

OUR PATERSON JEWISH HERITAGE

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2026

1st Edition May 1986

2nd Edition (with pictures) October 1987

The 2nd Edition is in honor of the

75th Anniversary of the

Y.M. – Y.W.H.A. of North Jersey

Cover: The Nathan Barnert statue by Gaetano Federici at the Paterson City Hall Plaza was unveiled on October 28, 1925 before the eyes of the 86 year old statesman . . . a rare phenomenon in public sculpture, a memorial to a living man. See article on page 7.

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OUR PATERSON HERITAGE

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1st Edition Cover Artwork . . . . Nina Lalin

FOREWORD

This pamphlet is the result of interviews, research, and editing by dedicated volunteer members of the Jewish Historical Society of North Jersey.

An outgrowth of the Charles Goldman Judaica Library of the YM-YWHA of North Jersey, the Jewish Historical Society began as a volunteer committee committed to taping the reminiscences of Paterson Jewry. However, the need of the Paterson Jewish community to preserve its history became the focus of this group. As archives, exhibits, speaker's bureau, and genealogy workshops were added, the committee developed into a Jewish Historical Society comparable to such groups all over the United States. It is now listed with the American Jewish Historical Society.

WAVES OF IMMIGRATION TO PATERSON

German Jews 1840
Russian and Polish Jews 1880's
Lodz and Bialystok 1905
Russian Revolution 1920's
Holocaust Immigrants 1940's
Soviet Jewry 1970's

During these periods, many Jews immigrated to the Paterson area because of economic factors, persecution, pogroms, revolutions and wars.

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

We dedicate this booklet to the thousands who, in search of a better life, bravely crossed an ocean to face uncertain futures. It records a golden age in the history of Paterson Jewry, 150 years of

struggle, achievement, happiness, and heartache. This, then, is the story of the first Jewish settlers of Paterson: the merchants and tailors from Germany, Bohemia, and Hungary who came in the 1840's, the Russian, Polish and Lithuanian Jews who came in the 1880's, and the immigrants from the textile centers of Lodz and Bialystok who came in the 1900's. Fleeing the pogroms and the persecutions so prevalent in Europe in the 19th Century, they came to America in search of the "Goldena Medina". They brought an age-old religion and built a new life around it. They found ways to hold tight to their Jewish beliefs and culture and, as their parents before them, handed them down from generation to generation. They rose from poverty and deprivation to positions of influence; they created agencies and organizations which helped to make the new life bearable; they helped to build a city.

This booklet is only a beginning. There may be unintentional errors and omissions, for which we apologize. Except for a meager account in the Encyclopedia Judaica, there was no other written information or authoritative resource to which we could turn. We therefore turned to those people who could share their remembrances, prized pictures and mementoes. We express our appreciation to the small group of volunteers who conducted interviews, wrote reports and edited them. We are deeply grateful to all who participated and made this booklet a reality, especially to those who conceived this project and patiently and tenderly nurtured it.

The seeds have been planted. It is our intent to add to this effort and eventually produce a volume worthy of the vibrant Jewish community of this area. We can only succeed with your cooperation. Help us make this effort a beautiful tribute to our Paterson Jewish heritage by correcting and adding information and contributing materials to the ongoing Archives of the Paterson Jewish community.

EDITORS' NOTE: We are aware that thousands of people contributed to the building of Paterson Jewish life. Nevertheless in this work we dwell on organizations and institutions and do not mention names since we could not verify many of them and we did not want to omit anyone. However, we include only two names, Nathan Barnert and Jacob Fabian, philanthropists who left us a legacy of many humanitarian accomplishments.

NATHAN BARNERT

In 1849 Nathan Barnert arrived in the United States, a poor 11-year old. At the age of 20, in 1858, he settled in Paterson. Five years later he married Miriam Philips.

At a time when few Jews lived in Paterson, Barnert, a pious Jew, became one of its most illustrious citizens. As a successful businessman and a respected public figure, at age 45 he was elected mayor and served two terms.

Barnert contributed his salary from all public offices to the sick and underprivileged, donating much of his wealth to establish and support many charities for all races and creeds. He gave generously to the Barnert Memorial Temple, the Miriam Barnert Hebrew Free School, the Nathan and Miriam Barnert Hospital and the Miriam Barnert Home for the Aged.

In 1925, two years before his death, the grateful citizens of Paterson honored the 87-year old Nathan Barnert with an imposing bronze statue. His statue still stands in City Hall Plaza.

THE YM-YWHA OF NORTH JERSEY

Over a hundred years ago, as early as 1877 the dream of a Jewish Center which would provide physical, social and educational activities for all ages took root in the minds of the Jews of Paterson. Many early attempts were unsuccessful.

In 1906, a handful of young women meeting regularly at the Barnert Free School formed the YWHA. In 1914, the YMHA was incorporated and rented quarters at 97 Broadway. A fierce desire grew among its founders to match the existing YMCA which admitted some Jews but only under a quota system. The new YMHA proudly proclaimed "no quota here!".

In 1917, the United States declared war on Germany and the YMHA became a busy center of activity. A gym program was started at a neighboring school. Both the YWHA and the YMHA jointly and separately contributed to the war effort with dances, concerts and gift boxes for Jewish soldiers. During these years a popular joint venture was the Hebrew Literary and Debating Society.

When, in 1919, the YMHA moved to Orpheus Hall, its activities multiplied. Athletics were in full swing; baseball and football leagues were organized which participated in state athletic meets. Numerous clubs were formed. A group of young men, the Culsos, founded to pursue culture, brought a lively literary, musical and social life to the "Y". A symphony orchestra was organized and concerts were presented at the Majestic Theater.

By 1922, the thriving YWHA had acquired a building on Church Street, and the YMHA was so vigorous that it was able to buy a lot on Van Houten Street next to Temple Emanuel and engage an executive director to publish a weekly newsletter, The Criterion. In December

of that year, the YMHA and the YWHA formed one organization and prepared to move into a new home together.

In the milestone year of 1925, the "Y" became an important part of Paterson and a new Georgian-style building on Van Houten Street was opened. It boasted the best modern facilities, a gymnasium, auditorium, swimming pool, library and a tiled rooftop which could be used for dances. The physical education department flourished. A basketball team was formed and the baseball team won games throughout the state. Football, wrestling and track attracted numerous athletes and spectators.

There was a surge of new members. Neighborhood organizations and dozens of clubs, junior and senior, began to meet at the "Y". Some of the clubs like the Culsos, the Panthers, the Roosevelt Club and the Hebrew Athletic Club became "lifetime clubs" lasting for more than thirty years. Tea dances were held where many young men and women met their future spouses. A lecture series was begun featuring nationally-known speakers.

In the late twenties the Religious Committee established a Sunday School and the "Y" offered regular Sabbath Services. These were eventually discontinued because they duplicated services offered by local synagogues and temples. In 1928, the partnership of the Veritans Club of Paterson and the "Y" was forged and Camp Vacation, a day camp, was created by the "Y" and supported by Veritans contributions.

