

The Synagogue Journal

1856-2006

November 24, 2006

HistoricalJournal@KaneStreet.org

Shabbat Toldat

Issue 47

Synagogue Renewal

In this issue ...

In Shabbat Toldot, the readings introduce the third Hebrew generation, the twins Esau and Jacob. Inserted in the chapter between the tales of their stormy relationship is the only Biblical account devoted to the adult Isaac, a man who repeats the same journeys and actions of his father Abraham, even re-digging the same wells. The second and third Hebrew generations juxtapose conservatism and tumultuousness, and remind us that maintaining a tradition over the generations involves preservation, at times, and radical change, at times.

Within our congregation's generations, synagogue leaders have built and rebuilt the synagogue inside and out. They have maintained buildings after fire damage, leaky roofs, cracked masonry, peeling paint, outmoded heating, electrical and plumbing. Sometimes changes were made based upon changes within the congregation. In 1879, just seventeen years after building Brooklyn's first synagogue, the congregation renovated the Boerum Place Synagogue, reconfigured the sanctuary's interior, removing the central reading table, reorienting the pews to all face the new Bima located at the front and eliminating the women's galleries. The relocation of the synagogue in 1905 from Boerum Place to the current facility, a former church built in 1855, included relocating the Ark. This issue reviews the congregation's major projects and the consecration programs held at each project's beginning and end.

The Journal focuses on the congregation's most extensive project during the last one hundred years, the Goldman Educational Center. A photo montage of the Renewal Project documents the dire condition of the building before renewal, the construction site, project leaders, celebratory events and donor recognition. The Campaign brochure told an old Talmudic tale about a wizened farmer planting a fig tree and a young man who asks why. "You will never live long enough to taste its fruit." The farmer replies, "Perhaps. But my children will. Their children will. And their children's children will." The congregation, as the synagogue's stewards, renews it "In trust for future generations".

At the groundbreaking ceremony November 18, 2003 Rabbi Sam Weintraub recalled the story of Jacob awakening after his dream, taking the stone from under his head and vowing, "This stone which I have set up as a pillar shall become a house of God" (Genesis 28:10ff.) Rabbi Weintraub said, "Today, like Jacob, we are privileged to consecrate stones and to imagine the future with reverence and hope. Today, where our building formerly stood, we now have a view of Heaven."

We include the speech that Renewal Committee Chairman Howard Schneider delivered at the dedication of the Sol and Lillian Goldman Educational Center, in which he reviews the history of the four million dollar project, the leadership, professionals and friends. President Susan Rifkin provides a brief update on plans to restore our sanctuary

Special thanks to: Rabbi Samuel Weintraub; the Brooklyn Daily Eagle Online™, Brooklyn Public Library; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/eagle, Brooklyn Public Library, The Brooklyn Collection.

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Provides a chronology of major work on the congregation's historic synagogues

"Before" Photos of the Community Building

The Feasibility Study and Condition Survey from September 2000 showed the sorry state of the building. Photos include cemented-over windows and "temporary" partitions erected in 1923.

Credit: Tesoro Architects

In Wake of World Trade Center Disaster, Renewal Committee Decides to Go Ahead With the Campaign

A page from the first of four Renewal Project newsletters included this article by Rabbi Sam Weintraub, brief notes from *The Architects' View* and photos of committee heads.

Credit: *L'dor Vador*, November 2001

A View of Heaven

The congregation gathers around the cornerstone at the November 18, 2003 groundbreaking.

Photo credit: Howard Sider

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Reconstruction of Beth Israel, September 8, 1879

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Jews Rededicate Oldest Synagogue, September 23, 1929

Temple Ends Drive, May 14, 1941

Rites Set to Mark Renovation of Boro Synagogue, January 11, 1953

Renewal and Rededication

Atlantic Street Synagogue (see Issue 1: Beginnings)

- 1856 – Dedication of 155 Atlantic Street, an existing brownstone storefront as Synagogue

Boerum Place Synagogue (see Issue 2: Brooklyn's First Synagogue)

- January 1862 - Lay cornerstone at State Street and Boerum Place property
- September 1862 – Consecrate synagogue
- September 1879 – Dedication services after reconfiguration of layout and new vestibule extension.
- April 1889 – Dedication of synagogue after building repairs that included a new roof, vestibule and double entrance way, increased seating capacity and redecoration.

Harrison Street Synagogue (see Issue 7: Harrison Street Synagogue)

- 1905 - Dedicate Synagogue at 236 Harrison Street – Install Ark from Boerum Place Synagogue; One of the first projects is to replace the primitive toilet facility, installing a tile floor and ceramic fixtures. This was just the beginning of many, many renovations.
- 1906: The Sunday school building is wired for electricity.
- 1911 - Synagogue rededicated after a complete renovation that included the installation of a new pulpit, electric lights, ten stained glass windows and two bronze menorahs
- 1917 - The Jewish Circle installs a new medallion art window with a Star of David above the Aron Hakodesh. The bima wall is painted in neo-classical ropes and cornucopia. Memorial plaques are installed.
- 1922 - A steam heating system is installed in the Sanctuary and school building.
- 1923 - Fire nearly destroys the school building. Install “temporary” partitions within a few months time.
- 1928 - Dedication of the new Harrison Street Synagogue- the 55-year-old buildings in great need of repair, Building Fund established and board recognizes subscribers of \$250 or upwards on a marble tablet inscribed with the donors' names.

Kane Street Synagogue (In 1928 Harrison Street is renamed Kane Street)

- 1929 – Julius Kahn supervises Sanctuary renovation, replacing illuminated medallion window with stained glass Ten Commandments, removes painted tablets from the top of the Ark, paints bima wall ochre with floral border and trompe l'oeil stone walls.
- September 11, 1933 – Board minutes document numerous proposals for work, estimated costs, work proposed but not approved, and problems with workmanship. “They gave out the work to repair the two towers for the sum of \$550.”
- October 16, 1933 - The building committee reported the completion of the towers and that “the cement work on the schule wall needed repairing.” Subsequent minutes do not mention repairing the walls.
- August 5, 1946 - Minutes reported that there was, “a contract signed with the Del Juidice Construction Co for brownstone work in the Synagogue, including steps for \$14,200. Work to start by 8/6.”
- September 8' 1946 - Minutes confirm that the work was completed, but the board was unhappy about the lack of uniformity in the color of the brownstone.
- 1947 – *The Scroll* reports “With the approach of milder weather, work on our Synagogue, which had been temporarily suspended during the winter months, has now been resumed. .. *GIVE “for the sake of the House of Our God”*”
- August 25, 1952 minutes indicate that the exterior doors were originally in a wood finish. They refer to “a savings of \$75 to have Julius Kahn paint them a solid color instead of graining.”
- 1953 – January rededication of Synagogue after six-year \$40,000 renovation to refortify both buildings, enclose tower windows, refinish stone masonry in brown stucco and paint the Sanctuary interior. Plaque in vestibule commemorates donors to the project.
- 1975 - A chapel is constructed and named The Belth Room in honor of Herman & Florence Belth.
- 1977 -The Community Room is renovated with new walls, ceiling and lighting.
- 1982 – Restore stained glass windows.
- 1984 - Paint Sanctuary in shades of pink, burgundy, white and blue and install new chandeliers. The pews are not painted as a cost saving measure.
- 1991 - Judith R. Greenwald and Leonard Wasserman prepare proposal to rehabilitate the “School” Building, but no action is taken.
- 1995 - Refurbish bima and vestibule furnishings. Dedication service acknowledges grant from the Sol Goldman Charitable trust.
- 1998 - A committee forms to gather support for major fundraising to renovate the Community Building. This group is the forerunner of the Renewal Committee. Renovate Community Room and install air conditioning.

