



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 2005 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.

- The B'nai Abraham Museum & Cultural Center is located at 328 5th Street South at the corner of 4th Avenue & 5th Street South.
- For updated information visit the B'nai Abraham website:

www.ironrangejewishheritage.org

Summer Performances 2017

At B'nai Abraham, 328 5th Street South, Virginia, MN

All programs are free except Northern Lights.

Alan Phillips with Jim and Joan Hagblom **Sunday, May 21, 2017 at 7 P.M.**

Join us for our first event of the year! "Timeless", featuring Jim and Joanie Hagblom and Alan Phillips. In their former band, "Crystal Vision," The Hagbloms and Alan Phillips toured northern Minnesota in the late 70's entertaining audiences with a variety of classic rock performances featuring the music of popular artists of the day.



Now the spotlight is on the music of some of history's greatest performers such as Neil Diamond, Stevie Nicks of Fleetwood Mac and The Beatles. Enjoy a blast from the past with Timeless!

The Wilcox Family Fiddlers **Saturday, June 24, 2017 at 7 P. M.**

The Wilcox Family Fiddlers, Sheila, Aaron and Andrew, will be sharing their fiddle music with some classical surprises thrown in. Sheila, the Orchestra Director at Virginia High School, has a Masters degree in music education, and has been a member of the Duluth-Superior Symphony Orchestra, the Mesabi Symphony Orchestra and many other musical groups. She considers herself a classical stiff who likes to fiddle around.

Her sons, Aaron and Andrew attended Virginia High School and both young men have studied music and orchestra and received superior ratings for their performances. Sheila, Aaron and Andrew each won Fiddle championships in their age division at last summer's MN State Old Time Fiddle Contest. They will be playing from hoedowns and reels to rags and waltzes.



Northern Lights Music Festival
Saturday, July 15, 2017 at 7 P.M.

The Northern Lights Music Festival is a three-week classical music performance program and music school, which is held each summer on the Minnesota Iron Range. Founded thirteen years ago by concert pianist and Aurora native Veda Zuponic, Northern Lights brings together award winning students and internationally known performers and teachers in a unique program that includes daily lessons, chamber music coaching, master classes and numerous performance opportunities.



Northern Lights is fortunate to have access to an array of historic performance venues for its concerts and operas. By performing in these unique venues, Northern Lights is not only able to bring the highest level of classical music to Iron Range communities but to celebrate and showcase the architectural gems found in Northeastern Minnesota.

\$10 admission for Northern Lights, tickets at www.northernlightsmusic.org or at the door.

Sam Miltich and the Clearwater Hot Club
Saturday, August 12, 2017 at 7 P.M.



On Saturday, August 12, 2017 B'nai Abraham welcomes jazz guitarist Sam Miltich and the Clearwater Hot Club to Virginia, Minnesota. The Clearwater Hot Club is dedicated to preserving the repertoire and instrumentation of the Jazz Manouche style pioneered by Manouche Roma jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt.

This performance will highlight the sounds of Klezmer, Serbo-Croatian Tamburitza and traditional Roma music from the Balkans.

Although hailing from the woods of Northern Minnesota, guitarist Sam Miltich has toured internationally since his teens, performing on stages from the Iron Range of Minnesota to Tokyo, Japan to New York's Lincoln Center. For this performance, clarinetist Tony Balluff, violinist Gary Schulte, bassist Matthew Miltich and drummer Jay Epstein join him.

The Singing Slovenes
Saturday, September 16, 2017 at 7 P.M.

Under the direction of Frank Bucar and assistant director Mary Spehar White, "The Singing Slovenes" were formed in the multi-ethnic community of Gary-New Duluth in 1980. The mission of the Minnesota group is to preserve Slovenian music and cultural heritage. Though the name of the troupe is indicative of the Slovenian heritage, the group boasts a wide and varied number of nationalities. The "Singing Slovenes represent countries far and wide: Slovenia, Croatia, Italy, Germany, Denmark, Poland, France, Norway, Finland and Sweden. The Singing Slovenes promote fellowship through music and cultural education, sharing the Slovenian heritage and preserving it for current and future generations.



These events are made possible in part by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural fund.



Duluth Superior Harbormasters Barbershop Chorus

Saturday, October 7, 2017 at 3 P.M.

The men's chorus will perform a variety of songs for your listening pleasure.

Sponsored by the Virginia Area Historical Society



The Virginia Area Historical Society in conjunction with Finland's independence, will have a summer exhibit at their Heritage Museum near Olcott Park reflecting on the influence and activities of Finnish immigrants in the Virginia area and Iron Range. Look for it to open in mid-May.

2017 EXHIBIT ON PROHIBITION AT B'NAI ABRAHAM MUSEUM AND CULTURAL CENTER

Sponsored by the Virginia Area Historical Society

Since the 1800s intoxicating beverages were seen as one of America's major problems, and local and state governments, searching for remedies, adopted prohibition laws that were later repealed.

