



SISTERHOOD OFFICERS

Seated: Mrs. Samuel G. Levine, V-Pres., Mrs. Harold Schleider, President, Mrs. Leo F. Cohen, V-Pres., Mrs. Keva Miller, V-Pres. **Standing, left to right:** Mrs. Morris Blumberg, Finn. Sec'y., Mrs. Alfred Rosin, Treas., Mrs. William Goldberg, Sec'y., Mrs. Harold Snyder, Cor. Sec'y.

Past Presidents: Mrs. William Marx, Mrs. Abe Salkin, Mrs. Simon Goldberg, Mrs. A. B. Slesnick.

Story of the Sisterhood

The Council of Jewish Women was the first organized group of Jewish women affiliated with the Tree of Life Synagogue. Its history began sometime in the early part of the 1900's. To speak of this group lightly would be doing an injustice to the far-reaching effect it played in local community affairs. The main project was the placement of immigrants from overseas into their new homes in America. Although this was the Council's main project, they also concerned themselves with the needs of the less fortunate in our community.

The meetings, held in homes, are remembered with a great deal of nostalgia. Programs were devoted to the cultural and social interests of its members who were well schooled in the literary and art world. Evidence of the scope of Council's interests was their sponsorship of a local art exhibit. During World War I, members volunteered their services for sewing, knitting and making bandages.

Mrs. Rachel Lowentritt was the first presi-

dent and Mrs. Danheiser was president during the final years of Council's existence.

Some of the prominent names in the Council register were Miss Sarah Braunschweiger, Mrs. Rachel Lowentritt, Miss Hannah Silberberg, Miss Rachel Silberberg, Miss Bertha Silberberg, Mrs. Dave Jacobs, Mrs. Max Jacobs, Mrs. Bertha Lewis, Mrs. Abe Silberberg, Mrs. Joseph Levi, Mrs. A. J. Ullman, Mrs. Mayer, Mrs. Baer, Mrs. Hannah Manheim Cohn, Miss Lena Salmon, Mrs. Kinsberski, Mrs. Herschfield, Mrs. Danheiser, Mrs. Solovay, Mrs. A. Goldman, Mrs. Lena Serrins, Mrs. I. Broida, Mrs. A. Broida, Mrs. Seal Cohen and Mrs. M. Mogilowitz.

During their active existence, Council contributed to the local Carnegie Library a number of valuable Jewish volumes, which are still in use.

Council enjoyed many years of full activity, but in 1931, it began to decline to the point that it no longer existed. It was disbanded and brought to a final close.



Mrs. Morris Blumberg, Mrs. Leo Levine.



Mrs. Morris Sklar, Mrs. Keva Miller.

BAZAAR, 1957

In the middle of the 1930's, the Jewish women reorganized and named their group the Sisterhood. It was during this period, that a new kitchen was installed in the vestry room of the Synagogue and many of our members today will remember the fine dinners prepared both to welcome and bid farewell to the various Rabbis serving the congregation. Those who were very active were, Mrs. Israel Backer, Mrs. Ike Broida, Mrs. Jake Broida, Mrs. Julius Broida, Mrs. Seal Cohen, Mrs. David Cohen, Mrs. Charles Goldberg, Mrs. Harry Grant, Mrs. Simon Goldberg, Mrs. Abe Lang, Mrs. Joseph Schultz, Mrs. Sam Magdovitz, Mrs. Jacob Mogilowitz, Mrs. Michael Potts, Mrs. Mose Spear, Mrs. Nathan Rosen, Mrs. Sam Rosen, Mrs. Abe Salkin, Mrs. Lena Slesnick, Mrs. A. Silverman, Mrs. Herman Stahl, Mrs. Julius Stahl, and Mrs. Harry Zand, as well as many others too numerous to add to this short history. Mrs. Seal Cohen was one of the most active workers.