Renewal Project Milestones

- May 2000 - Commission Tesoro Architects to conduct Building Conditions Survey and Feasibility Study
- June 21, 2000 - Present Renewal Proposal at Annual Meeting
- August 2000 - Receive two \$5000 matching grants for Building Conditions Survey and Feasibility Study from the New York Landmarks Conservancy and the Herman Goldman Foundation.
- August 2000 - Commission Fundraising Campaign Feasibility Study with Development Consultants Inc.
- September 12, 2001 - Renewal Committee votes to go forward. The Congregation commits to the rebuilding of its Community Building. The 20-week capital campaign had begun the week before 9/11.
- October 21, 2001 - Kick-off Renewal Campaign. The theme *L'dor Vador*, From Generation to Generation, resonates. Over two hundred gifts are made; more than three million dollars is raised, including a grant of one million dollars from the Lillian Goldman Charitable Trust.
- May 2002 - Edson USA commences Sanctuary structural repairs and install restrooms.
- July 2003 - Receive Landmarks Preservation Commission approval and Buildings Department construction permit to build a three-story building behind the two-story stone façade and to add a connector building. Levien & Co are engaged as project managers.
- August 2003 - Receive construction loan from Signature Bank
- November 18, 2003 - Gather for ground-breaking, "Setting the Stone"
- September 2004 - Receive Temporary Certificate of Occupancy
- October 24, 2004 - Dedicate Sol & Lillian Goldman Educational Center
- November 2005 to February 2006 - A team of architects and engineers under the supervision of Kaitsen Woo Architect P.C. assess the Sanctuary's condition and recommend a comprehensive scope of repairs and improvements.
- October 20, 2006 – Receive matching grant of \$350,000.00 from New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Places to be used for a new Sanctuary roof and restoration of the stained glass windows, front doors and steps.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

The two-story Kahn Community Building addresses the cultural needs of the congregation. It houses the large multipurpose room, four classrooms, a study, offices, the caretaker's apartment, and the only restrooms in the Synagogue. Interiors lack any distinguishing character and are generally in poor condition. However, the Kane Street facade has the potential to be handsomely integrated with that of the Sanctuary Building.

Foundation walls, ground floor construction, and masonry walls are essentially sound, commanding repair/reinforcements. Basement is dirty, strewn with rubble and exposed wiring; asbestos insulation must be removed. The existing second floor does not comply with current code requirements and must be reinforced/replaced. Roof structure appears to be sound but will need modifications/replacement to accommodate an additional floor. The asphalt shingled roof surfaces are old, in poor condition, and will need replacement. Many minor leaks are evident; however, none appear to threaten the structural stability. Repair can be incorporated in the forthcoming reconstruction project.



Northwest Corner

Bulging stucco infill panel

*Remove lath and stucco,
restore original windows*



Exterior

*Painted stucco surfaces, windows small and in poor
condition, undistinguished facade*

*Repaint surfaces, improve courtyard access, enlarge/add
windows, decorative treatment*



< Restroom

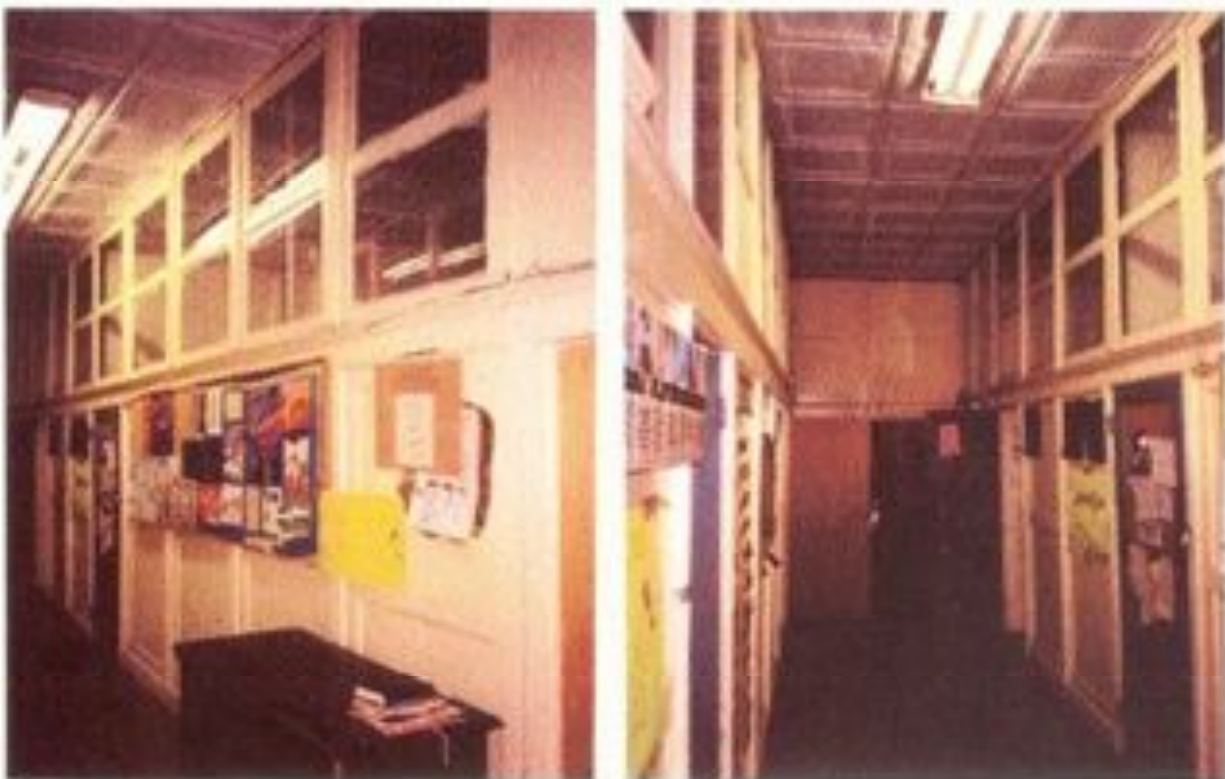
Cramped space, old plumbing and fixtures

Modernize and relocate

Caretaker's apt >

Tight space, badly designed, arched windows to Sanctuary are blocked

Relocate with adequate room for caretaker, or eliminate



Second Floor

Shoddy space, flimsy panel-type partitions, inadequate lighting, uneven floor, dilapidated ceiling

Rebuild floor, construct new sound-resistant partitions with bulletin board space, improve lighting, repair ceiling.

THE ARCHITECTS' VIEW

The Kane Street Renewal is both exciting and challenging," according to Andrew Tesoro of Tesoro Architects, the firm designing the renovation. What makes it exciting "is the integration of a historic masterpiece with a set of contemporary needs that nest beautifully together on the compact site." What makes it challenging is dealing with a large committee representing a "very interested and discerning congregation," although, he adds, distilling views through the facilities committee kept it from becoming "chaotic." Another challenge, of course, is the financial constraint of what can be achieved for an affordable price.

The Renewal Project's features include an attractive outdoor atrium that integrates the Community Building with the Sanctuary, makes the stained glass windows and buttressing visible from the Community Room, and expands the capacity of the first floor. The two-story Community Building will gain a third floor, add a roof terrace and recover a portion of the cellar for clean storage space. There will be nine sound-proofed classrooms, a new enlarged chapel, a separate library, well-organized offices for the rabbi, the Prondar principal and the synagogue administrator, a new kitchen and new bath-

rooms. Front and rear corridors between the two buildings on the main and second floors, front and rear staircases and an elevator from basement to roof allow accessibility throughout the facility.

Andrew concluded, "Claude Samton and I have worked over the years on many projects, both Jewish and secular. The Kane Street assignment coming as it does at this particular moment is among the most meaningful and important we have ever done."



Above: (L. - R.) Ellen Berman, Facilities Committee Co-Chair, and Susan Rifkin, Facilities Committee Co-Chair and Campaign Co-Chair, are joined by architects Claude Samton and Andrew Tesoro.

