

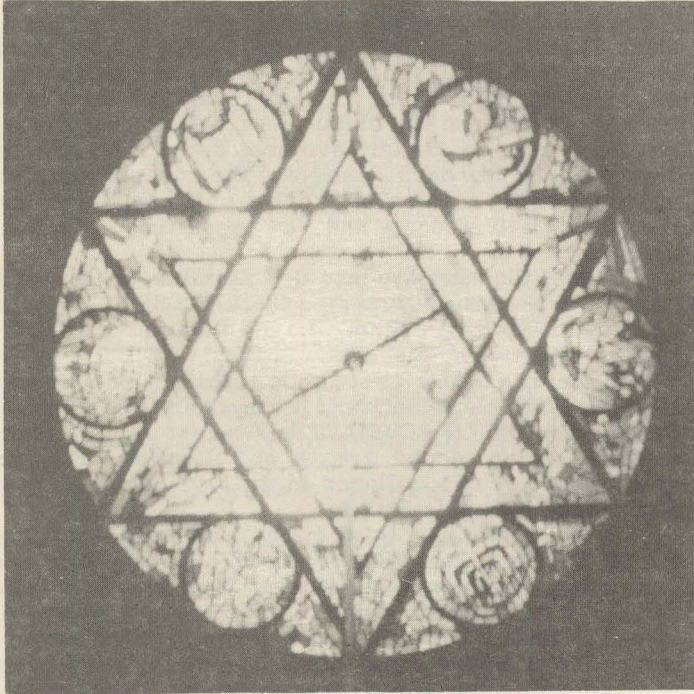
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The EVERGREEN NEWS

A Neighborhood Newspaper Sponsored by Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association

Hirsch History

by Rick Thomas



One of the most imposing facades in the V/E community belongs to Baron Hirsch Synagogue. In addition to its striking physical appearance, it ranks as the largest Orthodox synagogue in the United States. Since much of its congregation lives in this neighborhood and September marks the beginning of the Jewish New Year, this might be an appropriate time to feature it.

Although the synagogue itself did not become a neighborhood landmark until the early 1950's, the events of local Jewish history go back much further. The first known Jews to pass through the Memphis area were of Spanish and Portuguese origin. They stopped on the Chickasaw Bluffs en route from Mexico to the middle of the United States to trade with Indians before Memphis was laid out as a city. They did not linger but were soon followed by Jews of German origin who did. This group, fleeing from political upheaval in Europe, became prominent in the life of the city. The first Jew to be buried in Memphis died in 1847.

Orthodox German Jews were the major Jewish group for thirty years with their religious life centered around a synagogue at Main and Exchange. However, a number of Reformed Jews took up residence here in the 1850's and the two philosophies vied for dominance.

The yellow fever epidemics of the 1870's virtually eliminated the Jewish community in Memphis. Most fled the city during the epidemics and by 1880 only two Orthodox families remained. After 1880 some Jewish families returned to the city and this religious community was boosted by the arrival of a number of Russian, Rumanian and Galician Jews whose passage was provided by one Baron Maurice D. Hirsch of Austria. Several

of the newcomers obtained a state charter in 1892 for the Baron Hirsch Benevolent Society in honor of this Jewish philanthropist. The name stuck and the history of the present Baron Hirsch congregation dates back to this period.

The congregation had 50 members in 1900 and most of its activity was still centered downtown. However, new immigrants, mostly from Russia, soon made the synagogue too small. Consequently, a new building was built in 1914 at Washington and 4th. Although the size of the community varied during the next decades, membership surpassed 500 families in 1941. Again the congregation outgrew the synagogue and many members moved to what is now the mid-town area (including the V/E community).

To many people, the growing membership and changing residential patterns offered an opportunity to build a magnificent temple. In 1945, the land at Vollentine and Evergreen was purchased for \$20,000 and two adjoining lots were later bought for \$27,750. An architect was retained in 1946 and WILLIAM GERBER supervised initial planning. PHILIP BELZ oversaw the final stages.

In 1952 the educational building was completed and in 1955 ground was broken for a new synagogue. The cornerstone was a block of Jerusalem marble and mixed with the mortar was a sack of earth brought here from Mt. Zion.

