World War II, too many clothing stores, slowing down as they got older, and their kids attending the University of Minnesota, all contributed to an exodus of the Jews from Ely. Eddie and Milton Gordon, and Dave Bourgin joined the military, and Simon Bourgin, who had also enlisted, was working for *Stars and Stripes* in Paris. Anita Gordon was teaching school. Many of them returned to the all-school reunion in 1976 and for the Ely Centennial in 1988. Simon Bourgin came back to spend the end of his life in Ely and felt it was still a village in the wilderness.

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**Tom Rose, PhD is a retired psychology professor. He and his wife, Dorcey Rose, had a cabin in Ely for 20 years starting in the mid-90s. Tom grew up in Mahtomedi, Minnesota, moving with his family to California in 1952. His great-grand father, Isidore Rose, came to St. Paul in 1856 and the Rose family became part of Minnesota history.**

## IN MEMORIAM



**NORMAN PINK**  
**1934 - 2023**

**JHSUM acknowledges the passing of board member Norman Pink.**

**Norm spent his life in the service of his family and community, including more than 25 years as a Board member of JHSUM. May his memory be a blessing.**

# Not Every Sam Was a Schloime

By Susan Weinberg, MNJGS President

Jewish traditions have unique features that present some twists and turns, but also provide valuable clues where we explore our family history. Do you know who you are named for? It is tradition to give a Jewish child both a secular name and a Hebrew name. If you are an Ashkenazic Jew that name is typically after a deceased grandparent or great-grandparent. When several cousins bear the same name, you can assume that a grandparent of similar name had likely died before the earliest birthdate.

Now consider the fact that our ancestors came from another country where they also had a secular name from that country as well as a Hebrew name, and as is often common, a nickname. When they came to America, they Americanized their name or selected a new name that may or may not resemble their former name. Having made that leap into a new life, they often continued to modify their name, trying on new identities.

They can have as many as three or more names from their ancestral town and several names in the United States. To work your way back, you will want to learn their Hebrew and Yiddish names. To follow their trail in the United States, you will need to trace name changes. So how do we do that?

## Finding Hebrew and Yiddish Names

Another unique feature in Jewish tradition will provide the Hebrew name, the tombstone. If you are fortunate, there will be Hebrew on your family tombstones that will reveal both their Hebrew

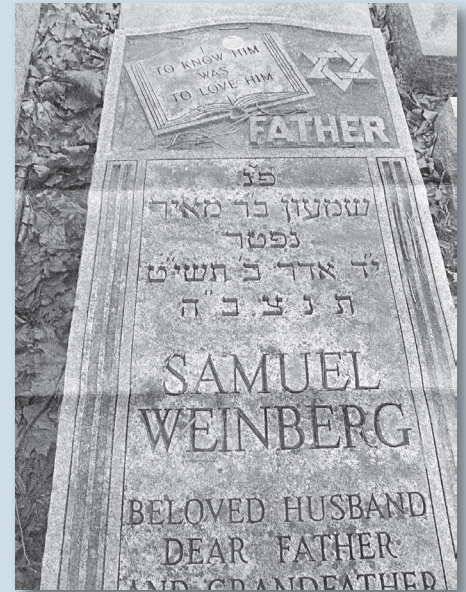
name and their father's name. You can often work from the Hebrew name to the secular name, typically found on the immigration manifest. Often the Yiddish name is shortened from the Hebrew. Yisrael becomes Srul, Ishaya becomes Shaja, Eliazar becomes Lazar.

Certain names may be calques. A calque has the same meaning, but in a different language. Often calques are associated with animals, so Aryeh means lion in Hebrew and Leib means lion in Yiddish. While someone's tombstone may read Aryeh, their secular name was likely Leib and, in the US, they often became Louis. Dov means bear in Hebrew, Ber in Yiddish. Sometimes the two names are combined into one, such as Dov Ber, but there are often unrelated double names. And don't forget those nicknames. Dov often became Berek or Berel because of the Yiddish form of the word.

If they became naturalized after 1906, the naturalization record will show both the name they went by in the US and, if different, the given name and surname they held when they entered the country. You can now work back from that document to the immigration manifest. One thing you will quickly discover is that not every Sam was a Schloime or Shmuel. They may have been another name with an "S" such as Shimon or Shaja.