IN WAKE OF WORLD TRADE CENTER DISASTER, RENEWAL COMMITTEE DECIDES TO GO AHEAD WITH THE CAMPAIGN

by Rabbi Sam Weintraub

Meeting in emergency session on September 12, and speaking in pained and hushed tones, the Renewal Committee asked if the political, economic and psychological uncertainty brought about by the attack on the Twin Towers should halt its efforts. While the committee noted that the needs for attractive, conven-

ient and comfortable space which motivated its formation two years ago still exist, what convinced its members was being reminded that the Torah enjoins us to "choose life." That means we must search and grow and build, not just in comfortable times, but even, and especially, in difficult times.

I reminded assembled Renewal Committee members that Jeremiah looked to the future, even as he preached during the fall of Jerusalem in the 590s and 580s (BCE), when poverty and chaos, repression and disease reigned and the king and thousands of leading citizens were already in exile. With tenderness and hope for his people, Jeremiah bought real estate in Jerusalem, and composed psalms to Zion which to this day form the final and most uplifting of the seven blessings at Jewish weddings. We still live, thank G-D, in one of the strongest, most stable and most protecting democracies in human history. We must build. How can we do less?



Left: Paul and Nancy Fink, Advisory Council Co-Chairs, present a compelling case for why renovations cannot be delayed.

A Brief History

by Howard Schneider

The Renewal Chairman delivered this speech at the Dedication of the Goldman Educational Center on October 24, 2004.

Seven years ago almost to the day, I was sitting in the administrative office on the second floor of the old Community Building with Mike Shelanski, a stalwart member of this congregation as well as a neighbor across the street. We said to each other, do you think we could possibly raise \$100,000 to replace the paper-thin partitions separating the office, the rabbi's study, the four or five classrooms, and then give it all a new coat of paint? The partitions – gaps and all – had served us well – or more truthfully, not so well – for more than seventy-five years in a building that was fast approaching its 150th anniversary, and this seemed like the least we could do under the circumstances.

As it turned out, that project was never undertaken. We concluded that the rickety staircase and many other problems and shortcomings with that building made it pointless to embark on such patchwork repairs. Instead, after due consideration, the Synagogue Board of Trustees authorized a formal conditions survey of the entire property – the Sanctuary, the 2-story Community Building, and the rear-connecting kitchen building. We engaged Tesoro Architects to conduct the conditions survey, and their graphically illustrated report emboldened us to embark on the Renewal Project and the Capital Campaign. Whether taken separately or together, this Project and the associated fundraising campaign were the most significant such efforts in this Congregation in the one hundred years that we have happily occupied these premises.

The theme of our Capital Campaign is “from generation to generation”. Every current member of this congregation inherited a beautiful Sanctuary and a tolerable Community Building from prior generations of members, all without paying any rent or mortgage payments and with only a bare minimum of maintenance. In the meantime: This, the oldest continuous Jewish congregation in Brooklyn and all of Long Island, has restored itself from a period of bare survival in the 1950s and '60s; Brownstone Brooklyn has blossomed; and Cobble Hill has become a seven-figure real-estate destination. In 2001 our property was probably worth \$5 million and yet the Community Building in particular was hardly adequate for our activities and aspirations - - and as we came to learn, was close to having its rear wall and its kitchen walls collapse.

Now all those shortcomings and problems with the Community Building have been totally resolved as we come together to dedicate the wonderful – shall I say, miraculous? –Sol and Lillian Goldman Educational Center. It's all brand new, yet with the original granite façade wonderously uncovered, restored, and preserved.

As everyone here knows, none of this happened by chance. It took huge quantities of worry, sacrifice, inspiration, generosity, and effort ... as well as luck and answered prayers. The \$4 million Renewal Project and the Capital Campaign have not been a religious effort as such, but they have been inspired by the desire to create an appropriate setting for our religious life, our educational requirements, our social gatherings, and our sharing with the larger community.

Today we have come together to thank everyone who has helped to make the Goldman Educational Center a reality. Every donor of time or money, large or small, has made an essential contribution to getting this project completed. The Renewal Committee especially wants to express our deep appreciation to our late member Lillian Goldman and her family for an extraordinarily generous grant of \$1 million from her Charitable Trust. We also want to warmly thank Joe and Diane Steinberg for their major donation and dedication of the lovely atrium (which will be even more lovely when it's completed). Standing here in the Synagogue, we recall that the Eternal Light above the ark has been dedicated in loving memory of our treasurer, past president, and *chazzan*, Bob Weinstein – through the generosity of his bequest after his years were cut off much too early. As another example, we thank the Stulberg family for dedicating the access ramp at our new central front door, a dedication with special meaning for their son Joey.

At the same time the Renewal Committee also wishes to thank each and every one of the 275 other members and friends who have made their own pledges and gifts of \$100, \$1000, \$10,000, or \$100,000 or more. No one wants to be the only donor. Everyone wants to give to a cause that many others value, support and will help to maintain. As many of you know, of course, one of the handbooks from our oral tradition in Judaism is *Pirkei Avot, the Ethics of the Fathers*. At one point it considers the reactions of four different types of people who are asked to give to charity. The pious person, according to *Pirkei Avot*, is the one who both wants to contribute and wants others to contribute. In that spirit: The name of every single donor is recorded in today's dedication program. The name of every donor of \$2500 or more also appears on the Community Plaque in the lobby of the Goldman Educational Center. Nearby are individual plaques that many of the larger donors have selected to honor their specific dedications.

As a congregation and a community, we also want to thank our professionals in this Project and Campaign: Our visionary - Andrew Tesoro Architects; Development Consultants Incorporated, whose experience guided our capital campaign; Our superb general contractor Edson USA – look carefully at the quality of their work; Owner's representative Levien & Company, who kept us on budget and pretty much on time, while also preserving our sanity, and Signature Bank – our construction and mortgage lender. For each of these professional firms, I especially add their dedicated staffs and

subcontractors, a number of whom have joined us today. Even for them, this has been a labor of love, and it shows. Being surrounded by well-designed and well-constructed space – whether old like this Sanctuary you are sitting in, or new like the Goldman Center you are about to experience – is like being surrounded by fine music; it stirs the spirit and soothes the soul.

We also want to thank our neighbors on Kane Street and Tompkins Place for their patience during the extended period of construction. We hope that they and other members of the Cobble Hill community will see our new buildings as, in part, a gift to them as well.

This honor roll of appreciation would not be complete without mentioning the more than seventy volunteers from among our members and friends who have helped to run and staff the Capital Campaign and the Renewal Project. (I especially have to add the half dozen people who were in the Goldman Center last night doing an extra dusting and mopping.) You will find all their names as you turn the pages of the Dedication journal. Here I include: our dear Rabbi Sam Weintraub, who has always made sure that in the intensity of our efforts, we do not lose sight of the spiritual and humanistic elements of our endeavor; the very hardworking Congregation presidents over the past seven years - past presidents Ellen Bowin, Ralph Kleinman, and most recently Danny Magill, and our current president Don Olenick. Each of them has placed the Renewal Project at the top of their agendas, and has given it their fullest personal energy and support; the board, educational directors, and staff of our Prozdor, our Hebrew School, who have managed to continue to educate our children smoothly in spite of operating in temporary space for the past two years; and our office manager Linda Mahler, who has probably put in more hours than everyone else combined.

Special thanks go to: my long-contributing and long-suffering colleagues on the Renewal Committee; the Capital Campaign volunteers including the Recognition Subcommittee; the members of the Building and Space Use Committee including the specialized volunteer teams on design, kitchen, and décor.

In particular, among all the volunteers I have to make special note of four people who have truly been “without whom”. We often say that no one is irreplaceable, but frankly I don’t know who would have been able to fill the many roles that each of these four people have managed and carried out on our behalf over the past seven years: They are: Susan Rifkin and Ellen Bowin, co-chairs of the Building and Space Use Committee. Ellen, of course, was president when the Renewal efforts were first organized and energized. Susan has just assumed new responsibilities as our executive vice president. Working together over the past four years, they have selflessly overseen the planning and the execution of the construction effort every step of the way. Judy Greenwald, a past president, Congregation historian, and real-estate maven. She has been one of the constant sparkplugs and tireless leaders of our Capital Campaign and this Renewal Project, culminating close to 40 years of constant devotion to the Kane Street Synagogue. (Unfortunately, Judy had to be away today in Los Angeles at a family wedding.) Carol Levin, head of the Recognition and Design Committees as well as of the History Project that has grown so fortuitously and so amazingly out of the Renewal effort. Her historical exhibition, which is of museum quality, is on display next door in the chapel. It offers wonderful insights into past generations of Brooklyn Jews who walked through these doors in the 20th century and those of our prior premises in the 19th century.

