

THE IDA PEARL AND JOSEPH CUBA ARCHIVES AND GENEALOGY CENTER
OF
THE WILLIAM BREMAN JEWISH HERITAGE AND HOLOCAUST MUSEUM
1440 SPRING STREET
ATLANTA, GA 30309
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MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

REGISTER:

Temple Beth Israel – Gadsden, Alabama

Processed by Sandra Berman
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MSS NO: 214

Temple Beth Israel – Gadsden, Alabama was unofficially founded in 1903 when ten Jewish families in the area organized a religious school for their children. The school met at a private home on the corner of 5th and Cherry Streets. In 1908, the first formal services were held on 4th Street in a single room over the Gadsden National Bank. The services were led by J. Nadler, one of the original teachers, and Hugo Hetch.

Acknowledging the need for a building for the fledging congregation, money was raised through poker games and raffle tickets. In 1922, the cornerstone was laid and the first service at Temple Beth Israel was held on November 24, 1924. By 1946 the congregation had grown to include more than thirty families and the first full-time Rabbi was hired. By the early 1960s seventy families were listed on the Temple's membership roster.

The synagogue and its membership were active in the general community life of Gadsden. In 1960, the congregation's long history of acceptance and security within Gadsden was tarnished when a young Hitler devotee tossed a Molotov cocktail into the sanctuary during a Friday night service, shooting two congregants in the process of making his escape. Unlike other church and synagogue bombings in the South during the late 1950s, this attack was the work of one individual and not part of a larger white supremacy movement. Like the bombing of the Temple in Atlanta, Georgia in 1958, however, there was an outpouring of support for the congregation from the general community in the aftermath of the incident.

Throughout the 1970s the membership of the Temple remained steady, consisting of about fifty-five families. By the 1980s and into the 1990s, the roster steadily declined. In 2005 there were only 26 families still active in the congregation. Without a growing population, the congregation was finally forced to close its doors in 2010.

Temple Beth Israel – Gadsden, Alabama Records, 1921-2011, are arranged in alphabetical order by subject and chronologically within each folder. The collection consists of minutes, correspondence, and bulletins of the congregation, as well as records from Gadsden chapter of

B'nai B'rith Women and the Gadsden Federated Jewish Charities. The historian interested in the growth and development of Jewish life in the South and the ultimate demise of the same will find this collection of special interest.

Restrictions: Available to the Serious Scholar

Number of Containers: 7

Photographs: Removed to Visual Arts

Oversize: Removed to Oversize Collection

Shelf Space Occupied: 2.6 linear

Container

1 Files, A-Bu, 1947-2008.

Folder 1: Altrusa Club, 1985.

Folder 2: Anniversary – “25th”, 1948. (of first building)

Folder 3: Anniversary – “40th”, 1963. (of first building)

Folder 4: Anniversary – “50th”, 1973. (of first building)

Folder 5: Anniversary – “75th”, 1983. (of congregation)

Folder 6: Anniversary – “85th”, 1993. (of congregation)

Folder 7: Anniversary – “100th”, 2008. (of congregation)

Folder 8: B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League, 1959.

Folder 9: B'nai B'rith – Gadsden Women's Chapter – financial, 1947-1950.

Folder 10: B'nai B'rith – Gadsden Women's Chapter – general, 1955-1966.

Folder 11: B'nai B'rith – Gadsden Women's Chapter – minutes, 1947-1954.

Folder 12: B'nai B'rith – newspaper articles, 1956-1967.

Folder 13: Board of Trustees, 1967-1969.

Folder 14: Bombing, 1960.

Folder 15: Building, 1975-1999.

Folder 16: Bulletins, 1958-1964.

Folder 17: Bulletins, 1965-1972.

Container

2 Files, Bu, 1973-1986.

Folder 1: Bulletins, 1973-1977.

Folder 2: Bulletins, 1978-1979.

Folder 3: Bulletins, 1980-1981.

Folder 4: Bulletins, 1982.

Folder 5: Bulletins, 1983-1984.

Folder 6: Bulletins, 1985-1986.

Container

3 Files, Bu, 1987-2010.

Folder 1: Bulletins, 1987-1989.

Folder 2: Bulletins, 1990-1993.

Folder 3: Bulletins, 1994-1995.

Folder 4: Bulletins, 1996-2000.

Folder 5: Bulletins, 2001-2007.

Folder 6: Bulletins, 2008-2010.

Folder 7: Bulletins, undated and incomplete.

Container

4 Files, Ca-In, 1923-2011.

Folder 1: Calendars, 1979-1997.