## Trying on a New Identity

When our ancestors arrived, they discovered the popular names of the day and were quick to assume them if they resembled their Yiddish name. Batya often became Bessie, Chaim was



The Hebrew name of Shimon on the tombstone corresponds to the Polish birth record, even though the Americanized name was Samuel.

likely to become Hyman and Chana, Anna. But not always! And some names hardly changed at all. Binyamin became Benjamin 94% of the time. You may be surprised to know that in 97% of cases Ze'ev became William. Ze'ev is a calque meaning Wolf. Wolf to William makes more sense, but it would be puzzling if you didn't know about calques.

There were no rules governing which name they took, and names often evolved. The best way to trace them is to review city directories and census records, tracing them in family groupings. As their name changes, you know you have the right person. You may find small changes between Bertha, Bessie, Betsy, or Betty. Another common name cluster is Esther, Ernestine and Stina.

Never assume a name was static.

Knowing a person's name at a particular time will allow you to locate records from that period. If you have a gap with no records, consider the possibility that records are hiding in plain sight, just by a different name.

## 2022 Highlights

# A look back at the highlights of JHSUM's work in 2022

### JANUARY 2022

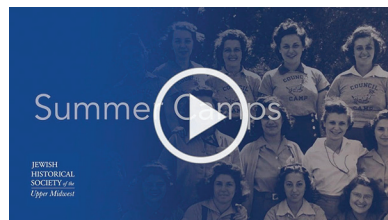
#### Anti-Semitism in Minnesota: Then and Now

Online Class. Our ongoing collaboration with Robbinsdale Community Education. Minnesota historian, Laura Weber, presented on behalf of JHSUM.

### FEBRUARY 2022

#### *It Happened Right Here: Summer Camps* video release

Summer camps have a long history of being instrumental in Jewish identity. This video explores the origin of regional Jewish summer camps. We are excited to have captured so many wonderful stories.



### APRIL 2022

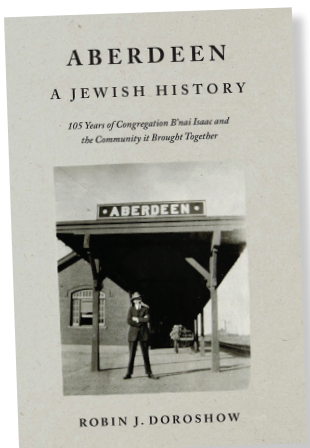
#### *It Happened Right Here: To Repair the World* video release

This video explores Tikkun Olam and the Jewish Community.

### MAY 2022

#### JHSUM documentary series honored

JHSUM was honored to have our documentary series, *It Happened Right Here* featured in Jewish Heritage Month. We were part of an online exhibition featuring the work of Jewish organizations from throughout the country.



### June 2022

#### *Aberdeen: A Jewish History* journal release

JHSUM Executive Director, Robin Doroshow researched and wrote about 150 years of Aberdeen Jewish history.

#### *Aberdeen: A Stop Along the Way*

The video features the Jewish history of Aberdeen, South Dakota.



### Celebration Weekend

On June 16-19, 2022 a small group of JHSUM travelers celebrated 105 years of the Congregation B'nai Isaac and the Aberdeen Jewish community, and the release of our latest journal in Aberdeen. The weekend included a Shabbat service at the synagogue, followed by dinner in the old Alonzo Ward hotel, and a walking tour the historic downtown.

### AUGUST 2022

#### Pickling class with Robin Doroshow

Robin led two classes teaching the history of pickling and sharing her famous family recipe.



### SEPTEMBER 2022

#### JHSUM documentary series aired on PBS

JHSUM Documentaries, *It Happened Right Here* aired on South Dakota public television.

### OCTOBER 2022

#### JHSUM Annual Meeting at Sharei Chesed

#### *Aberdeen: A Jewish History, 2nd version, release*

JHSUM Annual Meeting at Sharei Chesed Congregation, *Aberdeen: A Jewish History*, 2nd edition release and discussion of Aberdeen's history and JHSUM's June weekend in Aberdeen. Robin Doroshow discussed her research and writing process that culminated in this journal.



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# Not all donors live in the Upper Midwest

As we thank you, our donors, for helping the Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest continue to do what we do — collect and tell stories of this region's Jews — it is notable that we have donors from all over the country. Every donor has their own reason for supporting the JHSUM.

Following are just a couple examples of donors who do not make this region their home, and why the work of the Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest speaks to them personally.

