

B'nai Israel Congregation Photographs, c1920-1992

Creator: B'nai Israel Congregation

Catalog Designation: MSP # 470

Rauh Jewish Archives

Library and Archives Division

Senator John Heinz History Center

1212 Smallman Street

Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Language of Materials: English

Extent: 1.75 linear feet (4 boxes)

Abstract

B'nai Israel Congregation in Pittsburgh's East End was chartered in 1911. After outgrowing various rented facilities in the early 1920's, the congregation built a sanctuary at 327 Negley Avenue. Growth of the congregation continued until it peaked in the 1950's and then began to decline in the 1970's, as the Jewish population moved into and then from the area. In the 1990s, the congregation merged with Beth Jacob of New Kensington to found Adat Shalom Congregation in Fox Chapel. B'nai Israel formally closed on June 30, 1995. The B'nai Israel Congregation Photographs contain both photographic prints and negatives. They include images of the building, clergy, education, anniversaries, events, and congregation members and organizations. Of note are a series of confirmation class photographs ranging from 1933 to 1979, and a photograph of an early sukkah.

Historical Sketch:

For the historical sketch of the B'nai Israel Congregation please refer to the finding aid with the catalog designation of MSS # 470.

Scope and Content Note

The B'nai Israel Congregation Photographs are housed in four archival boxes, arranged by categories: building, clergy, education, events, and members. Negatives are housed in a separate box. Within each category are alphabetically arranged folders, the contents of which are organized in chronological order to the extent possible since many photos are not dated. The collection consists of both amateur and professional photographs. These include images of the groundbreaking for the new building which was completed in 1951, exterior and interior of the buildings, as well as a set of professional photographs taken by Hans Jonas prior to the congregation's closing in 1996. The collection also contains individual head shots of the congregation's clergy, as well as photographs of their involvement within the congregation. These photographs may be found with education and event photographs, including negatives of Rabbi Lichter's 70th birthday party.

Hebrew and Sunday school assembly, class, and staff pictures are organized chronologically in folders, as are a series of Confirmation class pictures, from 1933 to 1979.

Additionally, the collection contains photos of congregational events and holidays, including a picture of an early sukkah, and photos of the congregation's 75th anniversary celebration. The collection also includes images of congregational organizations, as well as other miscellaneous photographs.

Provenance: These materials were received in five accessions.

Acc# 2007.0164	Gift of Congregation B'nai Israel.
Acc# 2006.0035	Gift of Adat Shalom/B'nai Israel.
Acc# 2003.0086	Gift of Ben Melnick.
Acc# 2002.0088	Gift of Irene & Harry Louik.
Acc# 1998.0120	Gift of Congregation B'nai Israel.

Preferred Citation: B'nai Israel Congregation Photographs, c. 1920-1992, MSP#470, Rauh Jewish Archives, Library and Archives Division, Senator John Heinz History Center

Restrictions: None

Separations: One folder of oversize photographs has been separately arranged and described as MSR #470.

Processor: October, 29 2007; collection arranged and inventory written by Ashley Sebastian; revised May 2008 by S. Melnick and Theresa E. Rea with generous support from the PNC Charitable Trusts-J. Samuel and Rose Y. Cox Foundation and the Giant Eagle Foundation in April 2010.

Container List

	Building	
Box 1 Folder 1	1996 (photos by Hans Jonas)	
Folder 2	1996 duplicates	
Folder 3	Exteriors (old building)	
Folder 4	Interiors (old and new building)	
	New building	
Folder 5	Ground breaking	1950
Folder 6	Site	1946
	Clergy	
Folder 7	Cohen, Seymour (Rabbi)	
Folder 8	Haalman, Mordecai (Cantor)	
Folder 9	Heiser, Mordecai G. (Cantor)	
Folder 10	Lichter, Benjamin (Rabbi)	
	Education	
Folder 11	Bar/Bat Mitzvah classes	1946, 1949, 1963-1964
Folder 12	Choir	1943, 1964
	Confirmation classes	
Folder 13	1933-1947	

Folder 14	1948-1950	
Box 2 Folder 1	1951-1959	
Folder 2	1960-1979	
Folder 3	Hebrew School	1943-1969
Folder 4	Staff	1968
Folder 5	Sunday School	c1930-1990
Folder 6	Youth programs	
	Events	
Folder 7	Anniversary -75 th	1979
Folder 8	Dinners and conventions	1951-1990
Folder 9	Holidays	
	<i>Sukkot</i>	pre-1920
	<i>Seder</i>	pre-1950
Box 3 Folder 1	PT boat launch	1943-1945
Folder 2	Publicity photos of speakers	c1950-1970
	Members	
	Groups	
Folder 3	Bond Committee	1965-1973
Folder 4	Scouts (Boy and Girl)	1952-1960
Folder 5	Sisterhood	1941-1985
	Women's League for Conservative Judaism	
Folder 6	c1950. 1982	
Folder 7	Conventions	1963-1992
Folder 8	Individuals	
	Grayzel, Solomon	
	Levine, A.J.	
	Perlow, Edward	
	Ruben, Robert	
	Scheinman, David	
	Scheinman, Israel	
	Scheinman, Lillie	
Folder 9	Topical	n.d.
Folder 10	Trips	
	USY	
	Congregation	1969
Box 4	Negatives	
Folder 1	Building interiors	
Folder 2	Education	
	Bat mitzvah	1946
	Choir	1943
	Confirmation	1945-1946, 1960-1962
Folder 3	Rabbis	

	Cohen, Seymour	
	Lichter, Benjamin	
	Birthday party (70 th)	1956
Folder 4	Sisterhood	1961, 1962