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Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Temple Ohave Israel

Other names/site number: Brownsville Shul

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 210 2nd Street

City or town: Brownsville Borough State: PA County: Fayette

Not For Publication: NA Vicinity: NA

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___**national** ___**statewide** X **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X **A** ___**B** ___**C** ___**D**

Andrea L MacDonald Division Chief December 8, 2015

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

PA Historical and Museum Commission

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Temple Ohave Israel
Name of Property

Fayette County, PA
County and State

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

_✓_ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

for Edson N. Beall 2-2-16

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: [X]

Public – Local [ ]

Public – State [ ]

Public – Federal [ ]

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) [X]

District [ ]

Site ☐

Structure ☐

Object ☐

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
RELIGION/religious facility
EDUCATION/school
SOCIAL/meeting hall

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
LATE 19th & 20th CENTURY REVIVALS

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property:
Foundation: CONCRETE
Walls: BRICK, STONE/limestone
Roof: ASPHALT

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Temple Ohave Israel is a former synagogue now used as a commercial building, located close to the National Register of Historic Places-listed Brownsville Commercial Historic District in Brownsville Borough, PA. Constructed in 1919 with revival style elements, the large brick building with reinforced concrete construction has a modified rectangular plan and is two stories high with a full basement. The building is located in an urban setting, sited close to the sidewalk line with an adjacent three story building to the east. The property slopes down to the north, where the basement is fully exposed. Decorative features are focused on the main entrance, which is set within a cast stone, Classical pediment that includes simple Doric pilasters with panels of multi-colored brick and glazed buff brick arranged in a geometric pattern on either side. Other decorative features include numerous stained glass windows. The building is in excellent condition and retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Narrative Description

Setting

Temple Ohave Israel is located in an urban area on the east bank of the Monongahela River, approximately one city block southwest of the National Register of Historic Places-listed Brownsville Commercial Historic District (1993). The property is also close to the intersection of Bridge Boulevard, which connects the east bank of the river with West Brownsville on the other side of the river, and High Street, which leads from the commercial downtown to the residential neighborhoods on the hill above Temple Ohave Israel. Railroad tracks line the river, two blocks north of the building.

Temple Ohave Israel is located on the north side of 2nd Street between Arch Street to the east, Cherry Street to the west, and Middle Street to the north. The building site slopes down from 2nd Street on the south to Middle Street on the north. An adjacent, three-story, brick building is located to the east. The remainder of the block consists of vacant lots. The building sits close to the sidewalk line, separated from it by a metal fence, which is set in a low, concrete curb. In warmer months, grass and flowers are planted between the fence and building façade, east of the entry. Two gates in the fence lead to the main entrance and to a concrete walkway along the east elevation.

Exterior

The building is two stories high with a basement and is a modified rectangle in plan (Photos 1-2). The main, south, section consists of the sanctuary and balcony, while a smaller, but wider, one story section at the north contains smaller offices. Due to the sloping site, the basement, which runs the full length of the building, is fully visible at the north side of the building. Constructed of reinforced concrete, the building is clad in running-bond brick with a contemporary asphalt shingle roof. The south section features a centrally placed cross-gable roof, while the north section is topped by a hipped roof. Unadorned brick parapets rise above the cross gable roof on all elevations. Wide, overhanging eaves with decorative rafter tails are visible along east and west elevations. Overhanging eaves are also visible around the north section. Designed with revival style elements, the building exhibits character-defining features of the revival style architecture, specifically a central, two-story arch that surrounds the main entrance. Fenestration includes fixed sash, stained glass windows set within wood frames and concrete sills on the first and second floors. Brick arches are located above stained glass windows on east and west elevations. Double hung, wood sash windows with concrete sills are located in the basement and north elevation. A brick chimney rises above the north section of the building, reaching a height nearly to the roof of the south section.

The main entrance is centered on the south façade (Photos 1-2). This elevation is narrower than the rest of the building, which gradually steps out to the north section. A concrete, shallow porch, punctuated by two cast iron light fixtures with round globes, is accessed by three steps and a ramp. Set within a double height arch, the main entrance, consisting of a pair of carved

wood doors, is set within a cast stone, Classical pediment that includes simple Doric pilasters (Photo 3). The entrance pediment is flanked by decorative panels of multi-colored brick and glazed buff brick arranged in a geometric pattern. A transom above the door, within the pediment, also has a decorative, geometric pattern. A panel above the transom spells in Hebrew letters: "אוהב ישראל" or "Ohave Israel," which translates as "Lovers of Israel" (Photo 5). Four, stained glass panels fill the double height arch above the pediment. Aside from the arched entry, there are no other openings in this elevation. A cast stone Star of David toward the center of the pediment serves as a sign for the building's original function. A cornerstone at the southeast corner of the building states "1919" (Photo 4). A simple brick parapet rises above the roofline.

Due to the slope of the ground down to the north, the basement is visible along the east and west (side) elevations and is separated from the upper floors by a row of vertically laid bricks punctuated by concrete corner blocks. The east elevation is five bays wide and is defined by offset planes (Photos 6-7). Two window openings are located on each floor of each bay with the exception of the central bay, which is marked by a large, arched, stained glass window and is topped by a simple, brick, gabled pediment. All window sills are concrete while first floor and balcony stained glass windows in the south section are topped by brick arches. A stairwell to the basement in the central bay leads to a contemporary wood door topped by a glass transom (Photo 8). Basement light-wells at the south side of the east elevation are enclosed by low concrete curbs.

The north, rear, elevation is at a lower grade than the three other elevations and is distinct from the rest of the building (Photos 9-10). The basement in this section is fully visible with one floor above. The two levels are visually separated on the exterior by a row of vertically laid bricks punctuated by concrete corner blocks, following the pattern from the side elevations. The north section has a hipped roof with wide overhanging eaves and exposed rafter tails (Photo 11). A section of the roof is cut out to allow light to reach an arched, stained glass window in the north elevation of the south section. Similar to the other elevations, a simple, brick parapet rises above the cross gable roof of the south section. There are two, wood sash, double hung, clear glass windows centered on the first floor along the north elevation, while one, wood sash, double hung, clear glass window is placed to the west side of this elevation at the basement level. Two contemporary doors lead out from the basement at either side of the elevation. The door at the west side of the north elevation is topped by a glass transom. A brick chimney rises from the northwest corner of the north section.

The west elevation almost precisely mirrors the east elevation. Like the east elevation, the basement level at the west elevation is separated from the upper floors by a row of vertically laid bricks punctuated by concrete corner blocks. The west elevation is five bays wide and is also defined by offset planes (Photos 10, 12). Two window openings are located on each floor of each bay with the exception of the central bay, which is marked by a large, arched, stained glass window and is topped by a gabled pediment. All window sills are concrete while first floor and balcony, stained glass windows in the south section are topped by brick arches. An exterior stair

runs from the higher grade at the south façade to the lower grade at the north elevation (Photo 13).

Interior

The interior of the building consists of a basement, main level, and balcony. A high-volume sanctuary was historically the focus of the main level with a balcony along the south façade. The basement was historically used as an "auditorium," serving as an after-services social gathering space, a meeting place for numerous social clubs, and a school for religious education. The north section historically served as a rabbi's study and additional meeting place for social clubs.

The entry lobby on the main, first floor, an important intermediary space between the secular world outside and the sanctuary to the north, is finished in smooth plaster walls with wood wainscoting and a floor of granite tiles (Photos 14-15). A chandelier is located in the center of the lobby with round globe sconces on either side of the main door. Above the door to the sanctuary, a small, painted medallion shows a dove with an olive branch in its mouth. Stairs to the balcony are located at both east and west sides of the entry lobby, while stairs to the basement are accessed through a wood door at the east side of the entry lobby (Photos 16-17).

The high-volume sanctuary on the main level was designed to seat "over 300, including the balcony"[1] (Photos 18-22). The sanctuary has a north-south orientation and a barrel vaulted ceiling. The barrel vault is interrupted by smaller, cross vaults in the middle of the space. A brick proscenium arch defines a niche at the north end of the sanctuary (Photo 24). A semi-circular stained glass window is located within the niche, while a small Star of David is placed above it. Walls of the sanctuary are finished in smooth plaster and are encircled by wainscoting made of brick (Photo 23). A three-tiered chandelier hangs from the smooth plaster ceiling at the center of a plaster Star of David (Photo 30). A smaller chandelier hangs above the balcony. Simple ceiling fixtures and wall mounted, globe sconces illuminate the underside of the balcony. The balcony, with a raked floor, extends over approximately one third of the space, creating a lower, plaster finished ceiling below. Floors of the sanctuary are wood with a short section of contemporary carpet running from the double entry doors. Five rows of pews are still located under the balcony. It is not known when the remaining pews were removed. The remainder of the large, open space contains removable, glass display cases.

Large, stained glass windows with leaded cames are located at either side of the cross vault (Photos 27-28). The three-sectioned windows are topped by a radius arc. Smaller stained glass windows are located around the perimeter of the sanctuary. Each stained glass window, and each section of the large stained glass windows, consists of a regular grid of yellow glass surrounded by a multicolored border. A round medallion near the top of each window incorporates traditional Jewish iconography. Some of the imagery includes a Star of David, menorah, scrolls, and doves. Memorial plates for deceased congregants are placed within the base of each stained glass window.

[1] "Brownsville, PA., Jewry will Dedicate New Temple," *The Jewish Criterion,* vol. 55, no. 3, September 10, 1920, 118.

The balcony steps down from south to north with three levels of pews divided in half by an aisle (Photos 25 and 29). The three-sectioned, semi-circular stained glass window illuminates the south side of the balcony (Photo 26). The floor is finished in wood. Stairs from the entry lobby are located at the east and west corners of the balcony and are cordoned off by simple, turned wood railings. Originally used as seating, likely for the women, the balcony now serves as a storage area.

The basement runs the entire extent of the building and consists of a large, open space accessed from the north and south (Photos 31-32). While the basement appears to retain its original plan, finishes, such as light fixtures, paint, and a partial height counter appear to date to circa 2000. Restrooms with contemporary fixtures are located at the south side of the basement.

In the north section, a stair runs along the north elevation between the basement and first floor. The stair accesses a study and bathroom connected by a short corridor (Photos 33-34). The study is also accessed by a door from the niche at the north end of the sanctuary. Ceilings in both the study and hallway are finished in acoustical tile (installed circa 1950s). The bathroom has all contemporary finishes, including fixtures, acoustical tile ceiling, and floor tile.