Susan, Ellen, Judy, and Carol, many of us have made this project the biggest single financial contribution of our lives, but without your truly heroic efforts it would all still be “a work in progress”, or perhaps even a just good idea that petered out, like the Second Avenue Subway. Every donor and every member of this Congregation and the larger community are eternally in your debt for bringing it all together.

Now that we have successfully completed the Sol & Lillian Goldman Educational Center, our attention can turn to this beautiful and historic Sanctuary. This treasure we are heir to needs to be preserved for ourselves and future generations. With G-d's help and your continued inspiration and support, this can and will be done. Thank you one and all.



Next Steps – Restoring the Sanctuary

President Susan Rifkin reports about plans to preserve the Sanctuary Building.

2005 will be remembered in Kane Street's history as the year we completed the renovation of the Goldman Educational Center. Our new building has reinvigorated our Hebrew school and educational programs, enabled us to start a preschool, given us a wonderful social space and permitted people with disabilities to travel throughout our building unimpeded.

Yet, we can't rest on this success. In 2006 Kaitsen Woo Architects completed a comprehensive condition survey of our historic Sanctuary Building. We were not surprised to learn that we must make major structural repairs to maintain the integrity of this beloved building. Past Presidents Ellen Bowin and Judith Greenwald and long time Vice-President Howard Schneider are spearheading this project.

So, we've started to plan how to proceed, how to start yet another major building project. But this time we are faced with different challenges. We can't just tear down our beloved Sanctuary. The building itself demands respect. Historic preservation and restoration can be more expensive than ordinary construction and our congregation's resources are already stretched. We are lucky that one of our members, Ann-Isobel Friedman, is extremely knowledgeable about historic preservation and she has become our unofficial advisor.

We decided to reach out to organizations and government agencies that fund historic restoration projects for assistance. Last spring we submitted our first grant application to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Places. We were bold enough to ask for the maximum matching grant of \$350,000.00 to be used to replace our roof and restore our stained glass windows, front doors and steps. We were advised that few applicants receive grants the first time they apply and that we were unlikely to receive the full amount of the grant. But we had faith! On October 20, 2006, we were formally notified that we had been awarded a matching grant for the full amount requested: \$350,000!!

Now all we have to do is raise the matching \$350,000!

JEWS REDEDICATE OLDEST SYNAGOGUE

SEP 23 1946
The oldest synagogue in this borough, Congregation Beth Israel Anshei Emes, Kane st., near Court st., was reopened and rededicated last evening before a crowded audience. It has been rebuilt along the lines of medieval Arabic architecture and is now one of the most beautiful Jewish houses of worship in the city.

The feature of the evening was an ancient Hebraic processional march, when the trustees entered the synagogue carrying scrolls and singing various hymns and psalms. Addresses were made by Louis Summer, president of the congregation; Louis I. Moss, chairman of the board of trustees, and Dr. Louis Gross, editor of the Brooklyn Examiner.

The dedication prayer was delivered by Rabbi Harry Halpern of the East Midwood Center, and the Rev. Israel Goldfarb, rabbi of the congregation, gave the dedication sermon. The unveiling of a bronze memorial tablet in memory of those who served the synagogue for the past 75 years was performed by Nathan Roinick, vice president. The benediction was pronounced by Rabbi Isadore A. Aaron of the Mount Sinai Temple. Cantor M. Halpern led the singing.

RELIGIOUS.

LAYING THE CORNERSTONE OF A SYNAGOGUE

INTERESTING EXERCISES.

**Meeting of the Army and Navy Committee of the B. Y. M. C. A.
A Brooklyn Synagogue—Corner Stone
Laid—Trowel Presentation—Inaugural
Address.**

The Hebrew congregation, known as "Baith Israel," worshipping the God of their fathers in a temporarily fitted up Synagogue at No. 155 Atlantic street for six years past, have so increased in intelligence and wealth as to be in a condition to erect a suitable house in which to worship. With this object steadily in view a site for the new building was purchased, and a day fixed for laying the corner stone, which turned out to be one of the ugliest days in the whole year, and being so its tendency was to cut short the proceedings. The ground selected for the new church is eligibly and centrally situated at the corner of Boerum and State streets, in the Tenth Ward. The lot is 90 feet on the former, and 94 feet 9 inches on the latter street. The building is to have a front of 47 feet on State street, and extending back along Boerum street 68 feet. The structure will be of brick, of a plain, unpretending style of architecture, and calculated to seat 300 persons. The basement will be 9 feet high, mainly underground. This will be divided into rooms to be used for Sabbath School and other purposes pertaining to the Society. The auditorium will be eighteen feet in the clear, and the whole will be plainly furnished. The land and building will cost about \$10,000, and is to be ready for use about the 1st of May next. Schlegel & Co. are the builders, and the mason work is to be done by Doplan & Brother.

Previous to laying the corner stone yesterday, the Society held a meeting at No. 155 Atlantic street, and united in religious exercises with the pastor, Rabbi Joel Alexander, who intoned the 117th, 122d and 135th Psalms. Much disappointment was experienced at the absence of Rev. Dr. Raphael, who was prevented taking part in the proceedings by his personal attendance at the funeral of a deceased elder of his congregation in New York city.

At the conclusion of the exercises a procession was formed by the congregation, and, preceded by their officers, went to the site of the new building. Here within the excavation for the cellar a temporary platform had been erected for the accommodation of all persons taking an active part in the exercises. The American flag floated from three corners of the stand, and with the promiscuous crowd on the surrounding banks made the scene an interesting one. When the procession reached the spot, the congregation opened to the right and left, when the Rabbis in surplices passed through, and with the officers of the Church, took their places upon the stand.

Rev. Dr. Alexander first read a chapter in Hebrew, after which, in the absence of Rev. Dr. Raphael, who was expected to assist, the Rev. Dr. Isaacs delivered an address, in manner following:

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—Previous to my coming here it was my intention to offer a few remarks, but I fear now that I shall disappoint you, for I had not prepared myself to deliver an address, concluding as I was led to believe that Dr. Raphael would be here to take that agreeable duty upon himself. However I will do the best I can. I am sure that the sentiment of all around me is in unison with the sentiment of the psalmist—"I rejoice when they said to me go up into the House of the Lord." I rejoice that I meet the Hebrews of Brooklyn face to face this day, on so solemn and interesting an occasion as laying the corner stone of a building dedicated to the worship of your God and mine. When I conse-

erated a few years ago the building we have just left—knowing as I do there is not a Rothschild among the whole crowd—I must say that this undertaking is most creditable to your zeal and liberality. There is no direction, nor any mention made as to laying a corner stone, in our ritual, but we know that God laid the corner stone of the earth, and all the children of God rejoiced together and clapped their hands with joy. I feel greatly honored at being called on to lay the corner stone of a temple to our God in this land of liberty. In this glorious Union, coming as most of you do from the land where despotism is the rule—are you not rejoiced to have the privilege of laying the corner stone of a temple in this land of freedom? True the star of liberty is at present behind a cloud, but that cloud is passing and will pass away, and that star to which the oppressed of all nations look up to from afar with hope and gladness will shine brighter for its temporary obscuration. (Applause.) The God of Israel who for 33,500 years has watched over your soldiers and sailors will nerve their arms for this contest for the right. No a stone of this glorious Temple of Liberty shall be lost. (Enthusiastic cheering.) You and I and all of us have reason to bless this land. It has been to us a land overflowing with milk and honey. The fact of our laying this corner stone is evidence that we, at least, have no fears for the perpetuity of the Union. Years hence some child in the morning will learn from this stone when we are gathered to our fathers and our dust mingled with our kindred dust, that this sacred stone has been laid to perpetuate the worship of the one living God and faith in the coming of the Messiah, as revealed to us by the Holy Spirit from Mount Sinai. There are those here and elsewhere who differ from us, but all must acknowledge that we are the first children of God, who redeemed us from slavery and who made no distinction between Jew and Heathen. In this inclement season I will not detain you with a lengthened harangue. I trust the Almighty who has hitherto guided you in your wanderings and sojournings will be with you and protect you still and bless this your undertaking. Let your conduct never tarnish your principles; and remember this is an orthodox building. Let no heresy disturb or shake your faith. As the sons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, remain good old Jews, as your fathers did before you. Be the same outside of this Synagogue as within, and don't look upon it as a burial place merely. Nowhere in the scriptures is there mention made of a dead

