

THE
United Jewish Community
OF
Beaver Valley



Homecoming Weekend

May 1 - 3, 1964

Schedule of Activity

Friday, May 1, 1964

8:30 P.M. Sabbath Services featuring the
Agudath Achim Choir

9:45 P.M. Oneg Shabbat

Saturday, May 2, 1964

8:00 A.M. Sabbath Services

All Day Family Visitations

7:30 P.M. Testimonial Banquet

10:00 P.M. Reunion Dance

Sunday, May 3, 1964

10:00 A.M. Hebrew Religious School
Open House

10:00 A.M. Adult Minyan

11:00 A.M. Religious School
Commemorative Assembly

Noon Farewell Brunch

History of Beaver Valley Jewry

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF BEAVER VALLEY, as far as it can be ascertained from official documents, began when the Silverman family settled in Rochester in the early 1850's.

Four years later Raphael and Rosa Steinfeld, immigrating from Germany, arrived in Rochester and then settled in New Brighton. This was the same Raphael Steinfeld who later donated the land in New Brighton for use as a Jewish cemetery. This cemetery, still existing but somewhat desecrated, was named Tree of Life and used by Jewish families in both Beaver and Lawrence counties.

The first Hebrew congregation in Beaver Valley was organized in New Brighton in April 1864. It moved to Beaver Falls in 1879 and enrolled members from all of the towns in the area. There was no regular rabbi; services were held in different homes.

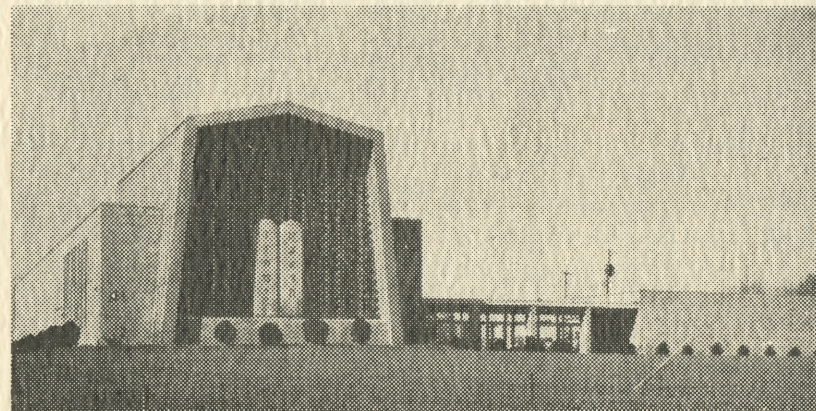
On October 20, 1904 a charter was granted for the Agudas Achim Hebrew Congregation. As one of its first actions, the new congregation purchased a cemetery plot in Patterson and White Townships. It was ten years later, in 1914, that the Agudath Achim Synagogue was built and opened for services.

An interesting sidelight of the times was that the services in those early days were conducted in buildings, generally located in the south end of Beaver Falls, and often held by candlelight. A curtain was occasionally hung to separate the men and the women.

It was in the early part of the century, too, that a toll bridge linked the Beaver Falls and New Brighton communities. Jewish families had made arrangements to pay the toll during the week in order to avoid handling money on the Sabbath and holidays.

Jewish people have long been known for their abilities to organize and to accomplish through collective action. In the early 1900's, documents indicate that the Zionist Organization of America was in operation; a Young Men's Hebrew Association (YMHA) existed in Beaver Falls in 1914.

The Council of Jewish Women that carries on its fine work today began locally in early 1917. One of Council's founders, the late Nettie Silverman, was a direct descendant of the first Jewish family that settled in Beaver Valley.



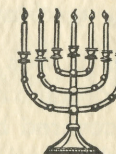
The United Jewish Community Center located in Chippewa Township became a reality in 1960. "... behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity". Psalm 133:1.

Other organizations came in a regular procession: the Sabra Club in 1920; B'nai B'rith, 1921; AZA, 1929.

Yet, it was not until the 1940's that the remaining organizations came into being: the B'nai B'rith Girls, 1941; Hadassah, 1945; and the Men's Club of the Agudath Achim Synagogue, 1947. The United Jewish Community, an organization developed to unite all of the individual religious and civic Jewish groups in the area, was chartered in 1957.

The Jewish people have for many years had representatives in every walk of civic and community life. In 1882, Harry Goldsmith was the president of the Mason's and secretary of the school board; in the 1920's Jack Sack was football coach at Geneva College; in the 1890's there was a Jewish county detective by the name of Ben Lazarus.

Jewish people since those early years have continued to play a major role in the development and progress in Beaver Valley.



Religious School: Half Century of Progress

THE BEAVER VALLEY HEBREW RELIGIOUS SCHOOL was organized in 1914 under the inspirational leadership and guidance of Meyer Berkman, with financial sponsorship from Mrs. Max Solomon and the teaching assistance of the B'nai B'rith Auxiliary. Classes were held in the Agudath Achim Synagogue. Some of these early dedicated teachers were Miss Bertha Berkman, Mrs. Augusta Barnett Unger, Mrs. Harry Markson, and Mrs. Goldie Solomon Glick. Miss Goldie Wolfe taught the first Confirmation class.

The first Confirmation took place in June 1917, at the old Lyceum Theatre, with the late Rabbi Isadore Philo of Temple Rodef Shalom, Youngstown, Ohio, as the spiritual leader. The class of nine girls included: Sarah Sidler; Lillian Green Silverman; Belle Belloff Gross; Belle Maretsky Stern; Minnie Marcus Roman; Libbie Marcus Levy; Dorothy Feinberg; Sarah Feinberg Melnick; and Rochelle Wasbutsky Goldstein.