Alterations

As Fayette County does not maintain building permits for interior alterations, it is hard to determine the full extent of alterations. However, based on visual inspection, very few alterations appear to have been made since the building was constructed. Limited damage was sustained in a fire in February 1957, and included only curtains, carpeting, and small areas of the floor in the north section of the building.[2] These areas of the north section of the building now exhibit acoustical tile ceilings, which were likely installed at that time.

Based on Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, it appears that the wider, north section was original to the building, despite the odd placement requiring a cut-out to accommodate the large, semi-circular stained glass window at the north end of the sanctuary. No documentary evidence exists to explain this strange placement which may have been due to program, to allow for a rabbi's study accessed from the sanctuary.

When the congregation disbanded and moved out of the building in 1979, the property transferred to the Faithful Baptist Church. The ark, ner tamid,[3] and memorial plaques were removed and reinstalled in Beth El Congregation of South Hills near Pittsburgh in 1982. The property was purchased by the current tenants, a retail store and café, in 1999. At that time, vines were removed from the exterior of the building, the masonry was cleaned and repointed, and gutters were replaced. Work completed on the interior between 2000 and 2003 included converting the basement social hall to a café. As the basement was historically used as a social hall, it is likely that it was always a large open space. Alterations to convert the basement space

[2] Glen Tunney, "Brownsville Time Capsule," Article #111, March 5, 2000, <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~glenntunneycolumn/capsule111.htm >, site accessed July 13, 2015.

[3] The "ner tamid" or "eternal light" is a light fixture that hangs above the ark and is perpetually lit, some say in remembrance of the menorah in front of the historic Temple in Jerusalem that was destroyed in 70 AD.

to a café appear to have included installation of a partial-height counter and new equipment. All finishes in the basement social hall and bathrooms appear to be contemporary.

Integrity

Temple Ohave Israel is very well maintained and retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and retains the essential physical features that enable it to convey its appearance from the period of significance (1919-1945).

Temple Ohave Israel retains integrity of location close to the Monongahela River and the National Register of Historic Places-listed Brownsville Commercial Historic District. While integrity of setting has been somewhat compromised with removal of some of the earlier dwellings immediately west of the building, the large brick building to the east remains. In addition, Temple Ohave Israel retains integrity of design. The general form, plan, progression of interior spaces, structure, and style from the building's construction have been retained, as well as individual decorative features. The brickwork, stained glass windows, and pedimented entry clearly express the revival style of the building. Similarly, Temple Ohave Israel retains integrity of materials as it retains the physical features that constitute its style, including the two-story entry arch, masonry exterior walls, stained glass windows, and interior high-volume sanctuary. Since the building retains integrity of materials, the building also retains integrity of workmanship, demonstrating evidence of craftsmanship in the brick, stained glass and woodwork, including wainscot and stairs in the lobby and balcony railing. Although the building has not been used as a synagogue since 1979, change in use from a religious to a commercial property in the past 15 years has not removed earlier physical features, thereby retaining integrity of feeling and association.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [x] A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [ ] C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

- [x] A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- [ ] B. Removed from its original location
- [ ] C. A birthplace or grave
- [ ] D. A cemetery
- [ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- [ ] F. A commemorative property
- [ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Social History

Period of Significance
1919-1945

Significant Dates
1919

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Cooper, Andrew P.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Temple Ohave Israel is significant under National Register criterion A in the area of social history for its role as the center of the small, but influential Jewish community in Brownsville. In addition to providing religious services for Brownsville's Jewish community, Temple Ohave Israel also cultivated and strengthened the Jewish community by educating the community's children and by providing meeting space for social organizations, such as the Hebrew Ladies Aid Society; a Jewish Boy Scout troop; and the Co-ed Club, a Jewish youth club. By doing so, it served as an anchor for the Jewish community in Brownsville. Temple Ohave Israel also meets Criteria Consideration A as a religious building that derives its primary significance from historic associations, specifically social history. The period of significance begins with construction of the synagogue in 1919 and ends in 1945, when the Jewish population of Brownsville began to experience a steep decline.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Brownsville

Located along the National Road, the history of this byway is integral to the history of Brownsville. Also called the "Old National Pike" or the Cumberland Road, since it starts in Cumberland, MD, the National Road was the first federally improved highway in the country. The road followed almost the same route as an earlier road, the Braddock Road, which opened in 1751 during the French and Indian War. This road stretched between Maryland and what is now Pittsburgh, PA, to connect the Potomac and Ohio rivers. The National Road initially reached Wheeling, VA (now West Virginia), in 1818, eventually stopping in Vandalia, IL, even though plans were to continue to the Mississippi River. The National Road became a corridor for the movement of goods and people, allowing access to the West. The National Road arrived in Brownsville in 1817, 32 years after construction initially began. Brownsville, as the eastern most point on the Monongahela River as it flows into the Ohio River, became a gateway city for settlers moving west along the National Road. In addition, from an early date, Brownsville had a direct land connection with Pittsburgh. A 26 mile road connected Brownsville to Pittsburgh, completed possibly as early as 1803 and paved in 1851.[4]

Industry and commerce in Brownsville shifted in 1852 when the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad bypassed the town. With the rise of the steel industry in southwestern Pennsylvania, Brownsville served as a transportation center for the coal and coke produced in the region. It was also a hub for passenger rail service with several rail lines. At its peak, there were 57 trains a day coming in and out of Brownsville's Union Station with service through Pittsburgh. "It was then common to hear residents say that you didn't need a schedule to take a train to Pittsburgh, just go to Union

[4] Charles R. M'Murtie, "The Brownsville Road: Redstone Road in Olden Times". *The Pittsburgh Press,* September 23, 1900, <http://wiki.carrick-overbrook.org/Brownsville_Road>, site accessed July 12, 2015.

Station and board one."[5] Passenger service ended in 1950, with a shift to automobile travel, which had been exponentially gaining in prominence throughout the first quarter of the twentieth century. In 1926, the National Road became a transportation throughway for automobile travel with designation of U.S. Route 40, which traverses essentially the same route as the National Road, bisecting Brownsville less than a mile from Temple Ohave Israel.[6] In its heyday in the mid-1950s, US 40 connected Atlantic City to San Francisco and had "more automobile traffic than any other transcontinental highway."[7]

Two historic districts in Brownsville were listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1993. The Northside Historic District is "significant in the areas of commerce, particularly associated with the National Road and the western migrations of the early 19th century…."[8] The nine churches in the Historic District "reflect some of the ethnic groups which settled in Brownsville in the early 19th and early 20th centuries."[9] The other historic district, the Brownsville Commercial Historic District, located approximately one city block away from Temple Ohave Israel, is significant as "the commercial center for the numerous coal mining communities established in the Klondike coal fields of western Fayette and eastern Washington and Greene counties. The district also included the headquarters of the Monongahela Railway Company, which connected the area's coal fields to their steel producing markets at Pittsburgh."[10]

Jewish community of Brownsville

Moses Heller may have been the first Jewish resident of Brownsville when he opened a clothing store in 1870 at the age of 27.[11] There were very few Jews who followed his initial lead; however, commerce in Brownsville shifted during the second half of the nineteenth century from transportation-related industries to coal. Between 1852 and 1903, commercial activity contracted and population remained somewhat constant until 1903, when the railroad arrived. In the first three decades of the twentieth century, the population of Brownsville tripled from 3,650 in 1900[12] to 10,250 in 1930.[13] Census data notes very few immigrants or children of immigrants living in Brownsville prior to the 1910 census, including only a few Jewish immigrants or children of immigrants. Prior to 1910, most Brownsville residents and their parents were born in Pennsylvania; however, the 1910 census marks a dramatic increase in the number of immigrants,

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[5] Glenn Tunney, "Brownsville Time Capsule, October 1950," <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~glenntunneycolumn/capsule44.htm>, site accessed July 12, 2015.

[6] Jeffrey J. Kitsko, "40, National Road," <http://www.pahighways.com/us/US40.html>, site accessed July 12, 2015.

[7] Frank X. Brusca, "U.S. Route 40," <http://www.route40.net/page.asp?n=1>, site accessed July 12, 2015.

[8] Noreen A. Halvonik, "Brownsville Northside Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, February 28, 1993, Section 8, page 1.

[9] Noreen A. Halvonik, "Brownsville Northside Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, February 28, 1993, Section 7, page 4.

[10] Noreen A. Halvonik, "Brownsville Commercial Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, February 28, 1993, Section 8, page 1.

[11] Jacob S. Feldman, *The Jewish Experience in Western Pennsylvania: A History, 1755-1945*, (Pittsburgh, PA: Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, 1986), 62.

[12] This figure represents population of Brownsville Borough, Brownsville Township, and South Brownsville Borough.

[13] Noreen A. Halvonik, "Brownsville Northside Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, February 28, 1993, Section 8, page 6.

including Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. The Jewish population of Brownsville was first noted in the 1927 *American Jewish Yearbook* as having 900 people and 725 ten years later.[14] Census data on individuals shows that many Jews lived in West Brownsville, which was not considered in the American Jewish Yearbook tally. The overall population of Brownsville peaked around 1940 with many of the newcomers working in the coal mines, and dropped off sharply in the following decade.

Possibly due to common languages, Jewish immigrants settled in Brownsville, lured by the booming industry and commerce after the railroad arrived in 1903. Rather than working in the coal mines, Jews owned many of the businesses. Although the number of Jews in Brownsville represented approximately 30% of the total population in 1930 and 10% ten years later, a third to half of all businesses in Brownsville in the first half of the twentieth century were owned by Jews.[15]

After Moses Heller's brief interlude in Brownsville in the clothing trade, Jews began moving to Brownsville around 1895.[16] Pioneering merchants[17] included Louis "Harry" Goldstein[18] who opened L. Goldstein and Son men's furnishing store with his sons Frank and Joseph,[19] brothers Morris and Harry Levy, who opened Levy Men's clothing store in 1886,[20] and Barnet (Benjamin) Wise, who opened Wise's Department Store in 1893.[21] "Starting modestly, the first comers gradually developed and began to take an important place in the commercial and civic life of the town."[22]

The population of the Jewish community in Brownsville followed a similar decline as the overall population of the town. By the 1940s, Jewish immigrants throughout the country were experiencing greater economic prosperity. Many American-born children of immigrants moved away from Orthodoxy in preference of the Reform movement. As early as the 1920s, Jewish children raised in smaller towns, such as Brownsville, moved to cities with larger Jewish populations to pursue higher education and often did not return to small family businesses. This

[14] Lee Shai Weissbach, *Jewish Life in Small-town America : A History*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 345-347.