Today Baron Hirsch has a congregation of over 1500 members of which about a third live in the V/E community. It is one of five Memphis Jewish congregations and is more fundamental than two of them—the Reformed (Temple Israel) and the Conservative (Beth Sholom). The other two congregations are small and quite fundamental. It is interesting to note that dual memberships are

—continued

ARTS & CRAFTS Show/Sale

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22nd
10:00 - 6:00

EVERGREEN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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The Evergreen News is sponsoring the above show and sale specifically for the benefit of the VECAA community and its various artists. However, there will be a number of other Memphis artists and craftsmen participating, and the show will be advertised city-wide.

Along with oil paintings and watercolors, there will be assorted hand-made bric-a-brac, pottery, weaving, photography, leather goods, glass jar terrariums, sculpture, and much more.

Don't forget that it's not too early to do your Christmas shopping, and this show will be a good place to do it. For further information, call 278-2210.

You are invited to the September VECAA meeting to be held on Monday the 17th at 8 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall of McLean Baptist Church. Incoming chairman Irv Sachritz and secretary Margaret Brown will be installed.



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Baron Hirsch continued

not uncommon. Although the number of families affiliated with Baron Hirsch has varied occasionally, it has remained essentially stable in recent years despite changing residential patterns.

Baron Hirsch's synagogue is elaborate by Orthodox standards. Its exterior walls are limestone and its walks crab orchard stone. The lobby walls are white oak with other walls being travertine marble. All of the floors except the carpeted sanctuary are terrazzo. The ceiling is painted blue to resemble the sky and six gold stars are arranged at random upon it. Bronze is used freely in the sanctuary which seats over 2,000.

Probably the most striking feature in the synagogue is the set of twelve stained-glass windows on each side of the main sanctuary. They were designed by miniature artist Jack Grue and depict events in Jewish history starting with The Flood and ending with a map of modern Israel.

For Orthodox Jews the synagogue remains the center of life. Three services are held daily in addition to the regular Sabbath (Saturday service). Sunday School classes are provided for young people while adults meet at various times throughout the week to discuss religious writings, current events or some other topic of interest to the group.

This year, September 25 marks Rosh Hanshanah, the Jewish New Year. The Old Testament instructs Jews to begin the New Year on the first day of Tishri. The occasion is not one of revelry but one of spiritual renewal. It begins the period called "Ten Days of Return" which leads up to Yom Kippur, the most sacred of Jewish holidays.

We are fortunate to have such a large Jewish community in our midst because of the cultural diversity it offers. It serves as an example of the richness of life that can result from the observance of beloved traditions. May Rosh Hanshanah mark the beginning of a year of peace and happiness for our Jewish neighbors.

Report Card

Mr. ROCHESTER NEELY, Sr., principal, reports from Vollentine School that about 500 students are enrolled, about 75 of whom are in the school's three kindergarten classes. The ATTU (Accountability of the Underachievers) and MGM (Mentally Gifted Minors) programs have been approved, and the blueprints for expanding the library and media center have been drawn. Mr. Neely says the next few days should see the buses running on schedule and a resolution of the overcrowding in the first grade (148 students and, at press time, only four teachers).

Several teachers are new to Vollentine this year. In the kindergarten is Mrs. CONSTANCE B. REED, a graduate of Memphis State who did her practice teaching at Vollentine. Mrs. GEORGETTE M. CHARLTON of 1929 Edward is a new first grade teacher. She has ten years teaching experience and is a graduate of LeMoyné-Owen. Mrs. DICKIE LOVEIACE has taught for five years and is teaching second grade at Vollentine. She has attended several colleges in the Mid-South and is a graduate of Memphis State.

There are two new third grade teachers, Mrs. DOROTHY EALY and Mrs. VERA McCROSKEY. Mrs. Ealy has eight years experience, a bachelor's degree from Lane College, and 33 hours work toward a master's degree at Memphis State. Mrs. McCroskey has 16 years experience. She is a graduate of Milligan College and has an M.A. from Memphis State. Two new teachers of special subjects are Miss BETTY ANN HUNT, the Orff music teacher, a June graduate of Memphis State, and Mr. JAMES TAYLOR, who spends two days a week at Vollentine teaching physical education.

Vollentine has a new secretary this year, too. She is Mrs. BESSIE M. GARNER of 2246 Henry. Mrs. Garner got her business training at Henderson Business College and has worked for the school system for seven years. Her husband is Mr. WARREN GARNER who in addition to his other distinctions is known to many north of Jackson and east of Springdale as the man responsible for delivering the Evergreen News.

