ROSENBAUM, Samuel

RIHER 3-97

Samuel Rosenbaum, 77, Long-Time Head of Cantors Assembly, Dies

A graveside service for Hazzan Samuel Rosenbaum, 77, a noted Yiddish poet and writer and longtime executive vice president of the Cantors Assembly, was held March 26 at Wellwood Cemetery, Farmingdale, L.I.

He died March 23 in Rochester, N.Y., where he had served as cantor of Temple Beth El from 1946 until his retirement in 1987. Since then, he was cantor emeritus. The cause was heart failure, according to his son, Michael.

Officiating at the service were Hazzan Abraham Shapiro, executive administrator of the Cantors Assembly; Dr. Abraham Karp, professor of history at the University of Rochester, who served as rabbi of Temple Beth El from 1956–1972; and Hazzan Martin Leubitz, current cantor at the Rochester synagogue.

Since 1959, Rosenbaum served as the professional head of the 450-member Cantors Assembly — the world's largest body of hazzanim — after completing a three-year term as its president. He was one of 10 cantors who founded the group in 1947. During his tenure, he developed a series of innovative programs that spurred the organization's growth and development, and was a major force in elevating the position and role of the cantor in Jewish worship and in gaining official government recognition of the cantor's status as a clergyperson.

A prolific author and composer, he wrote four textbooks that are widely used in Jewish religious schools throughout the country: *A Guide to Haftarah Chanting, To Live as Jew, Sing a Song of Israel* and *Sabbath Festival Songs for the Young Singer.* He was also the author of *A Yiddish Word Book for English-Speaking People,* the world's only Yiddish word book that transliterates Yiddish into English.

In addition, he was the librettist of more than a dozen major musical works presented on radio and television, among them "Yizkor: in Memory of the Six Million," an oratorio that was

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esented on ABC television; tars in the Dust," a commemo- ive composition on the 50th niversary of Krystallnacht; ver Since Babylon," marking e 500th anniversary of the pulsion of the Jews from Spain d Columbus' first voyage to e New World; and four holi- y records, which he also nar- ted: "The Birthday of the 'orld," a New Year celebration; To Freedom," a Passover salute: Let There Be Light," words and usic for Chanukah, and "A anctity of Time," songs and ords for the Sabbath.

He served as editor of the antors Assembly's *Journal of Synagogue Music* and as a consultant to the Prayer Book Press. At the time of his death, he was in the midst of writing a major commentary to the High Holiday prayer book titled, "Machzor 101."

Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., he earned a B.A. degree from New York University and was a graduate of the Herzliah Teachers Academy. He studied music and voice privately and prepared for the cantorate under the tutelage of Cantors Jacob Beimel and Adolph Katchko. After serving in the U.S. Army from 1942–1946, he joined Temple Beth El of Rochester as its cantor — the first and only pulpit he ever held.

He leaves a wife, the former Ina C. Levi, and three grown children: sons Michael of New York and David of Los Angeles, a daughter, Judith Witt, of Evanston, Ill., and three grandchildren.