[15] Noreen A. Halvonik, "Brownsville Northside Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, February 28, 1993, section 8, page 6.

[16] "Brownsville Jewish Community," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 51, no. 9, July 4, 1919, 27.

[17] Glen Tunney, "Brownsville Time Capsule," Article #11, March 5, 2000, <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~glenntunneycolumn/capsule11.htm>, site accessed July 13, 2015.

[18] Louis Goldstein is listed as Harry Goldstein in the 1900 U.S. census.

[19] After Louis retired in 1909, the business was taken over by his sons Frank and Joseph, who opened a "ladies" store in 1912 in an adjacent building. (Glen Tunney, "Brownsville Time Capsule," Article #11, March 5, 2000, <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~glenntunneycolumn/capsule11.htm>, site accessed July 13, 2015.)

[20] Glen Tunney, "Timeline: Events in Brownsville's history," <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~glenntunneycolumn/Brownsville%20Time%20Line.htm>, site accessed July 13, 2015.

[21] "Brownsville Jewish Community," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 51, no. 9, July 4, 1919, 27.
Glen Tunney, "Timeline: Events in Brownsville's history," <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~glenntunneycolumn/Brownsville%20Time%20Line.htm>, site accessed July 13, 2015.

[22] "Brownsville Jewish Community," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 51, no. 9, July 4, 1919, 27.

trend accelerated after World War II. By 1950, there were only about 250 Jews in Brownsville, almost 500 fewer than 13 years earlier.[23] This decline mirrors the overall decline in population in Brownsville, due to closure of Pike Mine in 1945 and J&L Vesta #4 Mine in 1957. Over 1,000 people lost their jobs with the closure of the two mines.[24]

History of Temple Ohave Israel

Members of Ohave Israel (Lovers of Israel) first met in the house of Sam Birkenfield in 1906 and a charter was granted by the state of Pennsylvania a year later.[25] "There were but a mere handful present and the prospects of an eventual congregation was [sic] rather gloomy at the time but the spirit and earnest desire of the few present brought about further meetings."[26] Charter members included John Altman, a tailor from Hungary;[27] Joseph N. Cooper, an American of Austrian descent and a hotel proprietor;[28] Joseph Cooper's neighbor Edward Gottesman, an Austrian-born merchant;[29] Ignaz Herskovitz, a German grocer;[30] Max G. Krause, an Austrian proprietor of a shoe store with his twin sons as clerks;[31] and Harry Levy. A second community, Tree of Life congregation, took out a charter in 1915 with 19 members from west and south Brownsville, many of whom were originally from Hungary.[32] It appears the community was not large enough to sustain two congregations, as they combined by 1919. A division among different factions of Jewish communities was not uncommon and was likely due to a rift in religious ideology between Orthodox and Reform movements, with Eastern European Jewish immigrants tending toward Orthodox and German and Austrian Jewish immigrants more inclined to Reform ideology. Temple Ohave Israel held religious services on Shabbat (Friday nights and Saturdays) as well as holidays, in both Hebrew and English,[33] suggesting that while the congregation identified as Orthodox, more acculturated members were also included.

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[23] Weissbach, 345-347.

[24] Glenn Tunney, "Brownsville Time Capsule," <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~glenntunneycolumn/capsule4.htm>, site accessed July 5, 2015.

[25] "Brownsville, PA., Jewry will Dedicate New Temple," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 55, no. 3, September 10, 1920, 118.

[26] "Brownsville, PA., Jewry will Dedicate New Temple," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 55, no. 3, September 10, 1920, 118.

[27] United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910*, Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1910, Brownsville Borough, Pennsylvania, Page 1A, Enumeration District 2.

[28] United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920*, Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1920, Brownsville Borough, Pennsylvania, Page 6A, Enumeration District 2.

[29] United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920*, Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1920, Brownsville Borough, Pennsylvania, Page 6A, Enumeration District 2.

[30] United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910*, Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1910, South Brownsville Borough, Pennsylvania, Page 18A, Enumeration District 68.

[31] United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910*, Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1910, South Brownsville Borough, Pennsylvania, Page 4B, Enumeration District 68.

[32] Feldman, 201

[33] Harry Schneiderman, ed., *American Jewish Year Book*, vol. 21, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1919), 539.

The first synagogue building in Brownsville was dedicated on September 10, 1916, with clergy from Brownsville and rabbis from surrounding towns as far away as Pittsburgh.[34] Prior to that time, the congregation met in homes of members and rented halls around town for High Holiday services when attendance was higher. Construction of a synagogue held symbolic value for both the Jewish community and the larger town, representing both the permanence of a congregation as well as "creat[ing] a sense that Jews were part of a local town life."[35] Likewise, the synagogue was located close to the commercial center as many members of the Jewish community of Brownsville owned commercial and retail properties and maintained businesses along the primary downtown blocks of Market Street, which "reinforced the impression that Jewish [sic] were a pivotal group within the larger community."[36] The 1916 wood frame synagogue of Ohave Israel was destroyed by fire after just three years in 1919.[37]

The first rabbi of Ohave Israel, Julian Shapo, was born in "Russia" around 1882 and emigrated to Florida in 1902.[38] He was educated both at the Rabbinical School and Teachers' Seminary in Vilna, and at the University of Oregon.[39] Rabbi Shapo served as an itinerant rabbi for short periods of time for fledgling congregations around the country, including Uniontown, PA; Knoxville, TN; Key West, FL; Portland, OR; Newport, RI; Miami, FL, New Castle, PA; and New York, NY. It is unknown the exact dates he resided in Brownsville. Rabbi Shapo died in 1945 in Brooklyn, NY,[40] having "proven to be the inspiration of the spiritual development of the [Brownsville and presumably other] community"[41]

After the fire in 1919, the congregation immediately reconstructed their synagogue and the existing building of Temple Ohave Israel was dedicated in 1920. The brick building was designed by Andrew P. Cooper[42] of Uniontown in a simple revival style and constructed by Brownsville Construction Company for a cost of $50,000. [43] The 48 stained glass windows were designed and made by Pittsburgh Stained Glass Studios for a cost of $1,634.70.[44] The building

[34] "Dedication of Brownsville, PA Temple," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol 47, no. 3, September 8, 1916, 15.

[35] Weissbach, 180.

[36] Weissbach, 180.

[37] "Brownsville, PA., Jewry will Dedicate New Temple," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 55, no. 3, September 10, 1920, 118.

[38] United States of America, Bureau of the Census. *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1930, New Castle, Lawrence, Pennsylvania, Page: 21A, Enumeration District 32. Many Jews were simply listed in the U.S. census as having originated in Russia. What is more likely, however, is that they came from the Russian Pale of Settlement, territories of the Russian Empire in which Jews were permitted permanent settlement, which included much of present-day Lithuania, Belarus, Poland, Moldova, Ukraine, and parts of western Russia.

[39] "Brownsville Jewish Community," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 51, no. 9, July 4, 1919, 27.

[40] "Obituaries," *The Jewish Criterion*, November 2, 1945, page not available.

[41] "Brownsville Jewish Community," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 51, no. 9, July 4, 1919., 27

[42] While an article appearing in *The Jewish Criterion* in 1920 cites that Temple Ohave Israel was designed by N.P. Cooper of Uniontown, PA, the first initial was probably in error and the architect was likely Andrew P. Cooper of Uniontown, PA.

[43] "Brownsville, PA., Jewry will Dedicate New Temple," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 55, no. 3, September 10, 1920, 118.

[44] Pittsburgh Stained Glass Studios, Company archives, "Order Sheet," 1919. The company was founded in 1909 as Pittsburgh Art Glass Company in downtown Pittsburgh and moved to their current location at 160 Warden Street in Pittsburgh's West End in 1913. Order sheets for Temple Ohave Israel were made available by the company. With studios in Pittsburgh, PA,

contained a "vestry" that provided space for clubs to meet, as well as an auditorium in the basement that was used as a school, for lectures, and as a gymnasium in the evenings. While there were 45 member families when the synagogue was dedicated, it had a seating capacity of 300, including the balcony.[45] It was not uncommon for synagogues to construct buildings larger than they needed "suggesting both their optimism and their desire to make a statement about their place in the local religious culture."[46]

Andrew Cooper (1876-1919)[47] was born in Uniontown and it is not known where he received his architectural training, nor does he appear to have been a member of the American Institute of Architects. He was responsible for a number of buildings in Fayette and Washington Counties, including Gallatin School in Uniontown (1908, listed in the National Register in 1998), East End Grammar School (1907), Uniontown High School (1911, remodeled), Emma Peach Elementary School (1916, currently used for administrative offices),[48] Charleroi High School in Washington County (1919), the rectory for St. Nicholas Greek Catholic Church in Brownsville (1918),[49] the Morris Lynch Building in Uniontown (1907),[50] and Asbury United Methodist Church in Uniontown (dedicated 1919).[51] As Andrew Cooper died before Temple Ohave Israel was complete, construction was overseen by Emil R. Johnson, who had worked in his firm as a draftsman from 1908 to 1917 before becoming an associate.[52] A stained glass window memorial plaque in the synagogue is dedicated "in memory of Andrew P. Cooper, Architect."[53]

When Temple Ohave Israel was sold in 1979, there were only eight members left, all of whom signed the resolution to sell. United Citizens Group of Southwestern Pennsylvania purchased the building from the remaining eight members for $27,000.[54] A non-profit, church-related organization, United Citizen Group used the building for community outreach programs, such as food distribution. In the early 1980s, a former member of Temple Ohave Israel who had grown up at the synagogue, helped facilitate the relocation of the ark, Torah, and memorial plaques to

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Harrisburg, PA, and Columbus, OH, the company incorporated in 1925 as Pittsburgh Stained Glass Studios. Their most notable work is located at Langley Air Force Base Chapel, the Citadel Chapel, and J.F. Kennedy's Special Forces chapel at Ft. Bragg.

[45] "Brownsville, PA., Jewry will Dedicate New Temple," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 55, no. 3, September 10, 1920, 118.

[46] Weissbach, 18.

[47] "Find A Grave," <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=65191805>, site accessed July 13, 2015.

[48] Charles H. Uhl, "Gallatin School," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, form prepared March 14, 1998.

[49] The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, "Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Project," <http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display_projects.cfm/66542>, site accessed July 13, 2015.

[50] *The Brickbuilder*, vol. 16, no. 10, 1907, 191.

[51] "Asbury United Methodist Church - Uniontown, Pennsylvania," <http://asburyunitedmethodistch.org/History.html >, site accessed July 13, 2015.