During this period, Mrs. Simon Goldberg served for many years as president of the Sisterhood whose sole purpose was directed to the furtherance of Synagogue functions, aid to the Sunday School, and the collection of funds for the needy.

We feel sure that, many years prior to and several years after the outbreak of World War II, the role of Sisterhood became secondary to the very urgent and distressing plight of the European Jewry who were victims of Nazi persecution. The Hadassah Organization was the great call of the day and all women rallied to its cause. With a community so small in number and the workers of both organizations being the same people, all effort was directed to the greater need. Finally, as the settlement of more and more refugees became effected, searching eyes were once again turned to local needs.

The only known recorded minutes of Sisterhood meetings begin on March 15, 1943, when Sisterhood was reorganized. Mrs. William Marx was president of the Sisterhood at this time. Under her leadership many new projects were undertaken. Sunday School plays were produced with members contributing their talents and time in the sewing of beautiful costumes. A new

feeling for a more active organization was begun.

Although the number of active workers was small, there was an intense desire to build a strong group. Most of these early workers are still the backbone of the present Sisterhood. No history would be complete without paying tribute to the memory of Mrs. A. Resnikoff, whose unselfish efforts in behalf of all Synagogue functions will never be forgotten.

The first mention of a program was made on March 12, 1945, when a musical was presented by Joel Broida, trumpet solo; Judith Cohen, piano solo; Bertram Zweig, violin solo. On October 26, 1945, Sisterhood sponsored a Friday night service with Rabbi Newberger officiating. Visits to Polk State Institute by Rabbi Newberger and members of the Sisterhood were begun on March 1946, and have been continued to the present time.

Mrs. Abe Salkin was installed as President May, 1946. Mrs. Salkin, a tireless worker, gave not only in time and labor, but above all, the inspiration to all who worked along her side. It is interesting to note that on February, 1948, the first mention of a Community Center Building Project was made and thereafter the fund grew beyond the greatest expectations of its founders. Mrs. Simon Goldberg served as president one term, May 1948-1949. Mrs. Abe Salkin served again as president from May 1949 to 1953. The years between the early beginnings of the revitalized Sisterhood and its recent development into a highly organized group were filled with tremendous activity and zeal.

Some of the most interesting notes taken from the minutes of this period are here recorded.

FEBRUARY 11, 1948

A regular meeting of the Sisterhood was held at the home of Mrs. Alfred Rosin with the President, Mrs. Abe Salkin presiding. A novel idea in the use of baby sitters by our own local women was suggested, with monies to be turned into the Sisterhood to help start a Community Fund.

All members were asked to bring or collect antique pieces of china to be put on sale at the next Sisterhood meeting.



Mrs. Herman Brody, Mrs. Sophie Wein, Mrs. Harry Cohen.



Mrs. A. B. Slesnick, Mrs. I. M. Magdovitz, Mrs. Simon Goldberg.

BAZAAR, 1957

APRIL 7, 1948

"A regular meeting of the Tree of Life Sisterhood was held at the home of Mrs. H. Schleider . . . Mrs. Schleider gave a report on the coming antique sale to be held as soon as enough antiques were collected. It was decided to save all the things left over and to make the antique sale a yearly project. (Ed. Note. This was the forerunner of the yearly bazaar.) In the Community Bldg. Bank Project, \$9.00 has been turned in from baby sitting. The first sitters were, Mrs. S. Keller and Mrs. A. Salkin."

MAY 26, 1948

"The final meeting of the Tree of Life Sisterhood was held in the form of a tureen dinner at the Synagogue with Mrs. A. Salkin presiding . . . Mrs. Alfred Rosin reported a total sum of \$434.70 made on the antique sale which money is to be used for the Community Center. A trusteeship was appointed to deposit and record funds for this project." (Ed. Note. First mention of the Community-Center.)

NOV. 3, 1948

"It was also announced that Herman Brody had returned his check, received for his services to the Sunday School. Also Miss Sally Stahl, returned hers, in honor of her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Seal Cohen's 50th wedding anniversary."

