



A TRADITION OF GIVING

THE HISTORY OF JEWISH PHILANTHROPY IN PITTSBURGH



Herman Fineberg Photographs, Rauh Jewish

ANYONE IN NEED WAS HELPED.

PAULINE HIRSCH MILCH, *MY VOICE WAS HEARD*

Jewish families first arrived in Pittsburgh in the 1840's, bringing with them the Jewish tradition of *tzedakah*—the act of giving to help others. For over 150 years, the Jews of Pittsburgh have worked to care for other Jews and to improve the world at large. They have dropped coins into *pushke* (collection) cups, visited the sick, built institutions to serve those in need, and raised millions of dollars for many causes in Pittsburgh and beyond. This culture of giving was determined by the Jewish religious commandment to be compassionate, righteous, and just and was shaped by their experiences as Jews in America.

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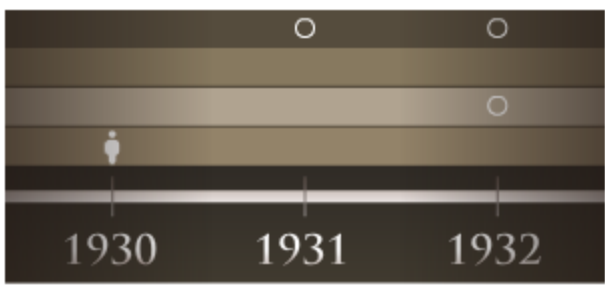
PHILANTHROPIC HISTORY

View collections from the Rauh Jewish Archives throughout the timeline and learn more about where to research, read, and discover the history of philanthropy and giving among Pittsburgh's Jewish community.

EXPLORE OUR INTERACTIVE TIMELINE

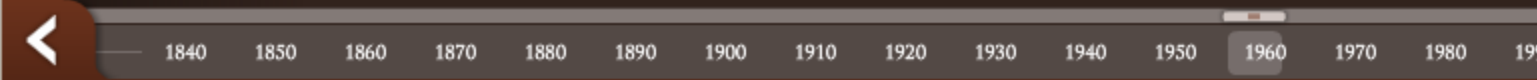
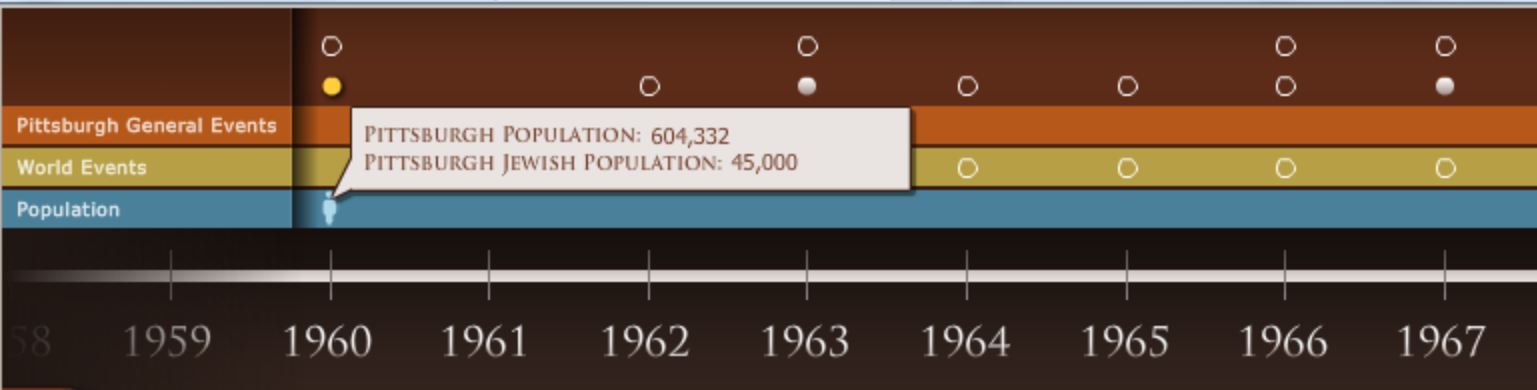


1931



DID YOU KNOW THAT...

