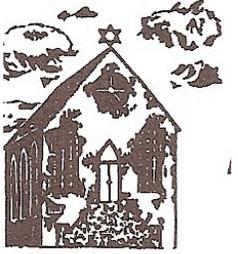


HISTORIC B'NAI JACOB SYNAGOGUE



Nissley at Water Streets

Middletown, Pennsylvania 17057

AUGUST 2009

Services Calendar

Shabbos Service

Fri. Aug. 7, 2009 - 7:30 p.m.

Selichos

Sat. Sept. 12, 2009 - 7:30 p.m.

Erev Rosh Hashana

Fri. Sept. 18, 2009 - 7:30 p.m.

I Tishrei 5770

Rosh Hashanah (1st day)

Sat. Sept. 19, 2009 - 9 a.m.

Rosh Hashanah:

Sat. Sept. 19, 2009 - 6:30 p.m.

(Special Place: Cumberland

Crossings Retirement

Community, Davis Hall)

2nd Day Rosh Hashanah:

Sun. Sept. 20, 2009 - 9:15 a.m.

Yom Kippur/Kol Nidre:

Sun. Sept. 27, 2009 - 6:30 p.m.

Yom Kippur/Yizkor:

Mon. Sept. 28, 2009 -

9:00 a.m./11:00 a.m.

Ne'ela Service/Shofar/

Break-the-Fast:

Mon. Sept. 28, 2009 - 5:15 p.m.

Simchas Torah Service:

Sat. Oct. 10, 2009 - 7:30 p.m.

Shabbos Service:

(including commemoration
of founding of B'nai Jacob)

Sat. Nov. 6, 2009 - 7:30 p.m.

Chanukah (Party & Annual Board Meeting)

Sun. Dec. 13, 2009 - 5:00 p.m.

Services and directions are posted
on the Shul Website ---

www.bnai-jacob.org/calendar

B'NAI JACOB FLOODED!!

The Shul's connection to the water main broke during the weekend of June 14, 2009. The water seeped through the ground and completely flooded the basement. Water rose to about two inches above the basement floor. It was also under the floor in the original beam construction that supports the synagogue.

Soon after, the water main was closed and flood restoration began by pulling up the flooring to get to the water underneath. After the water was pumped out, the drying process began using fans night and day to dry the basement. Drying finished in mid-July and restoration of the floor began.

The Torah scrolls were under lock and key in the basement safe. Fortunately, they were undamaged and moved to a secure location to be returned to the basement safe after the work is done.

On July 15, the air conditioner filter backed up, causing water to leak onto the floor of the balcony and through the floor to the sanctuary entryway below. The result is a wet rug in the sanctuary and some water stains upstairs. The problem has been fixed and the floors are being refinished.

Repairs for both incidents are scheduled to be completed by August 5, 2009. The Shul's Shabbos Service on August 7th will provide everyone a chance to check out the repairs.

The flooding did not damage the 1906 structure, which survived even worse flooding from the river several years ago, thanks in part to the craftsmanship of our Founders. Historic B'nai Jacob Synagogue is a replica of an Eastern European synagogue and the oldest building erected as a synagogue in Dauphin County in continuous use. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985.

Restoration of the basement will be covered by the Shul's insurance policy, except for the \$200 deductible. The insurance does not cover the repair of the water pipes, cleaning the rugs, or the increased electricity needed for the drying process. A feature on the "Flood" appeared in the *Community Review*; and donations have already been received to help pay for the repairs.



Ornstein Scholarship Winner Visits Shul

This year's winner of the Shul's Ida Betty Ornstein Scholarship for graduating seniors at Middletown High School, Bre Mahr Manning, visited the Shul during services this Spring to express his thanks to the congregation. Bre Mahr, who was raised by his grandmother in Middletown, was a star player for the high school basketball team, voted best dressed senior for the year book and "king" of the home coming court. He will be attending Penn State-Harrisburg and playing basketball there, but will also be spending some additional time on the courts to help pay for his college education as one of Pennsylvania's youngest certified PIAA basketball referees.

JEW'S Are Very Special People

By Dorothy G. Kapenstein

Community News

It seems to me that having a sense of humor and loving to share a few jokes is part of the genetic structure of Jews. In the midst of pain and suffering, we have often managed to find a good laugh. This may be why we have played a major role in the field of entertainment in the past and the present, in this country and in other places. I recently came across a book called *The Golden Age of Radio*. I enjoyed reading it because I was born in 1928 and I grew up in that golden age. I have learned to live with television and computers, but I still have warm and nostalgic feelings for radio as it was then.

Among the most popular broadcasts were variety shows with a strong lacing of comedy. A number of famous comedians started there and went on to have their own shows. At that time, great comedians were as well known as rock stars today. A good number of the comedians were Jewish performers who started out on the stage. Among the great ones were Eddie Cantor, Jack Benny and George Burns. These three men were all the children of poor Jewish immigrants who never had much to laugh about.

