

Starting back in 1927 and 1928, a group of Jewish families fostered the idea of building a place of worship and community center. These Jewish people lived in Rochester, Beaver, Monaca, Freedom and Conway having "migrated" here from Pittsburgh and points East, West, North and South. The central location of Rochester was decided upon inasmuch as the area was known as the "hub" and could easily be reached by streetcar, bus, car and horse & wagon. The site of the building at the corner of New York Avenue and Pinney Street was agreed upon because the "price was right" and it was available. With "kishka" money that was raised through personal pledges, rummage sales, dances, card parties, picnics, latke and blintz parties, the founders were able to "pay-as-they-built" this beautiful building and sanctuary. Wonderful; heart-warming stories of some of the founders can never be forgotten as all of the "new-comers" learned. Jackie Cohen and Jacob Finemen (alava sholem) and several others could be seen almost on a daily basis as they watched and supervised each brick and piece of lumber and window put into place.

The Tree of Life Synagogue became a reality by the end of 1928. At that time, Mr. Ignatz Ecker (alava sholem) was one of the founders as well as the individual that every question and phase of religiosity was referred to -- he had the answers. Religious services for all major and minor holidays were conducted on a very regular basis to a capacity and overflowing <sup>GROUP OF</sup> congregants and families and friends. Weddings, Births, Bar Mitzvahs, Pinyon a Ben and most every part of our Jewish life was conducted in this wonderful building. There were no individual groups and cliques and individuals -- we were basically a total and complete "Rochester Family". It was always a most compatible group.

Over the years that followed -- both good and not-so-good, new families came, some left, some died, new children were born. However, the percentages ratio was not in favor of showing a "growing" or even level of a Jewish population. Quite the contrary was true. By the end of 1972, the loss of membership had become so great, it was difficult to call together the needed 10 men for a "minyan" or quorum to conduct a religious service.

In January, 1973, a special letter was sent to each remaining member and family urging them to attend a meeting at which time a decision had to be made regarding the disposition of the Shule Building and its contents. This meeting was held as well as many other difficult meetings wherein the remaining small group of members made those decisions.

On June 11th, 1973, all remaining members were informed that the building and all assets from the Tree of Life Synagogue and Congregation would be turned over to the Beaver Falls United Jewish Community Center in Chippewa Township, Beaver Falls, Pa. The offer of "extended membership" to the U.J.C.C. was made to each of the remaining members.

Many items such as benches, chairs, books, talasim and some dishes are still being used at the B.F.U. J.C.C. A Jewish group in the North Hills did purchase some of the stained glass windows. Some of our local members did purchase small religious items for their homes. Some chairs and books were given to another Shule in Trenton, N.J. Some of these items are still being used today.

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Saul M. Sigal  
Registered Representative



The original Founders of the Tree of Life Synagogue were.  
These names are on a bronze plaque.