Jew being saved by the Almighty, but much about the salvation of living Jews. Bring hither your wives and children, and when your bones are gathered to your fathers, here let your relatives come and pray for the repose of your souls. May the God of Abram, Isaac and Jacob be with you in all your ways, and may His blessing descend upon the President of this Association, also upon the benevolent individual who is now about to lay this stone. And O! may this city flourish and this country prosper and be perpetual. (Great cheering.)

The Rev. Dr. Alexander in a brief address thanked the brethren for their attendance upon this interesting occasion. He hoped this temple would remain a monument of their faith to their children throughout all generations—the foundation of unity, freedom and prosperity in our generation.

The box, containing a parchment with the name of the pastor and members of the synagogue upon it, one each of the American coin from one cent up to one dollar, and some Jewish publications, was then placed in position, when Mr. Julius Corn, Secretary of the Society, stepped in front of Mr. Moses Loewenthal, and said he had the pleasure and the honor of presenting to him the silver trowel with which to lay the corner stone. The present was by direction of the congregation for his efforts in behalf of the Society. Taking the trowel, Mr. Loewenthal said, "I am very much obliged to you and the congregation for the honor conferred upon me this day." The trowel is of solid silver, and was made by Messrs. Rogers & Folk, No. 329 Fulton street. It has engraved upon one side, in English:

Presented to Mr. Loewenthal,
on laying the cornerstone of
Synagogue Balth Israel,
Corner Boerum and State streets,
Brooklyn, L. I., Jan. 12, 1862.

The same is engraved on the other side of the trowel in Hebrew characters.

The corner stone was then put in position. Returning to the stand the pastor, Rev. Mr. Alexander, recited in Hebrew another psalm and a prayer, which concluded the exercises. The committee of arrangements having in charge this work is composed of the following named gentlemen, who are also authorised to receive subscriptions to aid in paying for the new Synagogue: Solomon Furst, Chairman, No. 406 Atlantic street; Mr. Bass, No. 35 Atlantic street; Mr. Loewenthal, No. 32 Hudson avenue; and Mr. Beasman, No. 24 Atlantic street.

Notwithstanding the very unpleasant state of the weather, about three hundred persons were present at this ceremonial commencement of the first Jewish Synagogue ever begun in Brooklyn.

BETH ISRAEL.

Reconstruction of the Boorum Place Synagogue.

How the Repetition of Dedicatorial Services was Rendered Necessary—A Description of the Ceremonies—Address by the Rev. Dr. H. S. Jacobs—Some Very Plain Language in Regard to those who Would Ostracise the Jews.

The Synagogue Beth Israel is a very unpromising looking structure at the corner of Boorum place and State street. It was built about seventeen years ago, and for some time after its construction was amply large enough for all the demands made upon it by the congregation. During recent years, however, the question not only of slightly enlarging the synagogue but of furnishing it with pews of the precise pattern prevailing in Christian churches, began to be agitated. The latter proposition was favored very strongly by a majority of the members, a very respectable minority, however, regarding it as a radical innovation. Those who advocated the change further urged that there should no longer be any separation of the sexes during service, and a vote upon this proposition three years ago showed that those who favored it outnumbered its opponents over two to one. Nothing was done in the direction of making the change until a few months ago, when the idea was again taken up and acted upon so vigorously that the synagogue was rededicated yesterday afternoon. Every seat was occupied, the ladies very generally availing themselves of their newly found privilege of sitting in the body of the edifice.

The front galleries had been torn down, the side galleries extended clear to the wall which faces upon Boerum place, and the vestibule instead of being on the inside of this wall as heretofore was outside of it, an extension having been built for the purpose. The altar and sanctuary were very

TASTEFULLY ADORNED WITH FLOWERS, rural baskets full of garden beauties also hanging from the galleries at stated intervals. The congregation were not very punctual in their attendance, a circumstance which delayed the opening of the ceremonies for nearly an hour. At half past three the minister, wardens and honorary officers of the congregation made their appearance at the door of the synagogue, bearing the Scrolls of the Law. The rabbi wore the customary black gown and velvet cap, and the wardens and officers bearing the Koran wore the tallisim, an insignia which may be compared to a silk scarf of unusual length and width. The procession halted at the door, where the rabbi, the Rev. Dr. E. M. Myers, said, "Open unto me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them and praise the Lord." From within was sent the response, "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving; into His courts with praise." The door was then opened, and the Scrolls were borne under a crimson canopy held by attendants into the synagogue. The rabbi, chanting selections from the psalms, led the way to the altar, stopping at the sanctuary. Here one of the oldest members of the congregation, Mr. M. Bass, ignited the gas, from which will flow the perpetual light, giving utterance as he did so to the following benediction:

Blessed art Thou, Eternal God, King of the Universe, who hast sustained and supported us, and permitted us to celebrate this occasion.

The procession then walked round the interior of the synagogue seven times, different Psalms being chanted on each occasion, and the scrolls being finally placed in the ark by the Rev. Dr. H. S. Jacobs, of the congregation B'nai Jeshurun, New York. As they were being deposited, the choir sang the twenty-ninth Psalm.

The rabbi, Rev. Dr. Myers, then extended to his congregation a cordial welcome into their improved house of worship. He would refrain from speaking to them at length, having frequent opportunities to do so, and would call upon his friend, Dr. Jacobs, to address them.

DR. JACOBS' ADDRESS.

Public worship is a subject of vast importance to all who claim to be the servants of the true and ever living God; the manner and spirit in which it is performed is of the highest consequence to all classes and conditions of men. Public worship, in its manner and spirit, is a seldom failing test of the intelligence of a people—their social, moral and intellectual status. Public worship is also the sentiment of a human heart, which has been exhibited from the earliest periods. It prompted the untutored savage to make those grotesque images which were the objects of his adoration. It manifested itself in the beautiful and poetic mythology of ancient Greece and Rome, and it is perceptible in the invocations to the Great Spirit of the vast prairies of this continent. But it doesn't depend on mere sentiment; it has all the authority of a divine command. It rests upon the injunctions and the very spirit of the holy Scriptures, for we find that scarcely had the Divine Being by His strong hand and outstretched arm released His people of Israel from Egyptian thralldom and manifested Himself as their ruler than He instituted a command, "Let them make me a sanctuary and I will dwell among them." He prompted David to erect a fitting sanctuary, though his hands had been imbued in blood. The same privilege was given to his son and successor who erected that noble monument of peace to Him who loveth and giveth strength. The centuries rolled onward, and this sentiment no longer exhibited itself in the Hebrew nation. The prophets and holy men warned them and expatiated upon the efficacy of public worship. We find that God in His ire gave evidence of the efficacy of it when He said, "My house, a house of prayer, to be called for all people." These words I select as a text for this exhortation. We are assembled here together

