

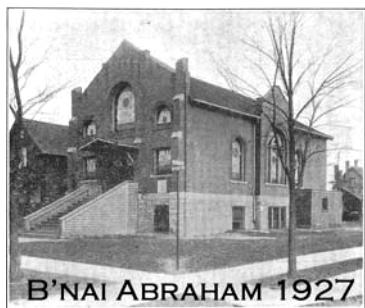


B'NAI ABRAHAM

Virginia, Minnesota - St. Louis County



The History of Jewish Life on the Minnesota Iron Range



B'NAI ABRAHAM 1927

The B'nai Abraham Synagogue in Virginia Minnesota is a story of loss and reuse. Built in 1909-10, it was the last remaining active synagogue on the Iron Range until its congregation dwindled to a handful of members who could no longer maintain the handsome brick structure. It closed its doors in the mid-1990s. It was acquired in 2004 by a not-for-profit organization, The Friends of B'nai Abraham, who raised funds, and continue to do so, for the building's restoration and reuse in order to serve as a cultural center for all the citizens of Virginia, Minnesota and surrounding areas, and to preserve the history of its Jewish community, of which it was so much a part. Together with our partner, The Virginia Area Historical Society (VAHS), we look forward to seeing this lovely building used for many cultural and educational programs for the community.

A very special World War II Exhibit

May 19 through July 10, 2011 at B'nai Abraham

Open daily from noon to 3 PM

and at 7 PM for scheduled musical performances and wartime recollections.

- cosponsored by the Virginia Area Historical Society and The Friends of B'nai Abraham
- includes displays from -

Minnesota Historical Society

WW II Minnesota Homefront: Panels, audio interviews, songs of the period, and a "Letter Stories" bin, sharing the experiences of 46 Minnesotans and the state's role in the most widespread war in history.

Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest

Saving World War II Memories: The contribution of the Jewish Community to the war effort.

Friends of B'nai Abraham

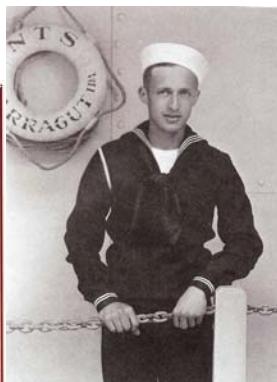
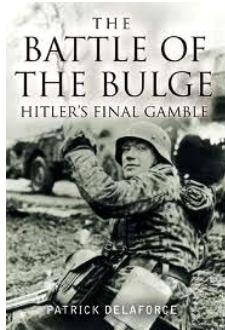
Members who Served: Posters, stories and WW II artifacts.

Traces Center for History and Culture

German internment camps in the Midwest: Posters and more.

The Virginia Area Historical Society and Veterans Memorial Hall

Exhibits: At B'nai Abraham, The VAHS Heritage Museum.



Musical Performances coming to B'nai Abraham



'40's JAZZ: Connie Evingson, Dave Karr, Sam Miltich and Matthew Miltich - Thursday, June 16, 2011, at 7:00 P.M.

Benefit Concert: Tickets are \$10 apiece, and can be bought at the door that evening from 6:15 on, first come first serve, or in advance from the Virginia Area Historical Society after June 1, - cash or checks only. An anonymous donor is helping with the cost of the performance but additional DONATIONS for this B'nai Abraham benefit will be welcome.



Songs from WW II:

Northern Lights Musicians directed by **Veda Zupancic**.

Saturday, July 9, 2011, at 7:00 P.M. This is the third year that these wonderful young musicians have performed to great accolades at B'nai Abraham. The concert is free. First come, first serve.



Afternoon Concert Series:

Fridays, 1:00 P.M. These concerts are free.

May 20 - WWII Sing-Along with Barb Baldrica and Bert Needham

May 27 - Virginia-Eveleth-Gilbert String Students

June 3 - Shannon Lee

June 10 - The Dischords (Male Quartet)

June 17 - Reflections in Harmony (Female Quartet)

June 24 - I Cantatori (Italian Singers)

July 1 - Sue by Two (Sax and Piano)

July 8 - Five Seasoned Brass (Brass Quintet)

Please check the Virginia Area Historical Society website at www.VirginiaMNMuseum.com for up-to-date scheduling information and additional programs.

Restoration



B'nai Abraham
under construction
winter 1909-1910



Under
reconstruction
2010-2011

Progress Report

This is a real life story, similar to the childhood tale about the Little Engine That Could: **We Thought We Could and We Are.**

The wonderful progress and beautiful results are due to the effort of many including the Board of the Friends, scores of contributors and granting agencies as well as a host of talented artisans and workmen who put in countless hours repairing and restoring the structure. Examples of restoration are seen on the next page. We are not done but the building is already in use. Your help is still needed.