Wanted

USED CONSOLE PIANO in good condition. Prefer French or Italian Provincial. Call 324-5812 (day) or 386-6735 (night).

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PTA Action

Snowden PTA is helping recruit volunteers from the neighborhood to work as teacher's aides for the new IGE (Individually-Guided Education) program. Interested persons should call the school office at 274-4500 or Mrs. Richardson at 324-8693.

Parents will get to meet their children's teachers at the first PTA meeting of the year. Make a note to be there at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, September 18, Snowden School.

Happenings

September

- 8-----Sandbar Party sponsored by McLean Baptist Church. Will welcome college students, nursing students and servicemen to Memphis. Participants will leave the church at 4:30 p.m.
- 22-----Arts and Crafts Show and Sale sponsored by The Evergreen News. The show will be held on the rear lawn of Evergreen Presbyterian Church from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- 22-----Nationally-recognized table tennis tournament to be held at Evergreen Presbyterian gym. Netters from all over the South will vie for the championship starting at 9 a.m. The tournament is being sponsored by Snowden's P.T.A.
- 23-----Fall Church Family Night at Lindsay Memorial Presbyterian Church. The event will feature a potluck supper beginning at 6 p.m.
- 25-----Parent Effectiveness Training (P.E.T.) begins at Evergreen Presbyterian. The 7 p.m. session will be the first of eight Tuesday night meetings. The course was designed by a psychologist and focuses on communication skills and handling problems and conflicts. Tuition will be \$50 per person. For further information contact Mr. Gale Isom at 534-6592.
- 27-----XYZ Club (senior citizens) will have its monthly meeting at 11 a.m. at Springdale Methodist Church.

October

- 12-----Annual meeting of the Tennessee Federation for the Aging will be hosted by the Lewis Senior Citizen Center. Senior citizens from across the State will hear speakers and participate in various programs. The meeting is a first for Memphis and 5-600 visitors are expected.

For Rent

FAXON AVENUE. Room with kitchen and phone privileges. Employed lady, \$15 per week. 272-3118.

Small bedroom with kitchen privileges. Employed lady or might take an unemployed lady. Price if employed \$40, if not, \$50. Call 276-3292.

Last Resorts

Once again the time has come to recount the summer adventures of neighborhood residents. This has been a bumper season for traveling and the passages below can only begin to describe the exotic sights seen by V/E eyes.

As usual many vacationers went to local resorts. LYNN MALKIN of 803 University, for example, saw the wonders of the Ozarks while resting at Lake Dardanelle and MARTY TAYLOR of 407 Stonewall took in the attractions at Hot Springs. On the other side of Memphis, Dr. LEWIS AMIS and family of 1870 Tutwiler relaxed for several days at the family farm in Huntland, Tennessee.

Other cities in the Mississippi Valley proved to be popular destinations. New Orleans, always a big favorite, was visited by AUBREY and PAT HOWARD of 884 Sheridan and ROGER and LOU ANNE COOPER of 1856 Vollandine. St. Louis was big again this year with PEG CHERRY of 890 Kensington visiting relatives there and the neighborhood's oldest jet-setter, 81-year-old Mrs. FRED THOMAS of 865 N. Evergreen, making the trip to see the Cardinals play.

Neighbors eyeing more distant horizons included C.W. and LESLIE STACKS of 1516 Tutwiler who visited relatives at Davidson, North Carolina, and RICK and LAILA ECKELS of 693 Center Drive who went deep-sea fishing at Destin, Florida. Others were Mr. and Mrs. ED WEBB of 807 West Drive who vacationed at Ocean Isle, North Carolina, and MIKE RICHARDS of the Cabanas who visited Alaska (if you can call Reserve camp a vacation). The GEORGE SUTTONS of 1855 S. Rainbow Circle went to a family reunion in Birmingham, and on to the Alabama Gulf Coast where they fed garbage to the 'gators and themselves to the sandfleas.