FOR THE SACRED PURPOSE OF REDEDICATING
this house, which has been renovated, improved and beautified as a tribute of the hearts of this congregation to God. Zeal, enterprise and material means have been expended, and they testify to the interest of the members of this congregation in that important matter which concerns the due conservation of public worship. But now comes the important question, and one which should not be overlooked on this occasion. After all these efforts and endeavors, is the work completed? Are there no lessons and ideas to be drawn, to be evolved out of all these ceremonies; important truths which should go to the hearts of every man, woman and child in the congregation in order to incite something beyond a mere external form of teaching the purer and grander ideas connected with the service of God? Now, what is the necessity for a house of worship? Can God be confined within four walls—limited to a certain space? Is He not infinite and has He not declared that His glory filleth the universe? The very prophet from whom I have taken my text has said

in the name of God: "The heavens are My throne and the earth is My footstool." It cannot be a question to any individual raised in intelligence above the brute creation that God is to be found everywhere. This fact is engraven on the face of universal nature. It shines in the sun and glitters in the stars. The seas and the mountains, the roaring cataract and the meandering stream, the very flowers in their beauty speak of the presence of God. Blessed is the privilege that gives us a house of worship where the distinctions of the world are forgotten and shown to be naught, where common calamities are recognized and all advantages looked upon as proceeding from One whose love cannot be bought by lucre or earthly possessions. The question follows in logical order: Having the places of worship, what are the qualifications required to maintain and uphold them? What is the synagogue to be? That's a question before all of you. Is it to be a place of mere idle assemblage; are there not thoughts and duties and obligations, aye, and responsibilities, which attach themselves to the establishment of houses of worship? The text suggests

THE FIRST IMPORTANT THOUGHT

in connection with this idea. The synagogue stands as directly in relation to us as the temple did to our forefathers. This house is God's house and is to be a house of prayer. Every synagogue is the logical successor of the holy house that stood in Jerusalem. True our service is different. We have not nor are we permitted to have those bloody sacrifices once offered on the altar. They have passed away and been replaced by the sacrifice of a righteous and contrite heart which God always receives. I say our oblations are those of a contrite heart and the incense which we offer now is the incense of admiration of God. When He saw how the bloody sacrifices had become a means of hypocrisy He would have no more of them. The synagogue is a house of prayer. By the means of prayer religion is made firm in the human heart. It is

THE WONDROUS BRIDGE

which spans the chasm of time and lands us into eternity. Prayer is that mighty piston on which the spirit of man essays to fly upward above the turmoil of this life to reach at last that place reserved at God's right hand forever more. These changes and improvements you have made here to be efficacious must be consistent with the sincerity and devotion which I hope they are intended to promote. I uphold as a step in the right direction every endeavor to bring the worship of God to the heart and mind; I uphold every act by which this and every house of worship can be made worthy of the great purposes for which it is designed. I counsel you then to continue to eradicate everything that tends to lead the heart from prayer. I would have you retain the ancient landmarks vital to the spirituality and principles and doctrines of Israel, but as to mere form and ceremonial I say they are only the setting of the gem and the gem above all things must be preserved that it may sparkle in its brilliance and glory in the eye of Jew and Gentile. Remember that prayer without devotion is like a body without a soul. Against such devotion the whole spirit of Judaism warns you. This house is also a house of instruction as well as prayer. Knowledge should go free like the waters of the ocean, so that the young may be Jews, not because they are told to be Jews but because they are made to understand the nobility of their mission and the glory of their responsibility. We are to be Jews, and I glory in the word; we must be Jews as banner bearers and ensamp-
lers of all that is good and honorable. We see that

DOWNTOWN

Temple Ends Drive May 25

Oldest Synagogue Seeks \$10,000 Fund

Gongrégation Balith Israel Anshel Emes, Brooklyn's oldest synagogue, has launched the final stages of its drive to raise \$10,000, and the campaign will end at a dinner on May 25 in the temple, 236 Kane St., in the downtown section.

The celebration will commemorate the 85th anniversary of the synagogue in conjunction with the 150th anniversary of the bill of rights. Supreme Court Justice Meier Steinbrink, in accepting an invitation to be one of the sponsors of the event, has stated:

"Your congregation was purely a pioneer in our community and in the light of what is going on in this chaotic world about us it is well that you link with your celebration the anniversary of the Bill of Rights, which document remains the bulwark of our liberties."

Other sponsors of the event include Municipal Court Justice Charles H. Breitbart, Representative Emanuel Celler, City Court Justice Murray Hearn, Federal Judge Grover M. Moscovitz and Supreme Court Justice Mitchell May.

Eastern District since April, 1951.

Rites Set to Mark Renovation of Boro Synagogue

Congregation Baith Israel Anshei Ems, Kane St., near Court St., which will observe its centennial in 1956, will hold rededication ceremonies tonight to celebrate the recent complete renovation of the synagogue.

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The Rev. Dr. Israel Goldfarb, rabbi of the congregation for the past 48 years, will conduct the service. Among the speakers will be the Rev. Dr. Max Arzt, vice-chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America; the Rev. Joseph Miller, rabbi of Congregation Shaare Torah, Flatbush; Supreme Court Justice M. Harry Marcuscello and Representative John J. Rooney.

Jacob Herts will preside over

PUT IN THE ARK

The Scrolls of the Law in Synagogue Baith Israel.

Rededication Services Held in the Edifice Yesterday—The Perpetual Lamp Lighted—Addresses by Distinguished Hebrew Clergymen.

The consecration and rededication services yesterday afternoon at Synagogue Baith Israel, on the corner of Boerum place and State street, were most impressive. The synagogue is the oldest in the city. It was erected twenty-eight years ago, and every synagogue at present in Brooklyn is either attended by seceders from or is a branch of it. Three months ago it was found necessary to thoroughly repair the building and put on a new roof. The seating capacity has been increased, a new vestibule and double entrance way have been added and the entire inside renovated and handsomely decorated. The cephoria torim, or scrolls of the law, had been removed while the alterations were going on, and yesterday they were returned to their resting place in the ark with all the pomp and solemnity of the orthodox Jewish ritual in the presence of a rejoicing congregation almost too large for the church.

The services were almost entirely in Hebrew. The congregation kept their heads covered. Each minister wore a long, full robe of black silk, a small velvet cap and a white scarf called a tallus, round his neck. The ushers, Messrs. J. Krone, J. Franklin, J. Falkart, R. Raphael, S. Phillips, N. Sermanstrahl, N. Jacobs and J. Arneberg, wore evening clothes and everyone appeared as if trying by the festival appearance of his or her attire to show the joyful nature of the occasion.

The exercises commenced at about 3 o'clock by the trustees and the minister, the Rev. Rabbi M. Friedlander, going to the school house wherein had been deposited for safe keeping the scrolls of the law, carrying them to the vestibule and

knocking at the door leading into the synagogue. In response to the question from within of what was wanted the minister exclaimed: "Open for me the gates of the righteous and I will come in and I will praise the Lord." The Rev. B. Hastchazan of the Shaaray Zedek Congregation, of New York, responded from within: "These are the gates of the Lord that the righteous may come into them. Come into the gates with praise, into the court yards of the Lord with thanks. Praise him! Bless his name!" The president, Mr. M. S. Phillips, then opened the door and the bearers of the scrolls entered, the Rev. P. Minkowsky chanting as they pass him: "Holy, holy are thy tabernacles: glorious thy tents, O Lord."

When the trustees approached the ahm memmir and went up the steps leading to the ark the perpetual lamp, which is always kept lighted in front of where the scrolls of the law are kept, was lighted by Mr. Phillips, Mr. Minkowsky chanting, "And it came to pass when the ark moved," and "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one God."

The seats within the ahm memmir rails were occupied by the Rev. Dr. F. De Sola Mendes, of Synagogue Shaaray Tefila, New York; Rev. Dr. M. Maisner, of Synagogue Adath Israel, New York; Rev. B. Hast, of Congregation Shaaray Zedek, New York; Rev. P. Minkowsky, of Congregation Kehal Adath Jeshurun, New York; Rev. M. Friedlander, of Synagogue Baith Israel, Brooklyn, and Mr. M. S. Phillips, the president of the Shule. As soon as the trustees, with their precious burdens, took up positions inside the rails facing the ark, Dr. Mendes offered a brief but eloquent consecration prayer. At the conclusion of the prayer the scrolls of the law were carried four times round the synagogue, at the end of each circuit being borne to their original position in front of the ark, while one of the chazanim chanted a psalm. The psalms chanted were Psalm XXX, by Rev.