MARCH 9, 1949

The minutes read of receiving the first gift for the Community-Center Sunday School, twelve pictures, depicting scenes of Jewish Holidays, presented to the chairman, Mrs. H. Schleider, by Mrs. Sam Mogilowitz.

NOVEMBER 1949

"The first annual Donor Dinner was held at this time, commemorating the Synagogue's Golden Anniversary." (This affair was the forerunner of an annual Donor Dinner held each year.)

NOVEMBER 2, 1949

"Mrs. S. Mallinger reported that she has started a nursery school to be held in her home,

with Mrs. David Cohen and Mrs. Bert Samuels assisting her. The monies realized from this project to be used for the Center building fund.

JANUARY 4, 1950

"Mrs. S. Mallinger reported a net total of \$112.50 realized from the nursery school towards the fund. Mrs. Louis Salkin reports a check received from Mr. and Mrs. Sol B. Harris for the sum of \$150.00 for their son's Bar Mizvah. The Sisterhood's expenditure was \$18.00, leaving a profit of \$132.00 towards the Center Fund."

"Miss Rae Cohen was appointed "Sunshine Lady", in charge of the Flower Box. This money will be used to buy flowers for members who are ill." (Miss Rae Cohen has performed this service every year since that time. Ed. Note)

DECEMBER 6, 1950

"Mrs. Louis Salkin, chairman of the "Golden Book" read some interesting letters she had received with enclosed checks amounting to \$105.00 from former residents of Oil City. To date, through her letters, the total amount she has received is \$514.00."

(Ed. Note. Shortly thereafter, the Book of Remembrances messages were instituted and an outstanding source of revenue has been realized from this project.)

MARCH 14, 1951

"Center Fund reaches a sum over \$5000.00."

MAY 8, 1951

"Spring Concert held at Senior High School, featuring Mrs. Elinor Grant as vocalist. Highly successful concert as rendered by the artist . . . Mrs. Louis Salkin, chairman of the event reports that a gross profit of \$2753.00 was realized for the Center Fund, by the sale of tickets and an advertisement program managed by Dr. Harold Schleider."

OCTOBER 1952

"Mrs. Alfred Rosin stated a loan of \$1000.00 had been made to the men of the Synagogue as a down payment on the new Center property."



Mrs. Marvin Kessler, Mrs. Leo Cohen, Mrs. Julius Stahl.



Mrs. Sol B. Harris.

FEBRUARY 1953

"The program featured a presentation entitled, "This I Believe", consisting of a summary of the beliefs of the Jewish religion, as drawn up by Miamonides, who reduced the original 613 principles of faith to only 13. A recitation of these principles was given by Miss Evelyn Snyder, Mrs. Morris Sklar and Mrs. A. B. Slesnick."

NOVEMBER 10, 11, 1953

"Mrs. David Cohen, Bazaar chairman, reported another successful bazaar, with all respective booth chairman most responsive and cooperative."

MARCH 1954

"A letter was read from Mrs. S. Metz, Chairman of Shenango Valley Council of Jewish Women, who expressed her appreciation to the women of the Tree of Life Sisterhood for their cooperation in assisting the various functions held at the State institution at Polk."

MAY 1954

"Mrs. A. B. Slesnick installed as President of the Organization."

OCTOBER 1954

"Meeting held at the home of Mrs. Abe Silverman . . . Miss Evelyn Snyder, program chairman introduced Mrs. Sol B. Harris of Clarion, who in a most delightful and informative manner spoke on, "My thoughts of the Jewish Tercentennial Year." She highlighted our 300 years of growth and advancement in America."

JANUARY 1955

"Report of the first annual contest for home Chanukah decorations sponsored by the Sisterhood. This contest created a great deal of enthusiasm and imagination, by the children of each family and stimulated their interest in the holiday. Winners were, 1st, The George Cohn Family; 2nd, The A. B. Slesnick Family; 3rd, Tied, The Keva Miller Family and The Henry Levine Family."