Hard times during the depression brought out the best in the "Y". It became necessary to reduce staff and budget and increase the work load. In 1931, the new "Y" Woman's Club started its fundraising activities which continue to this day. They sponsored the Junior Lyceum program, a cultural arts program for teens. Through these rocky years another group, the Boosters, could be relied upon for

fundraising. It supported activities and budgets and each year sponsored a special fundraising edition of The Criterion.

At this time, the Music Committee brought noted artists to Paterson and a special relationship with the Paterson community emerged when the "Y" concerts were moved to the larger auditorium at Eastside High School. Marian Anderson, Jascha Heifetz, Vladimir Horowitz, Yehudi Menuhin, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Artur Rubinstein and Efrem Zimbalist were only a few of the distinguished guests to perform.

December 7, 1941 plunged the nation into war and once again the "Y" met the challenge. It became the local headquarters for the home effort. It opened its doors 24 hours a day to military personnel stationed in or near Paterson. "Coffee and" was available along with social and athletic opportunities. Packages for Hanukkah and Passover were sent abroad and over 2,000 Jewish men in the armed forces were kept in touch through The Bugle, a newsletter prepared by The Criterion staff. Each man received an automatic membership in the "Y".

By the time the war ended the "Y" had lost many men on the battlefield.

With the return of the servicemen in 1945 and the arrival of refugees from Europe, the "Y" recognized the need for expansion. A generous gift of the old Temple Emanuel property next door to the "Y" enabled it to build an addition providing 30% more space for sorely needed facilities. New groups and new activities emerged. JONA, the Jewish Organization of New Americans, was formed; the Socialites, one of the first singles groups in New Jersey was started; the Junior Women's Club established the Cooperative Nursery School; and in the summer of 1952 Camp Vacation became Camp Veritans where children of all economic backgrounds were served through a sliding scale of fees.

In 1966, the Anna L. Schneider Branch Building was offered to the "Y" through the Jewish Federation. Located outside of the downtown area with ample parking facilities, it opened new possibilities for junior and senior programs. The slogan of the Schneider Branch became "3 to 83".

Changes were taking place. Young people were leaving the city and new Jewish communities were springing up in the suburbs. In 1969, the membership chose a new name, the YM-YWHA of North Jersey. A search for a new location was under way.

The search for a new regional center for the YM-YWHA of North Jersey ended when in 1973 a site was found in Wayne on the Hinchman property. Through the generous donations of a group of 14 long-time "Y" members who put together the seed money, 2.4 million dollars, the "Y" became a financial reality. The intense efforts of the Up-county Group, the tireless work of the Building Committee, and dynamic fund-raising campaigns resulted in a center which would enrich the life of the Jewish communities for years to come.

On May 2, 1976 the YM-YWHA of North Jersey opened its doors to serve people of all ages in the North Jersey communities. An atrium, art gallery, gift shop, theater, social hall, dance studio, Olympic-sized swimming pool, gymnasium with a suspended running track, health club, exercise rooms, several ball courts, coffee shop, meeting rooms, Judaica Library, numerous classrooms, senior lounge and tween and teen game room, The Jewish Federation of North Jersey, Jewish Family Service and the Jewish Board of Education are under the same roof.

The "Y" is people. Like people the "Y" is a living thing - constantly in need of nurturing and renewal. Its work is never ended.

THE "Y" PARENTS' GROUP

The "Y" Parents' Group, its oldest volunteer group, was organized in 1926 as the "Y" Parent Teacher Association. Its purpose was to subsidize the Sunday School and provide financial aid to needy students.

As the years passed through various fundraising activities, the group provided supplies for the school's educational program, and sponsored functions enriching the celebration of Jewish holidays. The Model Family Seder was an annual highlight.

Eventually the Sunday School was discontinued and the group focused on the Schneider Branch Nursery School and maximizing Jewish activities at the Schneider Branch.

Today, the "Y" Parents" Group still meets there; it maintains and services the Regina S. Simons Memorial Library and the Essie Beck Memorial Gift Shop. In addition, the group contributes annually to the "Y" operating treasury.

THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF NORTH JERSEY

The Jewish Federation of North Jersey, located in Wayne, is today the central coordinating agency for 28 North Jersey communities. It brings together Jewish leaders and a skilled professional staff who work jointly to determine priorities responsive to Jewish needs.

Historically, the Jewish Federation of North Jersey evolved from the Jewish Community Council of Paterson. When Nathan Barnert died in November 1927, the community no longer had a paterfamilias to whom it could turn for funds, advice, and authority. For the next four years Jacob Fabian and others shared the burden. In 1933, the council was created to provide a central coordinating structure for the Paterson Jewish organizations. Under Council, duplication of the effort of local activities was eliminated. The Council's stated goals were: to strengthen Jewish life from within while protecting it against the forces of anti-Semitism from without, to sponsor Jewish culture and education, to cooperate with national organizations, and to work to maintain and preserve Jewish traditions and protect the dignity and honor of our people.

Under the leadership of its early executives, a fund-raising campaign was established in 1934 called the United Jewish Appeal. Funds were raised for German Jewish Relief as well as overseas and local institutions. Through the years, the Council office was at 179 Ellison Street, later at 45 Church Street, 390 Broadway, and Market Street in Paterson.

During the war years, the Jewish Community Council strengthened its position as the spokesman for Paterson Jews, and intensified its fund-raising efforts to provide rescue, relief and resettlement for the Jews of Europe in America and in Palestine.

In the 1960's with the exodus of many Jewish families from Paterson to suburbia, services were expanded to reach out to Jewish people in Fair Lawn, Wayne, Pompton Lakes and Wyckoff. Campaign needs escalated with the establishment of the State of Israel followed by the Six-Day War.

In 1969 the name of the Jewish Community Council of Paterson was officially changed to the Jewish Federation of North Jersey. Today Federation conducts the annual United Jewish Appeal Campaign; provides a forum for coordinated citizen action on matters of Jewish concern and interest; provides a referral service for those who need help; provides leadership development for Community Service; and publishes The Federation News, a bi-monthly newspaper of local Jewish interest. In January 1986, in conjunction with the Federation of Greater Clifton-Passaic, the publication was renamed Jewish Community News.

The current constituent agencies of the Federation are: Community Relations Committee, Council on Aging, Daughters of Miriam Center for the Aged, Fair Lawn Jewish Community Council, Frisch School, Jewish Family Service, Jewish Students Association at William Paterson College, YM-YWHA of North Jersey, Yavneh Academy, Barnert Hospital, Regional High School, Federation Apartments, Solomon Schecter Day School.