Folder 2: Confirmation, 1961-1987.

Folder 3: Constitution and by-laws, 1983-1995.

- Folder 4: Contributions, 1965-1966.
- Folder 5: Correspondence, 1967-2011.
- Folder 6: Dedication, 1923.
- Folder 7: Financial records, 1916-1929.
- Folder 8: Financial records, 1963-1975.
- Folder 9: Financial records – reports, 1966-2010.
- Folder 10: Gadsden Federated Jewish Charities – minutes and financial records, 1958-1965.
- Folder 11: Guest book, 1993-1995.
- Folder 12: History, 2005
- Folder 13: Holidays – Hanukkah, 1960-1989.
- Folder 14: Holidays – Passover, 1961-1980.
- Folder 15: Holidays – Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, 1960-2007.
- Folder 16: Honors and memorial fund, 1995.
- Folder 17: Individuals and families - Caminker, Rabbi Harold F., 1979-1980.
- Folder 18: Individuals and families - Cohn, Marvin, 1965-1986.
- Folder 19: Individuals and families – Denson family members, 1973-1980.
- Folder 20: Individuals and families – Drew, Jack, 1967-1976.
- Folder 21: Individuals and families – Fertig, Rabbi Arnold M. 1977-1978.
- Folder 22: Individuals and families – Hagedorn, Ruth, 1970-1986.
- Folder 23: Individuals and families – Halevi, Rabbi Jacob, 1966.
- Folder 24: Individuals and families – Lowi, Janice Haas, 1978-1987.
- Folder 25: Individuals and families – Lowi, Theodore, 1964-1991.
- Folder 26: Individuals and families – Miller, Herman, 1968-1974.

Folder 27: Individuals and families – Miller, Steven, 1973-1982.

Folder 28: Individuals and families – Parsons, Bubba, 1978-1980.

Folder 29: Individuals and families – Peilen, Rabbi Mark, 1992-1995.

Folder 30: Individuals and families – Pizitz family, 1969-1990.

Folder 31: Individuals – Rubin, Rabbi Saul, 1960-1976.

Folder 32: Individuals and families – Schwartz, Rabbi Henry Leon, undated.

Folder 33: Individuals and families – Utschen, Rabbi Joseph, 1950.

Folder 34: Individuals and families – Weil family, 1990.

Container

5 Files, Le-Mi, 1958-2009.

Folder 1: League of Women Voters – Greater Gadsden, 1981.

Folder 2: Library, 1961-1982.

Folder 3: Marriage and birth announcements, A-Z, 1958-1982.

Folder 4: Membership, 1975-1998.

Folder 5: Merger – Temple Emanu-El – Jasper, Alabama and Temple Emanu-El – Birmingham, Alabama, 2000.

Folder 6: Minutes and general administrative files, 1991-1994.

Folder 7: Minutes and general administrative files, 1995-1999.

Folder 8: Minutes and general administrative files, 2000-2003.

Folder 9: Minutes and general administrative files. 2004-2009.

Folder 10: Minutes and general administrative files, 2010.

Folder 11: Miscellanea, 1976.

Folder 12: National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, 1976-1978.

Folder 13: Newspaper articles, 1957-1991.

Folder 14: Obituaries, B-Z, 1959-1982.

Container

6 Files, Pr-Si, 1921-2010.

Folder 1: Programs and invitations, 1967-1988.

Folder 2: Property sale, 2010.

Folder 3: Shema Award, 1987-1990.

Folder 4: Sisterhood – constitution and by-laws, 1997.

Folder 5: Sisterhood – financial – special funds, 1942-1947.

Folder 6: Sisterhood – general, 1943-1998.

Folder 7: Sisterhood (formerly Ladies Aid Society) – minutes, 1921-1930.

Folder 8: Sisterhood – minutes and financial records, 1939-1942.

Folder 9: Sisterhood – minutes and financial records, 1945-1949, 1963.

Folder 10: Sisterhood – minutes and financial records, 1983-2003.

Folder 11: Sisterhood – newspaper articles, 1953-1985.

Folder 12: Sisterhood – yearbooks, 1972 – 1985.

Container

7 Files, Si-Yo, 1964-2006.

Folder 1: Sisterhood – yearbooks, 1986-1997.

Folder 2: Special services, 1964-1997.

Folder 3: Student rabbis, 1973-1976.

Folder 4: Union of American Hebrew Congregations – Southeast Council, 1993-1994.

Folder 5: Yahrzeit, 1996.

Folder 6: Yearbooks, 1999-2006.

Folder 7: Youth group, 1967.