Eddie Cantor was born Israel Iskowitz in 1892. His parents died young and his maternal grandmother raised him. When she registered him for school, somehow her last name, Kantorwitz, was substituted for his on the records. It remained his name until he shortened it to Cantor for the stage. Eddie began his career by dropping out of elementary school to sing and tell jokes on the street for the coins that people threw at him. In time, he worked his way up to the stage and did well. He appeared in the Ziegfeld Follies for many years. He was a little guy with great big eyes and early on became known as *Banjo Eyes*. He told jokes and belted out songs on the Chase & Sanborn Radio Hour for some years and then had his own comedy show. Eddie used his wife, Ida, and their five daughters as his comic theme. It brought him a million laughs and a lot of money. Eddie also had a number of movies to his credit. For a while, he had a TV show. As part of his serious side, he helped organize and was the first President of the Screen Actors Guild. Eddie helped to create, and supported, the March of Dimes that worked to eradicate Polio. Eddie wrote several books, including two autobiographies.

Jack Benny was born Benjamin Kubelsky in Waukegan, Illinois in 1894. He flunked out of high school but then went on to become a great star. Part of his comic theme was to pretend that he was a horrible violinist; actually, he could play quite well. He started out with a music act, but soon the jokes crept in and he became one of the funniest men in show biz. The rest of his funny traits included being super cheap, keeping his money in a locked vault under his house and having a pay phone and cigarette machine in his living room. He kept a pet polar bear named Carmichael and drove an aged Maxwell car for years, while always being 39. Jack appeared in many stage hits, made some successful movies, kept radio humming with his jokes and finally took his show to television. After his retirement, he often appeared in concerts with his violin to make money for serious causes. Shortly before his death, he was asked to play an aged comedian in a movie called *The Sunshine Boys*. He didn't make it. Another Jewish comedian took his place. George Burns.

George Burns, was born Nathan Birnbaum in 1896. Like Eddie Cantor, George started as a child singing for coins on street corners. He got into vaudeville and tried all kinds of acts with modest success but finally hit the big time in 1923, when he teamed up with a super comedienne named Gracie Allan. George played straight man to the zany character created by Gracie. They were married in 1926. They moved into radio and had their own hit show from 1932 to 1950 when they moved their show to TV and performed until Gracie's retirement in 1958. George tried to keep the show going without her, but it went exactly nowhere. Gracie died in 1964. George drifted and people thought he was finished, but, in 1976 he got Jack Benny's role in *The Sunshine Boys*. The movie was a scream and a hit. George won an Oscar for Best Supporting Actor. He started a new life in show biz. He played in the hit movie, *Oh, God!*, and in two sequels. He began to appear on stage and TV. George lived to the great age of 100 years. He never stopped performing until the last few months of his life. He always appeared with a cigar in his mouth or his hand. When a reporter asked what he thought gave him such longevity, George replied that it was because he smoked 50 to 60 cigars a day. On his 100th birthday, a reporter asked how it felt to be 100, he replied: "It feels fine. Every morning when I get up, I read the Obituary Page. If I'm not there, I shave. I like that idea. I'm 80 and from now on, if I'm not there, I'll take a shower.

[Dorothy Kapenstein, (80 years young and not counting) after passing a course on how to tell jokes after she retired from teaching, presented her own one-woman comedy show at the Shul, the Jewish Community Center in Harrisburg, and also at venues in and around her home base in the Philadelphia Area.]

Volunteers for Services Programs Wanted - Anyone interested in leading a Friday Night Service should contact Dr. Mike Eckstein at Mikes1hog@comcast.net or call him at (717)258-5016. The service may be conducted in the traditional manner or if one has a unique concept, their service plan (like a lesson plan) should be presented to Dr. Eckstein six weeks prior to the proposed Shabbat Service date.

The Next Generation - Our Shul's basketball team MVP, Harry Kapenstein, announced during services this Spring that he has begun preparing for his Bar Mitzvah at the Shul with Dr. Eckstein. Dr. Eckstein prepared some tapes and independent study materials for Harry to work on over the summer. Harry will begin taking a greater role in leading the night service in the very near future.

Mazel Tov to the Burger Family (Judy and Harvey) on the birth of their first granddaughter, Lia Raelynn Burger, on July 14, 2009, to parents David and Jessica, "the first girl in our line of the Burger Family in 57 years"!

Silvia Myra Svoboda, born November 3, 2007, the Snell's new granddaughter recently visit the Shul with her family.

Historic B'nai Jacob Synagogue is located in Middletown, near the Harrisburg International Airport. If you have Community News that you would like to share in the next Shul Newsletter or would like to be added to our mailing list, PLEASE e-mail that information on the Website e-mail link at: <http://www.bnai-jacob.org>
Shul Officers (2008-2009):
Mike Eckstein (President)
Tom Armstrong (Vice President)
Bruce Baron (Secretary)
Larry Kapenstein (Treasurer)