The communities included in the Jewish Federation of North Jersey are: Allendale, Bloomingdale, Butler, Elmwood Park, Fair Lawn, Franklin Lakes, Haledon, Hawthorne, Kinnelon, Lincoln Park, Little Falls, North Haledon, Oakland, Paterson, Pequannock, Pompton Lakes, Pompton Plains, Prospect Park, Ringwood, Riverdale, Rochelle Park, Saddle Brook, Totowa, Waldwick, Wanaque, Wayne, West Milford, and Wyckoff.

HOLOCAUST COMMITTEE - JONA

The Jewish Organization of New Americans (JONA) was organized by survivors of the Holocaust with the help of the Paterson YM-YWHA. JONA was the successor to Club Freedom, the first organized group formed by new Americans who survived the horrors of World War II.

On April 30, 1950, JONA joined with other Yiddish-speaking groups in Paterson to conduct New Jersey's first commemoration of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. The first program was conducted entirely in Yiddish, as were the succeeding programs, through 1960. In order to involve the English-speaking Jewish organizations, the Holocaust Committee requested the support of the Jewish Community Council, today known as the Jewish Federation of North Jersey.

With the Federation's full support and backing, the Commemoration evolved from a Paterson-centered event with a limited audience to a community-wide observance which draws audiences in excess of 800 people. The Annual Commemoration of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and Yizkor for the six million Jewish martyrs is the single largest yearly gathering sponsored by the Jewish Federation of North Jersey.

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE OF NORTH JERSEY

Jewish Family Service was established on June 26, 1944 as the Jewish Social Service Bureau of Paterson, under the auspices of the Jewish Community Council (later the Jewish Federation). First located at 179 Ellison Street, the agency later moved to 390 Broadway, and in 1975 moved to its present location at the North Jersey YM-YWHA in Wayne.

Originally the agency was formed to oversee the welfare of Paterson's homeless Jewish children. Prior to its establishment, homeless Jewish children were cared for at the Daughters of Miriam Home for Orphans and the Aged in Clifton. Because of the growing needs of the chronically ill and aged, it was no longer feasible to house the children in the same facility with the aged. Plans were initiated not only to relocate and place the children in foster homes, but also to offer comprehensive social services to families in the entire Jewish community.

Throughout the 1940's, 50's, and 60's, the agency developed a range of counseling and social services to assist individuals and families under stress. Initially, the agency screened applicants for the Daughters of Miriam. After World War II, it actively participated in helping to resettle many immigrant families. From 1949 to 1972, the agency was licensed for adoption and foster care services. During the 70's and 80's, Jewish Family Service became a multi-function family agency, providing counseling, outreach, consultative and educational services to Jewish families. In addition, JFS developed a wide range of community-based and specialized services to the elderly and their families.

Today, JFS provides professional and confidential counseling services to all Jewish families who live or work within the JFS area seeking help for personal, marital and family conflicts.

The agency collaborates with the YM-YWHA in providing educational and consultation programs to the nursery school, parenting center, senior citizen groups and Camp Veritans. Staffed by professionally trained clinical caseworkers, JFS is subsidized primarily by the Jewish Federation of North Jersey with UJA funds. Services are available for all Jewish families who live or work within the Jewish Federation area.

RELIGION

The Jews who came to Paterson in the late 19th and early 20th centuries carried with them the religious philosophy and customs of their homeland.

Religious life played an important role in the establishment of Paterson Jewry and many synagogues and temples were founded and prospered. Not surprisingly they were not all of one sect and a variety of congregations arose. Some of the most representative are included.

THE BARNERT TEMPLE - CONGREGATION B'NAI JESHURUN

In the mid 1840's the small Jewish community of Paterson was comprised of merchants and a few professional men, mostly of German origin. Gradually they were joined by some Jews from Bialystok, Poland, eastern Europe's textile center. By 1847 the Jews of Paterson, to serve their spiritual and social needs, had formally organized themselves as the Congregation B'Nai Jeshurun of the Town of Paterson, a traditional Orthodox synagogue, following the Ashkenazic ritual of the German-Jewish community.

By 1858 space was rented for worship in a building on West Street, and in 1860 they moved to new quarters at 9 Mulberry Street. Because the congregation at this time was still small, it often was necessary to travel to Passaic in order to gather the necessary number of Jews for a minyan.

With the great influx of German Jewish immigrants to Paterson in the 1860's, the congregation outgrew its original cemetery in Clifton (then known as Acquackanock Township), and purchased a larger cemetery in Totowa, Mount Nebo Cemetery, which is the congregation's burial ground today. In 1878 the congregation acquired its first permanent building at 124 Van Houten Street.

Though there are no official records of a formal adoption of Reform Judaism by the congregation, there was a gradual move toward Liberal-Reform Judaism in the 1870's and by 1886 the Russian and Polish Jews who did not wish to affiliate with the trend toward reform, broke away, organizing their own congregation, B'Nai Israel, on Godwin Avenue.

In 1894 Paterson's Reform Temple was dedicated on the corner of Broadway and Straight Street, a site deeded to the congregation by Mayor Nathan Barnert. The two-towered Moorish building, a popular

style for synagogues during the Victorian Era, with a seating capacity of over 650, a beautiful interior, stained glass and a pipe organ, soon became a city attraction.

An outstanding event in the history of the congregation and of Paterson took place on April 20, 1900, when President William McKinley attended the Passover Sabbath evening service at the Temple. The early 1900's was a time of carefree elegance in social life. Extravagant formality, Prince Albert coats, high silk hats and fashionable Paris gowns were de rigeur at the Sabbath services, and the congregation was always in formal attire for the High Holy days.

As the eastern European immigration wave came to Paterson in 1900, the ethnic-national make-up of the congregation began to change, and Russian names joined those of German origin. In 1920, the congregation cemented its ties with Reform Judaism, accepting the Union Prayer Book, the official prayer book of the Reform movement, for general use.

After 1945, the suburban communities surrounding Paterson experienced population booms, and a large shift of the Jewish families caused a decline in the membership of Barnert Temple. In 1964, the congregation moved to a new location at 13th and Wall Avenues (the old Wall-Carroll estate in Eastside Park), where today 300 families from the surrounding communities worship.

Sunday School and Hebrew School have been maintained throughout the years. Owing to further change and movement out of Paterson, the Temple plans a new building in Franklin Lakes. Ground breaking ceremonies took place on May 17, 1987.

TEMPLE EMANUEL - A CONSERVATIVE CONGREGATION

Temple Emanuel was established as a conservative congregation to consecrate a place where the Jews of Paterson and vicinity might worship in a manner adaptable to the American way of life and yet adhere to the customs of traditional Judaism.

In 1904, the First Austrian-Hungarian Benevolent Association, dedicated to mutual helpfulness in times of distress or sorrow, decided to establish a synagogue. Because they did not have a building of their own, they held services in various places: first in an old church on Hamilton Street, then in a Bridge Street bakery, and later in the Masonic Temple. In April 1907, they bought land on Van Houten Street near Church Street and the new building of Congregation Emanuel was dedicated and officially opened on August 25, 1907.