[52] Sandra L. Tatman, The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, "Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Project," <http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display_projects.cfm/66542>, site accessed July 13, 2015.

[53] Pittsburgh Stained Glass Studios, Company archives, "Order Sheet," 1919.

[54] Fayette County Deeds, Book 1263, Page 488, August 1979.

Congregation Beth El in the South Hills neighborhood of Pittsburgh.[55] Current owners purchased the building in 1999 and have used it as a specialty store and café.[56]

Criterion A Significance for Social History

Not only did Temple Ohave Israel serve as the spiritual focus of the Jewish community by providing a location for worship, the building helped to cultivate and strengthen the community through Jewish education of the children and as a meeting place for Jewish social groups. The congregation was committed to the Jewish education of their children. Initially, Rabbi Levendorff made the 100 mile trip from New Castle, PA, every Sunday to teach at various children's homes until there were enough students to rent a hall.[57] Once Temple Ohave Israel was dedicated in 1920, religious school resumed under the supervision of Rabbi Shapo with five classes, each class with their own teacher, with a total of 85 students. Religious school met five days a week. Jewish educational institutions were often called Talmud Torah, describing a curriculum that included Torah study and Talmud, the generic term for documents that comment and expand upon rabbinic law. Hebrew language instruction was central to studying texts in their original language. Younger children were also instructed in Jewish liturgy, holidays and traditions. The religious school put on programs for the congregation for Jewish holidays, such as Chanukah and Purim.[58] By providing a Jewish education for their children, the congregation of Temple Ohave Israel emphasized a foundational Jewish principle of passing on traditions from one generation to the next and cultivating a Jewish identity in the younger generation.

One foundational Jewish principle taught at the synagogue's religious school and modeled by the congregation, was the tenet of "tzadakah," which has come to be translated as charity.[59] As the concept includes more than just donating money, it is closely related to the idea of "tikkun olam," which literally translates as "repairing the world." Congregants of Temple Ohave Israel engaged in acts of tzadakah, both within the congregation and within the larger Brownsville community. While it is not documented if the congregation of Temple Ohave Israel provided services to new arrivals, the synagogue provided a familiar space where congregants could speak a common language, whether that was German, Yiddish, Hungarian, or Hebrew. It was common in communities such as Brownsville for congregants to provide informal assistance to one another, which could have taken the form of an invitation to dine on Sabbath or holidays or monetary assistance to help with rituals around life events such as a bris (ritual circumcision at the birth of a boy), bar mitzvah (coming of age ceremony), marriage, or burial. Members of the Temple Ohave Israel community were also pillars of Brownsville's social fabric and supported

[55] Program notes, "Dedication of Leizer Balk-Ahavas Zedek Chapel," Beth El Congregation of the South Hills, June 12, 1983, Rauh Jewish Archives, Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, Senator John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center.

[56] "History and Information," <http://www.elmos.co/info.html>, site accessed July 27, 2015.

[57] "Brownsville, PA., Jewry will Dedicate New Temple," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 55, no. 3, September 10, 1920, 118.

[58] Purim is a joyous holiday celebrated in the early spring. The story of Purim is told in the Biblical book of Esther. Central to the synagogue celebration is an often humorous or satirical play recounting the story of Esther.

[59] The root of the Hebrew word translates as justice or righteousness.

other worthy projects, Jewish and non-Jewish, alongside their Brownsville neighbors; one congregant, Ruby Goldstein, served 16 years on the borough council.[60]

Temple Ohave Israel provided meeting space for the Hebrew Ladies' Aid Society, whose membership included approximately 98% of the Jewish women in Brownsville.[61] While not a national organization, it was common for American synagogues to have a women's group, more commonly called in contemporary synagogues "the Sisterhood," to support education of the children and philanthropic goals. ("There is no mission of mercy to which these faithful women do not lend themselves if it is worthy of their attention"[62]). The Brownsville Hebrew Ladies' Aid Society held regular meetings at Temple Ohave Israel on Wednesdays and hosted social gatherings to raise money for their activities. Fundraising missions changed with the need. In 1916, the women raised $853.67 for "war sufferers."[63] Later, their attention shifted to supporting "work in Palestine."[64] In addition to "looking after the charity of the poor and needy,"[65] the group "furnished and maintained a room in the Brownsville General Hospital."[66] Among their social activities was a "Dutch" supper followed by music and dancing,[67] a card party,[68] and annual fundraising banquets with speeches and "musical numbers."[69]

Other social groups that met in the "Vestry Room" of Temple Ohave Israel also served to cultivate and strengthen the Jewish community. These groups included the South Brownsville Jewish Boy Scout Troop #2;[70] the Co-ed Club, a gathering of Jewish young people organized around 1930;[71] the Young Men's Hebrew Association that held a dance at Temple Ohave Israel in 1927;[72] and the Brownsville Jewish Juniors.[73] By providing a meeting place, the synagogue encouraged gatherings of different ages of Jewish youth, thereby promoting socialization outside of religious services and religious school and further emphasizing and strengthening Jewish identity.

Context of Jewish settlement in Western Pennsylvania

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[60] Glenn Tunney, "Brownsville Time Capsule, Article #318," <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~glenntunneycolumn/capsule318.htm >, site accessed July 12, 2015.

[61] "Brownsville, PA., Jewry will Dedicate New Temple," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 55, no. 3, September 10, 1920, 118.

[62] "Brownsville Jewish Community," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 51, no. 9, July 4, 1919, 27.

[63] "Brownsville, PA., Raises Big Fund for War Sufferers," *The Jewish Criterion*, 1916, 7.

[64] "Our Neighboring Communities," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 58, no. 11, May 12, 1922, A.

[65] "Hebrew Ladies Aid Society of Brownsville," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 46, no. 29, March 17, 1916, 15.

[66] "Brownsville Society Celebrates Anniversary," *The American Jewish Outlook*, January 24, 1941, page not available.

[67] "Our Neighboring Communities," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 46, no. 29, March 17, 1916, 15.

[68] "Neighboring Communities," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 60, no. 12, December 1, 1922, 13.

[69] "Our Neighboring Communities," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 57, no. 1, February 24, 1922, A.

[70] Glenn Tunney, "Events in Brownsville's history," <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~glenntunneycolumn/Brownsville%20Time%20Line.htm>, site accessed July 13, 2015.

[71] Glenn Tunney, "Brownsville Time Capsule," <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~glenntunneycolumn/capsule4.htm>, site accessed July 5, 2015.

[72] "Brownsville Y.H.M.A," *The Evening Standard*, (Uniontown, Pennsylvania), July 26, 1927, 5.

[73] "Temple O'Have Israel plans Dancing-Cards," *The Morning Herald*, (Uniontown, Pennsylvania), October 10, 1932, 5.

Beginning in 1820 and continuing through 1924, an increasingly steady flow of Jews immigrated to America, culminating in a massive surge of immigrants in the beginning of the twentieth century. Initially, these Jews spoke German and emigrated from central and western Europe, propelled primarily by industrialization, overpopulation, and urbanization in their hometowns. Between 1820 and 1880, the Jewish population of the United States increased from 3,000 to 300,000. The number of Jewish immigrants exploded between 1881 and 1924 when over 2.5 million Jews emigrated from Eastern Europe, forced by persecution and lack of economic opportunity. This migration ended when restrictive laws limiting the number of immigrants were passed in 1921 and 1924.[74] The new immigrants moved to cities and towns where others from their extended families or villages of origin had settled. While German Jews tended to follow the new Reform denomination,[75] Eastern European Jews were more likely to be Orthodox. As German Jews were already established and many had entered the middle-class by the end of the nineteenth century, Reform Judaism was seen as a measure of Americanization.

As the largest city in Western Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh was the focal point of the Jewish community for Jews living in nearby small towns. It was also the earliest Jewish community established in the region. The Jewish community in Pittsburgh began to organize itself in 1847 when twelve men founded the Bes Almon (Mourner's House) Society and purchased a plot of land for $300 as a cemetery to bury two infants.[76] Congregation Shaare Shamayim (Gates of Heaven) was established a year later. When the railroad arrived in Pittsburgh in 1852, the city was firmly the center of the Jewish community in western Pennsylvania.[77] Interestingly, the Jewish population of Pittsburgh trailed behind many other cities of similar size, such as Cleveland and Milwaukee, likely due to the smoky air.[78] Though many Jews began as blue-collar workers, most established themselves as merchants, serving immigrant industrial workers with whom they shared common languages.[79]

At the same time that Jews were settling in Pittsburgh, German Jews set up dry goods stores in smaller western Pennsylvania towns catering to German speaking farmers. The first merchants in the 1840s stayed in one place for only short periods of time. By 1860, about 250 Jews were widely dispersed over western Pennsylvania outside of Pittsburgh, most operating dry goods or clothing stores. After the Civil War, the number of German Jews increased in small towns of

[74] The Immigration Act of 1924, also called the Johnson-Reed Act, superseded the 1921 Emergency Quota Act and limited the number of immigrants allowed entry into the United States through a national origins quota of two percent of the total number of people of each nationality in the United States as of the 1890 national census. (U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, "Milestones: 1921-1936," <http://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/ImmigrationAct>, site accessed June 25, 2015.)

[75] Reform Judaism started in Germany at the beginning of the nineteenth century as a means of adapting Judaism to modern times. Adaptations included changes to synagogue services to incorporate music, prayer in the local language rather than Hebrew, and mixed seating. More fundamentally, Reform Judaism renounced a return of Jews to Israel in a Messianic time and rejected the laws of Kashrut (dietary restrictions), family purity, and Shabbat.

[76] Feldman, 19. Orthodox ritual requires a minyan, or a quorum of 10 men over the age of 13 to perform Jewish rituals. It was common for Jewish communities to initially establish themselves in a new place by purchasing land for burial.

[77] Dianne Ashton, *Jewish Life in Pennsylvania* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania Historical Studies, The Pennsylvania History Association, 1998), 19.

[78] Feldman, 16 and 21.

