

Nat Bodian Collection
Jewish Historical Society of MetroWest Archives
Prepared by Jill Hershoin – October, 2011

Record Group: RG1

Collection Number: 17-99

Creator: Nat Bodian

Inclusive Dates: 1957-2008

Extent: 3 cf

Abstract: Personal papers from Nat Bodian

Acquisition information:

Records in the collection were acquired by the society in 1999 and 2010

Preferred Citation:

Nat Bodian Collection, Jewish Historical Society of MetroWest

Access restrictions:

The collections of the Society shall be available for examination and study by any member of the public under the normal security procedures and other special procedures established for the protection of the specific collections.

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History:

Mr. Bodian began in his teens as a reporter for The Star-Ledger of Newark. He served as a journalist in the Army Air Force during World War II, where he was the South Atlantic correspondent for YANK magazine. After the War, Mr. Bodian was in the first graduating class of the public relations program at the New School for Social Research in New York. He retired in 1988 from John Wiley and Sons in New York City after a 30-year career as a marketing manager for professional and scholarly books. In the course of his book industry career, he also wrote 14 books on the business and craft of book publishing, which became industry references and university texts.

Mr. Bodian lectured before national and international publishing groups, and was nominated for the Publishing Hall of Fame. In retirement he focused on his interest in American History, and in 2000 he completed a book on presidential curiosities and oddities. He presented lectures on this topic to groups throughout northern New Jersey. In addition, Bodian's lectures included topics related

Newark and Summit NJ, notable Jewish figures in U.S. history and issues in the book publishing industry.

Acquiring his first computer at the age of 79, Mr. Bodian became involved with the Old Newark web site, featuring recollections by former Newarkers on the city's life. Mr. Bodian contributed more than 100 articles for the site, providing recollections of the flourishing Newark Jewish Community.

Scope and Content:

In 1999, The Jewish Historical Society of MetroWest (JHSMW) established the Nat Bodian collection which contained a script that he penned for the Hillside Lodge B'nai B'rith event honoring local professional boxer, Lou Halper. This 1957 event featured guests which included: boxing promoter Willie Gilzenberg; Tony Galento; Tony Canzonieri; National Boxing Commissioner Abe Green; Vic Marsillo, ex-titleholder Barney Ross; Newark Evening News boxing writers Hy Goldberg and Willie Ratner; and former Newark Mayor Ralph A. Villani. There is a newspaper clipping featuring a photo the special guests which can be found in the "Publicity" series.

After Bodian's death in 2010, his research materials were donated to the JHSMW by his son, Les. After sorting through 8 cubic feet of these materials, archivist Jill Hershorin and Executive Director, Linda Forgosh determined that a majority of the collection belonged with the Newark Public Library. These materials can be better served at the library by researchers whose focus is about Newark, NJ. The JHSMW has retained all materials related to the Jewish community of MetroWest as it adheres to the collection policy and mission of the organization.

The collection contains documents related to Bodian's extensive lecturing engagements within the community as well as the publicity associated with these talks. The contents were kept in the original order that Bodian established with the exception of one box that holds his documents and a few miscellaneous items.

This collection is comprised of paper, has been arranged chronologically and is divided into four series as follows:

- I. Correspondence
- II. Publicity
- III. Lectures
- IV. General Subjects