Customarily Temples offered the purchase of cemetery plots to its membership and Temple Emanuel established its own cemetery. Today two cemeteries exist, one in Saddle Brook and another in Paramus.

Because of the ever-expanding community and Temple membership the president of the Temple, Jacob Fabian, contributed $400,000 in 1928 toward the building of a new Temple on Broadway and East 33rd Street. Later, he increased his donation to include enough money to build a new Hebrew School in memory of his son, Abraham. In 1928 a house on Park Avenue was purchased for the Hebrew School.

An attempt is being made to declare the Temple Emanuel sanctuary a historic monument so that the magnificent artistic decorations will be preserved.

THE BIG SHUL - B'NAI ISRAEL
and
THE LITTLE SHUL - AHAVATH JOSEPH

In 1886 the Orthodox Jews of Paterson formed a small congregation known as B'Nai Israel. Their first place of worship was rented at 94 River Street for holiday, daily and Sabbath services. In time the congregation moved to Van Houten Street, to 47 Bridge Street, to 28 Paterson Street, and some time later property was purchased at 12-14 Godwin Street where a large and impressive synagogue was built known popularly as the Godwin Street Shul or the Big Shul.

Another Orthodox Hebrew congregation, Ahavath Joseph, or the Little Shul, was established by Rumanian Jews in the early 1900's at 23 Godwin Street. While never reaching the numerical strength of the Big Shul, it played an important role in the religious life of the Jewish community.

On January 24, 1954 the Big Shul and the Little Shul combined owing to a declining Jewish Orthodox population. The current location of the merged synagogue is in a beautifully redecorated private residence at 561 Park Avenue which was purchased in December 1961.

FAIR STREET SHUL
(CONGREGATION ANSHEI LUBAVITCH)

To keep a Lubavitch presence in Paterson, Congregation Anshai Lubavitch was founded at approximately the beginning of the century on Godwin Avenue.

Originally the Orthodox Shul on Fair Street was known as the United Brotherhood Anshai Lodz, popularly called the "Polish Shul".

In the 1960's riots and vandalism forced a move to a new home at East 26th Street and Broadway. At this address the Fair Street congregation was joined by a small Shul, Linat Hatzedek, located on Carroll Street. Together they took the name of United Brotherhood Linat Hatzedek, dropping Anshai Lodz.

Little further information is known because all records and documents were lost when, in 1980, vandals destroyed its last home at 11th Avenue near 26th Street.

The only presence today is in a house on 32nd Street and Broadway known as Anshai Lubavitch Congregation. Both the United Brotherhood Linat Hatzedek and the Lubavitcher congregations are joining forces in looking for a new home in Fair Lawn.

CONGREGATION OHAV SHOLOM

Congregation Ohav Sholom, an Orthodox synagogue, was founded around 1915. Its early members worshiped on the third floor of a Main Street building in the Dublin section of Paterson and later moved to 453 Main Street in the same neighborhood. When Congregation Ohav Sholom was dissolved in 1951, its assets were distributed to Yavneh, the YM-YWHA, Daughters of Miriam, the Fair Lawn Jewish Center, the State of Israel and others. The property is now owned by St. Boniface Church.

WATER STREET SHUL

Another Orthodox synagogue was the Water Street Shul located on Water Street between Arch and Clinton Street. It still exists today as Congregation Beth Hamedresh Hagadol on Vreeland Avenue.

MIKVAH

A Mikvah is a ritual bath used mainly by post-menstrual women, by brides before their weddings and by converts to Judaism.

The first known Mikvah in Paterson existed at 38 Paterson Street under private auspices. It served the needs of the Orthodox community and introduced showers to those who lacked facilities at home.

After the owners sold the Mikvah, another one was established on Fair Street under the supervision of the Orthodox Rabbinate.

No Mikvah exists in Paterson today.

JEWISH EDUCATION

Few of the Jewish immigrants escaped the clash of cultures. While they gave their wholehearted support to the public schools and worked hard at becoming true Americans and assimilating into the American mainstream, they could not give up the spiritual values they brought with them. They strived to pass on to their children the traditional teachings of centuries. This meant schooling after public school hours in the Torah and the Talmud and Yiddishkeit. However, Jewish religious schools failed to attract more than a fraction of the immigrants' children. Responding to pressures for Americanization and assimilation they equated Hebrew learning and traditions, so vital to their parents, as foreignness.

Nevertheless, a variety of Cheders and Talmud Torahs (Hebrew Schools) sprang up, designed to give an elementary Jewish education to both boys and girls.

THE MIRIAM BARNERT MEMORIAL HEBREW FREE SCHOOL - COMMUNITY SYNAGOGUE

The Miriam Barnert Memorial Hebrew Free School was founded in 1895 when a number of leading citizens recognized the need to provide a free shcool for the religious training of Jewish children. Forty pupils were enrolled and sessions were first held on the third floor of the Smith and Jackson building on Market Street.

In 1902, after the death of his wife Miriam, Nathan Barnert deeded land at 176 Broadway for a school in her memory. The deed provided for a free school with daily instruction of Jewish children in the

Hebrew Language, in the Old Testament, in Jewish history and religion, and the study of the Talmud. It further provided that religious services should be conducted in the school. Nathan Barnert served as president of the school from 1896 - 1927.

In 1961, a new building erected on 14th Avenue between East 28th and 29th Streets, was ready for occupancy for the High Holy Days. Since that time services to the members and the community have been greatly expanded, membership has increased, and a cemetery has been purchased.

YAVNEH ACADEMY

Yavneh Academy was founded as the Paterson Yavneh Yeshiva in 1942 with only six children registered in its kindergarten. For the first two years classes met in a Graham Avenue storefront; later they shared a building with the Talmud Torah at 11th Avenue and 25th Street on a part time basis. In September 1950, the Talmud Torah was absorbed by Yavneh Academy which occupied a building at 377 12th Avenue. At that time, Yavneh Academy added an 8th grade and was now a complete elementary school with both Hebrew and secular departments. To accommodate its growing enrollment a new Yavneh Academy building was purchased on the 12th Avenue Paterson estate of former Governor John W. Griggs, and dedicated in September 1954.

New classrooms and a primary grade wing were added in 1960 and 1976. To serve its growing suburban student population, in 1981 Yavneh purchased an existing school in Paramus on five acres of land with athletic facilities. A new cafeteria and six classrooms were added.

Today Yavneh's eight-year course equips students with a thorough knowledge of spoken and written Hebrew, Chumash with Rashi's

commentaries, the minor Prophets, customs, traditions, religious observances, and Jewish and Israeli history. The secular program parallels that of the public schools, and is fully accredited.

WORKMEN'S CIRCLE JEWISH CHILDREN'S SCHOOL

A Workmen's Circle Children's School also called the "Shula" opened in Paterson in 1921. First housed in empty store fronts, then in a former church at 12 Governor Street, the Shula later moved to the Labor Lyceum building of the Workmen's Circle. Five afternoons a week professional teachers, mostly from New York, taught Yiddish reading, history and literature. Since the school was secular, no religious ideology was taught.

