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**

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**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.
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 country were also given there.
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.
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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

SEE MORE IMAGES

Interested in seeing more images like the one above? Simply click the button to view a curated collection of images like it.
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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
Rabbi Aaron M. Abraham

Rabbi Aaron Mendel Abraham was born on the 7th of June, 1854, in the town of
Pretoria, Republic of South Africa. He was one of the sons of Rabbi Shalom and
Rebecca (Rabbin) Abraham. He studied under the guidance of the
Rabbis of the city, and was later ordained as a rabbi by the American
Rabbinical Association. In 1880, he was appointed as the spiritual leader of
the Beth El Congregation in Pretoria, a position he held until his retirement in
1920. He was succeeded by Rabbi Zvi Hirsch. Abraham was a noted scholar
and was a member of the South African Rabbinical Conference. He was also
active in the Jewish community, serving as a teacher and a member of the
Jewish Educational Society. He died on the 10th of November, 1921.
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 ...

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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 Pennsylvanian 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.
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
Bertha Floersheim married Enoch Rauh (1874-1930), Richard and Helen Rauh, while raising her five children on behalf of Jewish immigrants and advocates for social reform and welfare programs in the city of Pittsburgh. She became the president of the American Jewish Yakult Congregation from the Russian Empire and Eastern Europe. By 1919, Bertha Rauh was a member of the National Council of Jewish Women, and the Consumers League Nursing Association, the League of Women Voters Association, and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. By 1919, she transformed the Pittsburgh Infirmary into a modern psychiatric hospital to improve the welfare of all the citizens of Pittsburgh, and helped to found the Consumers League Nursing Association. She also helped to found the Consumers League Nursing Association, the League of Women Voters Association, and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

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.
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🔗 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
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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Collection</th>
<th>Entry</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jacob and Lena Klee, photographed in Pittsburgh, c. 1860.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1840 First Jewish Families</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Frank (1819-1891) was among the founders of the Bes Almon Society.</td>
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<td>1847 Bes Almon Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Jewish Cemetery Project Attempts to Preserve Past,&quot; Jewish Chronicle, February 19, 1998</td>
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<td>1847 Bes Almon Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteers with the Jewish Cemetery and Burial Association assisting with a</td>
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<td>burial service, September 1981</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entrance gate to the Chesed Shel Emeth (Acts of Loving Kindness) Cemetery in Millvale, Shaler Township, c. 1980</td>
<td></td>
<td>1853 Hebrew Burial Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;New Association Ensures Cemeteries' Future,&quot; Jewish Chronicle, April 2, 1992</td>
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<td>1853 Hebrew Burial Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Protecting the Tradition,&quot; Jewish Chronicle, July 16, 1992</td>
<td></td>
<td>1853 Hebrew Burial Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Dignity of Humans Motivates HBA's 'Holy Deeds,'&quot; Jewish Chronicle, May 19, 1967</td>
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<td>1853 Hebrew Burial Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Dean of Orthodox Rabbinate Dies,&quot; Jewish Criterion, April 10, 1954</td>
<td></td>
<td>1853 Hebrew Burial Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Josiah Cohen,&quot; courtesy of Rodef Shalom Congregation Archives</td>
<td></td>
<td>1856 Rodef Shalom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Our Sisters' Recipes,&quot; courtesy of Rodef Shalom Congregation Archives</td>
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<td>1856 Rodef Shalom</td>
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<td>Rodef Shalom's 1901 synagogue on Eighth Street in downtown Pittsburgh.</td>
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<td>1856 Rodef Shalom</td>
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<tr>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>1856 Rodef Shalom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Pittsburgh Lodge No. 44, Independent B'nai B'rith,&quot; Jewish Community Book, 1921</td>
<td></td>
<td>1862 B'nai B'rith Jericho Lodge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the B'nai B'rith Golden Triangle Chapter helping distribute a meal at the Jewish Home for the Aged, c. 1960</td>
<td></td>
<td>1862 B'nai B'rith Jericho Lodge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josiah Cohen (1841-1930) founded Pittsburgh's first B'nai B'rith Lodge.</td>
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<td>1862 B'nai B'rith Jericho Lodge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td></td>
<td>1862 B'nai B'rith Jericho Lodge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>1864 Hebrew Benevolent Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Fink (1818-1892) was a founding member of the Hebrew Benevolent Society and served as its president for twenty years.</td>
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<td>1864 Hebrew Benevolent Society</td>
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<td>Preamble to the Hebrew Benevolent Society constitution, 1864, Aaron Family Papers</td>
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<td>1864 Hebrew Benevolent Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Hebrew Benevolent Society,&quot; Jewish Criterion, January 8, 1904</td>
<td></td>
<td>1864 Hebrew Benevolent Society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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