### Barbara (Bobbi) Horwitz-Esmark

A few years ago, JHSUM got a call from Barbara (Bobbi) Horwitz-Esmark. An artist based in New York's Hudson Valley, Bobbi shared information on her late father, Alex Horwitz, a high school football star during his youth in Fargo, North Dakota.

**"Yiddish with a mid-west twang is not what most people think of when they think of Jewish American history. And a Jewish All-American football hero adds a special twist to all the rich, compelling, deeply American stories that unfolded in the upper-mid-west," said Bobbi.**

Bobbi has become a dear friend of JHSUM, and we look forward to working with her to help bring her father's story to life in the future.



"To live in the hearts of those left behind is not to die."

Minneapolis, and before her marriage, was employed as the executive secretary to the president of the Marquette National Bank.

Both Irving and Grace were active at the Sholom Home and on the board and various committees of Mount Zion Temple in St. Paul.

### Ralph Birnberg

Ralph Birnberg grew up in St. Paul, Minnesota, and shared these thoughts about creating a L'Dor V'Dor fund to honor his late parents:

I grew up in St. Paul, MN. My parents A. Irving and Grace Hoffman Birnberg installed a strong ethic of philanthropy in me. To memorialize my beloved parents, my children — Gary, Todd and Mindy, — and I have chosen to proudly establish the A. Irving Birnberg and Grace Hoffman Birnberg L'Dor V'Dor fund at the Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest.

A. Irving Birnberg grew up in St. Paul. He owned and operated The Birnberg Agency, which was established in 1923, and handled insurance, property management and mortgage loans. He was a graduate of The University of Minnesota. Grace Hoffman Birnberg, grew up in South

# Thank you to our contributors and members for making these achievements possible!

**Your ongoing membership and support provides general operating dollars that allow us to share excellent content with you and the broader community as well as preserve our region's rich Jewish history for future generations.**

The following memberships and donations were received from Jan. 1 – Dec. 31, 2022.

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## We love our volunteers

JHSUM is extremely fortunate to have enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers. Over the years, volunteers have helped in numerous ways to support and supplement our work. The first power-volunteer at JHSUM was the late Judy Silk Sherman. She was a dear friend and volunteer to Dr. Linda Schloff, Director of Collections, Exhibits and Publications, in earlier years.

At the risk of missing someone (and please let us know if we do), we thank some recent volunteers who have stepped up and helped with myriad tasks.

Our 35th anniversary celebration held in September of 2019 couldn't have been the success it was without Jeff Levy, a retired attorney in our community, who helped with logistics; while Carolyn Abramson and Ruth Usem were also on hand with great ideas. Matthew Bloom lent a hand shuttling our speaker, Ari Shapiro, between venues, and he continues to pitch in regularly when needed.

Linda Stern Stein, a native of Grand Forks, North Dakota, is a recent addition to our marketing committee. Her excellent ideas are already being implemented.

Dr. Lija Greenseid, Natalie Madgy, Stacey Eichenberger, Janie Braufman, retired law professor, Steve Simon, and board member, Barb Ritzen, have stepped up to record oral histories using computer technology. These oral history recordings live in perpetuity at the Nathan and Theresa Berman Upper Midwest Jewish Archives at the University of Minnesota. The value of the work of these volunteer interviewers cannot be overstated.

**We are most appreciative to all of our volunteers. Thank you. Interested in preserving history? Contact us to lend a hand at [history@jhsun.org](mailto:history@jhsun.org).**

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*We are grateful to the volunteers who write articles included in our publications.*  
Ida Lewenstein  
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Earl Schwartz

## REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES | 2022

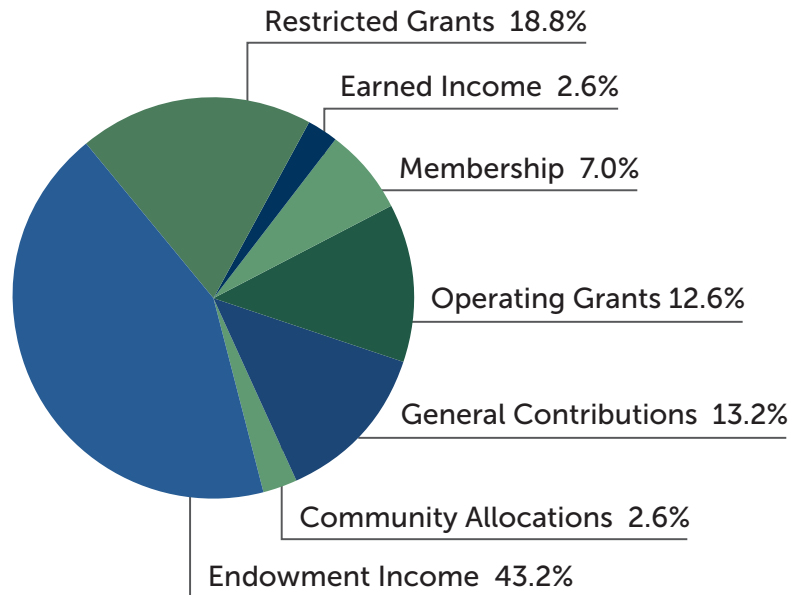
### REVENUES

Community Allocations	\$7,766
General Contributions	38,820
Operating Grants	37,000
Membership	20,693
Earned Income	7,644
Restricted Grants	55,508
Endowment Realized Gain	127,178
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$294,609</b>

### EXPENDITURES

Administrative	\$77,071
Fundraising	14,265
Programming:	
Preservation	2,401
Interpretation	148,073
Cost of Goods	2,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$243,810</b>
Net Income (Loss)	\$50,799
Endowment Unrealized Gain	(168,111)
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$(117,312)</b>

### REVENUES



## BALANCE SHEET | 2022

### ASSETS

Cash and Equivalent	\$70,361
Endowments	510,258
Equipment	1,629
Inventories	19,867
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$602,115</b>

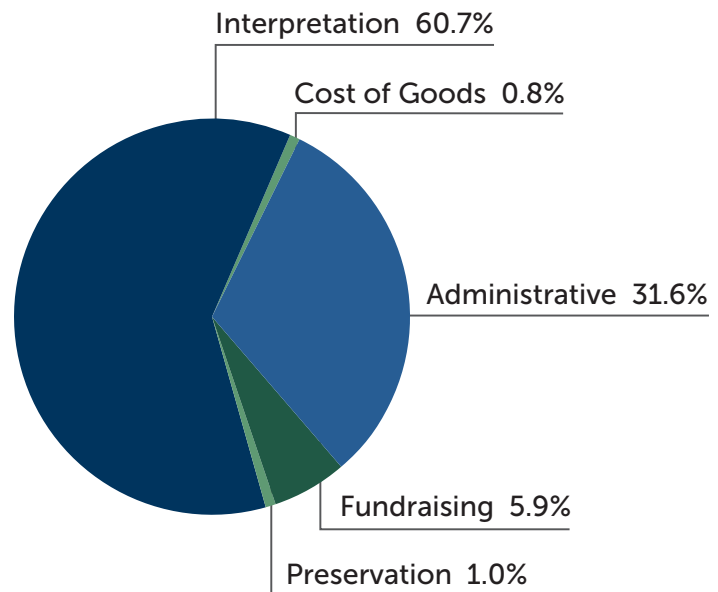
### LIABILITIES

Payables	\$ —
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### EQUITY

Endowment Contributions	\$373,015
Retained Earnings	346,412
Net Income	(117,312)
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>\$602,115</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>\$602,115</b>

### EXPENDITURES



JHSUM makes every effort to properly acknowledge each of our donors. For corrections or questions, please contact us at [history@jhsun.org](mailto:history@jhsun.org).

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CHANGE SERVICES REQUESTED



**Executive Director**  
**Robin Doroshow**

Dear Supporters,

We thank you for your ongoing support of the Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest. It is true that we cannot do it without you.

As we slowly begin to incorporate in-person events in addition to hybrid events, we feel the joy of coming together. Our recent deli exhibit has been a wonderful opportunity for some fun, in-person events. The recently closed exhibit – DELicious History:

The Appetizer was a hit, but it was only the beginning. We are working hard to expand to include more stories and more delis as we move toward DELicious History: The Main Course. Watch your email for more information, and if you don't receive our emails, I encourage you to contact us at [history@jhsum.org](mailto:history@jhsum.org), so we can add you to our lists.

This issue of our annual report celebrates donors and volunteers. We hope you will join these groups. There is so much we can do together.



**Appetizer deli reception featured deli favorites made by BernBaum's from Fargo, N.D.**