

We took the sense of community for granted in Warren and assumed it certainly existed in other cities as well. Not so. When we lived in Warren, my parents passed away. The house was filled with the Jewish community every day we sat in shiva. The Gentile neighbors prepared meals.

I developed breast cancer when we lived in Warren. My hospital room was filled with flowers, baskets of fruit, and get well wishes. When I was on chemotherapy, the Jewish women responded and prepared meals for my family. The Gentile women offered to take me for chemotherapy.

Since I've lived in Youngstown, none of the women's organizations (Jewish) has even made an effort to contact me, or to invite me to a meeting. The bond, sense of community, simply doesn't exist here within the Jewish or Gentile communities. Living in a larger city has forced me to see the clear differences of larger vs. smaller. Larger is impersonal, smaller is personal.

My husband and I have come to the realization that we are uncomfortable in the larger city. We do not choose to live our remaining years surrounded by indifference. We miss the feeling and security we took for granted—belonging. Therefore, we've put our condo on the market and will return to the small town—not merely a place to bide our time, but home.

☛ **DR. HERSCHEL RUBIN—EAST LIVERPOOL, OHIO**

I was born in East Liverpool, Ohio, located on the Ohio River at the junction of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia, about forty miles west of Pittsburgh. My father was born in Russia, my mother in Latvia. My father's parents, who died before I was born, were Russian. My mother's parents were Latvian. My father came to this country at the age of eighteen, to a brother in Charleston, South Carolina. Within twelve years he had learned English, formed a partnership with jewelry stores in Fairmont, West Virginia and Bellaire, Ohio, and then in 1910 he came to East Liverpool to open his own store. My mother was brought to Pittsburgh at the age of six months from Riga, when my grandfather (a tailor in Pittsburgh) sent for his family.

My parents were married in Pittsburgh on December 31, 1910, and settled in East Liverpool in time for my father's store to open in early 1911. At that time East Liverpool was known as the "Pottery Center of the World." Many potteries were in existence, there were steel mills in nearby

towns, and a railroad yard in neighboring Wellsville, Ohio. Evidently my father felt it was a good place to start a business. His store became “the” jewelry store in the area. He was hardworking in his business and very active in civic affairs. He was well liked and respected, and a leader in the Jewish community; a charter member of the Rotary Club; one of the first Jewish members of the country club, etc. Mother had taught school in Pittsburgh before marriage; she was active in the Jewish community, but not in civic affairs, except for the hospital auxiliary.

Our town was fairly typical of small towns at the time. The big majority of the people were pottery workers or steel workers or office or clerical workers. Not many Jews were in these positions. We were mostly business owners or professional people. I would say we were a middle-class town, with a few wealthy pottery owners and not too many really “poor” families. Jewish families were not at the top or bottom of the income levels.

When I was in school, we had a population of around 25,000; the Jewish population was at the very most 175 to 200 families. There was an Orthodox group with its own synagogue and a Reform congregation with a Temple dedicated in 1922, when I was six years old. Most of the Reform Jews lived fairly near the temple in what might be described as “near to town.” The geography of the area kept people hemmed in between the river and the hills, until later when wider usage of autos sparked a movement to the outlying areas. At present, my wife and I are the only Jews in this town area—we call ourselves the “inner-city” residents; we are only about one block from the temple.

I was able to walk to school, to stores, and most other activities. My school friends were almost all non-Jews; not on purpose or by design—it just happened that way. We had Sunday School and weekly services, but nothing like the “youth group” activities of today, or that were available in larger cities. When I went to the Ohio State University I joined a Jewish fraternity, Zeta Beta Tau, and my social contacts were almost entirely Jewish. I met my future wife there.

In my early school years I was never aware of overt acts or expressions of anti-Semitism. I never made any effort to play down the fact that I was Jewish; I felt totally comfortable among my non-Jewish peers. I did turn down an invitation to join the Hi-Y, a high school group, because no Jewish boy had ever been invited before. I was a member of the Boy Scout troop

at the First Presbyterian Church. My main high school activity was band, and I always skipped football dates that conflicted with the Holy Days. All Jewish businesses and offices closed for the Holy Days. The Orthodox congregation usually had a resident rabbi; we had mostly students from Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati for the Holy Days and much later they came as biweekly students. Members of the congregation conducted Friday night services and mothers taught Sunday school. We did not have *Bar Mitzvahs* in our congregation until after 1963.

I graduated with an Optometry degree in 1937 and opened my office here in that year. My wife graduated in 1938, and we were married in October of that year. Although she was from Youngstown, and I was a native, within a few months I became known as "Elsa Rubin's husband." She quickly became a very active part of community life, both Jewish and non-Jewish. Our daughter was born in November of 1942, and in April of 1943 I requested a change in draft status to 1-A, and was inducted into the armed forces because I felt it was something I had to do. I spent my three years on the California coast assigned to an eye clinic. I resumed practice in 1946. I became a Rotarian and was very active in the Jaycees; I served as president and was honored with a life membership and their Distinguished Service Award for community service.

Our son was born in 1955, and in time we both became active in Boy Scouts. For a long time we were the only Jewish Scout people in our entire council. For eight years he was the only Jewish student in his elementary school. He became an Eagle Scout and was active as a junior leader even after going to college. I am at present the Troop Committee Chairman for same troop I started in at the Presbyterian Church. As a matter of interest, my wife and I were made "honorary" members of the church because of our devotion to the troop.

Since my retirement in 1985, I have not been as active in the community. I am occasionally asked to speak on Judaism to church and club groups and was the Jewish speaker at several Desert Shield and Desert Storm rallies. My wife is active in several community groups. She was a Red Cross staff assistant in the local office during World War II. She is an art student at the East Liverpool Campus of Kent State University and was honored with a plaque and dinner for her years of very active service and support to the campus.

The population of East Liverpool has dropped to about 16,000. Potteries and steel mills have closed and people have left town or just moved outside the city limits. There is not much opportunity for young people here; our two children (both Journalism graduates of Ohio State) have gone elsewhere for families and careers.

In 1963, due to economic realities (a drastic drop in Jewish families, partly due to age and few newcomers), the two congregations merged into one, using the Temple of the Reform group. We have had mostly bi-weekly students for the Holy Days and through the year. My wife and I have provided a weekend home for these young people, and knowledge of things Jewish has increased tremendously. The last few students have been young women from Hebrew Union College/Jewish Institute of Religion in New York, and we have made some very wonderful friends.

I cannot speak for my children's growing up experience. I feel and hope it was a good one—I will be interested in reading what they send to you if they follow through on their intentions.

I can only say that my experience living in this small town has never been unpleasant because of anti-Semitism. I am not blind—I know it is there the same as anti-Catholic, anti-black, anti-everything, but it has never made me personally uncomfortable. We are not country club members, but we have a circle of good friends among Jews and non-Jews (more of the latter, probably due to attrition and our non-Jewish friends are younger). I feel we are liked and respected—we are always being asked to lend an ear or a shoulder to people with problems.

✦ **GERALDINE STREGEVSKY—BELLAIRE
AND SHADYSIDE, OHIO**

My mother's father was a peddler in the small towns around Zanesville, Ohio. How they came there is a mystery. We never really talked about it. Why they moved to Bellaire, Ohio is also a mystery. My grandmother had a small grocery store and evidently had many calls for pots and pans. She suggested to my grandfather that he start a factory to manufacture enamelware and he established the Bellaire Enamel Company, which became a leader nationally in the field. Eventually his sons were brought into the business and it flourished until after the war; then Enamelware became passe. In Bellaire my grandfather was accepted