Number of families on relief served by the Jewish Family Welfare Association doubles from the previous year due to economic hardships and unemployment caused by the Depression.



1960

Y-IKC

The Irene Kaufmann Centers (IKC), an educational, social, and cultural community center, was founded as the Irene Kaufmann Settlement in Pittsburgh's Hill District in 1909. Another organization, the Young Men's Hebrew Association, was established in 1910, also in the Hill District. In 1912, that organization joined with the Young Women's Hebrew Association to form the Young Men and Women's Hebrew Association, known as the "Y." The Y moved to Bellefonte Street in Pittsburgh's Oakland neighborhood in 1926, offering competitive sports, recreational and social activities, music and art programs, and classes and clubs of Jewish interest. By the 1950s, the Y and the IKC were offering many similar programs and services. To be more efficient, they merged in 1960, forming the Y-IKC. In 1974, the center was renamed the Jewish Community Center of Pittsburgh, and is now located on Forbes Street and Murray Avenue in Pittsburgh's Squirrel Hill neighborhood.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Jewish Community Center of Greater

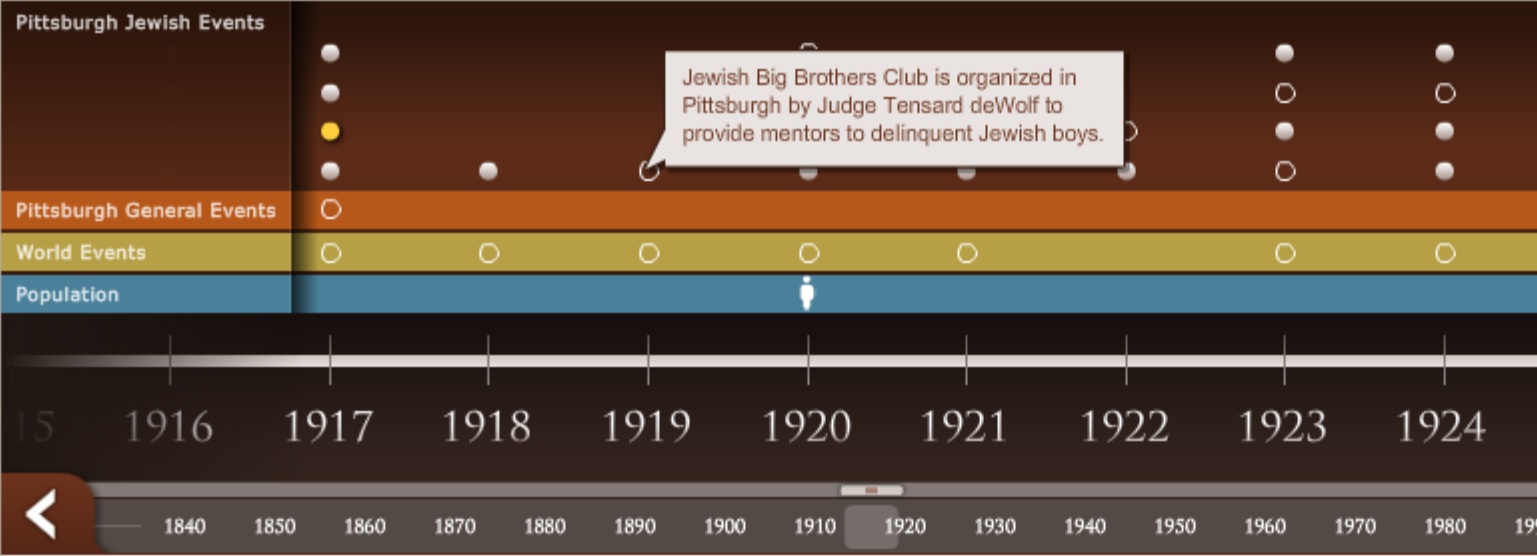


Site of a new Y-IKC



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1917

LABOR LYCEUM

The Labor Lyceum, housed in a large building on Miller Street in Pittsburgh's Hill District, opened in 1917 after ten years of fundraising by local Jewish labor groups. The building had meeting rooms and a large auditorium and became the center of Pittsburgh's immigrant labor movement. The local [Workmen's Circle, Branch #45](#), was headquartered there. Other groups, such as the Third Ward Jewish Branch of the Socialist Party and the Jewish Communist Party, held their meetings at the Lyceum. Lectures by labor leaders and speakers from around the