Congress, yielding to temperance pressure, passed the 18th Amendment in 1917, and after ratification, became the law of the land until repealed by the 21st amendment in 1933.

The 18th Amendment prohibited the manufacture, sale and transport of alcoholic beverages, but permitted home, medicinal and sacramental use. This was the wrong time to adopt societal boundaries---following WWI, the nation relaxed and moved into the Roaring Twenties, a time when convention and restraint were tested and new freedoms became vogue---music was romantic, dancing was suggestive, clothing was revealing and behavior was daring. And alcohol, the enhancer of excessive behavior, was made illegal, but not obtainable as skillful entrepreneurs moved into bootlegging and much of the public became buyers. Speakeasies mushroomed throughout the land and the odor of moonshine wafted through the night air. A popular poem preserved from those lawless days reads:

*"Mother's in the kitchen, washing out the jugs,
Sister's in the pantry, bottling the suds.
Father's in the cellar, mixing up the hops,
Johnny's on the front porch, watching for the cops."*



The Exhibit will attempt to capture those bold and lawless days with displays including: a still, wine press and barrels, authentic corked bottles of moonshine, two sawed-off (deactivated) shot guns, sheet music, records, music and a Victrola of the era, court abatement orders, newspaper accounts of outrageous and criminal acts, photos of flappers, poster displaying the 18th Amendment, posters and photos promoting repeal of the 18th Amendment, Poster displaying the 21st Amendment, photographs of local prohibition agents, guns, moonshine equipment and criminals.

The exhibit will be open on Wednesday and Friday afternoons from 1 pm to 3 pm starting late May, and an hour before and after programs or by appointment by calling 218-741-6613 or 218-741- 1136. Contact can also be made by emailing homeworks217@live.com.

IN MEMORIAM

William “Bill” Siegel 1921 - 2017

William “Bill” Siegel, 95, of Eveleth, died Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2017. Bill was born on July 6, 1921, in Eveleth and attended Eveleth Junior College. He served in the Army Air Corp from 1942 to 1945. In 1959, he married Beatrice Swartz in Winnipeg. Bill took over his father’s store, S. Siegel & Bros. in Eveleth in 1957 after his father passed away. Siegel’s was open for 90 years in Eveleth, first selling hardware, TVs and furniture and then furniture and G.E. major appliances. He was a member of the Eveleth, Virginia and Duluth Synagogues. He is survived by his wife, Beatrice; sons, Jack and Robert of Eveleth and grandchildren.

Judge Myron H. Bright 1919 – 2016

Judge Myron H. 97, died peacefully on December 12, 2016 surrounded by his children and grandchildren. Myron attended Eveleth High School and graduated from Eveleth Junior College before going on to the University of Minnesota for his undergraduate and law degrees. He was a captain in the Army Air Force in WW II. He married Frances (Fritzie)_ Reisler in 1946 and moved to Fargo, ND where he lived until his death. He had a 21-year career as a successful trial attorney, representing a variety of clients throughout North Dakota and Minnesota. In 1968 President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed Myron as an Appellate Judge on the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals for the United States where he served until his death. He was famous for his groundbreaking rulings in the field of civil rights and employment discrimination. He is survived by his daughter, Dinah (Christian) Golding and son, Joshua Bright and grandchildren.

SAVE the DATE

The St. Louis County Historical Society under the direction of Executive Director, JoAnne Coombe, will be sponsoring a Culture and Cuisine program in conjunction with the Friends of B’nai Abraham on Friday evening, August 11 at the Duluth Depot. The evening will include a program and dinner. Details will be available on our website, Ironrangejewishheritage.org, as the date of the event gets closer or by contacting the St. Louis County Historical Society at <mailto:history@thehistorypeople.org>.

Board of Directors of the Friends of B’nai Abraham

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James Rubenstein

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Grants awarded to the Friends of B'nai Abraham for 2017 program

Arrowhead Regional Arts Council - \$3280

Individual Contributions: Nov 2016- May 2017

Stuart Applebaum and Jean King
Alan Apter, Apter Family Fund
Alan Apter
Lesley Baseman and Roz Rettman
Mike and Sue Bleher
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Eric and JoAnn Pasternack
Ann and Felix Phillips
Charles Pitzele
Mike and Toni Rosen
Dianne and Leighton Siegel
Temple Israel - Minneapolis