Parents of the students were much involved in the running of the Shula, and in planning fundraising affairs for its support.

From the 20's to the 40's the Shula flourished. But as the Jewish population moved out of Paterson, the Shula's enrollment diminished and it became a 3-day a week school. Today, no Jewish Children's School exists in Paterson. However, the Workmen's Circle continues to sponsor a children's school in Hackensack.

THE YIDDISH FOLK SCHOOL

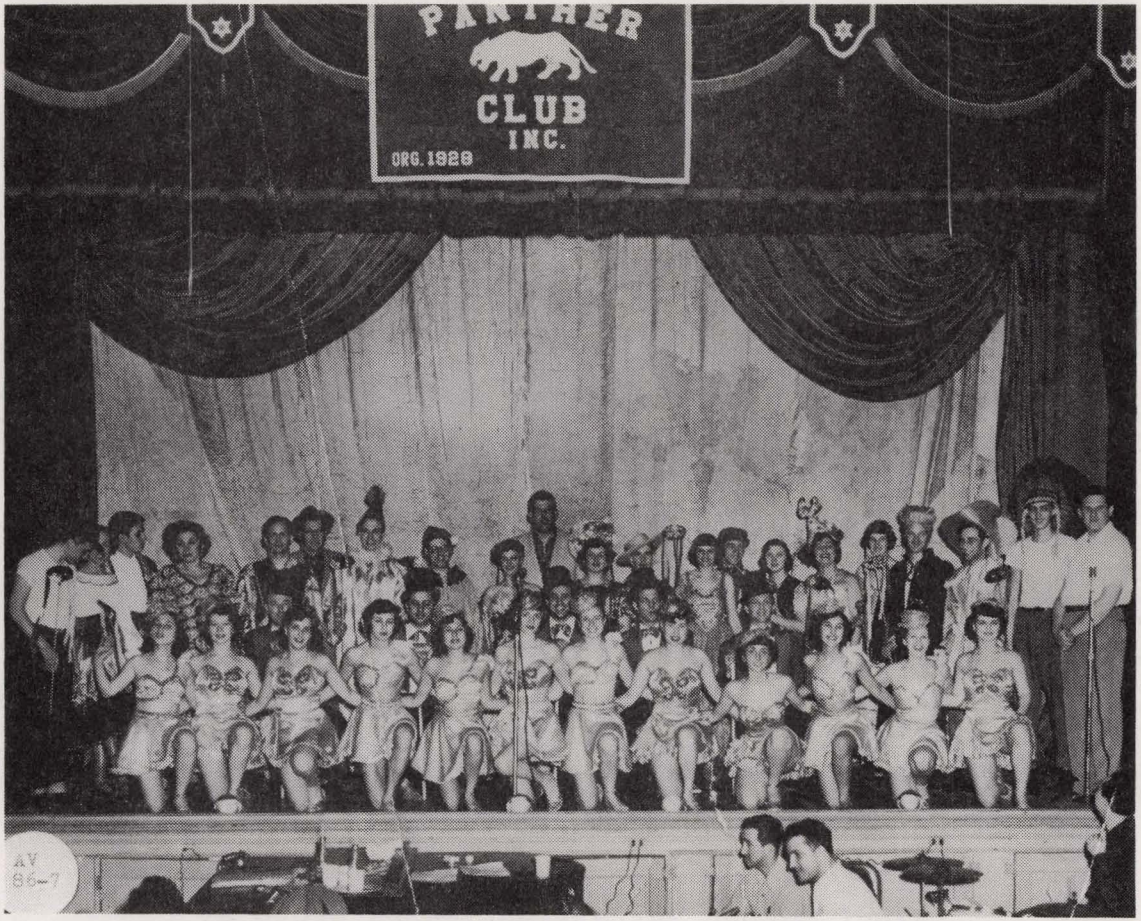
The Yiddish Folk School, located on Carroll Street, near Graham Avenue, was a store front operation to teach children Yiddish and Jewish culture. The children learned to read and write in Yiddish. Mr. Kolka, nicknamed 'Koka', was the entire operation, acting both as teacher and principal of the small non-religious school. Later the school moved to Carroll Street and Broadway.

OTHER YIDDISH SCHOOLS

Other Shulas existed under the sponsorship of different ideological groups.

The International Workers Order Shula emphasized the awareness of social problems. The Yiddisher Arbeiter Farband Kinder Shula had a Labor Zionist orientation.

On the whole, they followed the Workmen's Circle School pattern, starting in storefront locations, developing Yiddish Language and Jewish culture curricula, yet remaining secular in nature. They flourished in the 1920's and declined in the 1950's and 1960's when the Jewish population moved from Paterson to the suburbs.



Panther Club's Musical Extravaganza



Mayor Nathan Barnert addresses group at
Daughters of Miriam cornerstone ceremonies - 1926.
(photo courtesy of the Paterson Museum)



Veritans Club Committee for Annual Boatride - 1962



POSTER:

"The Paterson Jewish Drama Group under the direction of Meyer Paris presents a play in 4 acts 'All In a Lifetime'. Popular prices - 35¢ - 50¢."
(Courtesy of Ann Janowitz Korn)



