

THE IDA PEARLE AND JOSEPH CUBA ARCHIVES AND GENEALOGY CENTER
OF
THE WILLIAM BREMAN JEWISH HERITAGE AND HOLOCAUST MUSEUM
1440 SPRING STREET
ATLANTA, GA 30309
www.thebreman.org

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

REGISTER: Temple Beth El-
Anniston, Alabama

Processed by Sandra Berman
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Ms. No.: 194

Temple Beth El, Anniston, Alabama, was founded as on April 1, 1888, by twenty-four Jewish men of the community. The newly established congregation had no formal house of worship and its members met either in each other's homes or in rented halls. The founding members were primarily of German-Jewish descent and the congregation adhered to a Classical Reform liturgy.

On December 10, 1890, approximately fifteen women of the congregation formally organized as the Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Society. The earliest minutes state that "the women had come together for the purpose of 'visiting the sick, aiding the poor, and promoting Judaism generally.'" In addition to their charitable work, the newly formed society decided to raise money to purchase land for the construction of a permanent house of worship. According to the history of the congregation completed by Beth El member Sherry Blanton in 2000, a New Years Eve hop followed by bazaars and auctions were the society's means of raising the funds. Society members also added to the treasury by imposing fines on each other for being absent without good excuse and for not bringing their "fancy work" to meetings.

In the spring of 1891, the Society had enough money to purchase a lot on the northeast corner of Quintard Avenue and Thirteenth Street for \$1,500. The Society took an active role in all aspects of the construction that would follow and named the new building, which was dedicated on December 8, 1893, Temple Beth El (house of God).

Throughout most of its history Temple Beth El did not maintain the services of a rabbi. Members of the congregation, lay leaders, normally took responsibility for the leading the services. In 1953, The Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio, offered the services of Paul Irving Bloom, a student rabbi studying at the seminary. After his first year, and for the next two, Rabbi Bloom began to make bi-monthly visits to Anniston. In 1988, Rabbi Fred Raskind began an eleven-year career at Beth El, coming for the High Holy Days and for Friday night services twice a month.

On November 5, 1993, Temple Beth El celebrated its 100-year anniversary of the dedication of the sanctuary.

Temple Beth El Records, 1890-2010, are arranged in alphabetical order by subject and chronologically within each folder. The collection consists primarily of minutes of the Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Society also known as Henrietta Sterne Sisterhood and the Anniston Sisterhood. The minutes provide insight into both the “good works” of Ladies Benevolent Societies as well as the importance of this particular sisterhood in the overall success of this congregation.

Restrictions: Available to the serious scholar.

Number of containers: 4

Shelf space occupied: 1.4 linear feet

Container

1 Files, D-L, 1890-2010

- Folder 1: Dues record book, 1949-1954.
- Folder 2: Dues record book, 1949-1954 (photocopy).
- Folder 3: History, 2000.
- Folder 4: History – Temple Beth El’s Holocaust Survivor Stories, 2010.
- Folder 5: Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association – minutes, 1890-1903.
- Folder 6: Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association – minutes, 1890-1903. (photocopy).
- Folder 7: Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association – minutes, 1906-1916.
- Folder 8: Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association – minutes, 1906-1916. (photocopy).

Container

2 Files, L, 1914-1927

- Folder 1: Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association (now known as Anniston Sisterhood) – minutes, 1914-1917.
- Folder 2: Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association (now known as Anniston Sisterhood) – Minutes, 1914-1917 (photocopy).
- Folder 3: Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association – minutes, 1916-1927.
- Folder 4: Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association – minutes, 1916-1927 (photocopy).
- Folder 5: Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association(now known as Henrietta Sterne Sisterhood)- minutes, 1928-1934.

Container

3 Files, L-M, 1928-1948

- Folder 1: Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association (now known as Henrietta Sterne Sisterhood) – minutes, 1928-1934. (photocopy)
- Folder 2: Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association (now known as Henrietta Sterne Sisterhood)- minutes, 1941-1946.
- Folder 3: Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association (now known as Henrietta Sterne Sisterhood)- minutes, 1941-1946. (photocopy)

- Folder 4: Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association (now known as Henrietta Sterne Sisterhood)-minutes, 1949-1951.
- Folder 5: Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association (now known as Henrietta Sterne Sisterhood)-minutes, 1949-1951. (photocopy)
- Folder 6: Minutes, 1944-1948.
- Folder 7: Minutes, 1944-1948. (photocopy)

Container

4

Files, M-R,

- Folder 1: Minutes and miscellaneous documents (original order), 1959-1967.
- Folder 2: Minutes and miscellaneous documents (original order), 1959-1967. (photocopy)
- Folder 3: Receipt book, 1922-1927.
- Folder 4: Receipt book, 1922-1927. (photocopy)