

Jewish Center of Sussex County
Jewish Historical Society of MetroWest Archives

Prepared by David Druce & Jennifer McGillan. Revised by Jill Hershoin (March, 2008)

Record Group: 1

Collection Number: 15-01 and 13-08

Creator: Jewish Center of Sussex County

Inclusive Dates: 1944-2002

Extent: Two cubic feet

Abstract: Institutional Records of Jewish Center of Sussex County, including meeting minutes, financial, and legal documents.

Acquisition information: Acquired by the Society in 2001. Most papers were donated by Sanford & Roz Hollander.

Preferred Citation: Jewish Center of Sussex County Collection, Jewish Historical Society of MetroWest

Access restrictions:

Series III f14-15 is restricted to members of the Executive Board of the Jewish Center of Sussex County due to the confidential nature of the records.

Copyright:

For information about permission to reproduce or publish materials, please contact Jill Hershoin, Archivist, Jewish Historical Society of MetroWest.

History:

Newton is a town of approximately 8,000 in rural Sussex County. Its Jewish community began around 1890, and an Orthodox synagogue, (originally called B'nai Elizer) Reuben Shimon, was founded in 1921, soon followed by the organization of the YM/YWHA of Sussex County. In 1944 the Jewish Community Center of Sussex County was organized under the leadership of Dr. Robert Weinstein and in 1950, the building of Reuben Shimon with a newly constructed addition occurred. In 1951, the YMHA became the Jewish Center of Sussex County and the YWHA became its Sisterhood. They soon hired a full-time Rabbi and the community soon witnessed the foundation of a true place of worship.

The JCSC chose not to affiliate with any denomination, due to the expenses involved and diverse nature of its congregants. However it 'followed a conservative prayer style' and often chose rabbis with a Conservative background, including Michal Shekel, one of the first female rabbis given a pulpit in Metrowest.

The JCSC was known for serving a diverse population and attempted to expand its congregation. The congregation was known to invite interfaith families to services as well as reaching out to Jewish students from the nearby Blair Academy to High Holiday services. The JCSC was also noted in the community for community fundraisers such as a well-publicized country music concert. The JCSC is one of the rare New Jersey synagogues to boast of having its own cemetery. The congregation purchased 100 feet of cemetery land in Hardyston in Sussex County from Congregation Sons of Israel in Franklin in 1936.

Various photographs of the community are included in this collection. Some photos depict congregation members posing in their businesses. Also included is a photograph of the Sisterhood (1971). A photograph of marchers at the Nazi Bund Camp is also included. "Anti-Semitism showed its ugly face in Newton too. It was a center of Klan activity and, in 1923; a Jewish boy was tarred and feathered there. In 1941, a Nazi Bund camp was set up six miles away, in Lake Iliff. Fritz Kuhn, head of the German-American Bund, was a regular visitor there, and the organization held rallies and marched in Newton..."

Scope and Content:

NOTE: There are 2 finding aids and 2 entries in Past Perfect for this congregation. The earlier entry (Acc#15-01) was processed and the archivist inadvertently processed new materials (Acc #13-08) without noticing the previously processed collection.

For complete description please look at both entries in Past Perfect.

This collection is generally comprised of paper documents, but also includes photographs, account books, and printed booklets. The collection is arranged in twelve series, as follows:

- I. Administrative
 - a. Constitution
 - b. Grant Proposal
 - c. Minutes - Board Meetings Minutes
 - d. Minutes - General Meetings Minutes
 - e. Misc. (letter to Rabbi Pollack,
 - f. Rabbi Search
 - g. United Synagogues of America
- II. Committees
 - a. Cemetery
 - b. Dinner
 - c. Liaison
- III. Events

- a. Blair Boys
- b. Concert
- c. Dinner – Sam Schulman
- d. Dinner – Ruth & Murray Mendel
- e. Dinner – Past Presidents Honors
- f. Misc. Events
- g. Fundraiser – Fred Seplow
- h. Fundraiser – Misc.
- IV. Finance
 - a. Mortgage
 - b. Misc.
 - c. Raffle
- V. Hebrew School
- VI. Legal
 - a. Certificate of Incorporation
 - b. Certificate of Title
 - c. Land Sale
 - d. Lawsuit – Chaim Whale
 - e. Merger (UJF of Morris-Sussex)
 - f. Property
 - g. Rabbi Contracts
- VII. Membership
- VIII. Publications
 - a. Directories
 - b. Newsletters
 - c. Yizkor Services – Book of Remembrance
- IX. Press
 - a. Newspaper Clippings
- X. Sanford Hollander
- XI. Sisterhood
- XII. Photographs

Conservation Notes: A few documents from the early 1960's are made of acidic paper. In addition, some photographs and newspaper clippings were adhered to photo albums and could not be removed without damaging the material.

Removals: None

Organization: The materials are organized alphabetically, then chronologically when needed, within the series.

The Enduring Community: The Jews of Newark and Metrowest; Helmreich, William B, [Transaction Publishers](#), 1998, Newark, NJ; 296

Information from 'New Jersey Jewish News' and 'The New Jersey Herald' articles, and synagogue documents. Detailed information on the history of the congregation between 1930 and 1960 can be found in the January 1987 bulletin.