



# B'NAI ABRAHAM

Virginia, Minnesota - St. Louis County



The History of Jewish Life on the Minnesota Iron Range



B'NAI ABRAHAM 1927

B'nai Abraham, built during 1909-1910, is the last remaining synagogue on the Minnesota Iron Range and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It had not functioned as a working synagogue since the late 1990s and had undergone significant deterioration. In 2005, the Friends of B'nai Abraham (FBA) was organized as a non-profit 501(c)3 with the mission of restoring and preserving the building so that it can function as a community cultural center for all the people of Virginia and the surrounding communities, as well as providing a small museum space to tell the story of the Jewish presence and contributions on the Iron Range. 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.

## B'nai Abraham Centennial

100 years celebrated on July 9 & 10, 2010



A filled sanctuary



Rededication plaque



Saturday lunch



Saturday evening klezmer

MILLIE & THE MENTSHIN ANOTHER DI MENTSHIN

Northern Lights Music Festival



Friday night classics



Saturday morning rededication



visitors arrive



Mezuzah placement

Thank you all to all the photographers who provided us with these images.

B'nai Abraham Centennial  
100 years celebrated on  
July, 9 & 10, 2010



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### Mark your calendars for Saturday evening July 9, 2011

We are honored once again to be hosting the *Northern Lights Music Festival*, under the direction of Veda Zuponic, on the concluding weekend of the World War II, *Minnesota Homefront* exhibit this summer. Join us at B'nai Abraham for glorious classical music and a marvelous exhibit.

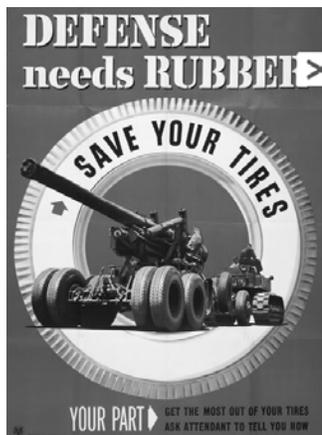


### Bet Shalom Confirmation Class

Members of the *Bet Shalom Confirmation Class* and Rabbi David Locketz visited Bnai Abraham in the Fall of 2010. They brought with them the Torah that had once belonged to the Hibbing Synagogue and now is used at Bet Shalom.



## Exciting exhibit coming to B'nai Abraham May 21 through July 10, 2011



The *Virginia Area Historical Society* will be hosting the *Minnesota Historical Society's* traveling exhibit entitled, *Minnesota Homefront, World War II*. The exhibit will be located in the lower level *Sanford I Berman Social Hall* of B'nai Abraham. The members of the *Virginia Area Historical Society* will provide daily tours. The exhibit will consist of nine panels, audio interviews, songs of the period and letters and other information that share the experiences of Minnesotans and the State's role in the most widespread war in history.

The exhibit will inform viewers about what it was like to "make do" with rationing, farm during a severe labor shortage, work on the Iron Range and in defense plants and other related topics.

The *Virginia Area Historical Society* will be adding parallel exhibits that demonstrate local involvement. The Friends of B'nai Abraham will also include information and objects about the role played by the Jewish community of the Iron Range.

In addition, performances and programs that relate to that period of history will take place in the upper level assembly hall.

Watch for more details in our Spring newsletter. Mark your calendars and plan to attend this most worthwhile exhibit.

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### In the works

We were fortunate to receive a *Minnesota Historical and Cultural Program Legacy Grant* to fund the construction of a canopy over the front entrance of B'nai Abraham, which will replicate the canopy that once existed. The canopy will protect visitors as they enter the building and will also serve to protect the beautiful new front doors. As funds become available, the area under the canopy will be enclosed to provide a vestibule.



