



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Landmark Exhibition Celebrates the Jewish Experience in Greenwich

Remarkable Heritage and Contributions to Greenwich's Cultural and Economic Vitality Are Explored

***An American Odyssey: The Jewish Experience in Greenwich*
November 15, 2017 - April 15, 2018**

COS COB, CT, October 12, 2017 -- A captivating collection of historic memorabilia and first-person accounts from Jewish residents of Greenwich chronicles the untold story of Greenwich's Jewish community dating to the turn of the last century. The Greenwich Historical Society's landmark exhibition: *An American Odyssey: The Jewish Experience in Greenwich*, which opens on November 15, examines how Jews, like other immigrants, struggled with the pull to integrate into American society and yet also remain distinct. Their significant contributions to the cultural and economic vitality of Greenwich, despite their humble start, low numbers, periods of discrimination, and restrictions on worship, employment, and housing opportunities, are explored.

Seven over-arching themes depict their journey, each supported by richly evocative stories, original objects, documents, and photographs, and first-person quotations and audio recordings: Jews in Colonial Greenwich; Mass Migration of Eastern European Jews; The Town the Settlers Found; Gaining an Economic Foothold 1880 - 1930; The Founding of Temple Sholom; Immigration Ends, Anti-Semitism Intensifies 1924 - 1940s; and Postwar Greenwich, Jews Suburbanize.

"This is among the most significant exhibitions in the history of the Historical Society," says Debra Mecky, executive director. "Despite its relatively small but growing population, the Jewish community has had an outsized influence on Greenwich. Many of the stores on Greenwich Avenue were established by Jewish immigrants who came here from Eastern Europe with little or no money. From their humble beginnings as street peddlers, they helped shape our thriving retail sector. Many Jewish families have made their mark through generous philanthropy that has contributed enormously to the town's vitality. Their story is integral to understanding Greenwich's legacy and prominent stature in the United

States."

Organization and Support

The exhibition is curated by Dr. Ann Meyerson, a nationally recognized independent museum curator who most recently co-curated *The First Jewish Americans: Freedom and Culture in the New World* at the New-York Historical Society.

Generous support is provided by Lawrence Benenson, The Blavatnik Family Foundation, Jessica and Drew Guff, Ambassador John L. Loeb, Jr., Isabel and Peter Malkin, Mr. and Mrs. David A. Messer, Ruth and Harold Newman, Davide and Ron Strackbein, and the Malcolm Hewitt Wiener Foundation. The Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the Greenwich Library Oral History Project and the Jewish Historical Society of Fairfield Country for their significant contributions to the exhibition.

"The American Odyssey follows exhibitions that explored the contributions to Greenwich from its Italian and Japanese communities," says Peter Malkin. "The Reimagined Greenwich Historical Society's Campus, to open in 2018, will permit the Society to host more and larger exhibitions and contribute even more to our Town upon the successful conclusion of our Capital Campaign."

The exhibition, which opens on November 15, 2017 and runs to April 15, 2018, is located at the Greenwich Historical Society, 39 Strickland Road, Cos Cob, CT 06807. The exhibition's hours are Wednesday-Sunday, 12-4pm. See www.greenwichhistory.org for additional details.

Exhibition-related Programs

Story Barn: Oy Vey!

November 17, 2017 at 7:30 pm

Enjoy stories told without notes on the subject of something gone awry, in a relaxed cabaret-like setting.

Coffee with the Curator, Ann Meyerson, PhD

November 29, 2017 at 10:30 am

Meet the curator of this exhibition and hear her insights as she gives a special one-time-only public tour.

Lecture by Dr. Michael Feldberg, Executive Director of the George Washington Institute for Religious Freedom

January 16, 2018 at 7:00 pm

Dr. Feldberg will discuss the history of the Jewish population of Greenwich.

Afternoon Nosh at the Greenwich Historical Society

March 25, 2018 at 12:30 pm

Enjoy a selection of foods representing traditional Jewish cuisine.