Paul Herman, a

Pittsburgh Jewish Events

Pittsburgh General Events

World Events

Population

1908 1909 1910 1911 1912 1913 1914 1915 1916 1917

1840 1850 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990

1916

HEBREW INSTITUTE

In 1916, the Hebrew Institute of Pittsburgh opened its doors to teach Hebrew, Jewish history, ethics, and literature to immigrant children. Rabbi Aaron M. Ashinsky, an Orthodox rabbi known for his work in responding to the needs of the city's growing Jewish immigrant population, first envisioned the school for Jewish studies and promoted the idea throughout the community. Donations, including a \$25,000 gift made by Louis I. Aaron, underwrote the construction of the building. First located in Pittsburgh's Hill District on Wylie Avenue and Green Street, the school later followed the many Jews moving to neighborhoods in the East End. In 1943, a new building opened on Forbes and Denniston Avenues in Squirrel Hill. The Hebrew Institute closed in 1991, and the building is now home to the Yeshiva Schools of Pittsburgh, Girls' and Preschool Campus.



Paul Drindell driving bus carrying, and Solomon Abrams...



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AUDIO



Excerpt of Interview with Dr. Solomon Abrams

[View Audio Transcript](#)

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- ["Hebrew Institute of Pittsburgh," *Jewish Criterion*, October 2, 1914](#)
- [Aaron Family Papers Finding Aid](#)
- ["Rabbi Aaron M. Ashinsky," *Pittsburgh Tri-State Pinkas*, 1949](#)
- [Minutes of early Hebrew Institute meetings, *Hebrew Institute Records*](#)
- ["Dean of Orthodox Rabbinate Dies," *Jewish Criterion*, April 10, 1954](#)
- [Hebrew Institute of Pittsburgh Records Finding Aid](#)

RESOURCES

- [Historic Pittsburgh, Hebrew Institute Photograph Collection](#)



Paul Drindell driving a bus carrying, among others, Solomon Abrams (left) and director of the Institute, Dr. Ellis (right), c.1922.

Hebrew Institute Photographs, Rare and Manuscript Collections, the Heinz History Center

7 Images Available

SEE MORE

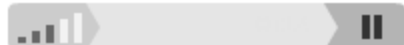
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VIEW



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Paul Drindell driving a bus carrying, among others, Solomon Abrams (left) and his brother, Dr. Ellis Abrams (right), c.1922.

Hebrew Institute Photographs, Rare and Manuscript Collections, the Heinz History Center

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VIEW



Hebrew Institute closed in 1991, and the building is now home to the Yeshiva Schools of Pittsburgh, Girls' and Preschool Campus.

AUDIO



Excerpt of Interview with Dr. Solomon Abrams

[View Audio Transcript](#)

Transcript of Excerpt of Interview with Dr. Solomon Abrams (b: 1913 - d: November 12, 2005)

Collection Name and Call Number: Corinne Azen Krause audiocassette tape collection, MSC# 113

Name of Interviewer: Corinne Azen Krause

Place of Interview: Unknown

Date of Interview: Unknown

Solomon Abrams: Well, interestingly enough, the Institute was founded by an, by an Orthodox Rabbi. His supporters came from a very Reform group. The Institute rapidly became inter-ideological, meaning not Reformed, not Orthodox, not Conservative, it was Jewish!

RELATED DOCUMENTS

["Hebrew Institute of Pittsburgh," *Jewish Criterion*, October 2, 1914](#)

[Aaron Family Papers Finding Aid](#)

["Rabbi Aaron M. Ashinsky," *Pittsburgh Tri-State Pinkas*, 1949](#)

RESOURCES

[Historic Pittsburgh, Hebrew Institute Photograph Collection](#)

Paul Drindell driving bus carrying, am Solomon Abrams director of the In brother, Dr. Ellis (right), c.1922.