[79] Edward L. Greenstein and Robert P. Tabak, eds, "Pennsylvania," *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 2nd Edition, *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0015_0_15550.html>, site accessed June 25, 2015.

western Pennsylvania outside of Pittsburgh. The men who moved to these towns were relatively young, in their 20s and 30s, and moved to improve their economic opportunities. As noted above, Eastern European Jewish immigration to the United States peaked between 1881 and 1924. Although most new immigrants settled in East Coast cities, some moved further west in search of economic opportunities. The Jewish communities in small towns outside of Pittsburgh convened in private homes as they were too few in number to support a synagogue building, sometimes too small to make a minyan, a quorum of ten men required for certain religious rituals. While most Jewish residents of the small towns were not stable and moved frequently, their total numbers remained fairly constant through the 1880s.[80]

Comparison to Other Jewish Communities in Fayette County

The Jewish Criterion, published in Pittsburgh between 1895 and 1962, knitted together the less populous Jewish communities around Pittsburgh.[81] Events occurring at these smaller Jewish communities, in counties surrounding Pittsburgh, including Fayette County, were reported in a section of *The Jewish Criterion* entitled "Our Neighboring Communities," indicating the fluidity between Jews in neighboring towns and attendance at each other's events. *The Jewish Criterion* reported on births, marriages, deaths, and even local and regional travel plans. It was common for marriages to be between people of neighboring towns, as was the case of Mary Alswanger of Monongahela to S/Sgt. I. Zelkovitz of West Brownsville in 1945.[82] It was common for families and commerce to move back and forth between the smaller towns, assisted by the ease of rail travel as noted above.

Unlike larger cities, synagogues in small towns like Brownsville were integral to preserving cultural identity. Historian Lee Shai Weissbach notes that "even Jews who did not have strongly held religious convictions were inclined to affiliate with local congregations."[83] This observation is also made in an article appearing in *The Jewish Criterion* that reported in "small communities… we find far more activity and a wider interest in Jewish affairs than is often discovered to our notice in communities of much larger size."[84] Larger communities often provided services to smaller communities, such as a kosher butcher (shochet), contributing to the fluidity between Jewish communities.

Temple Ohave Israel is one of only a few synagogue buildings in Fayette County remaining. What sets Brownsville's Jewish community apart from surrounding small towns, though, is that while the Jewish community was small, relative to the larger population, their influence within Brownsville was significant. Placing their synagogue close to the commercial core, rather than in a more residential neighborhood, distinguished the Jewish community to the town.

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[80] Feldman, 58.

[81] *The Jewish Criterion* has been digitized by the The Pittsburgh Jewish Newspaper Project, a partnership of Carnegie Mellon University Libraries, the Rauh Jewish Archives and the Rodef Shalom Congregation Archives. The digital archives are searchable at http://digitalcollections.library.cmu.edu/pjn/index.jsp.

[82] "Weddings," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 106, no. 1, May 4, 1945, 14.

[83] Weissbach, 157.

[84] *Jewish Criterion*, vol. 51, no. 21, July 18, 1918, 1.

Uniontown, approximately 15 miles southeast of Brownsville, had the largest Jewish community in Fayette County. The Orthodox Tree of Life synagogue of Uniontown was chartered in 1901 while the Reform Temple Israel of Uniontown was chartered in 1903 with seven Germans, seven Lithuanians, and four Hungarians.[85] Even with Jews from Connellsville making the approximately ten-mile trip to attend, the congregation of Temple Israel never grew to be more than 50 families. In contrast, the Tree of Life synagogue grew to 250 families by the 1920s and constructed a new building in 1922 on Pennsylvania Avenue.[86] Like Temple Ohave Israel, the Tree of Life synagogue had a Ladies Auxiliary that raised money for their activities through card evenings[87] and benefit dances.[88]

Other towns in Fayette County had much smaller Jewish communities than Brownsville, but their synagogues served a similar role of Temple Ohave Israel to provide spiritual, educational, and social focus to those towns' Jewish communities. Beth El Congregation of Masontown, 14 miles south of Brownsville, received a charter in 1924, but never grew to over 90 Jews.[89] The women of Beth El organized a Ladies' Auxiliary even before construction of their synagogue.[90] The Jewish community donated their rather plain, brick building at 9 South Washington Street to the German-Masontown Public Library in 1957.[91] While some Jews from Connellsville traveled to Uniontown, B'nai Israel in Connellsville received a charter in 1897.[92]

The Jewish population in Donora, 13 miles north of Brownsville, peaked in the mid-1920s at approximately 800[93] with Ohav Shalom Synagogue at Third Street as the religious and cultural center. The synagogue building, which opened in 1912, was designed in a Byzantine Revival style.[94] The mostly Hungarian Jewish immigrants stayed in Donora "despite the severe pollution from the zinc mill and resulting discomfort or illness many residents endured."[95] The Jewish community of Washington, PA, 24 miles from Brownsville in Washington County, was composed mostly of Lithuanians, who established Beth Israel Synagogue in 1891. Rabbi Jacob Goldfarb ministered to the congregation for over 50 years. While the congregation still exists, their current building was constructed in 1955.[96]

Representing a high proportion of business owners in Brownsville, the Jewish community created a sense of permanence in the city through their synagogue building, as well as

[85] Feldman, 200.

[86] The congregation continued to worship in the building until 2014. However, due to the dwindling and aging congregation, the building was put up for sale. Joyce Koballa, "Uniontown Synagogue Building Hits Market," *Herald-Standard*, July 25, 2014.

[87] "Bridge and Whist," *The Morning Herald,* (Uniontown, Pennsylvania), March 28, 1922, 5.

[88] "Auxiliary Dance," *The Morning Herald*, (Uniontown, Pennsylvania), October 20, 1924, 5.

[89] Feldman, 201.

[90] "Our Neighboring Communities," *The Jewish Criterion*, vol. 57, no. 1, February 24, 1922, A.

[91] Marshall J. Katz, "Beth El Religious Life," <http://archive-org.com/page/5536052/2015-03-08/http://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/Masontown/Masontown-Religious.htm>, site accessed July 13, 2015.

[92] Harry Schneiderman, ed., *American Jewish Year Book*, vol. 21, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1919), 540.

[93] Weissbach, 346.

[94] This building, located at the corner of Thompson Avenue and 2nd Street, is still extant.

[95] Feldman, 198.

[96] Marilyn A. Posner, "About Beth Israel," <http://mybethisrael.com/>, site accessed July 13, 2015.

demonstrating their influence by constructing an imposing brick building. Though not a very large building or an overly architecturally stylistic one, Temple Ohave Israel stands out among synagogue buildings in surrounding communities as a testament to the Jewish community of Brownsville. Although the building is currently occupied by a commercial venture, past and current owners have maintained the integrity of the building, allowing it to continue to read as a synagogue.

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Tunney, Glen. "Timeline: Events in Brownsville's history." <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~glenntunneycolumn/Brownsville%20Time%20Line.htm>, site accessed July 13, 2015.

Uhl, Charles H. "Gallatin School," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. On file at Bureau for Historic Preservation, Harrisburg, PA.

United States Bureau of the Census. *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910*. Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1910.

United States Bureau of the Census. *Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920*. Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1920.

United States Bureau of the Census. *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1930.

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Weissbach, Lee Shai. *Jewish Life in Small Town America: A History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
____ previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:
____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): ____N/A_____

---

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre_____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 40.020510 Longitude: -79.890407

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The land referred to herein is situated in Fayette County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and is described as follows:

Parcel ID 02-07-0150 in Brownsville Borough as recorded by the Fayette County Assessment Office, Uniontown, PA.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with Temple Ohave Israel.

---

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jenna Snow
organization:
street & number: PO Box 352297
city or town: Los Angeles state: CA zip code: 90035
e-mail jenna@preservingbuildings.com
telephone: 323-317-3297
date: July 29, 2015

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)
  Sanborn Fire Insurance maps (1949 and 1962)
  Pittsburgh Art Glass Company order sheet

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Temple Ohave Israel

City or Vicinity: Brownsville Borough

County: Fayette State: PA

Photographer: Shauna Benz-Patterson

Date Photographed: June 29, 2014 (Photos 5, 15-16, 18)
July 5, 2014 (Photos 1-3, 6-7, 9-12, 14, 25-30, 32, 34)
August 5, 2014 (Photos 17, 19, 21, 23, 24)
August 13, 2014 (4, 8, 13, 20, 22, 31, 33)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0001
South façade, view north

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0002
South façade, view northwest

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0003
South façade, view north, detail of entry portal

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0004
Southeast corner, view northwest, detail of cornerstone

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0005
South façade, view north, detail of entry portico

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0006
East elevation, view north

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0007
East elevation, view south

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0008
East elevation, view north, detail of exterior stairs to basement

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_009
North elevation, view south

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0010
North elevation (left) and west elevation (right), view southeast

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0011
East elevation, view southwest, detail of cornice at northeast corner

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0012
West elevation, view east

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0013
West elevation, view northeast, detail of stairs along elevation

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0014
Interior, lobby, main entrance at south façade, view southwest

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0015
Interior, lobby, entrance to sanctuary, view north

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0016
Interior, lobby, stairs to balcony, view west

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0017
Interior, lobby, view east

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0018
Interior, sanctuary, view north

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0019
Interior, sanctuary, view northeast from under balcony

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0020
Interior, sanctuary, view north

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0021
Interior, sanctuary, view south

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0022
Interior, sanctuary, view south toward lobby

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0023
Interior, sanctuary, view south, note brick wainscoting

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0024
Interior, sanctuary, view west, note brick proscenium arch

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0025
Interior, sanctuary, view northeast from balcony

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0026
Interior, sanctuary, view south, detail of stained glass window above pedimented main entry

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0027
Interior, sanctuary, view northwest from balcony

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0028
Interior, sanctuary, view northeast from balcony

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0029
Interior, sanctuary, view northeast from balcony, note pews

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0030
Interior, sanctuary, view north

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0031
Interior, basement social hall, view north

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0032
Interior, basement social hall, view southeast