Hast, Psalm XXIV. and C. by Rev. Friedlander and Psalm LXXXIV. by Rev. Minkowsky. The usual number of times the scrolls are carried round a synagogue is seven, in commemoration of the seven times the Hebraic hosts marched around Jericho. The number is, however, entirely optional, and, as a long order of exercises had to be gone through, it was decided to be satisfied with four. As the scrolls were placed in the ark Rabbi Minkowsky chanted a hymn of glorification. The scrolls of the law are the five books of Moses written out on sheets of parchment and rolled round cedar cylinders. Each end of the scroll is fast to a cylinder and when the parchment is rolled up it is half on the one and half on the other and it is, therefore, easy to lay on the reading desk and find any desired chapter. When rolled up ready to be put in the ark these scrolls are covered with handsomely embroidered bags, so made that the top ends of the cylinders protrude. These ends are adorned by silver and gold caps bearing small bells, which ring as they are moved. The writing on the parchment, and everything else connected with the scrolls, are entirely done by hand and they are, consequently, very valuable and expensive.

As soon as the doors of the ark were closed on the precious books of the law Mr. Phillips made a short address. He said, among other things:

Among all my experiences, that of to-day has been one of the most delightful, and will remain to the last day of my life the most precious gift of affection in my existence. From the depth of my heart, I express my thanks to the Heavenly Father, that he has permitted me to dwell for a while longer on earth and for being able to light the perpetual light which, when we look at it, reminds us that we are still one distinct people sailing under our ancient flag House of Israel, and kindles in our hearts our love for our true religion. As one of the founders of this synagogue, the honor of addressing you is due not to me alone, but to some others of our fellow members, especially to my esteemed friend and colleague, the vice president, who not only yielded his own aid toward keeping up this congregation for a period of twenty-eight years, but also added to the list of our membership two good members, his own children, who became members of

our congregation through his influence. He can relate to you more minutely how hard this congregation has had to struggle against those who cared more for fashion of the day than for religion. But, as one who has the satisfaction of seeing this congregation growing, I feel like saying that nothing can add more to my inward peace of mind than the promotion of orthodox Judaism at large and the promotion of this congregation which professes to be and to remain orthodox. As president I am glad to accept this beautiful house which is now being dedicated to God's service, and in behalf of the congregation I extend the warmest thanks to the Building Committee, who have sacrificed much of their valuable time for the improvement of the synagogue and the benefit of the congregation. I bid you all welcome to this house of God, wherein our prayers may be accepted in love, and I beg and trust that you will all extend your assistance for the permanent maintenance of this the first synagogue in this city.

Rev. Dr. F. De Sola Mendes followed with a short discourse. He took as his text, "If the Lord build not the house, in vain the builders toil," and illustrated it by an allegory of the Midrash. He expressed his pleasure at being with the congregation on the day of their rejoicing and participating in the pleasure of the newly restored house. It reminded him of the counsel given to the Hebrews who returned from Babylon, and set about restoring and rededicating the Temple at Jerusalem. That exhortation was: "Not by wealth, and not by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." It would be their privilege and their happiness to conserve the spirit of God in that house, to look upon it as sacred ground, and enter there always with reverence and awe. Then, indeed, would the Lord help to build their house and guard their citadel well.

An address in German, the native language of at least half the congregation, was delivered by Dr. Maisner. He took his text from Genesis, xxxiii: 27: "What is thy name? And he said Jacob. Then he said, thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for thou hast contended with God and man and hath prevailed," and said among other things:

These few lines of Scripture contain the outlines of the history of our nation as well as of the history of devotion. We take these two parts together, for in the development of our nation they are only one. The sublime idea of the only God, as revealed to our ancestors, gave birth to our nation and brought forth at the same time places of sanctuary and worship. As far back as the time of our first ancestors there was a knowledge of a God and marks of religious feelings. Cain and Abel were offering sacrifices to the invisible God. These feeble sentiments experienced by but a chosen few, were converted into the purer and higher conception of God as revealed by Him to Abraham. That same pure sentiment of religious devotion remains in the hearts of our nation to this day. The light kindled by our ancestors became the everlasting light. Abraham teaches us how to worship God. With what a world of submission and modesty does he say when pleading

for the preservation of Sodom and Gomorrah: "I am only dust and mortal. Let me find grace in thine eyes." Our sages say Abraham was the founder of the morning prayers, which is to say he taught mankind to pray. He taught how to approach the Almighty God. * * * But not only the spiritual part of our nation is recognized to-day, but also our social and commercial influence. The development of our people did not take place in the manner of other nations, who organize themselves in consequence of their commonwealth, country or language. Israel came forth from one tribe, one family, and his proper name is, therefore, Beth, house. Let me direct your attention to a passage of the Bible where the name Beth Israel, or house of Israel, which is also that of your congregation, is first met with: "And the cloud of the eternal was upon the dwelling by day and fire was on it at night in the eyes of all the house of Israel throughout their journeys." The movable sanctuary of olden times is a correct picture of the former social relations of our people to other nations. A cloud rested upon them and a continual fire burned around them. The cloud of the darkest misfortunes and the fire of prejudice and intolerance. Israel was condemned, like our forefathers in the Wilderness, to wander from one place to the other without rest or joy. Of the common rights of man he was robbed, from all society repulsed. All the higher branches of art and science were closed to him and the fire of hate, prejudice and slander was directed against him. Still the house of Israel was not destroyed, for Israel is like the bush in the prophet's vision which burned in a flame of fire, but was not consumed. And what gave our people the spiritual power to overcome all these trials? The house of worship, the Beth Israel. The

house of Israel, the house of worship. When the Romans took possession of our country and dispersed our people Beth Israel still remained the house of God. Wherever the Jew found a resting place he erected a house for his God and his house was his refuge where he prayed and cried and found consolation and satisfaction for all his sorrows and balm for his painful wounds, and there, also, was he encouraged for the honor of his people and his God, to die, if need be, the death of the martyr and the saint. Therefore, my brethren, hail to this day, hail and praise to the nations. Glory to our God that our name is no more Jacob, the wanderer and hated one, but Israel, the conqueror. Our places of worship are no more the wandering tents, but the strong builded houses firm on the soil of righteousness, peace and brotherhood, in the name of Beth Israel. Amen.

At the conclusion of Mr. Maisner's address the usual daily afternoon service was performed by Rabbi Hast, assisted by Rabbi Friedlander, all present joining in singing the final hymn, "Universal Lord Whom the Scepter Swayed." The dedication sermon, which preceded the prayer for the Government and the priestly benediction



pronounced by Dr. Maisner, was delivered by Mr. Friedlander, the rabbi of the Synagogue. Mr. Friedlander is the youngest man in the State occupying so important a position in the Jewish Church. He was born Russian Poland twenty-six years ago, and came to this country, after an education in England, to accept the appointment he now holds. He is a profound Talmudical scholar, an accomplished linguist and a sound theologian. He took as the text of his sermon "In all places where I record my name I will come to thee and I will bless thee." Exodus, xx:24, and said in part:

These words are the assurance of God's favor to every true and faithful heart. It is the tone of religion mingled with philosophy and polity. It is the support of the deserted, the comfort of the distressed and the hope of the forsaken. It is a most curious problem to the political inquirer and a profound admiration to the religious man of to-day, that the Jew still exists and the flame of Judaism not yet extinguished. Many nations have been born, have blossomed, faded and passed from the face of the earth; but the Jewish nation, notwithstanding the many struggles, the fatigues, the disasters and the unparalleled calamities it underwent, never ceased pursuing the course of its spiritual state. In fact, in most the misfortunes which befell the Jew only served to fan the flames of his enthusiasm and love for his religion. What was Vespasian's reply to the Roman ladies when they urged him to march immediately on Jerusalem and put a stop to the rebellion? "Nothing," said the great general, "would unite their forces but an attack from a common enemy." No project or force ever succeeded in the attempt to convert the Jew from his lofty principles. And to-day! Wander over the whole face of the habitable earth and on every continent, in almost every state you will find Jewish communities and places of worship the gates of which bear the ensign "Beth Israel." The Jews mingle with all nations, sects and parties in many affairs of life, yet refuse to mingle their blood with any other race. They dwell in their own distinct family and communities and maintain

their customs, literature, religion and, above all, the principle of national unity. Israel claims that their never dying existence is due to the special will of God. Truly nothing can shake the truth of their claim. But we may rightly inquire what has served as a mediator, as an agency through the operation of which Israel remained to this day so linked together and so adherent to their religion. Before answering this let us give a thought to the passage I have taken as my text: "In all places where I record my name I will come to thee and I will bless thee." It might be remembered that the first part of this passage, which reads, "An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me and shall sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings," etc., is the first place in the Bible where the command is made to build altars and offer sacrifices. Moses, who transmitted this command to Israel, appears not merely the first who founded a commonwealth on just principles, but one who advanced religious truth and political society to as high a degree of perfection as any civilized people are capable of attaining. The one great object to which he was devoted was the permanent happiness of the whole people. Finding Israel influenced with Egyptian paganism he strictly denounced polytheism and inculcated upon their minds the true teaching of monotheism. He discovered, however, that men at large are not capable of obtaining a state of life which is purely moral and ethical without a practical religion. He found his brethren unfit to be indoctrinated with an ideal religion, a religion based upon philosophy, without positive observation which might have upon man the desired effect. By the divine direction Moses therefore contrived a means by which they might gradually approximate the truth. With the command of God he ordered an altar built, then a Tabernacle, thus calling forth the liberality of the community for religious purposes. There, they brought sacrifices as a token of thanks and gratitude. There, poor and rich offered prayer to the same helping power. And the influence of the meetings at that sacred spot, taking the same effect upon almost everyone of the worshipers linked them together in one practical chain and instigated them to adhere to and struggle for the same religious cause. Wherever Israel went the Tabernacle went with them. The Lord spoke, Moses interpreted and the Tabernacle served as the medium of communication. Moses, well acquainted with both sides of Israel's character could through the inspiration of God foretell their future destiny. In order to implant in them a holy zeal to serve as a strong barrier against the dissolution of their spiritual state, that they might never give up their holy banner he stamped upon their memory the words of God, "In all places where I record my name I will come to thee and I will bless thee." Believe not that God's presence is only in the Tabernacle in the Temple near the altar upon the holy mountain in the holy city; wherever you may be you have the right to claim your license to teach the world the unity of God, to regulate society with laws of equality and to exercise a discipline upon humanity which should aim exclusively at fitting man for

conducting himself honorably and prudently in this life and properly prepare him for the life to come. "I shall be with you in the synagogue as in the sumptuous temple," says the Lord. "We may pay with prayer our bill for sacrifices," said the prophet. The synagogue is a most powerful instrument which operates upon the perpetuity of our unmingled race and upon the immortality of our spiritual state. It is the synagogue that ever kept together in one body the world dispersed members of the Jewish family. It is the synagogue that has ever been the vital vein of the Jewish body, and it may truly be said that it is to the synagogue that Judaism owes its existence. Hundreds of years after the temple was in ashes Israel still claimed "our sanctuary is not totally destroyed," as in place of the temple the synagogue as a place of worship grew up. There the nation met for the purpose of thanksgiving and there the individual came to utter his prayer in the more immediate presence of the Almighty. In short, since the destruction of the temple, the synagogue has been our only pride and our only patrimony. Well may He understand why the rabbis of the Talmud placed so much importance on the visiting of the synagogue that they say: "One who lives in a place where there is a synagogue and does not come to pray therein is called a bad neighbor." For in the synagogue the rich and the poor, the great scholar and the uneducated mechanic concur in their faithful attachment to the spiritual continuance of the Mosaic institution. In ages and countries where bigotry and despotism ruled attempts were constantly made to restrict the Jews from synagogue. But to-day, and in a blessed country like ours, where we may with our neighbors breathe the air of freedom with heartfelt thanks to God and to those men who struggled for the freedom, we lift up our voice, in open gates and say like our ancestors, "O, ye house of Israel! bless the Lord." We have assembled here to-day to hang over our gate the same old ensign, "Baith Israel," and as Solomon said when he consecrated the Temple we may say, "This house which I have built is called by Thy name." For this house has now been consecrated as the chief agency for the purpose of keeping us united in one sacred brotherhood under our ancient flag. As long as this flag is not entirely pulled down we may emphasize the fact that our temple, our sanctuary, is not totally destroyed. Twenty-eight years have passed since in this city, this, the first edifice, was dedicated as a synagogue. It was then that the Brooklyn Jews were not heard of abroad and had nothing to be proud of at home. Now they are recognized as active members of the spiritual brotherhood at large and as an important link in the educational and charitable chain among their fellow citizens. Now, my friends, to what are you chiefly indebted for whatever makes you proud of your religious edifices and your charitable institutions? Without hesitation it may be answered, to the place which shelters you now. The Judaic spirit which lurks in the depths of your Jewish bosom would have remained cold and frozen had it not been awakened and enkindled by the benign influence of this the first synagogue of Brooklyn.

The first stone which was placed in that corner, is not the cornerstone of this house only, but it is the cornerstone of all the sacred establishments the Brooklyn Jews are and may justly be proud of. Let me say to those who ask, "What do we want with a synagogue?" that the place where we gather for prayer is the loveliest spot on earth, it is our Eden, where we may speak face to face with God. In the moment of prayer we rest from care, emerge from the gulf of materialism, retire from the tumult of material life and become inspired with godly love and intellectual concerns. This is, of course, an idle picture for those who imagine that there is nothing dearer than this life, that man is no more than a refined clay, that the soul is merely a focus of personality and that God is only man's magnified image in the sky. To them we can no more describe the value of the hour of prayer than paint their souls. But I speak to those whose minds are not so incapable of reflection as to utterly ignore the existence of a supreme being who is the intelligent first cause of things. I speak to those whose thoughts, aspirations, hopes and prosperity are not bounded by the short span reaching from the cradle to the grave. I speak to those who, in all circumstances of life, find true comfort by holding to religion. To them I say if you wish to secure this comfort to your children keep up the place of worship which is essential to religion. But I must not forget there are even among regular synagogue visitors who think no more of a place of worship than of any other public place. Let me, therefore, before I quit, impress upon your minds that we dedicate this house as a place wherein nothing but divine service shall be performed and wherein the word of God shall be expounded. We consecrate this place as our sacred fountain from which strength may flow, which shall tend to constantly keep alive our ardent zeal as steadfast adherents to our law and our religion. And if in the hour of communication between us and our Maker we will, as our religious code teaches, keep "the eye downward and the heart upward," we will feel it our duty to put happiness, refinement and civilization within the reach of every fellow man. If from this place men and women will leave with the determination to be henceforth free from moral delinquencies, and if visiting the synagogue will have that much to be desired and blessed effect, we may rightly claim that this house is our temple and our prayer our sacrifices, and the question as to whether the temple of Israel was totally destroyed may be answered in the negative. May this congregation continue worthy of its name. May the Almighty King keep awake in our breasts the living fires of our holy faith. May the most merciful Father who freed our nation from so many dangers and snares shed his spirit through every heart, so that prejudice may vanish and peace reign.

The officers of Synagogue Bait Israel are M. S. Phillips, president; M. Coleman, vice president; A. Krone, treasurer, and J. Corn, secretary. The trustees are L. Jacobs, R. Moses and R. Jacobs.