Hebrew Institute Photographs, Ra the Heinz History

7 Images Available

SEE MORE

Interested in seeing one above? Simply button to view a cu images like it.

VIEW

Records of the Hebrew Institute of Pittsburgh
Call number: MS34912

Rack Jewish Archives
Library and Archives
Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania
Rector John Howe History Center
1222 Southman St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Extent: 3 linear feet, 2 boxes

Language of Materials: English

Abstract:

The Hebrew Institute opened its doors in 1914 and served as a Jewish educational institution until 1962. The materials in the collection consist primarily of administrative and budget records. The records also contain planning documents for the Hebrew Institute and other Jewish facilities as well as general reports on Jewish education.

Historical Note:

The Hebrew Institute was founded in response to the lack of organization and supervision of Jewish education in the Pittsburgh area. The purpose of the Hebrew Institute was to order Jewish education a better to provide Jews by teaching the Hebrew language and literature and by fostering knowledge of Jewish history and ethics. It was the vision of Rabbi S. M. Aronson to establish a system "Jewish Torah." He first presented this idea at a community committee meeting at the Washington Bank Building on September 5, 1911. The days later, a second meeting was held at his residence. During the meeting, a vote was taken to name the Jewish educational institution the Hebrew Institute.

After getting support and financial assistance from the community, on November 7, 1914, the Hebrew Institute of Pittsburgh opened its doors in a one building on Wylie Avenue and Chase Street in the Hill District, where Pittsburgh's Jewish immigrant population was centered at the time. The Hebrew Institute offered a kindergarten, elementary school, a student synagogue, library, printing department, sewing classes for girls and also offered evening classes. In addition to classrooms, the building housed a gym room and playground. The Hebrew Institute quickly became a center for Jewish community activities.

In the next few years after opening, the Hebrew Institute responded to the gradual demographic shift of Pittsburgh's Jewish population to the East End. In order to accommodate the needs of the growing Jewish community on Square Hill, in 1919, the Hebrew Institute began to use two rooms in the Collier School for classes. In 1921, the school began to provide transportation for the 700 students enrolled. The teachers from

Records of the Hebrew Institute, page 2

the Hebrew Institute also taught classes for younger part of Beth Shalom's Hebrew School. The Hebrew Institute also worked on organizing off-site schools such as 87th Street Hebrew Institute and the Tree of Life Hebrew School.

In 1923, the Hebrew Institute added the 3rd Street Hebrew Teachers' Training School and a high school, later to be known as the Louis I. Brand Hebrew High School, to its program. The Hebrew Institute became a member of the United Jewish Fund of Pittsburgh in 1937. In December 1943, the original building was sold and the Hebrew Institute relocated to a new building at May 1944 on Forbes and Decatur in Square Hill.

By 1954, the Hebrew Institute was conducting the largest kindergarten and summer camp of its kind in the country. The elementary school was also one of the country's largest. The entire program for the Hebrew Institute was used as a model for similar educational institutions.

In 1962, the Hebrew Institute, Community Day School, and the School of Advanced Jewish Studies merged to form the Jewish Educational Institute of Greater Pittsburgh.

Scope and Content Note:

The Records of the Hebrew Institute are housed in two archival boxes. The collection is arranged by folder in alphabetical order and placed in chronological order within each folder. The bulk of the papers include administrative, budget, and financial information dating from 1963 through 1962, with some records from 1978 and 1982. The records also contain planning documents for Pittsburgh's communal Jewish education, the Hebrew Institute, and Community Day School. The collection includes a staff study of the Hebrew Institute of Pittsburgh, written by Dr. Samuel H. Dancy, and an early history of the Hebrew Institute authored by Herman Cohen.

Statement of Acquisition: These records were received in two accession.

Accession #2008.0222 was received on October 31, 2008. Gift of Meyer Weisberg of the Jewish Educational Institute.

Accession # 2008.0213 was received on November 26, 2008. Gift of the Agency for Jewish Learning.

