



SAVE THIS SACRED SPACE:

The Campaign for the Ruckle Street Temple



Bernie and Helen Horwitz's Wedding, 1954

**“Who kept the faith and fought the fight;
The glory theirs, the duty ours.”**

– Wallace Bruce



Current State of Ruckle Street Temple

We are on the brink of losing an all-but-vanished chapter of Jewish heritage,

and an asset of great potential for the future of neighborhoods. In the heart of our city, a once glorious brick and limestone beauty is crumbling. Its roof has partially collapsed, allowing torrents of water to damage the stylized Art Deco plasterwork inside. The structure is the oldest surviving synagogue building in the city of Indianapolis and must be saved.

On Hanukkah, 1925, hundreds of Jewish families gathered in the Mapleton-Fall Creek neighborhood of Indianapolis to dedicate a newly built synagogue on the corner of 34th and Ruckle Streets. Attended by Indiana's governor and Indianapolis' mayor, it was the hottest ticket in town for a three-day celebration. It was a fitting occasion for such a celebration, on a Jewish holiday that recalls the dedication of the Ancient Temple in Jerusalem. The words of Jack Goodman, the congregation's president at the time, still resound today as a call for the preservation of heritage:

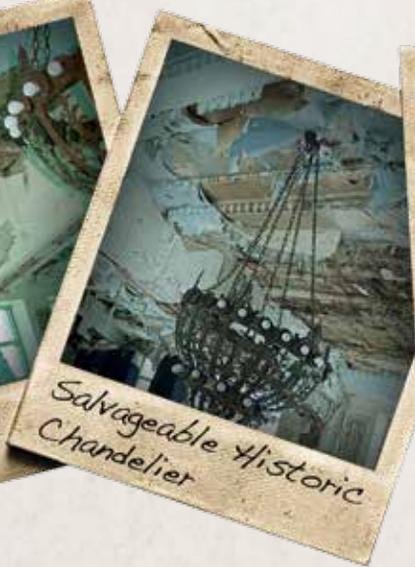
“We need to be quite conscious of the sacred trust we have inherited from our ancestors. We need to become aware of our obligations in preserving the heritage and passing it on to our generations – undimmed, undiminished, undefiled.”

Beth El Temple still stands, even though its original congregation has moved on. It is located in an area of the city which for some 50 years witnessed the vibrant life of hundreds of Jewish families. Several other congregations of diverse faiths have also made this their place of worship and have added their pages to the story of the building and its connection to the neighborhood. Most of the people who once lived here, now in their 70s and older, have vivid memories, photographs, and documents that recall those years. And, yet, this era of Jewish life in this neighborhood in the heart of Indianapolis has largely gone unnoticed. There are very few public historical accounts, recorded memories, or pictorial collections. The history of the Jewish generation that once thrived in Mapleton-Fall Creek is almost lost.

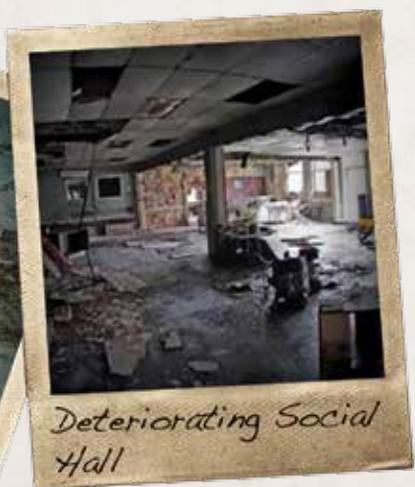
WE NEED YOUR HELP to save and share these stories.



Collapsing Roof



Salvageable Historic Chandelier



Deteriorating Social Hall



The campaign is an urgent quest and a rare once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to:

STABILIZE the Temple building and stop its decay, as well as reclaim its original elegant historic architecture

RESTORE the Temple and honor its history by partnering with like-minded institutions to remember and teach the stories and memories embodied in this sacred place and

CREATE a collaboration of neighborhoods and faith-based organizations to connect, welcome, and facilitate understanding and tolerance among diverse populations in our city.



Renderings courtesy of:
Browning Day Mullins Dierdorf.

Save This Sacred Space: The Campaign for the Ruckle Street Temple will raise \$3 million by 2016 for the complete restoration of the structure as well as an endowment for its maintenance so that this beautiful building won't fall on hard times again.

Your generosity

Honors the Temple's roots as a place of faith, fellowship, celebration, good deeds, and community building;

Saves a priceless chapter of Indianapolis history; and

Provides a rich new resource for our city's future.



The Temple Heritage Center, Inc., a 501c3 organization, has been formed, with the help of Indiana Landmarks, the Mapleton-Fall Creek Development Corporation, and countless volunteers, to carry out this important work. Using an historic synagogue to reshape and retell the stories that are significant to everyone has been accomplished in such cities as Baltimore, Savannah, and Miami Beach, to name a few. Indianapolis can draw from the experiences and models of other communities. Saving this sacred place will not only allow for exhibits, but will also create a unique forum to hold educational programs, present lectures, and bring together and serve our diverse communities.





The Temple Heritage Center's presence in Mapleton-Fall Creek will also enhance ecumenical dialogue. A local interfaith group called the Mid-North Church Council has worked for more than 30 years to address needs and opportunities in the neighborhood. This group's membership and mission will be enriched by the additional involvement of the Jewish community.

Please support the Temple Heritage Center with a meaningful contribution to **Save This Sacred Space: The Campaign for the Ruckle Street Temple.**



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