Friends of B'nai Abraham volume 5 No. 1 – May 2011 www.IronRangeJewishHeritage.org page 2

Windows



The true gems of the building, the colorful and meaningful stained glass windows have all been restored with the exception of the two small side balcony windows. The final interior molding trim is now being installed on several of the sanctuary windows.



In addition, the sanctuary entrance doors have been reinstalled. These doors had stained glass windows that were badly damaged and their repair truly puts one of the finishing touches on the sanctuary. The windows in the entry doors, one of which is seen on the right, include the beautiful Hebrew phrase from Psalm 118 verse 20 which translates as: *"This is the gate of God through which the righteous shall enter."* The large restored window, seen on the left, features a wonderful depiction of Noah's Ark.

Sanford I. Berman Social Hall



This lower level area is now completed with new fluorescent lighting and a new floor of commercial grade tile. This large bright room is perfectly suited for museum displays and festivities and will soon be the site of an extensive exhibit of many facets of World War II and its effect on the upper Midwest.

Once again we want to thank Sanford I. and Sande Berman for their generous donation, which made the restoration of this social hall possible.

Canopy and Vestibule



Another major project just completed in the last few months is the new entrance canopy and vestibule. There was a canopy on the front of the building before it was removed for the wooden entrance in the 1970s. The old entrance let the cold north wind blow directly into the building every time the front doors were opened. With the new canopy and vestibule, designed with a maximum of windows to render it less visible from an architectural standpoint, not only will the building be more comfortable during the winter, but the new wood paneled entrance doors will also be protected from the weather.

In Memory Dorothy Lillian Karon



Dorothy Karon, 92, of Virginia, a lifelong supporter of B'nai Abraham, has passed away. She ran the family business, the Karon Oil Company for many years, was active statewide in her support of libraries and was involved in the upgrade and expansion of the Virginia Public Library. She was referred to as a "lady of vision and dedication" who spurred the formation of the Arrowhead Library System. Dorothy was one of the last caretakers of B'nai Abraham and served as its treasurer for many years. The funeral was held at B'nai Abraham on April 29, 2011 and burial was at Adas Israel Cemetery in Duluth, Minnesota.

for N.L.
Summer
Summer fare from **HOT OFF THE RANGE**,
compiled by the Hibbing-Chisholm Chapter of Hadassah, 1971.

Traditional Cold Borscht

10 small fresh beets, peeled
2 quarts of water
2 teaspoons salt
Juice of 1 lemon
1 tablespoon sugar
3 eggs
1 cup sour cream
Hot boiled potatoes

Peel beets, cook until tender and dice. Save the boiling liquid to add to the diced beets later. Add salt, lemon juice and sugar to beets. Taste and set aside. Beat eggs thoroughly in a large bowl. Add the hot beet liquid to the beaten eggs very slowly, stirring constantly. Add beet mixture. Chill. Serve with a dollop of sour cream and a hot boiled potato in each serving. May also be garnished with a thinly sliced cucumber, minced parsley or green onions.

Ann Sher, International Falls, Minnesota

Grants awarded to the Friends of B'nai Abraham

Matching grant from the State Historic Preservation Office of the Minnesota Historical Society - \$5,000
Matching grant from the Iron Range Resources - \$15,000
Minnesota Center on Energy and the Environment - \$10,000
Virginia Community Foundation - \$2,500
Matching grant - Minnesota Historical Society Grant in Aid - \$10,000
Beverly Foundation - \$60,000
Matching grant from Iron Range Resources - \$75,000
Matching grant from St. Louis Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) \$75,000
Matching grant - Minnesota Historical Society Grant in Aid - \$48,500
Wells Fargo Bank Foundation - Minnesota - \$15,000
Minneapolis Jewish Federation - \$1,000
Jay and Rose Phillips Family Foundation - \$5,000
A Special Gift from Sanford I. and Sande Berman - \$20,000
Jeffris Heartland Fund - \$5,956
Mount Sinai Community Foundation - \$1,800
Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund - \$6,994
Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund - \$38,826
Minnesota Humanities Center - \$5,000
United Jewish Fund and Council of St. Paul - \$500
Temple Israel – Minneapolis
Hillsdale Fund - \$21,390
Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund - \$16,100 and \$7,000

Contributors to the Friends of B'nai Abraham

A special thanks to our supporters

Individual Contributions: Nov. 2010 - May 2011

Sande and Sanford I. Berman
Curt and Adele Brown
Frank Clayman
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Marietta and Charles Pitzele
Noah Rosenbloom
Leighton and Dianne Siegel
Buddy and Judy Tennebaum
Margie Zats
Alan and Bonnie Ziskin

