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Contact: Anna Farneski; [afarnesk@ramapo.edu](mailto:afarnesk@ramapo.edu)

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**AUTHOR TO DISCUSS THE BARNERT FAMILY OF PATERSON AND  
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AT RAMAPO COLLEGE**

(MAHWAH, NJ) – Cipora O. Schwartz, author and local historian, will speak at Ramapo College of New Jersey in February under the auspices of the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies and the History Club of Ramapo College.

“American religious freedom enabled everyone in this country to worship — or not worship,” wrote Schwartz about her book “An American Jewish Odyssey: American Religious Freedom and the Nathan Barnert Temple,” published by Ktav Publishing. “I’m just using Barnert [Temple] as an example of the trajectory taken by one group of people.”

The book, which took the long-time congregant eight years to write, was published in honor of the temple’s 160th anniversary in 2007. Barnert, which is Reform, is the oldest Jewish congregation in New Jersey, founded as Congregation B’nai Jeshurun in Paterson in 1847

The congregation was dedicated as the Nathan Barnert Memorial Temple on Sept. 17, 1894. Barnert had served as Paterson’s mayor for two terms. He also built and donated the Barnert Memorial Hospital on Broadway and the Daughters of Miriam Home for the Aged. During his mayoral terms, he donated his monthly salary to charitable and needy organizations of all faiths.

According to Schwartz, “His sense of philanthropy and the civic duty he demonstrated really laid the foundation for what this community is all about.”

Schwartz will speak on Tuesday, February 23 at 1 p.m. in the Alumni Lounge (SC138) of the Robert A. Scott Student Center. The presentation is free and open to the public. For more information or to reserve a seat, please call 201.684.7409.

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For media inquiries, contact Anna Farneski, assistant vice president, Marketing and Communications, 201.684.6844.