Related Archival: Records of the Hebrew Institute of Pittsburgh, 1963-1962, MS34912, Rack Jewish Archives, Rector John Howe History Center

Provenance: None

Records of the Hebrew Institute, page 3

Provenance:

PAGES CONTAINING THE SEARCH TERM: "BERTHA RAUH"

[Enoch Rauh Club](#)

Founded in 1920 as a Jewish boys' organization, the Enoch Rauh Club was named in memory of Enoch Rauh (1857-1919), a business ...

[1922 - Bertha Floersheim Rauh](#)

In 1922, Bertha F. Rauh (1865-1952) was appointed Director of Public Charities for the City of Pittsburgh, becoming the first woman in the United ...

[Bertha Floersheim Rauh](#)

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To
se

1922

BERTHA FLOERSHEIM RAUH

In 1922, Bertha F. Rauh (1865-1952) was appointed Director of Public Charities for the City of Pittsburgh, becoming the first woman in the United States to be a member of a mayor's cabinet. Bertha Rauh was born in Pittsburgh to German-Jewish immigrants Samuel and Pauline (Wertheimer) Floersheim. Her long career as a volunteer, advocate for the needy, and public servant began when she was a young woman. She volunteered, along with her mother and other women of the Rodef Shalom Congregation, to help Jewish immigrant refugees arriving from the Russian Empire and Eastern Europe.

Bertha Floersheim married Enoch Rauh (1857-1919) in 1888, and they had two children, Richard and Helen Rauh. While raising her children, Bertha Rauh continued her volunteer work on behalf of Jewish immigrants and advocated for others in need. In 1904, she was elected president of the National Council of Jewish Women, Pittsburgh Section, a position she held until 1919. She lectured, published articles, and initiated several charitable programs which were later taken over by the city of Pittsburgh, including the Penny Lunches in the Pittsburgh public schools, social work programs in the city's juvenile court, and the Committee for Jewish and Non-Jewish Blind, now known as the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind. Bertha Rauh also helped to found the Consumers' League, the first free dental clinic, the Public Health Nursing Association, the League of Women Voters, the Pittsburgh and Allegheny Milk and Ice Association, and the Pittsburgh Symphony Society.

By 1919, Bertha Rauh was a member of thirty boards, including those of the Humane Society, the Irene Kaufmann Settlement, and the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies. During her term as Director of the Department of Public Charities (later called the Department of Public Welfare) she transformed the Pittsburgh City Home and Hospital, later known as Mayview Hospital, into a modern psychiatric hospital. Bertha F. Rauh spent her lifetime working to improve the welfare of all the citizens of Pittsburgh.



Bertha F. Rauh ()
Richard E. Rauh
Jewish Archives &
Center

10 Images Available

improve the welfare of all the citizens of Pittsburgh.

RELATED DOCUMENT

- Richard E. Rauh Photographs
- Richard E. Rauh Photographs



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1922 Bertha Floersheim Rauh

The Rauh family (from left) Bertha, Richard S., Enoch, and Helen B. Rauh, c.1900.

Richard E. Rauh Photographs, Rauh Jewish Archives at the Heinz History Center

Cabinet. Bertha Rauh was born in Pittsburgh to German-Jewish immigrants Samuel and Rebecca (Wertheimer) Floersheim. Her long career as a social worker and servant began when she was a young woman. She was one of the other women of the Rodef Shalom Congregation, which was formed from the Russian Empire and Eastern Europe.

Bertha Floersheim married Enoch Rauh (1875-1945), a businessman, and they had three children: Richard and Helen Rauh. While raising her children, she worked on behalf of Jewish immigrants and advocated for social reform. She was president of the National Council of Jewish Women from 1915 until 1919. She lectured, published articles, and her work was later taken over by the city of Pittsburgh. She worked on public schools, social work programs in the city, and for the Jewish Blind, now known as the Jewish Community Center. She also helped to found the Consumers League, the Pittsburgh Nursing Association, the League of Women Voters, the Pittsburgh Association, and the Pittsburgh Symphony.