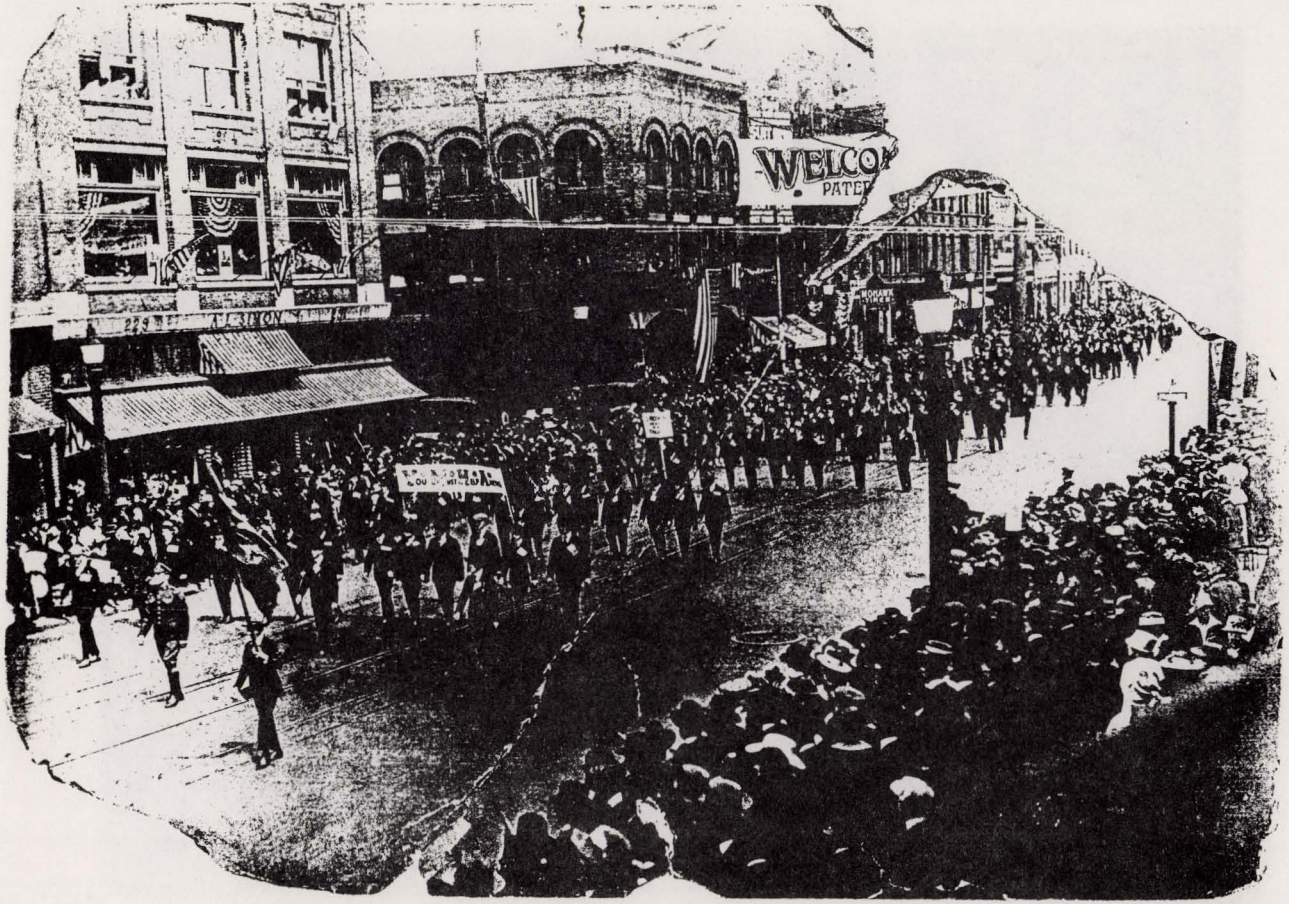
Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt with Jewish leaders during
1954 Bond Drive (photo by Russell Zito)



Congregation Ahavath Joseph - the "Little Shul"



Abraham Fabian Hebrew School Glee Club of Temple Emanuel
1936



Y.M.H.A. parade for the boys departing to France -
World War I

THE ECONOMY

MERCHANTS

In the early 1900's, the peak period of Jewish immigration, Paterson the textile city was a magnet for Jewish immigrants. From the textile centers in Europe, Lodz, Bialystok and Odessa, skilled workers poured into the city and settled in the "over-the-river section" near the mills built along the Passaic River. Some became manufacturers and others joined the large textile labor force.

Those unskilled in textiles struggled along as peddlers walking from house to house with heavy packs on their backs. As they prospered they traveled by horse and wagon going from place to place advertising their wares in singsong voices. This was the "age of the man", the ice man, coal man, seltzer man, dairy man, linen man, clothing man, the scissors and grinder man. Many sold their wares on credit of one dollar per week.

Eventually, the peddlers became the merchants on River Street, Washington Street, Lower Main and Upper Main Street and Market Street. Day and night the streets were alive with people and the variety of merchandise was endless: butter, eggs, baked goods, meat, dry goods, furniture, clothing. At one time, a Curb Exchange operated at Washington and Market Street in front of the Hamilton Trust Company. Here in a miniature stock exchange, Jewish textile manufacturers traded in silk yarns and textiles.

Unceasingly the immigrants labored to provide their children with the education that they themselves lacked. From these humble beginnings came a new generation of professionals: the doctors, dentists, lawyers, judges, public officials, poets, musicians,

writers, film and theater actors and producers, accountants, scientists and educators. This new Jewish intelligentsia made a significant contribution to American cultural life.

The Charles Goldman Judaica Library has a list of 150 Jewish merchants who once prospered in Paterson; a few still remain. However, the number of Jewish businesses has declined with the exodus to the suburbs and the rise of highway shopping centers.

THE SILK INDUSTRY

The Jewish Community, both as laborers and entrepreneurs, made a significant contribution to the thriving silk industry of Paterson.

Large-scale Jewish immigration to Paterson began after 1900 with the arrival of Jewish textile workers from Lodz and Bialystok. By 1913, close to 5,000 Jewish men and women worked in the silk industry, with the greatest number concentrated in broad-silk weaving. A small number of mills were owned or managed by Jews. When a bitter srike erupted, the Jewish textile workers joined other ethnic workers to fight against the 4-loom system, the fine system, and the blacklist. Their dignity and their standard of living were at stake. They had come to the new world to escape the evils of similar systems in "the old country".

In Paterson they continued the struggle. Workers and owners found themselves on opposite sides. However, despite the climate of class struggle, a sense of Jewishness was strong. From this era, the importance of helping each other, of learning, of pursuing Jewish culture and brotherhood survived.

THE PURITY COOPERATIVE

In 1917 after the bitter silk strike of 1913, the Jewish working people formed a cooperative bakery on Tyler Street selling shares at $5 per share. At one time there were three bakeries which sold baked goods of all kinds. Prices were reasonable and quality and cleanliness were paramount.

Well-supported by the community the stores were open to the public. They became part of the life of the city and were a unifying force in the Jewish working community. A butcher's cooperative also existed. Supervision of Kashruth was observed by a board.

In 1965, the cooperatives were dissolved; each shareholder was paid $25 per share. The shareholders decided to turn the money back to be used in the community.

SOCIAL, RECREATIONAL, EDUCATIONAL and WELFARE ORGANIZATIONS

As Paterson Jewry prospered and became Americanized, inevitably its institutions expanded. A mounting number of social, recreational, educational and welfare organizations accompanied the rise of Paterson Jews. Girls Clubs, Boys Clubs, lecture groups, debating groups, dancing groups, social service and welfare groups became an important component of Jewish life and made an impact on the community. Some are no longer in existence; those that are still functioning continue to strengthen our commitment to Jewish identification and values.

FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

INDEPENDENT UNITED JERSEY VEREIN

A fraternal brotherhood, the Independent United Jersey Verein of Paterson, organized on July 18, 1914, continues to meet regularly at the YM-YWHA Schneider Branch. At its peak, the Verein's membership totaled 403 men.

The Brotherhood strives to provide assistance to the sick and needy, scholarships to outstanding students, and wheelchairs for local and Israeli hospitals. The Verein also maintains a three acre cemetery in West Paterson.

EAST SIDE SOCIAL CENTER

A unique organization established in 1959 sprang from the ranks of survivors of the Nazi concentration camps. They felt the need for a social and cultural center where they would feel free to share their memories and experiences of the past in the languages familiar to them.