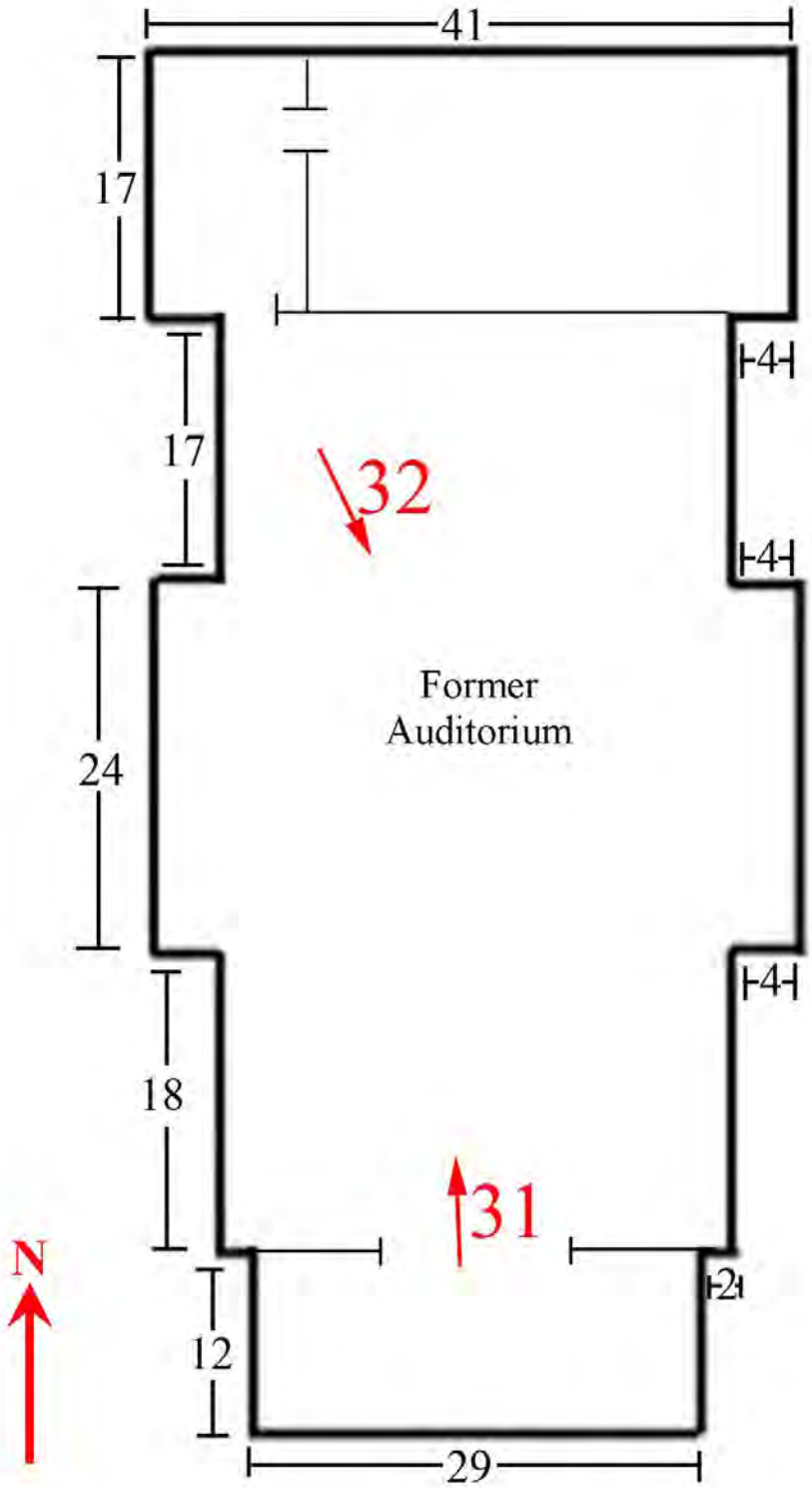
PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0033
Interior, north section first floor, view east from study to corridor

PA_FayetteCounty_TempleOHaveIsrael_0034
Interior, north section first floor, view southwest of corridor

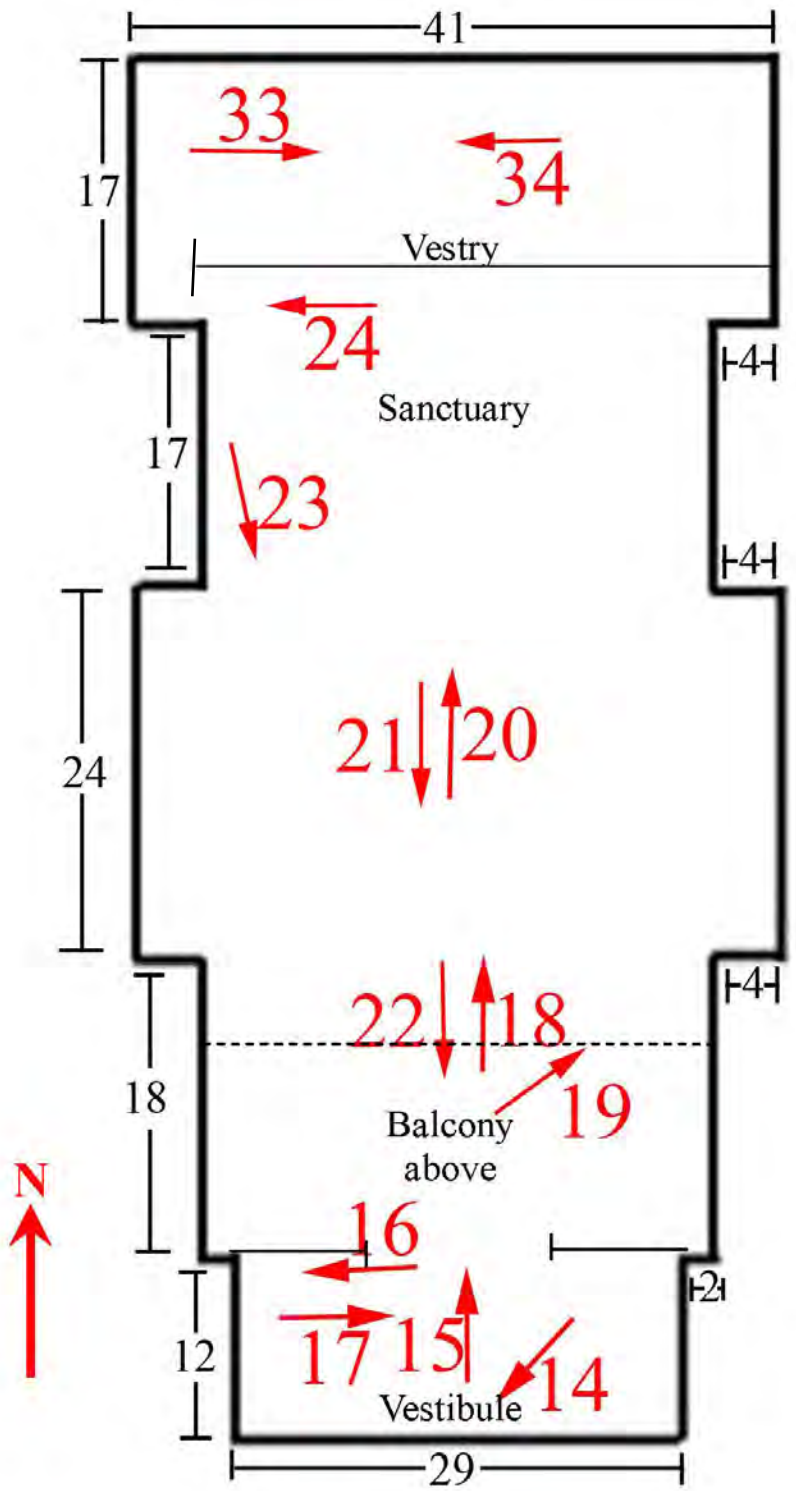
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Temple Ohave Israel Site Plan

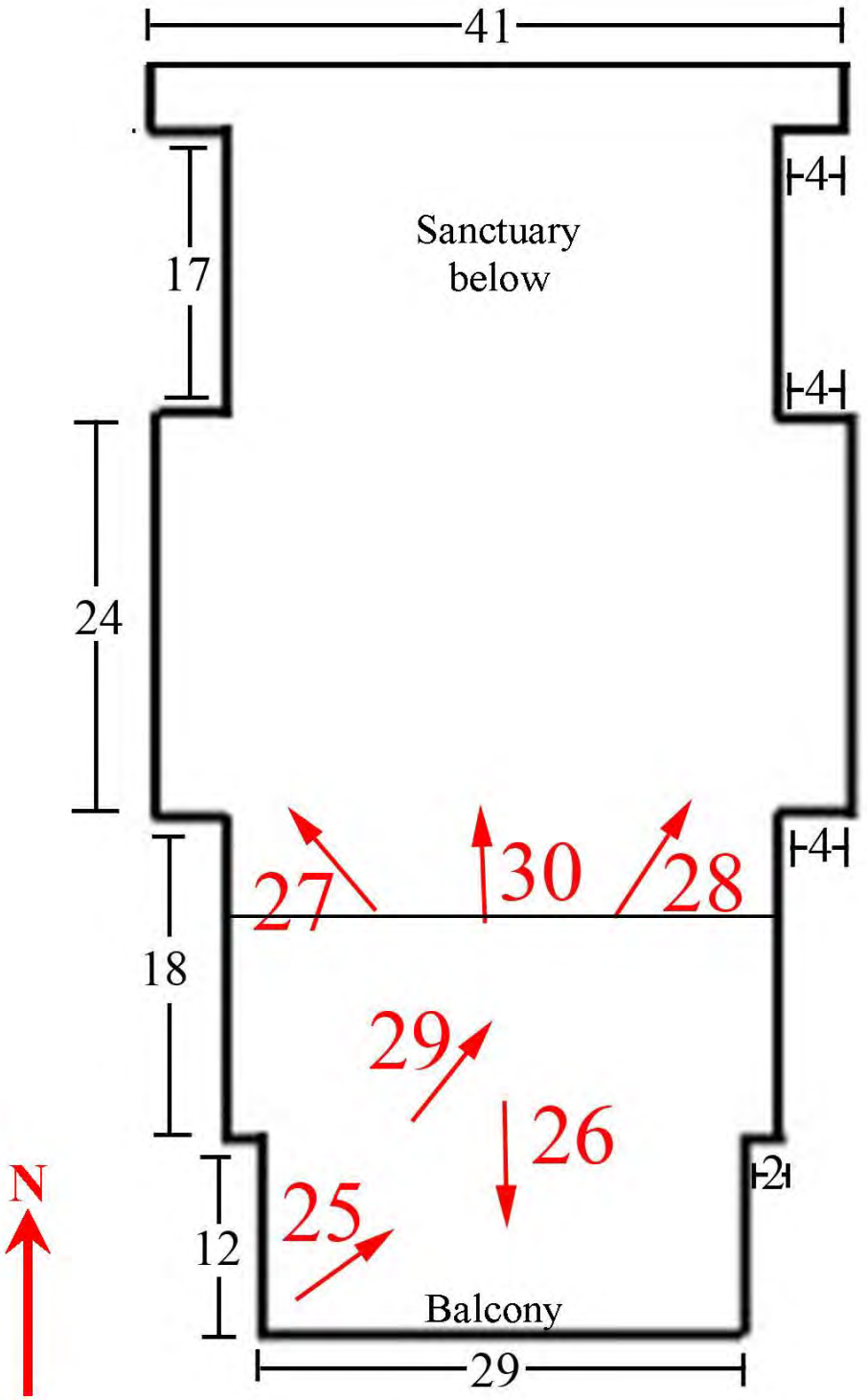
Temple Ohave Israel Photo Site Plan (National Register Boundary in Yellow).