FEBRUARY 1955

"The program for the evening was moderated by Samuel Grant, who introduced the fol-

lowing speakers and their subjects. Mr. Joseph Snyder who gave a historical outline of the Jewish people and the three great migrations. Dr. Norman Adams who spoke on, "The Churches influence on tolerance," and finally, Mr. Milton Rosen who narrated on the subject of the first Jewish settlers in Oil City and their influence until the present time."

MARCH 5, 1955

"Mrs. Samuel G. Levine announced the date, March 19, 1955, as the next Purim Costume Ball. The goal this year is to raise \$1300.00"

DECEMBER 10, 1955

"Mrs. Keva Miller gave a detailed report on the November bazaar. She stated that it had been a rewarding experience for her and she thanked all her co-workers. The total sum for her was \$1805.84. The President extended her thanks to Mrs. Miller for her capable work and her wonderful enthusiasm."

FEBRUARY 1956

"Community Fund Balance, \$23,477.33."

APRIL 1956

"At a recent board meeting, the board accepted the new by-laws, edited by Mrs. William Goldberg, and they will be mailed to each member."

MAY 17, 1956

"A motion by Mrs. Leo Levine and seconded by Mrs. Louis Salkin, that Sisterhood contribute an additional \$4000.00, this to be added to the additional loan of \$10,500.00, adding to \$14,500.00, to be given to the men, to fully purchase the lot, to be used as the new Center. Motion was unanimously accepted."

MARCH 3, 1957

"Co-chairman of the Donor Dinner, Mrs. Leo Cohen, extended her thanks on behalf of Mrs. Raymond Friedman and Mrs. Jacob Mogilowitz to their committee, in helping to make the Donor a social and financial success. The sum derived from this dinner was \$1019.35."



Mrs. Alfred Rosin, Mrs. Eli Levine, Mrs. Harold Schleider.



Mrs. Sheamon Keller.

BAZAAR, 1957

OCTOBER, 1957

"The Tree of Life Sisterhood held its first meeting in the Rose Schultz Memorial Hall of the New Tree of Life Synagogue-Center."

NOVEMBER 1957

"Mrs. David Cohen, chairman of the annual bazaar thanked all the committees for their splendid cooperation. Mrs. A. B. Slesnick gave a detailed financial report of the bazaar, the results of which was \$2400.00. A record attendance of over five hundred made this the most successful bazaar in its history."

Mention should be made of the two members who served the longest period of time as officers of the Sisterhood. They are, Mrs. Leo Cohen as secretary from 1948-1951, and from 1952-1957. Mrs. Alfred Rosin as treasurer from 1948 up to the present time.

Mrs. A. B. Slesnick was installed as president in May, 1954 and served for three consecutive years. During this time, the Building Fund Committee was established by the Synagogue, and Sisterhood was assigned the task of planning the kitchen, as well as serving on various other committees. It was under Mrs. Slesnick's leadership, that the kitchen planning was com-

pleted for the new building. She was also co-chairman of the building fund program and co-chairman of the plans committee, to which she devoted a great deal of her time.

Mrs. Harold Schleider was installed as president of the organization, May 1957. The months that followed were filled with the planning and purchasing of kitchen supplies, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Harry Cohen and Mrs. Herman Brody. A house committee, organized by Mrs. Julius Broida, completed the set of rules and regulations attending the use of the new Sisterhood kitchen.

Arrangements under the chairmanship of Mrs. Abe Lang and Mrs. Harold Snyder, were made for the purchase of banquet and card tables through voluntary contributions by various members.

Sisterhood obligations to the congregation have multiplied a hundred fold since its inception and the future promises to be a challenging one.

In recalling the memories of our past history, many unintentional omissions may have been made. We have attempted merely to represent Sisterhood's development from its beginning to the present time and to establish its identity with the Synagogue.