By 1919, Bertha Rauh was a member of the Board of Directors of the Irene Kaufmann Settlement, and the Pittsburgh Board of Public Welfare. As Director of the Department of Public Charities (later the Department of Public Welfare) she transformed the Pittsburgh Hospital into a modern psychiatric hospital. She worked to improve the welfare of all the citizens of Pittsburgh.



1922 Bertha Floersheim Rauh

Amelia Earhart, the world-famous pilot, Bertha Rauh, and two unidentified women in Pittsburgh, c.1928.

Richard E. Rauh Photographs, Rauh Jewish Archives at the Heinz History Center



RESEARCH HELP

OVERVIEW OF ZIONISM IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

 [Early Zionism in Western Pennsylvania by Ida Cohen Schwartz](#)

OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF JEWS IN PITTSBURGH

 [Community History, Jewish Chronicle Supplement, 2005](#)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Check here if you have questions about the website or its content, and for other basic information.

 [FAQs](#)

PITTSBURGH JEWISH NEWSPAPER PROJECT

An online resource providing access to Pittsburgh Jewish newspapers including the Jewish Criterion (1895-1962), the American Jewish Outlook (1934-1962), and the Jewish Chronicle (1962-present).

 [Pittsburgh Jewish Newspaper Project](#)

ONLINE RAUH JEWISH ARCHIVES FINDING AIDS

Finding aids to Rauh Jewish Archives collections are accessible on Historic Pittsburgh.

 [FAQs](#)

PITTSBURGH JEWISH NEWSPAPER PROJECT

An online resource providing access to Pittsburgh Jewish newspapers including the Jewish Criterion (1895-1962), the American Jewish Outlook (1934-1962), and the Jewish Chronicle (1962-present).

 [Pittsburgh Jewish Newspaper Project](#)

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 [Rauh Jewish Archives online finding aids](#)

PITTSBURGH AND BEYOND: THE EXPERIENCE OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

A comprehensive oral history project conducted by the National Council of Jewish Women, Pittsburgh Section. This collection of over 500 oral history interviews are digitized and available online.

 [Pittsburgh and Beyond: The Experience of the Jewish Community](#)

HISTORIC PITTSBURGH

A comprehensive online resource featuring digitized archival finding aids, texts, photographs, maps, census records and film from regional archives and libraries including the Heinz History Center, the Archives Service Center of the University of Pittsburgh, and the Carnegie Museum of Art.

 [Historic Pittsburgh](#)

JEWISH CONGREGATIONS AND SYNAGOGUES OF PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

Comprehensive list of all Jewish congregations and synagogues that have existed in the city of Pittsburgh.

 [Pittsburgh's Jewish Congregations and Synagogues](#)

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The following materials can be used by parents, teachers, and educators to broaden children's understanding of the history of Pittsburgh's Jewish community. These resources are designed to be used in the classroom or during a visit to the Heinz History Center.



UPPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - THE FACES OF OUR HISTORY
Coming Soon



MIDDLE SCHOOL - CONFLICT & COMPROMISE WITHIN
PITTSBURGH'S JEWISH COMMUNITY
Coming Soon



HIGH SCHOOL - YESTERDAY & TODAY
Coming Soon





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THE HISTORY OF JEWISH PHILANTHROPY IN PITTSBURGH



CONTACT US

Learn how you can support the Rauh Jewish Archives or donate archival materials by emailing our staff at the address below.

E-mail Address: rjarchives@heinzhistorycenter.org

The Library & Archives, which houses the Rauh Jewish Archives is open to the public and located on the History Center's sixth floor. To find information about hours, admission, and directions please visit the [Heinz History Center](#) website.



