

Trent D. Pendley was born in Chicago and grew up in Hammond, Indiana in the same neighborhood where his parents had spent their childhoods. The family moved to Crown Point when Trent was nine. Trent is an Alumni of Indiana University, Bloomington where he majored in Political Science and history. He also had taken Jewish Studies courses every semester when in Bloomington. He was also an IU Overseas studies student at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1977. With the intent of law school in Arizona he moved to Phoenix but got into the fine jewelry business in which he remained for over 40 years.

Trent D Pendley has a love of preserving the history of the Jewish people. Trent not only has a deep commitment to preserve Indiana Jewish history, but also to educate others when given the opportunity. He is considered the "go to" person whenever someone is trying to learn about anything related to Jewish history of Northwest Indiana. Trent has been a dynamic researcher, passionate collector, and record keeper, and has taken the mission of the Indiana Jewish Historical Society to heart since becoming a member when he was a teenager.

Returning home to Indiana in 1978, Trent participated with the UJA's Young Leadership & Development Tour to Washington, D.C., where he participated in a silent protest outside the Soviet embassy, partook in a larger human rights demonstration at the Lincoln Memorial, and lobbied United States Senators Birch Bayh and Richard Lugar with a large delegation of Hoosiers to lobby against the sale of American F-16 fighter jets to Saudi Arabia. He had been a breakfast guest of US Congressman Adam Benjamin in the US Capitol private dining room and took a tour of the Supreme Court and its Declaration of Independence display.

Back home in Indiana Trent's conference course on the Calumet Region with the late Grammy nominee, bestselling author, and co-founder of the Calumet Regional Archives in Gary, Professor Ronald D Cohen, saw him writing a ten page paper on Hammond's Jewish community in the 1950s. Trent, already a member of the IJHS for several years and aware there was no comprehensive history of the Jewish communities in Northwest Indiana, began a three-year study of devouring every book published on Northwest Indiana, scouring for Jewish references. This resulted in a 100-page paper on several communities and with an extensive bibliography.

In 1996, Trent took the reins of the Greater Crown Point Chamber of Commerce's Walking Tour Committee, instructing how to collect data and coining the name, *The First Walk*. This historical/folkloric walking tour of Crown Point's South Court Street including Ruffle Shirt Hill and 80 houses, he wanted to author, so the town would have a more cosmopolitan view and not regurgitating the same lily-white history. Two houses once occupied by Jewish merchants were therefore included. For one of these families, Trent saw to a medallion affixed to a lamppost, a proclamation from the mayor and several generations of the Winer family gathering in 2009 at their Patriarch's factory and their Matriarch's grand home. Trent discovered a long-lost novel thought to be folklore when researching *The First Walk* and when he discovered a rare copy in Houston, he turned that into a public relations bonanza for the town and gave two public readings of the novel. The book has since been turned into a play.

Trent continued his contributions to the archives of the IJHS and by 2000 began working on an inventory of every known Jewish community in Indiana. He saw a void in the organization's mission after it deeded its collection of 4000 papers to the safety of the vaults in the Indiana Historical Society and a skip in their publications of *Indiana Jewish History*. Seeing a map of Indiana that had been produced to note idiosyncrasies of the various historical marker sites around the state, he thought a Jewish map might be an educational tool. Alas, within an hour of adding notes to the map it became overwhelming and unless you had a computer map, the map wasn't possible. Trent's *Mapping Project* continued creating an inventory of Jewish connections county by county. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources and their Historic Preservation and Archaeology Department got wind of Trent's project, and this became the foundation to their *Jewish Heritage Initiative*. The IJHS is listed as a contributor. The late Jewish studies professor Irving Katz whom Trent had studied with at IU Bloomington called and asked him to join the IJHS Board of Directors. He accepted, and then held the Vice President's position and Presidency for seven terms.

From 2002 – 2005, Trent was on a *Cultural Connections* committee that put together three annual shows on the diversity of culture in Northwest Indiana. He built three displays that were each visited by over 10,000 guests at the Indiana Visitors Center in Hammond along the Frank Borman Expressway, each with a different theme. The first an overview of the local Jewish histories, from a

photograph of the first antebellum congregation and their temple in La Porte, IN to photographs of swastikas that defaced Hammond 's largest congregation in recent years. The second exhibit were influences the American Jewish community had on culture in the United States: fashion, cosmetics, literature, and jewelry designs, and the local factories that created American fashion icons and that introduced Estee Lauder cosmetics and the Nobel Prize winners and Pulitzer Prize winners that were raised in Gary. The last exhibit introduced forty local women through the generations that improved the quality of life.

In 2015 Trent nudged the Brauer Museum of Art at Valparaiso University to host a retrospective on the late artist and IJHS Honorary Board member Hermann Gurfinkel. Trent put together PowerPoint presentations for the confirmation classes at Temple Israel in Valparaiso. The Indiana History lessons, the students told him, were the best classes they'd ever experienced.

As a Pandemic project, Trent began filling in biographical information with photographs through the website *Find-A-Grave* for the hundreds of Jewish graves in Portage, IN and the burial grounds for the two Jewish congregations in Gary, IN. This is an ongoing project, with Temple Israel Cemetery now completed, and beginning the 1,400 graves in the neighboring Temple Beth El Cemetery. Trent hopes this project becomes a prototype for many Indiana Jewish cemeteries or perhaps a class for Hoosier Jewish religious school students.

When future generations, scholars and non-scholars, seek to explore our history, they will find valuable resources in the work of Trent D. Pendley. It's individuals like Trent that will allow our faith and culture to be preserved well beyond our living years.