For a complete list of future events at B'nai Abraham, visit our web site: [www.IronRangeJewishHeritage.org](http://www.IronRangeJewishHeritage.org)

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### From the desk of our President, Marjorie Ostrov:



It has been a wonderful year for B'nai Abraham, as you can see from the photos of the Centennial Celebration last summer and we have had wonderful responses from the many enthusiastic visitors. It was gratifying to see so many visitors from all over the United States and as far away as London, England. In addition to that wonderful event, the *Minnesota Humanities Center* once again held part of their teacher's workshop, *Building America*, at B'nai Abraham. Our own *Marilyn Chiat* gave one of the lectures. Sold out audiences listened to local talent, *Mary LaPlant*, on two occasions in conjunction with the teacher's workshops

The *Minnesota Historical Society* selected B'nai Abraham as the site for their regional meeting for organizations interested in applying for Minnesota Historical and Cultural Legacy Grants.

Nearly 1,000 people visited *B'nai Abraham Museum and Cultural Center* this past year, viewing the exhibits and learning about the building and the community's Jewish history. Marilyn Chiat and Ann Phillips spoke at *B'nai Emet Synagogue* in Minneapolis as a part of their historical lecture series.

We are busy with restoration work, fund raising and programming for the next season. Thank you to all our grantors, donors, supporters and the *Virginia Area Historical Society*. We could not do it without you.

A special thanks to our supporters

### 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 - \$7,000**

### Individual Contributions: May 2010 – November 2010

Barbara Albin	Jeremy and Carrie Gottstein	Bob Milavetz
Jill Anttila	Louise Grams	Joann Moffatt
Apter Family: Funded by the Apter Family Fund of the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation	Jon and Judy Harris	Sandi Maseovich Morris
Fern Badzin	Susan Helland	Virginia H. Nelson
Lenore Bear	Rabbi Hayim Herring and Terri Krivosha	Marjorie and Charlie Ostrov
Stuart Bear and Marsha Schoenkin	Lorraine and Mark Hertz	JoAnn Pasternak
Trudy Bers	Bergetta McGillivray and Michael Indihar	Ann and Felix Phillips
Alice Maud Bucknall	Mark Kaplan	Norman and Dorothy Pink
Tashi Bucknall	Sheldon and Helene Kaplan	Alice Maud Phillips
Charles Cohen and Christine Schindler	Harriet and Joel Katz	Roz Rettman and Lesley Baseman
Karen Alpert Entous	Judith Kramerich	Robert Roscoe -Design for Preservation
Beverly and Richard Fink	Judith and Harold Kuller	Noah Rosenbloom
Carol Muehling Frausto	Harry Lampa	Ann and William Sandvig
Mel and Patti Frisch	Marianne and Leon Levine	Robert and Linda Schibel
Michael and Bernice Frisch	Amy Lieberman	Katherine and Jeffrey Tane
Norman and Doris Fruman	Susan Lindgren Malec and Walter Malec	Temkin Family
Carol Garrison	Bob and Judy Marans	Elizabeth Cornelius Wiens
Roberta and Fred Goldner	Marilyn Marker	Lisa Weisman and family
Howard and Barbara Gordon	Chana Mesberg	Elizabeth and Cornelius Wiens
Phyllis and Herman Gordon	Alan Milavetz and Bonnie Resnick	Rabbi Marcia Zimmerman, Temple Israel

### Special Contributions: May 2010 – November 2010

**Carolyn Abramson and Manny Kaplan:** In honor of all my wonderful friends from Virginia, MN who created a fantastic "happening"

**Alan and Bobbie Bright:** In honor of Ray Bright's 95st birthday and Myron Bright's 91st birthday

**Joan and Harvey Bream:** In honor of Dianne Siegel's hard work

**Marilyn Chiat:** In honor of the special birthday of Dr. Jay Cohn; In memory of Arno Blum; In honor of Penny and Paul Svenkson's 32rd Anniversary; In honor of Bill Chiat and Jim Gladfelter's second wedding anniversary; Speedy recovery to Nancy Strauss; Speedy recovery to Janice Waller; In honor of Arnie Ribnick's special birthday; In memory of Dr. Evan (Bud) Ellison; In memory of Harvey Chiat's second Yartzeit; In honor of the Marriage of Heidi Svenkeson and Todd Larson; In memory of Esther Sabes; In honor of Penny and Paul Svenkson's 33rd wedding anniversary

