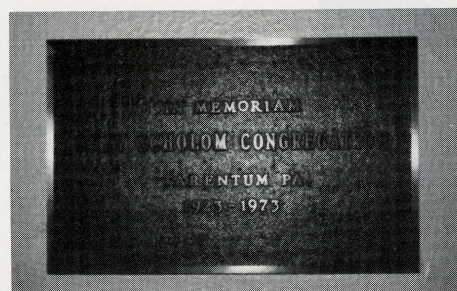


HISTORY OF OHEV SCHOLOM CONGREGATION OF TARENTUM



Ohev Schalom Synagogue (1923-1973) was the final home of the Ohev Scholom Congregation of Tarentum. Early residents, under the leadership of Max Krause, had religious services beginning around 1900 at various locations. The two best meeting places remembered by later members, were the Oppenheimer Building on the second floor, and the Smith Building, which is now Mas-sart's Restaurant.

A lot was purchased in 1922 and the present building was readied for the Holidays of 1923. The first President of this new Congregation was I.A. Lewis (father of later business leaders, Paul and Edward.)

Other Presidents to serve the Congregation were Philip Hach, David Silverman, Saul Caplan, Benjamin Wikes, Max Kubrin, Adolph Newhouse, Dr. I.H. Wachs, Jack Tanovitz, Alex Weissburg, Emanuel Wikes, Arnold Abes and Joseph Wikes.

Tarentum was fortunate in securing Dr. Babad for it's Rabbi. Rabbi Babad helped develop a very fine Shul with the help of the Sisterhood. Other early Rabbis were Maharam, Gray, Decter, Sobol, Labinsky, and Pollack.

The Sunday School was always the prime center of Tarentum's Congregation. Irving Sikov was Superintendent for many years. He worked with the Southwest District and Tarentum's Sisterhood to establish one of the district's finest Sunday School systems. Another fine Superintendent was Mel Kline, one of Tarentum's High School Teachers.

The Congregation grew from 25 members to 60. The War Years saw this membership dwindle as the young people relocated in search of careers. As finances dwindled it was no longer feasible to support a Rabbi. Fortunately, it was possible for the interested to join the Beth Jacob Congregation in New Kensington. As a result, Mr. Alex Weissburg volunteered his services as a Hebrew Teacher in charge of the Bar Mitzvah boys. Alex is very qualified since he attended a Yeshiva in Hungary and is the son of a Hebrew Teacher. Among his charges were his grand-nephews, Walter and Chad Cohen, and Richard Fishkin. He was a strict task master and the quality of his Bar Mitzvah's were praised by the parents.

A committee comprised of the remaining leaders:



This photograph of the facade of Ohev Scholom Synagogue was taken in 1983. Some changes had been made.

Harry Samuelson, Arnold Abes, Max and Joe Wikes, and others, arranged for the sale of the Ohev Schalom Building. They also had the Palgon Brothers take the Sacred Torahs as gifts to Synagogues in Israel. The cash proceeds of the sale were given to the Beth Jacob Congregation, since so many of Tarentum's former members had joined the New Kensington Congregation.

The Tarentum new-comers to Beth Jacob were very well received by the members. In time, the Tarentumites produced a Shul President (James Weissburg), and a steady worker on the Board of Directors (Max Wikes).

A plaque has been dedicated to the Ohev Schalom Congregation and is displayed in the Beth Jacob Sanctuary.



An Ohev Scholom Sisterhood installation (date unknown) From left: Lil Samuelson, Irene Malyn, Rose Friedman, Cel Weissburg, Dorothy Cohen, Belle Sakulsky, Lil Weissburg, Mary Sloan, Belle Rabinovitz.