Several residents chose foreign shores for their summer adventures. Included in this number were Dr. and Mrs. DAVID CHAMBERS of 869 N. McNeil who spent several days in Rome and Sorrento, Italy, and Dr. FRANKLIN WRIGHT of 669 University who visited his brother in Johannesburg, South Africa. Mrs. EVELYN BEASLEY of 1770 Tutwiler, last summer's "Tourist of the Year," had a hard time following her own act, but did manage to spend two weeks in Caracas, Venezuela. She was accompanied by her daughter JANIS, and CARMEN and TENSI PEARSON of 1852 Tutwiler. And as you receive your paper, ROWLETT and MARTHA SCOTT of 933 Oakmont Place are hiking through the wilds of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia.

Summer was a good time for the kids, too. Twelve-year-old BYRON WHITE of 1900 Mignon spent a week with his grandparents in Savannah, Tennessee, while his neighbor, seven-year-old JENNIFER THOMAS, visited relatives in Helena, Arkansas. Eight-year-old TODD TAYLOR of 407 Stonewall spent the summer with relatives in Hereford, Texas.

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Welcome

In May, GARY and SUE GORDON came from Cabool, Missouri, to buy the home at 816 N. Willett. Right now they're remodelling the kitchen, with Mr. Gordon building the cabinets. Their children are WESLEY, 5, and VALORIE, 8 months. Mr. Gordon is a dental technician at the University of Tennessee.

CAROLYN PEARCE and her eight-year-old son, PAUL, have recently moved to 817 Cypress. After receiving her master's degree in English at Memphis State just this summer, Mrs. Pearce has begun teaching reading at Bolton High School. She spends her spare time sketching and painting and playing the guitar. Paul, who attends the Presbyterian Day School, spends his time being an eight-year-old boy.

Another "out-Easter" has chosen our neighborhood. LYNN MALKIN recently moved to University St. from a suburban apartment. The former University of Tennessee student is employed as assistant to the media buyer for a Memphis advertising agency.

Mansion Gets Reprieve

According to an article in the Commercial Appeal, the Galloway Mansion at 1822 Overton Park Avenue may survive the change in ownership it has undergone. The home and the 2.8 acres that surround it were recently sold by Southwestern to GARY BELZ and F.L. BILLINGS for \$125,000. The developers now plan to sandblast the brick and repaint the wood on the three-story house, and subsequently subdivide it into about five apartments. Ten townhouse units with complementary architecture are planned for the McLean side of the property.

The developers had previously made the sale of the land contingent upon rezoning that would allow garden apartments. However, the Mid-Memphis Improvement Association and concerned neighbors requested that the lot be rezoned no lower than R-TH (townhouse) and this classification was agreed to by the purchasers.

Table Tennis Tournament

An athletic event of national prominence will be held in the V/E community this month. On Saturday, September 22, the Mid-South Open Table Tennis Tournament will take place in the Evergreen Presbyterian Church gym. It will be sanctioned by the National Table Tennis Association and points are to be awarded toward the national championship. The tournament has been accorded two stars, meaning it is the second best type that can be held.

GRANT CHAMBERS, recreation director for Evergreen, is expecting between 100 and 150 participants and has already received entry forms from all over the Southeast. Ten to thirteen games will be played at a time.

Neighborhood residents who want to root for the home team will have plenty to cheer about in the person of thirteen-year-old LESLIE HARRIS. Leslie lives at 1645 Faxon and is state champion in the women's division in Tennessee, Mississippi and Missouri, as well as state runner-up in Arkansas.

The tournament will begin at 9 a.m. and will last until a winner is declared. Admission is free.

For Sale

UPRIGHT PIANO in good condition, \$175. Call 324-5812 (day) or 386-6735 (night).

SANDER, Black and Decker, \$7.50. 274-5690.

DINETTE SET, 4 chairs and table, \$45; overstuffed couch, \$40. May be seen after 5 p.m., 877 N. McLean.

TWELVE-ROOM HOUSE, 2 1/2 baths, 5 bedrooms, 1229 E. Parkway South, 274-0565.

7-PIECE DINING ROOM SET: table, buffet, china cabinet, 4 chairs. 1724 Brown Ave., 272-1306, after 5.

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SOFA — 4 seats — Scotch Guard — beige background with floral printing — side tables and front table — side tables have drawer in front. (\$150.00) (Phone 274-9417)

WOODEN CRIB — double springs — can be made into a youth bed. (\$25.00) (Phone 274-9417)

WOODEN TABLE — can be used for dining room or kitchen — 8 chairs — has 2 leaves — chairs are made of hard vinyl. (\$100.00) (Phone 274-9417)

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