Special Contributions: Nov 2016- May 2017

Trudy Bers: In memory of her mother, Saragrace Kenner Haffron;
Stan Calof: In honor of Dianne Siegel's 75th Birthday;
Marilyn Chiat: In memory of Harold and Marion Greenberg; In memory of Leon Proshan;
Ben and Karen Deutsch: In honor of Elayne and Larry Chiat;
David Edelstein: In memory of his father, Mel Edelstein, and son, Brandon Edelstein;
Beverly Apter Greenbaum: In memory of Abe and Minnie Apter;
Sandy and Mort Greenberg: In honor of Marilyn Chiat;
Jane Effress (Effress-Miler Family Foundation): In honor of Ann Phillips;
Gertrude S. Goldberg: In honor of Ann Phillips;
Steven Goldfine: In memory of Dr. David and Lillian Finkelstein;
Bert and Susan Gross: In honor of Ann Phillips;
Phyllis and Buddy Harris and family: In honor of the anniversary of Sandy and Allen Harris;
Renate and Paul Hiller: In honor of Hannah Levinson; **Harriet Israel:** In memory of Gene White;
Colette and Peter Johnson: In honor of Audra Keller and Frank Clayton;
Miriam and Erwin Kelen: In honor of Ann and Felix Phillips;
Barbara Levie: In gratitude to Dianne and Leighton Siegel;
Bob and Judy Marans: In memory of Ann Siegel Marans;
Lesli and Mike Marasco: In honor of Dianne and Leighton Siegel;
Mesberg Yasher Fund: In honor and in memory of John, George and Bernard Mesberg;
Judy Milavetz: In honor of milestone birthday for Sandy Kaufman Harris;
Joanne Musich: In appreciation for service and friendship -Irving Frisch, Morris Frisch, Maxine Lesar "Miss. Fiedler" and Maxine Lesar ;
Ann and Felix Phillips: With congratulations to all;
Nancy Powell: In memory of Vern Drilling;
Bettimae Richman: In honor of her sister, Marilyn Karasov's 90th birthday;
Linda and Len Schloff: In honor of Eve Passman's Bat Mitzvah;
Marvin and Stefanie Segal: In honor of medical colleagues Drs. Leighton Siegel and Charlie Ostrov;
Judy and Moe Sherman: In honor of Margie and Charlie Ostrov;
Mel and Delores Sigel: In memory of Harold and Marion Greenberg;
Artis Silverman: In honor of Lula Ruth Blas Fox 's Bat Mitzvah
Sharron Steinfeldt: In appreciation of Marjorie and Charlie's efforts on behalf of the Friends of B'nai Abraham;
Rolland Walt: In memory of Ben and Pearl Walt;
Irwin Weisman: In memory of Margery Peilen Weisman;
Karen and Richard Welland: In memory of Munroe Milavetz;
If we have inadvertently missed your name on the Contributors list, please let us know so that you can be included in our next newsletter.

Endowment Fund Creation – help us preserve B’nai Abraham

Now that the building’s restoration is well on its way, **The Friends of B’nai Abraham would like to create an Endowment Fund** that will make certain B’nai Abraham can be well maintained long into the future. We have spoken to staff at several experienced community funds who have expressed an interest in being the repository for such an endowment and work with the Friends to assure that these dollars continue to be used to meet the goal of providing a community resource and ensuring that the contribution of the Jews of the Iron Range will not be forgotten.

To quote our Board member, Dr. Marilyn Chiat: B'nai Abraham represents our nation's great religious, cultural and ethnic diversity. When historic buildings such as B'nai Abraham are lost, our nation's magnificent mosaic (to quote Hubert H. Humphrey) loses some of its brilliant color.

This building in particular, the only extant synagogue left on the Range, and the only synagogue building in Minnesota to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, provides people with a window into understanding

the history of the Range and the people who contributed so much to its unique character.

If you have suggestions or may wish to make such a contribution, please contact Charlie

*Ostrov at: **costrov@gmail.com***

We need everyone to participate and help.



Ensure the preservation of this wonderful building.

WISH LIST - YOUR HELP IS GREATLY NEEDED TO COMPLETE

Tuck-pointing to close leaks and secure bricks, which will protect the beautifully restored building from harsh winters. The balcony floor needs to be sanded and refinished. Crown molding is needed in the sanctuary.

We welcome much needed contributions to the Endowment fund.

We are still short of our goal.		All donations are fully tax deductible.	
Please send your donation to:		Name: _____	
Friends of B’nai Abraham c/o Charles Ostrov, treasurer 1788 Maryland Ave. North Golden Valley, MN 55427		Address: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Endowment: <input type="checkbox"/> Restoration:		City, State, Zip: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Memory of: <input type="checkbox"/> Honor of: <input type="checkbox"/> Other:		Amount: _____	
_____		To contribute stock -or- appreciated securities, contact: Jackie or Daryl at Morgan Stanley 800-791-8360 -or- costrov@gmail.com	
Send acknowledgement card to: Name: _____		_____	
Address: _____		_____	
City, State, Zip: _____		_____	

If you would like to receive emails of our upcoming programs and events or you would like to receive our newsletter by email, please send your email address to Charlie Ostrov at costrov@gmail.com