Temple Ohave Israel Basement Floor Plan



Temple Ohave Israel First Floor Plan



Temple Ohave Israel Balcony Floor Plan

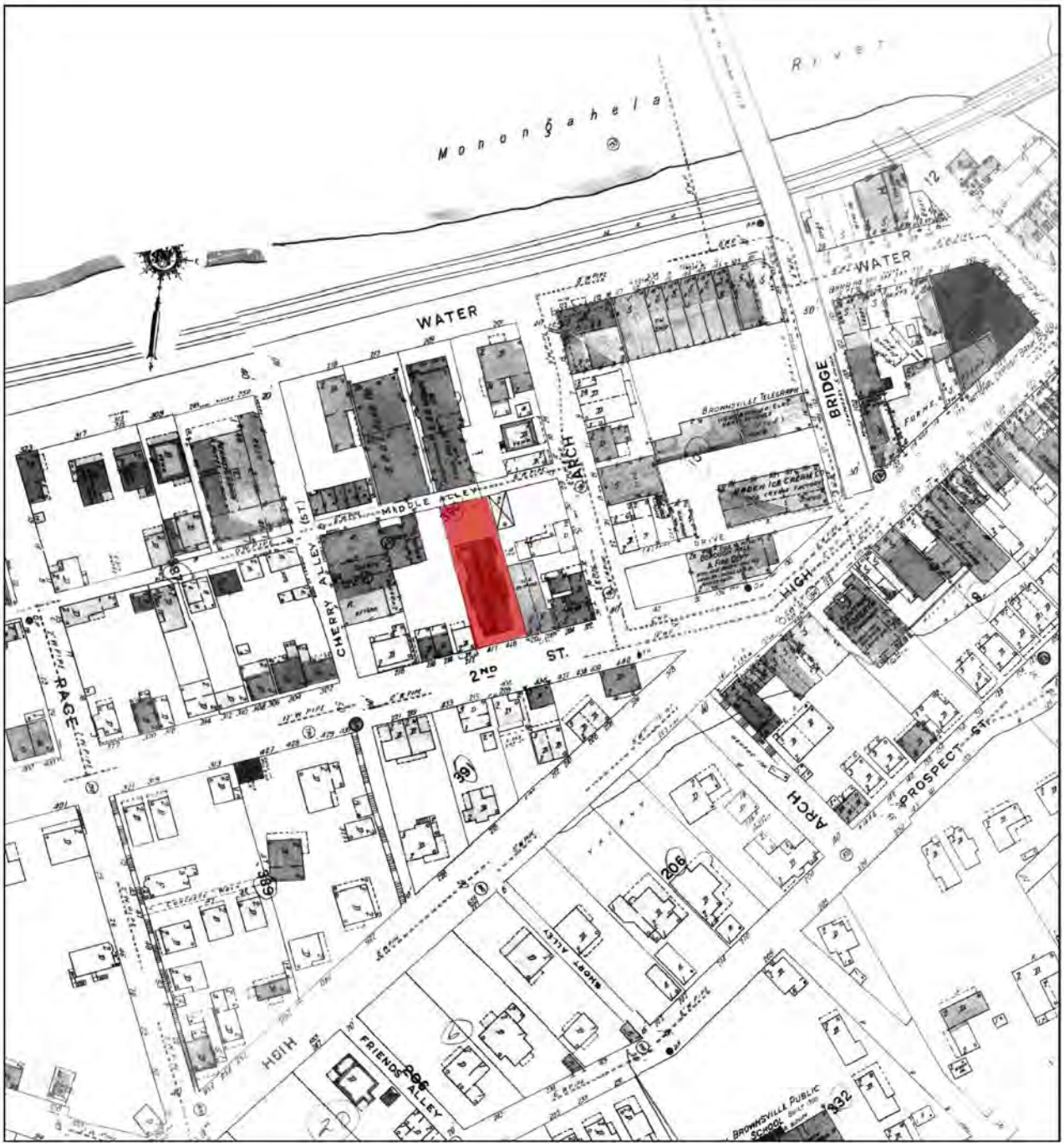


Figure 1: 1949 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Temple Ohave Israel highlighted in red.

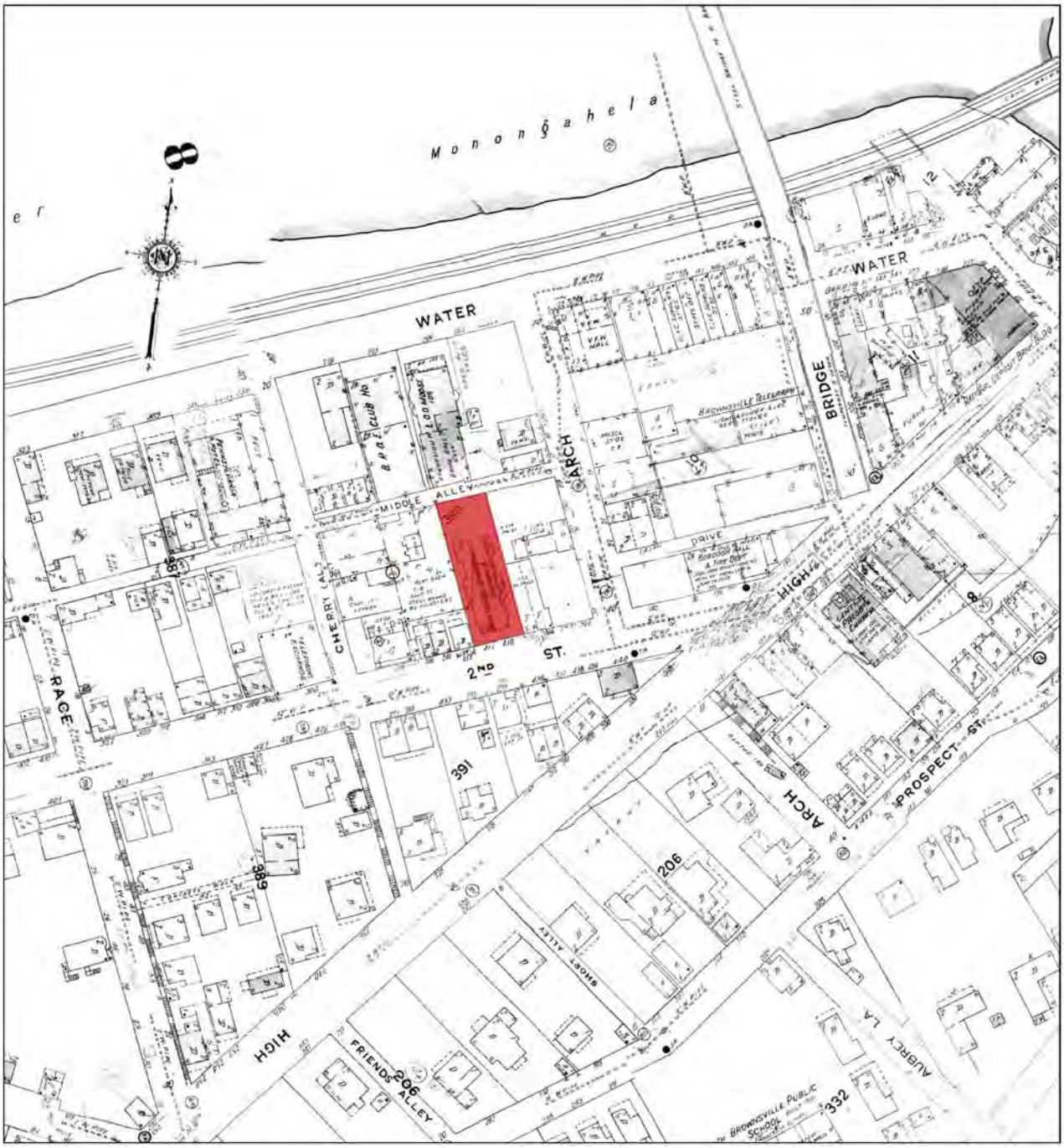


Figure 2: 1962 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Temple Ohave Israel highlighted in red.