**Bobby and Elliot Cohen:** In loving memory of Rav Mendel Cohen, Ida Cohen, David Cohen and Gertrude Cohen

**Audrey Goldfarb, Marilyn Marker and Carol Garrison:** In honor of Audra Keller, Ann Phillips and Margie Ostrov for all their hard work on behalf of B'nai Abraham

**Susan and Bert Gross:** In honor of Ann Phillips

**Joanne and Bruce Gruen:** In honor of Charlie and Margie Ostrov and the Alan Milavetz family  
**Barbara Halper:** In memory of Bernard Halper of Hibbing  
**Peggy and Herbert Greuling:** In memory of Dr. Charles and Esther Goodman, parents of Peggy Goodman Grueling, Winnie Goodman Gurovitsch and Barbara Goodman Sagen  
**Bob Hunegs:** In honor of wedding of John Hunegs and Emily Kaufman  
**Carol Kaemper and Amy Beth Lauer:** In memory of Nate and Molly Keller  
**Helene and Sheldon Kaplan:** In memory of Ruth and Monroe Shanedling; In honor of Ann and Felix Phillips  
**Gene Kishel:** In memory of Paul Ostrov and in memory of Carl Kaufman  
**Barbara and Keith Knoop:** In memory of Bob Langer; In honor of the Virginia High School class of 1953; In memory of Karl and Rose Sundquist  
**Barbara and Gary Krupp:** In honor of Mike Blehert's many contributions to the Jewish community  
**Judy and Bunny Kuller:** In honor of Ann Phillips' special birthday  
**Rabbi David Locketz:** In appreciation of the visit to B'nai Abraham by the Bet Shalom confirmation class  
**Marilyn Marker:** Wishing Felix Phillips a speedy recovery  
**Alan Milavetz and Bonnie Resnick:** In honor of Rabbi Adam Spilker; In memory of Rabbi Bernard Raskas  
**Eileen and Jim Mitson:** In honor of Amy and David's marriage  
**Margie and Charlie Ostrov:** In memory of Susie Steiger; In memory of Ramona "Monie" Gallop Steinman; In memory of Edith Goldish; In honor of the 80th birthday of Sherry Gleekel; in honor of the 50th anniversary of Gerry and Esther Neuwirth  
**Michael Phillips and Julia Bucknall:** In honor of Ruth, Monroe and Ralph Shanedling  
**Chad and Lucy Qaintance:** In honor of Ann Phillips  
**Anita and George Robinson:** Wishing Howard Gordon a rapid and complete recovery  
**Barbara (Tudie) Ross:** Wishing Felix Phillips a speedy recovery  
**Noah and Janet Rosenbloom:** In memory of Eli E. and Esther B. Rosenbloom  
**Reva Rosenbloom:** Wishing Felix Phillips a speedy recovery and a happy birthday  
**James and Rosemarie Rubenstein:** In honor of Elise Glass 90th birthday; In memory of Jeanne Schibel Gross  
**Steve Sagen:** In memory of Dr. Jerry Marcaccini  
**Katie (Bankman) Sakol:** In honor of the Board of the Friends of B'nai Abraham  
**Robert and Linda Schibel:** In memory of "All those cherished members of B'nai Abraham with whom we share so many memories;" In memory of Jeanne Schibel  
**Mel and Delores Sigel:** In honor of Marilyn Chiat  
**Dianne and Leighton Siegel:** In memory of Susie Steiger; In honor of Judy Maran's special birthday; In honor of the Lesli and Mike Marasco's 10th anniversary; Wishing Lisa Heilicher a speedy recovery  
**Libby and Richard Siegel:** In honor of Ann Phillips and her commitment to B'nai Abraham and the Iron Range  
**Sam and Ione Siegel:** In memory of Carl and Bessie Siegel  
**Nancy Straus:** In honor of Marilyn Chiat's granddaughter's wedding  
**Gordon and Maraline Slovet :** In memory of Harriet Gordon Slovet, who grew up in Virginia  
**Jean and Barry Steiger:** In honor of the rededication of the B'nai Abraham Synagogue and 49 years of marriage  
**Liba and Tom Stillman:** Wishing Audra Keller a speedy recovery  
**Joan Tamkin:** In loving memory of Ethel Shanedling  
**Marsha and Gary Tankenoff:** Wishing Felix Phillips a speedy recovery  
**Maricarol and Jon Wallace:** In honor of Ann Phillips and her families' heritage