I. IGNATZ ECHER

JACOB FINEMAN

BENJAMIN REISBERG

JACOB COHEN

ELIAS CAPLAN

LESTER CAPLAN

DAVID GORDON

MAX SOBEL

MAX BARNETT

WILLIAM BARNETT

HARRY GARSON

MAX MOSS

PHILLIP CAPLAN

A. MITCHELL CAPLAN

RALPH LEVITAN

MORRIS WEISS

NATHAN FRUMMERMAN

ELIAS GORDON

SANDOR WEINER

MORRIS GROSSMAN

AARON GREEN

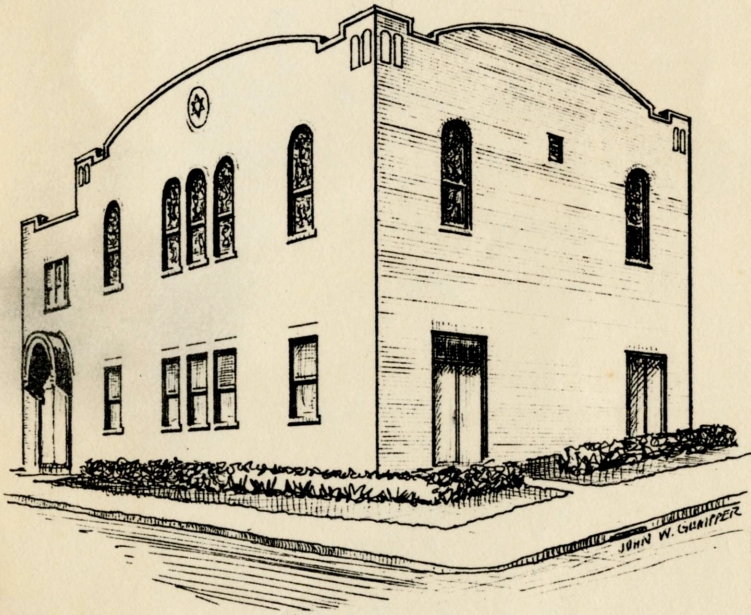
NATHAN STOLL

EMIL WINOGRAD

SAMUEL COHEN

HENRY MARGOLIS

# ROCHESTER



## TREE OF LIFE REUNION

Sketch of Synagogue by Artist:

John W. Gumpper

From Photo donated by:

Arnold B. McMahon

WELCOME TO  
THE TREE OF LIFE SYNAGOGUE REUNION

In honor of:

The Congregants of the Tree of Life

Pinney Street

Rochester, Pa.

Held at:

Holiday Inn Airport  
Beers School Road  
Coraopolis, Pa.

On August 4, 1984

at 6:30 P.M.

ETS CHAYIM HEE LAMACHAZEEKEEM BA

The average number of years that a congregation uses one building as its home in the United States is 25 years. When the time comes to move to a new location, the rabbi has to explain that a congregation is not a building but a community of people. And yet, when I say that I can never go home again, part of my pain is that our shul building is no longer a synagogue - that I can not quietly slip into a pew and remember those precious days.

To make matters worse, not only is the building gone but the congregation as such, is gone and the people are everywhere but where we all started.

Tonight, for a few priceless hours, our congregation lives again. We will all be so genuinely happy to see one another, that the strange location will not make any difference. To those of you who came tonight, your being is a blessing.

Come and together let us lift up our hearts. It is a TREE OF LIFE to those who hold fast to it, its supporters are happy, its ways are pleasant ways and all its paths are peace.

Rabbi Leonard Winograd...

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HATIKVA

(Hebrew National Anthem)

KOL OD BA-LAY-VOV, PNEE-MO

NE-FESH Y'HU-DEE HO-MI-YO.

U-L'FA-A-TAY MIZ-ROCH KO-DEE-MO

A-YIN L'TSEE-YON TSO-FI-YOH

OD LO OV-DO TIK-VO-TAY-NU

HA-TIK-VA SH'NOT AL-PA-YIM

LEE-YOT AHM CHOF-SHEE BAY AR-TZAY-NU

B'ERETS TZI-YON VI-RU-SHA-LA-YIM

## REMINISCENCE

(Can be sung to the tune of, "TO  
ALL THE GIRLS I'VE LOVED BEFORE")  
By Julio Inglesais

Tonight we reminisce and sigh,  
We were some special girls and guys.  
I'm glad we got along,  
I dedicate this song,  
To all the years that have gone by.

To Rabbi Stock and Alef-Base,  
To the first pimple on your face.  
We would recite aloud,  
Our parents would be proud,  
Tree of Life was a special place.

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### CHORUS

We think back on those yesteryears,  
Every time we gather near,  
And after 35 long years,  
Tonight we find our friends are here.

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To all the parties, food, and dance,  
That often led to a romance.  
The boy that held your hand,  
Danced to Glenn Miller's band,  
You twirled and dipped with elegance.

But now we have a separate life,  
With children, husband or a wife,  
The Star of David looms,  
Above the office rooms,  
That once was the "TREE OF LIFE."

CHORUS (See above)

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Phyllis Barron

Arlene Neft

Roseann Tisherman

Dorothy Weinberg

Rabbi Leonard Winograd

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Phyllis Barron  
Ariane Neft  
Rossann Fisherman  
Dorothy Weinberg  
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