

TRAUB DESIGN ASSOCIATES

Complete Museum Exhibit Design Services

"TO LIVE AND BE WELL: THE HISTORY OF JEWISH HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES IN PITTSBURGH"

Senator John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center, Pittsburgh, PA

(Completed while Don Traub was Director of Exhibits at the Senator John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center.)



PROJECT OVERVIEW:

"Live and be well", both a friendly parting comment and a charge for social responsibility found in the sacred scriptures of the Hebrew Torah, served as both the exhibit title and the focus of the exhibit. Deeply rooted in the Jewish tradition of caring for family and relatives, one also cared for his neighbor regardless of race, nationality or religion. The historic Jewish community of Pittsburgh established medical and social services that are the foundation of many present day institutions and services. Pioneering programs included establishment of a Jewish hospital with an open admissions policy; day care facilities for both well and sick children which included instruction in personal hygiene and provided healthy meals; and the first health insurance plan.

The story of the local Jewish community's reaction to racial and religious discrimination in the later part of the 19th and early 20th century, was so strong it was determined that the exhibit should be designed to travel throughout the region. Archival records of early Jewish organizations that sponsored the health and social reform activities were the primary historical resource for the exhibit. Those records were supplemented with oral histories, photographs, diaries, newspaper accounts and magazine advertising. In spite of a collecting initiative the exhibit did not include any objects, as the curators were unable to locate any objects of appropriate size that could travel with the exhibit.

In order to bring the stories and the exhibits to life, Don enlarged historic photographs of Jewish reformers and some of the children who benefited from the services, and distributed the life-size photographic cutouts throughout the exhibit. Oral history audio clips from the people who had participated in those social programs were also included.

The exhibit's sponsor required the exhibit to travel which mandated the following design guidelines: the exhibit's physical elements must be easily dismantled and packed for moving by two men into a mid-size truck; the layout of the exhibit must be flexible in order to adapt to various venues; and the construction materials and graphics must be both light weight and durable.



PROJECT DATE: 1996

EXHIBITION SIZE: 4000 sq. ft.

SERVICES RENDERED:

- Exhibit Planning & Programming
- Collection Acquisition
- Exhibit Design
- Project Management

DELIVERABLES:

- Exhibit Budget & Schedule
- Preliminary & Final Design Drawings
- Construction Drawings
- Maintenance Manual

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