Through the years religious guidance was provided by the Southwestern District of Temple Religious Schools. Rabbis from Pittsburgh, surrounding communities and from Beaver Falls itself lent assistance to a devoted Religious School Committee that supplied directors and teachers with equipment and materials.

With the United States' entrance in the First World War, Meyer Berkman and I. W. Solomon, who had given so much of their time to develop the Religious School, left to serve in the Army. But their work with the School was continued under the co-sponsorship of the newly-organized Beaver Valley Section of the National Council of Jewish Women and the B'nai B'rith. Classes were held in the Odd Fellows Hall on 16th street in Beaver Falls, and were continued there until the NCJW Council Community House at 1123 Eighth Avenue, Beaver Falls was purchased in 1928, to provide rooms for the growing School.

The "Sunday School", as it was generally termed, became Council's main project. The organization assumed financial responsibility for expenses not covered by the nominal fee charged to students. It provided Chanukah and Purim treats, a Model Pass-over Seder, and bibles to confirmands each year.



First Confirmation Class of the Beaver Valley Hebrew Religious School, June 3, 1917, at the Lyceum Theatre. Back row, Meyer B. Berkman, superintendent; Elizabeth Marcus; Rochelle Wasbutsky; Mrs. Max Solomon, sponsor; Belle Belloff; Minnie Marcus; Miss Goldie Wolfe, teacher Confirmation Department. Front row: Belle Maretsky; Dorothy Feinberg; Sarah Feinberg; Lillian Green; and Sara Sidler.

Through the years many people have served the Religious School as volunteers, dedicating time and energy to improve the teaching program and provide administrative personnel. Outstanding among these volunteers were Mr. and Mrs. J. Quint Salmon; Mrs. Leonard Goldstein; Mrs. Julius Arfield; and Mr. Jacob Venger. Mrs. Joseph Marcus, now deceased, served for many years as dramatics director.

When the Beaver Valley United Jewish Community Center was built in 1960 to house the Religious School and to provide meeting facilities for the various Jewish organizations of the Beaver Valley, the B. V. Section of NCJW sold the Council Community House and spent over \$11,000 to equip and furnish the Religious School classrooms. It is now in the process of staffing and developing a library Judaic.

For the past seven years spiritual guidance and supervision of the Religious School has been provided by Rabbi David G. Shapiro, of the Agudath Achim Congregation and director of the UJC Center, with the assistance of Mr. Joseph Hollander and Mr. Jacob Venger.

And, still, the Council continues its "parental interest" and concern.



A Testimonial
 Of
 Sincere Appreciation
 To
 Meyer B. Berkman
 For Distinguished and Unselfish Service In Numerous Civic,
 Religious and Educational Activities
 From the
 United Jewish Community
 Of Beaver Valley
 May 2, 1964

Programme

Testimonial Dinner - Dance

May 2, 1964

Invocation.....Rabbi David G. Shapiro

Dinner

Presiding.....Dr. Irving Bennett

Welcome.....Milton Harris, President
 United Jewish Community

Introduction of Out-of-Area Guests

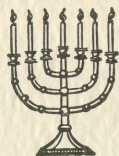
Remarks.....Dr. George W. Carson
 Trinity United Presbyterian Church

Presentation.....Milton Harris

Response.....Meyer B. Berkman

Benediction.....Rabbi Shapiro

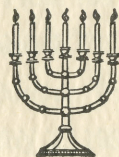
Dance



Acknowledgements

B'nai B'rith	Oneg Shabbat after Friday Night Services
Hadassah	Orchestra for Dinner-Dance
Council of Jewish Women	Souvenir Booklet
Auxiliary to UJC	Cuisine Preparations
Men's Club	Assistance with Farewell Brunch
AZA - BBG	Floral Bouquet; Ushering

Special Thanks to Baumgarten's Interiors and numerous individuals and local businesses.



Officers and Directors

United Jewish Community

1964

Milton Harris, President	Stanley Goorin, Fin. Sec'y.
Maurice Mervis, Vice President	Norman Soodik, Treasurer
William Levenson, Vice President	Mrs. Louis Zaremborg, Cores. Sec'y.
Mrs. Blanche Lenk, Vice President	Mrs. Martin Berk, Rec. Sec'y.

Directors

*Dr. Irving Bennett	Dr. William Lieberman
Meyer Berkman	Myer Shleifer
Louis Cohen	William Silverman
*Milton Farkas	Melvin Soodik
Morris Flam	*Jacob Venger
Philip Jacobson	Rabbi David G. Shapiro
	Mrs. Myer Shleifer, Auxiliary Liaison

*Past President



Homecoming Committee

Irving Bennett, O. D., General Chairman
 Mrs. Milton Farkas and Mrs. Abe Marcus, Invitation
 Mrs. J. Norman Soodik and Mrs. Morris Flam, Banquet
 Mrs. Nathan Ortinberg and Mrs. Richard Kane, Decoration
 Mrs. Jack Farkas and Mrs. Joseph Elias, Friday Night Service
 Mrs. Julius Arfield and Mrs. Morris Shulgold, Sunday School Program
 Mrs. Albert Zonis and Mrs. Isadore Bodell, Farewell Brunch
 Mrs. Joseph Boris and Mrs. Myer Shleifer, Cuisine
 Mrs. Jerry Sakulsky and Mrs. William Levenson, Dance
 Mrs. William Levenson, Book of Letters
 Mrs. Colman Middleman, Historian
 Mrs. Blanche Lenk, Transportation
 Mr. Harry Braun and Mr. Samuel Gilbert, Hosting