MY ROLE

- Digitize materials
 - Approximately 600 images on the website
 - 10 audio clips of oral histories
- Track materials on Excel spreadsheet
- Monitor interns' workflow
 - Up to five interns writing and researching
 - Some scanning
- Assist with research
- Create internal document on use

File Home Insert Page Layout Formulas Data Review View

Cut Copy Paste Format Painter Clipboard

Arial 10 A A

B I U

Wrap Text Merge & Center

General \$ % , .00 .00

Conditional Formatting as Table Styles

	B	C	
1	Description	Entry	Collect
2	Jacob and Lena Klee, photographed in Pittsburgh, c.1860.	1840 First Jewish Families	Frank F
3	William Frank (1819-1891) was among the founders of the Bes Almon Society.	1847 Bes Almon Society	Frank F
4	"Jewish Cemetery Project Attempts to Preserve Past," <i>Jewish Chronicle</i> , February 19, 1998	1847 Bes Almon Society	Jewish C
5	Volunteers with the Jewish Cemetery and Burial Association assisting with a burial service, September 1981	1853 Hebrew Burial Society	Jewish C
6	Entrance gate to the Chesed Shel Emeth (Acts of Loving Kindness) Cemetery in Millvale, Shaler Township, c.1980	1853 Hebrew Burial Society	UJF MS
7	"New Association Ensures Cemeteries' Future," <i>Jewish Chronicle</i> , April 2, 1992	1853 Hebrew Burial Society	Jewish C
8	"Protecting the Tradition," <i>Jewish Chronicle</i> , July 16, 1992	1853 Hebrew Burial Society	Jewish C
9	"Dignity of Humans Motivates HBA's 'Holy Deeds'," <i>Jewish Chronicle</i> , May 19, 1967	1853 Hebrew Burial Society	Jewish C
10	"Cemeteries Rich Communal History," <i>Jewish Chronicle</i> , September 11, 1986	1853 Hebrew Burial Society	Jewish C
11	"Dean of Orthodox Rabbinate Dies," <i>Jewish Criterion</i> , April 10, 1954	1853 Hebrew Burial Society	Jewish C
12	"Josiah Cohen," <i>courtesy of Rodef Shalom Congregation Archives</i>	1856 Rodef Shalom	Courtes
13	"Our Sisters' Recipes," <i>courtesy of Rodef Shalom Congregation Archives</i>	1856 Rodef Shalom	Courtes
14	Rodef Shalom's 1901 synagogue on Eighth Street in downtown Pittsburgh.	1856 Rodef Shalom	Corinne
15	Photographs of Josiah Cohen (1841-1930) who came to Pittsburgh in 1860 as the English teacher for Rodef Shalom's school and became one of the congregation's most active members.	1856 Rodef Shalom	Richard
16	"Pittsburgh Lodge No. 44, Independent B'nai B'rith," <i>Jewish Community Book</i> , 1921	1862 B'nai B'rith Jericho Lodge	L&A
17	Members of the B'nai B'rith Golden Triangle Chapter helping distribute a meal at the Jewish Home for the Aged, c. 1960	1862 B'nai B'rith Jericho Lodge	B'nai B'
18	Josiah Cohen (1841-1930) founded Pittsburgh's first B'nai B'rith Lodge.	1862 B'nai B'rith Jericho Lodge	Richard
19	A trip for the children of the Soho Community House to the Buhl Planetarium sponsored by the B'nai B'rith Golden Triangle Lodge, c.1955.	1862 B'nai B'rith Jericho Lodge	B'nai B'
20	Hebrew Benevolent Society president Abraham Lippman (1838-1910) was a successful dry goods merchant who dedicated much of his life to Jewish charitable causes in Pittsburgh.	1864 Hebrew Benevolent Society	Jewish C
21	Alexander Fink (1818-1892) was a founding member of the the Hebrew Benevolent Society and served as its president for twenty years.	1864 Hebrew Benevolent Society	Corinne
22	Preamble to the Hebrew Benevolent Society constitution, 1864, <i>Aaron Family Papers</i>	1864 Hebrew Benevolent Society	Aaron F
23	"The Hebrew Benevolent Society," <i>Jewish Criterion</i> , January 8, 1904	1864 Hebrew Benevolent Society	Jewish C

ANALYTICS

- 439 visits/month
 - US 385
 - Israel 11
 - India 5
 - Sri Lanka 2

Average page/visit overall is 1.74

LESSONS LEARNED

- Better-defined workflow
- Staging area for materials
- Staying within roll-out deadline
- Do not use Flash
- Better understanding of jargon
- One person writing entries