### Gifts of kind and other aid: May 2010 – November 2010

**Francie Paper:** Large Flower Pot  
**Robert and Gloria Nankervis:** A book: *The Living History and Archeology in the Eastern Mediterranean*  
**Roberta Ellis Goldner:** A book: *The Memorial Book for the Jewish Community of Yarburg, Lithuania*  
**Judy Kuller:** A Russian prayer book belonging to her grandfather, Harry Shanedling probably given to him in Russia at his Bar Mitzvah, with a Lucite display stand

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

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#### **Board of Directors of the Friends of B'nai Abraham**

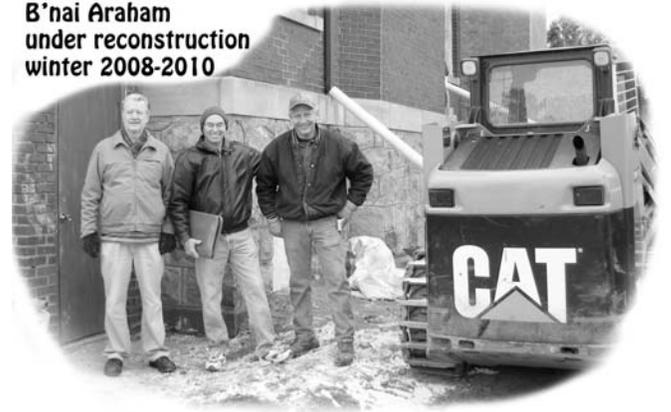
Marjorie Ostrov, <i>President</i>	Alan Milavetz, <i>Legal Counsel</i>	Elayne Deutsch Chiat
Ann Shanedling Phillips, <i>Vice President of Administration</i>	Marilyn Chiat, PhD, <i>Architectural Historian</i>	Audra Keller, <i>Corresponding Secretary</i>
Charles Ostrov, MD, <i>Treasurer</i>	Leighton Siegel, MD, <i>Webmaster, Editor, Photographer</i>	James Rubenstein
Dianne Siegel, <i>Recording Secretary and Grant Writer</i>	Judy Karon <i>Grant Consultant</i>	Katherine Tane, <i>Executive Director of the Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest</i>
Larry Chiat, <i>Legal Counsel</i>		
Michael Blehert, <i>Engineering Consultant</i>		

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**B'nai Abraham  
under construction  
winter 1909-1910**



**B'nai Araham  
under reconstruction  
winter 2008-2010**



**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. Below is a list of some of what remains to be done and estimated costs. We hope that you will remember this project and donate whatever you can to help complete our work.

<b>Social Hall</b>		<b>Foyer/Vestibule</b>	
Tile Floor	\$4,000	Slate tile floor/foyer	\$2,700
Ceiling lighting	\$2,000	Slate tile floor/vestibule	\$1,300
<b>Sheetrock</b> for foyer, balcony and stairs to lower level	\$5,000	<b>Future Kitchen</b> to rough in area, but no appliances	\$18,000
<b>Yearly maintenance expenses</b>	\$5,200	<b>Endowment</b>	\$ ???,???

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.

<b>We've made great progress but are still short of our goal.</b>		<b>All donations are fully tax deductible.</b>	
<p><b>Please send your donation to:</b></p> <p>Friends of B'nai Abraham c/o Charles Ostrov, treasurer 1788 Maryland Ave. North Golden Valley, MN 55427</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>City, State, Zip: _____</p> <p>Amount: _____</p> <p>To contribute stock contact: York Securities, Inc. 800-221-3154 directed to Kathleen -or- <a href="mailto:costrov@gmail.com">costrov@gmail.com</a> -or- <a href="mailto:phill037@umn.edu">phill037@umn.edu</a></p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Memory of:    <input type="checkbox"/> Honor of: _____</p> <p>Send acknowledgement card to: Name: _____</p> <p style="padding-left: 150px;">Address: _____</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;">City, State, Zip: _____</p>			