The present membership of approximately 130 has been meeting in the Fair Lawn Jewish Center since 1973. The group's original home was on 10th Avenue in Paterson; later it moved to 14th Avenue.

In 1967, the group established a monument in King Solomon Cemetery in Clifton commemorating the six million murdered Jews. Here ashes of Auschwitz victims are interred. The State of Israel and the Soldiers Welfare Fund, as well as local Jewish charities and institutions, are recipients of some of the funds raised by the membership.

JACOB DINESON LODGE

The Jacob Dineson Lodge, named after the noted Jewish author, was formed on September 28, 1919 by a group of men seeking to promote Yiddish cultural programs.

As a chapter of the Independent Order of B'rith Abraham, the lodge membership meeting at the YM-YWHA grew to 275. They sold Israeli bonds, raised monies for the U.J.A. and the Jewish National Fund, sent two ambulances to Israel and helped to build a medical clinic in Zichron Ya'acov.

At present, the group meets at the Schneider Branch in Paterson and continues to carry on its cultural and social programs.

LABOR ZIONIST ALLIANCE (FARBAND)

Branch 70 of the National Fraternal Order of Labor Zionists (the Farband) was founded in Paterson in 1913 by a group of activists prominent in Jewish community life who were imbued with the philosophy of Labor Zionism. In 1952, Branch 65 was chartered with most of its membership coming from Holocaust survivors who settled in Paterson and its environs. It offered its members economic and moral support through life insurance, sick benefits, and a variety of social activities.

Social changes over the years caused a reduction in membership in both branches and in 1970 they merged into a single organization, Branch 135.

The Labor Zionist Alliance remains active at the Schneider Branch of the YM-YWHA in a variety of civic, social, and charitable endeavors, including fund-raising for the UJA, JNF, Israel Bonds, the Federation, and the YM-YWHA. Meetings are centered around speakers, concerts, holiday observances, and family celebrations.

THE VERITANS

The Veritans, one of the oldest remaining Jewish service clubs in the United States, was organized in 1927 by a group of Jewish business and professional men after hearing of such groups established in New England.

Throughout the years, the Veritans have worked with the YM-YWHA to serve the children of the Jewish Community. Since its first Annual Boat ride in July 1928, the Veritans have set a precedent of contributing a major part of their fund raising to the "Y" Criterion Camp Fund. This was the beginning of a long and fruitful partnership between the Veritans and the "Y" which continues to this day.

The present Camp Veritans came into being as Camp Vacation on the roof of the "Y" on Van Houten Street. When larger outdoor facilities were needed for a children's summer day camp the Veritans purchased a large estate of 60 acres on Pompton Road in Haledon and offered it to the "Y" for use by the camp. Today a schedule of fees on a sliding scale permits many disadvantaged children to enjoy camp.

The annual Veritans Boatride has become a Paterson "institution" well attended by business, professional and political people of the area. When the chartered Hudson River boat service was discontinued, the fund raiser turned into a "land" outing in the Catskills.

In addition to its support of the "Y" camp, the Veritans contribute to many other Jewish and communal charitable causes.

WORKMEN'S CIRCLE

The Workmen's Circle (the Arbeiter Ring), a national Jewish fraternal organization steeped in the Socialist tradition of championing civil and humanitarian rights, of supporting trade unions, and actively engaging in political, social, charitable and liberal causes was formed in 1900. Paterson, in its prime, had numerous branches including a women's branch, with thousands of members enrolled.

Eighty years ago the Jewish textile workers in Paterson labored 12 hours or more a day for low wages under arduous, hazardous and unsanitary working conditions. They found spiritual and recreational release in Workmen's Circle programs: concerts, lectures, dramatics, debates and political discussions.

The Workmen's Circle also offered its members sick benefits: life insurance, medical clinics, tuberculosis sanitariums and funeral and cemetery provisions.

Early meetings were held in halls on River, Governor and Bridge Streets. In the 1930's, the Paterson Workmen's Circle Branches built their own building on Carroll Street and 12th Avenue called the Labor Lyceum.

As the Jewish population moved, the Workmen's Circle sold its Labor Lyceum and in the 1960's bought a house on East 29th Street and 12th Avenue for its headquarters. However, that building was sold as the membership dwindled, leaving only one branch in Paterson. Now, Branch 121 meets periodically in Temple Emanuel.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

PATERSON B'NAI B'RITH LODGE NO. 143

On March 9, 1970, Mayor Lawrence Kramer proclaimed the month of March as B'nai B'rith Month honoring Paterson B'nai B'rith Lodge No. 143 on the 100th anniversary of its founding. He described the lodge as a shining beacon lighting the way toward true democracy for its 100 years of non-sectarian service to all minorities, for fighting bigotry and intolerance, furthering inter-group understanding, helping to prevent juvenile delinquency, and its philanthropic work.

In 1870 when there were only 30 Jewish families among Paterson's population of 35,000, a small group of twenty-eight immigrant Jews, led by the young Nathan Barnert, founded the Jephthah Lodge #143. During the first thirty years of the lodge's existence members devoted themselves to philanthropic and communal activities helping new immigrant Jews to get a start in the new world and become integrated into the life of the community and caring for widows and orphans. In the late 1920's a Ladies Auxiliary was organized and in 1930 twenty Jewish boys organized a chapter of AZA, the B'nai B'rith National Youth Organization.

The sobering effect of the depression, the horrors of the Holocaust and of World War II, and the creation of the State of Israel provided the impetus for the expansion of B'nai B'rith locally, nationally and internationally to become the largest Jewish service organization in the world. Relief programs for the persecuted Jews of Nazi Germany were organized; assistance to the survivors of the death camps and massive programs of aid to Israel were carried out.

During the 1950's when the Jewish population of Paterson was at its height, numbering in excess of 25,000, the roster of the Paterson Lodge exceeded 1,000. With the great exodus of Jews to the surrounding suburbs the Jewish population decreased to approximately 10,000 and the Lodge's membership today is 350.

The activities of B'nai B'rith on a local and national scale have changed considerably through the years. As other organizations took over the responsibility for many of the philanthropic projects in which B'nai B'rith had been a pioneer, B'nai B'rith's activities shifted and the organization focused on wider fields. Today, its emphasis is world-wide concentrating on assisting the State of Israel, anti-defamation, seeking freedom for Soviet Jewry, adult education, supporting Hillel on 250 college campuses, completely supporting the children's wing of the National Jewish Hospital in Denver and the Leo N. Levi Arthritis Hospital in Arkansas.

The thrust of the Women's Auxiliary focuses on Jewish women's issues: the image of Jewish women in the workplace, child care, abortion, the immigrants' experience relating to women and the power of women.

Today, the Paterson B'nai B'rith Lodge No. 143 meets in the Schneider Building.

BRANDEIS WOMEN

One hundred and fifteen women from Paterson, Elmwood Park, Fair Lawn, Clifton, Passaic, Wayne and Paramus formed the Greater Paterson Area Chapter of the Brandeis University National Women's Committee in 1959. Their primary purpose then, as it is today, was to support the Library of Brandeis University.