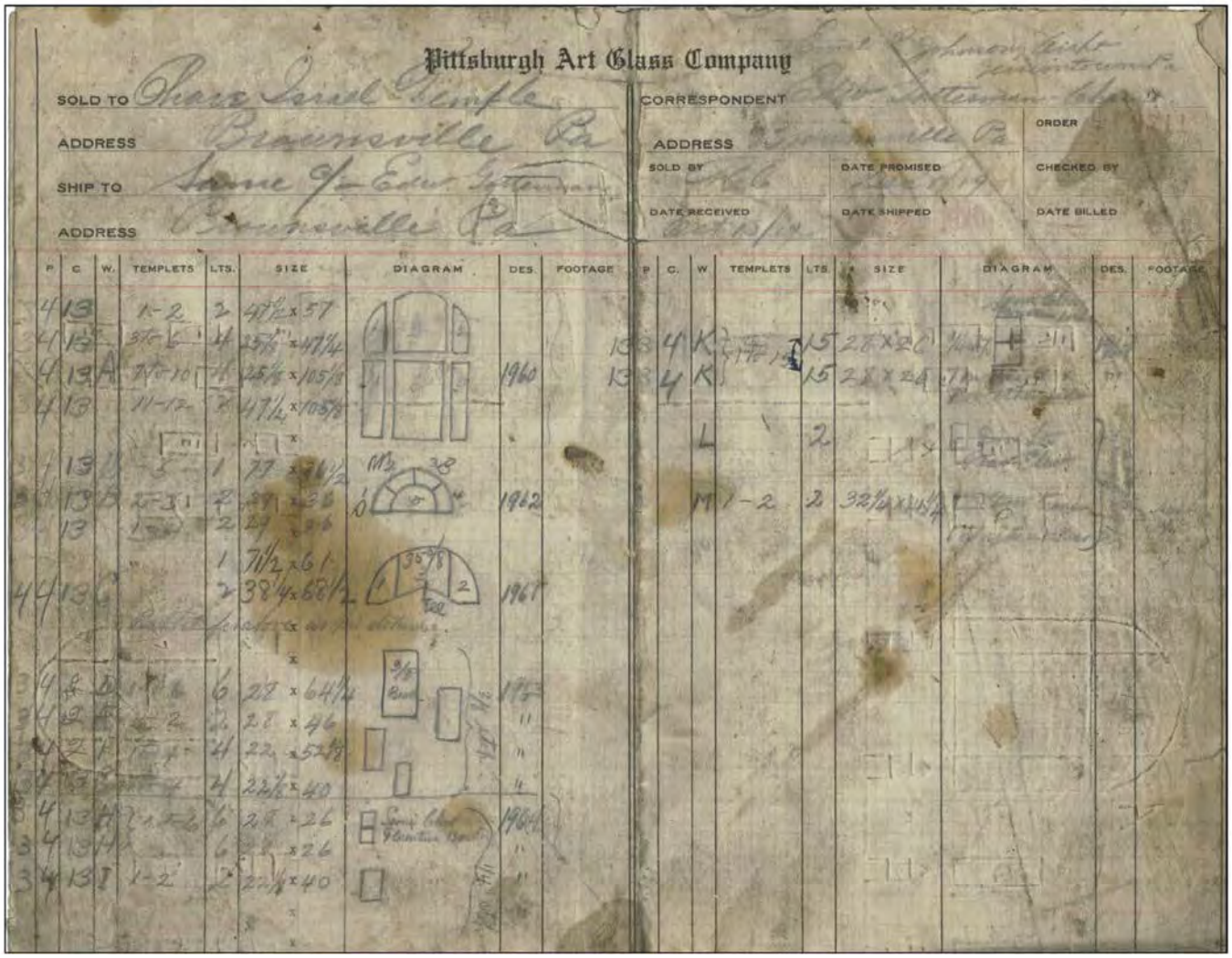


Figure 3: Front of order sheet from Pittsburgh Art Glass Company (now Pittsburgh Stained Glass Studio).

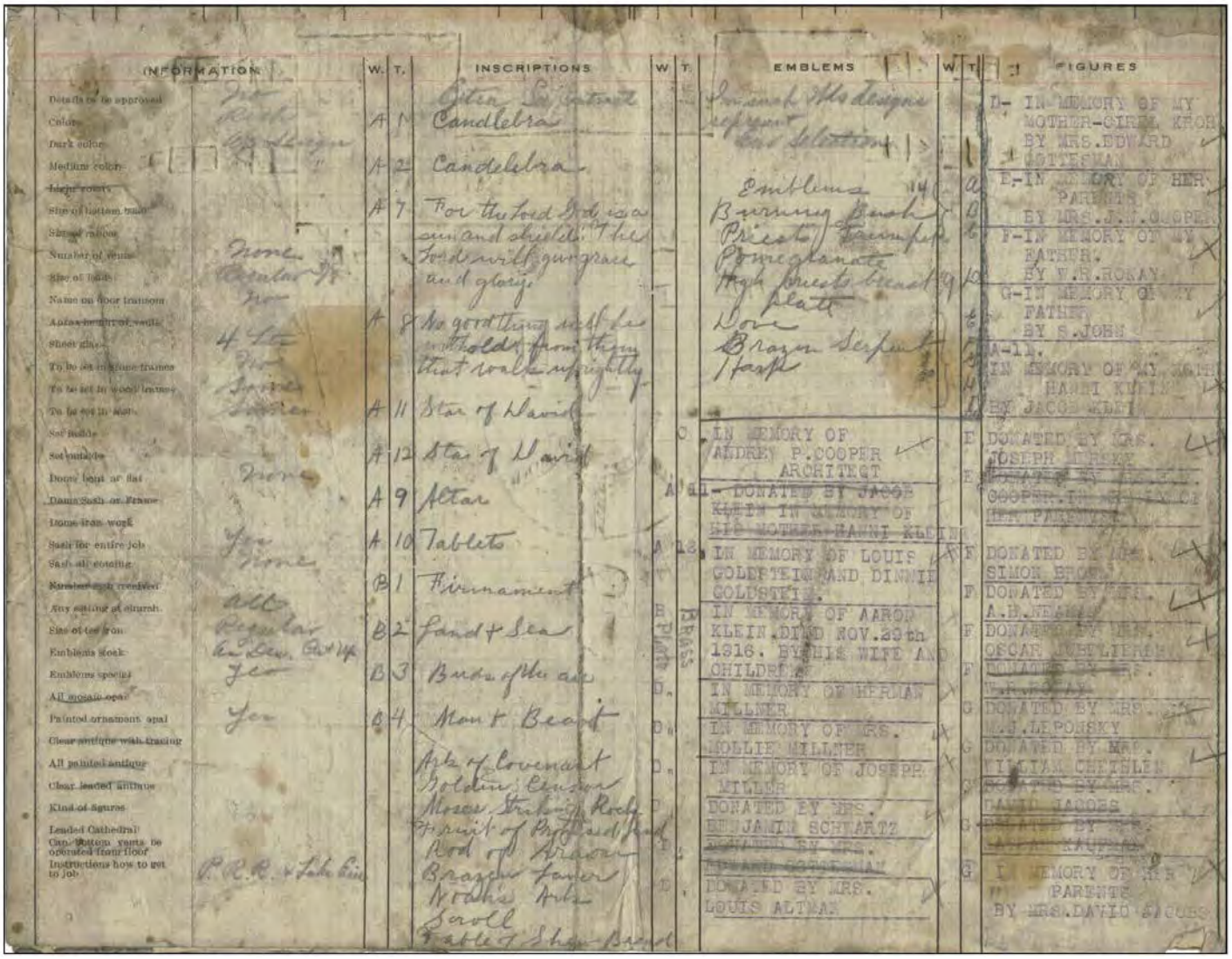
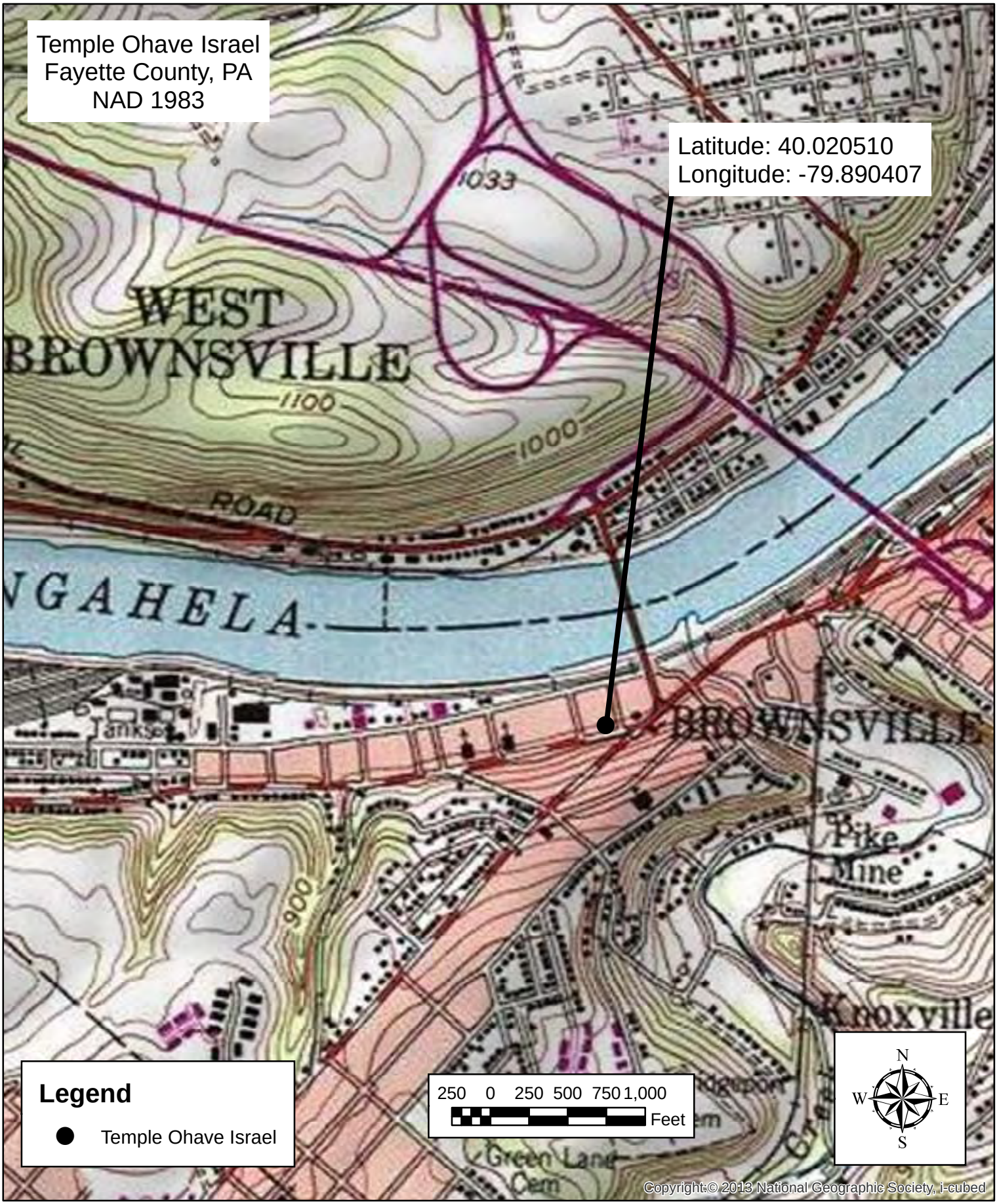


Figure 4: Back of order sheet from Pittsburgh Art Glass Company (now Pittsburgh Stained Glass Studio).


Temple Ohave Israel
Fayette County, PA
NAD 1983
Latitude: 40.020510
Longitude: -79.890407
WEST
BROWNSVILLE
1033
1100
1000
ROAD
NGAHELA
BROWNSVILLE
Pike
Mine
900
Knoxville
Green Lane
Cem
Legend
Temple Ohave Israel
250 0 250 500 750 1,000
Feet
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S
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אהל ישראל

אהב ישראל

אוהב ישראל

1919

אורחב ישראל

elmo's
1919

GUARD
protection
1-800-PROTE

DOUBLE WIDE

TCL
ASUS
LG
COOLER MASTER
acer

ThinkCentre
lenovo
ThinkCentre
lenovo
ThinkCentre
ThinkCentre
UTILITECH
ASUS
COLOR LASERJET PRO MFP M177fw
M177fw

ASUS
EZ N Ro

EXIT
CAUTION

Heineken
DO NOT CUT!