Special Contributions: Nov. 2010 - May 2011

Marc Blehert: In honor of Mike and Sue Blehert's 42nd wedding anniversary
Helen Brooks: In honor of Ann and Felix commitment to B'nai Abraham's revival/survival
Elaine and Larry Chiat: In memory of Beverly and David Deutsch
Marilyn Chiat: In memory of Harald (Hersh) Specktor; In memory of Richard Diamond; In memory of Mickey Smith; In memory of Ann Specktor; Wishing Faye Segal a speedy recovery; In memory of Jan Ribnick
Frank Claymon: In memory of Rose Fingerhut
Bobby and Elliot Cohen: Thanking Margie and Charlie Ostrov for their wonderful hospitality
Jeanne Corwin: In honor Ann Phillip's special birthday
Judy and Rodney Cooperman: Wishing Audra Keller a speedy recovery
Ben and Karen Deutsch: In honor of Elayne and Larry Chiat
Abigail Farber: In honor of Ann and Felix Philips
Mimi and Sherry Gleekel: In honor of Margie and Charlie Ostrov - for all their work on B'nai Abraham
Morris and Gerre Hoffman: In honor of Marilyn Chiat
Steve Hunegs: In support of the marvelous efforts involved with the rededication of B'nai Abraham
Colette and Peter Johnson: A happy Hanukah to Audra and Frank
Audra Keller: In honor of the special birthday of Ann Phillips; In memory of Dolly Schibel Blumberg; In memory of Marjorie Grossman
Gene Kishel: In honor of Charlie and Margie Ostrov
Allen Levoff: In memory of Anna Kaufman Levoff
Robert Maslansky, MD: In memory of Carolyn Phillips Maslansky
Bob and Judy Marans: In memory of Anne Siegel Marans
Lesli and Mike Marasco: In honor of Dianne and Leighton Siegel
Chana Mesberg: In memory of Geoge and Sarah Mesberg
Shirley Olson: In honor of Ann Phillip's birthday
EttaFay Orkin: In memory of Dr. Evan Ellison; In honor of all the dedicated workers
Charles and Marjorie Ostrov: In honor of the special birthday of Harriet Israel; In memory of the sister of Judy Marans; In memory of Edward Phillips; In memory of Jan Ribnick
Ann and Felix Phillips: In memory of Dolly Schibel Blumberg; In memory of Richard Diamond; In memory of Edward Phillips, friend and benefactor to the Friends of B'nai Abraham
Rochelle and David Rottenberg: In memory of Buddy Tennebaum's father
Paul Sakol: In memory of Pearl Bankman Sakol
Marvin and Stefanie Segal: In honor of the friendship of Mort Silverman and congratulations on your great work on B'nai Abraham
Dianne and Leighton Siegel: In honor of the special birthday of Harriet Israel; In memory of the sister of Judy Marans
Marilyn Marker and Bud Shapiro: Wishing Audra Keller a speedy recovery
Artis Silverman: In memory of Ann Stanley and Rosabelle Berkoff
Sharron and Oren Steinfeldt: In honor of Margie Ostrov and her extraordinary contributions to B'nai Abraham
Karen and Richard Weiland: In memory of Munroe Milavetz

If we have inadvertently missed your name, please let us know so that you can be included in our next newsletter.

Board of Directors of the Friends of B'nai Abraham

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Audra Keller, *Corresponding Secretary*
James Rubenstein
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**We've made great progress but are still short of our goal.
Your continued interest and contributions are vital to our success.**

Many of you had the opportunity to visit B'nai Abraham this past summer for our Centennial Celebration or perhaps as you were passing through Virginia at other times. We hope that you were pleased with all of the work that has been done to restore this beautiful building and to help preserve it for future generations. However, there is still more to be done. We hope that you will remember this project and donate whatever you can to help complete our work.

Once again, those who have IRAs and are now required to take a yearly distribution, have the opportunity to make a non-taxable charitable contribution from their IRA. Please consider our restoration efforts when you make those decisions.

The B'nai Abraham Museum and Cultural Center has seen many events and visitors in the last year and restoration work has proceeded, but there is still more to do. The rear lower level entrance, kitchen, front foyer and balcony need to be completed or rebuilt. Your donations to help complete this project are very much appreciated.

As you consider a possible donation, remember that we have no staff costs. The entire project is managed by a dedicated group of volunteers, and the building is maintained through your donations.

We've made great progress but are still short of our goal. All donations are fully tax deductible.

Please send your donation to:

Friends of B'nai Abraham
c/o Charles Ostrov, treasurer
1788 Maryland Ave. North
Golden Valley, MN 55427

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Amount: _____

To contribute stock contact: York Securities, Inc. 800-221-3154 directed to Kathleen -or-
costrov@gmail.com -or- phill037@umn.edu

In Memory of: In Honor of: Other: _____

Send acknowledgement card to: Name: _____

Address: _____

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