



Family of Strangers

Howard Droker, Jacqueline B. Williams

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Family of Strangers draws on hundreds of newspaper accounts, articles, and oral histories to provide the first comprehensive account of Washington State's Jewish residents. The first Jewish immigrants came in a small trickle during the middle of the nineteenth century, and then in larger numbers during the open-door era that stretched to 1924. They included Ashkenazim primarily from the cities, towns, and shtetls of central and eastern Europe and Sephardim from the Mediterranean Basin. Followed by European Jews fleeing persecution by the Nazis and discrimination by the Soviet Union, they grew in number with the arrival of American Jews who were part of the great westward movement in the postwar era. Isolated from the large centers of American Jewish life, speaking different languages -- German, Yiddish, Ladino, and others -- and following different religious customs, initially these groups had little in common other than their identification as Jews. Yet they succeeded in developing a community whose members made notable contributions to the civic and cultural history of Washington State. Regional politics, lively neighborhood histories, local responses to the plight of Europe's Jews during World War II, commercial and business enterprises, detailed histories of congregations, organizational philanthropy and social work, and the contributions of Washington's Jewish musicians and artists are presented in this generously illustrated book, often through the voices of those who took part. The vibrant life stories of dozens of notable local individuals are embedded in the overall context of how the Jews of Washington State organized a group of complementary and thriving cultural and religious communities. Molly Cone is the award-winning author of more than forty books for young readers. A native of Tacoma, she counts five generations of her and her husband's families born in Washington State. Lawyer and historian Howard Droker is the author of Seattle's Unsinkable Houseboats and numerous articles on Seattle's early Jews. Jacqueline Williams, also an award winner, is author of Wagon Wheel Kitchens, The Way We Ate, and The Hill with a Future: Seattle's Capitol Hill 1900-1946, and lectures widely about pioneer life in the Pacific Northwest. All three authors live in Seattle.

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Carrie Wilson:

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