

HARBIN SYNAGOGUE RESTORATION PROJECT

中国哈尔滨犹太老会堂将再现百年前风貌

Dear Former Residents of Harbin and Their Descendants,

It gives me a great pleasure to inform you of the Harbin Municipal Government decision to reconstruct and renovate the Harbin Main (Old) Synagogue and the Jewish Secondary School next to it, as well as two other buildings and a large square that together form a block in the heart of historical Harbin.

The Harbin Municipal Government has invested more than 80 million Yuan RMB for the project. About 40 million Yuan RMB were already spent on relocating residents from 4 nearby apartment buildings, and leveling the structures to give way for the square that is situated at the center of the block.

The other 40 million Yuan RMB are being used for the reconstruction and renovation works.

In February 2013, the Harbin City Government decided to return the Harbin Main (Old) Jewish Synagogue to its original early 20th century appearance – both exterior and interior.

Unfortunately, we were unable to find the original construction and design blueprints of the synagogue. Moreover, I was able to locate just few photographs, mainly of the exterior of the building, and several of the interior.

As works on the project have already started and the architects are working on the design, we are in urgent (!!!) need of any information, including architectural drawings, pictures of the interior (of the different halls and communal rooms), diaries, letters, and or other data you may have in your hands (family albums, memorabilia, or any other sources) that may shed light on the interior look of the synagogue.

I urge all of you to spare no effort in trying to find anything that may be of help to us return the Harbin Jewish heritage to its glorious days.

Please scan your materials and send all information to me URGENTLY and AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

Please pass this information to all your family members, friends and anyone you know who had roots in Harbin.

With much gratitude,

Professor Dan Ben-Canaan

Member and Advisor,
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