About the Greenwich Historical Society

The Greenwich Historical Society was founded in 1931 to collect and chronicle the unique and colorful history of Greenwich, Connecticut. The circa 1730 National Historic Landmark Bush-Holley House, which began life as a home for prosperous merchants and gained recognition later as the site of the first American Impressionist art colony in Connecticut, is open to the public as a museum. The Greenwich Historical Society operates a museum gallery with rotating exhibitions, educates thousands of school children annually, and produces a full calendar of programs and events that connect residents with the town's history. The Historical Society has embarked on a major capital campaign to advance its mission and secure its future at the forefront of America's historical institutions. A dynamic campus transformation is underway that will accommodate more visitors, expanded programmatic initiatives and an increased endowment. The newly imagined campus will be completed in fall 2018.

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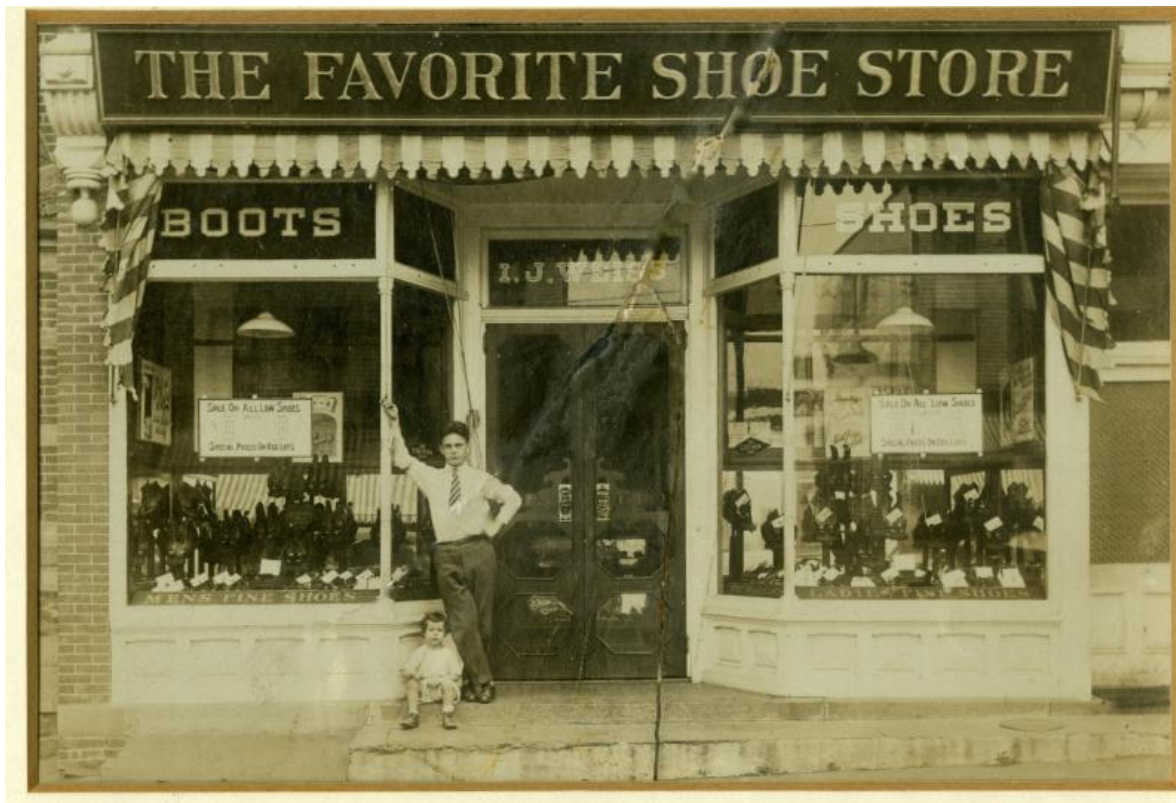
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The Favorite Shoe Store opened at 92 Greenwich Avenue in 1914 during the first wave of Jewish immigration and remained open for 91 years.

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