Through the years, Brandeis Women has met its obligation to supply and maintain the library by fund-raising events, cultural, artistic and educational in nature. Its members also participate in a cultural and educational program centered around syllabi prepared by professors from the University.

Today, with a membership of 600, the chapter is known as the North Jersey Chapter of Brandeis Women. In addition to the original communities, Ridgewood, Ramsey, Oakland, Pompton Lakes and Wyckoff are included.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN

National Council of Jewish Women was originally formed in Chicago in 1894 by Hannah Solomon, dedicated in the spirit of Judaism to the democratic way of life and the advancement of human welfare. One of its first projects was to give service to newly arrived immigrants by meeting their ships, locating their relatives and resettling the new Americans.

The Paterson branch was established about 1928. Originally they met at 15 Church Street in the Jewish Community Council offices. By 1931, the membership grew to 300 and they moved to Temple Emanuel.

In the 1940's NCJW supported the YM-YWHA and the Jewish Family Service by organizing a recreational and social program for older adults. The "Y" furnished facilities and staff guidance while NCJW provided the volunteers, funds for the kitchen and an assistant.

In 1957, the Paterson NCJW, with the cooperation of the YM-YWHA, initiated a conference on the aging. This contributed to the mayor's decision to create a Paterson Commission on Aging. With the aid of Rutgers University graduate sociology students and volunteers from the Paterson NCJW and other groups, the Commission conducted an in-depth survey focusing attention on the needs of the elderly. The Paterson study was a spur to building low-cost housing in Paterson and became a model and pilot study for many communities around the nation.

Over the years, NCJW responded to the community by initiating projects as needed: youth and jobs programs, a comprehensive study of the Juvenile Justice System, a group housing project, a Big Brother/Big Sister type project, and Project Share.

By 1965, many NCJW members no longer resided in Paterson; they merged with the Fair Lawn section, now called the Jersey Hills section.

HADASSAH

Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, was founded in New York City in 1912 with Henrietta Szold as its first president. Hadassah has a dual purpose of education and youth activities. It supports a number of projects in Israel including Hadassah Hospital, Youth Aliyah, Hadassah Israel Education Service, and the Jewish National Fund.

On January 30, 1925, a Paterson chapter with a membership of 20 women received its charter. At first the organization met in members' homes, but the group soon became too large and arranged to meet at the Hebrew Free School, the Van Houten Street YM-YWHA, and other public meeting facilities.

By 1927, 180 women were enrolled in the Paterson chapter. Active youth groups included Hadassah Buds and Junior Hadassah. Membership in the senior group peaked at about 1,200 in the years between 1948 and 1953, but dropped off markedly with the general exodus of the Paterson Jewish community. Separate chapters were established in Elmwood Park, Fair Lawn, Pompton Lakes, and Glen Rock/Ridgewood. Today the Paterson Hadassah chapter meets regularly at the "Y" Schneider Branch.

DEBORAH HOSPITAL

When the Deborah Hospital, a tuberculosis sanitorium in Browns Mills, New Jersey, opened its doors in 1922, a Paterson Sisterhood chapter was organized and flourished for over 30 years. Large numbers of volunteer women from the Jewish community raised money for the hospital, now a heart and lung center dedicated to treating anyone regardless of race or ability to pay.

The Paterson chapter no longer exists; area non-sectarian chapters have taken over.

ORT

ORT, the Organization for Rehabilitation through Training, has grown to be the largest non-governmental vocational and technical education program in the world. It began in Russia in 1880 because Jews were not allowed to receive an education. Over the years millions of Jews worldwide have been trained in marketable skills.

In 1927, Women's American ORT was founded in Brooklyn. Twenty years later the Paterson chapter became the first of its kind in New Jersey. The first meetings of the chapter were held alternately in Montclair and Paterson. In the late 1950's the Paterson chapter split into two groups, evening and afternoon. The evening group meets at the Schneider Building and the afternoon group meets at Temple Emanuel.

PIONEER WOMEN

The Paterson Chapter of Pioneer Women was founded in 1937 by a group of Yiddish speaking women who were Labor Zionists. Their aim was to raise funds for projects in Israel.

Originally the women met in homes but as the membership grew meetings were held in the "Y" on Van Houten Street. Early fund raising activities consisted of walking door-to-door with the famous little blue boxes, "pushkas", associated with the Jewish National Fund.

After the 1948 War in Israel, an English-speaking chapter was formed known as Kadima Club, Pioneer Women. Their fund raising activities expanded with auction sales, bazaars and parties.

To consolidate all their activities the two groups merged in the mid '50's, continuing to meet in the "Y". Kadima Club is still an active arm of the National Organization of Pioneer Women Na'amat.

INDEPENDENT LODZER YOUNG MEN

The Independent Lodzer Young Men was founded in 1928 to foster the ideals of Judaism by lending assistance to the sick, the needy and the bereaved.

Its first home was the Zionist Building on 14th Avenue in Paterson. By 1950 the group moved to the YM-YWHA on Ellison Street in Paterson, then to the Schneider Building in Paterson.

Over the years the group actively supported local Jewish organizations: Barnert Hospital, Daughters of Miriam, Yavneh Academy, Frisch School, B'nai B'rith Youth Fund, U.J.A., the State of Israel with bonds and an ambulance.

Currently the group continues to uphold the high ideals of Jewish life with donations to charitable organizations, to Israel, and a fund which gives scholarships to needy children.

Most of the present members are Holocaust survivors, and the majority are senior citizens. Meetings are held at the Fair Lawn Jewish Center.

LANDSMANSCHAFTEN

A number of "landsmanschaft" organizations came into being to serve as fraternal centers for immigrants from numerous East European communities. Among them were the Bialystoker Society, the Lodzer Sick and Benevolent Society, the Independent Lodzer Young Men, the Ozerkover Society, and the Pabianitzer Society. Their common purpose was to help people in their home towns in Europe and to provide sick benefits and maintain cemeteries for their members. They raised funds by sponsoring social functions and journals. The Independent Lodzer

Young Men and the Ozerkover Society are still in existence today contributing to Israel and responding to local needs.

PATERSON JEWISH WAR VETERANS

On February 11, 1932, under the auspices of the Jewish War Veterans of the United States, the Reuben Kaufman Post was organized by the Paterson Jewish War Veterans to honor the first Patersonian killed in action in France during World War I. Its policy, then as now, was to emphasize the heroism of American Jews and combat anti-Semitism and bigotry and discrimination of all kinds.

That same year a ladies auxiliary was formed, and an elaborate Armistice Day service was held at Barnert Memorial Temple. By 1933 the Post acquired headquarters at 150 Van Houten Street and unveiled a boulder to commemorate the deceased Jewish War Veterans of Paterson.

With the rise of Nazism, the Post launched a vigorous campaign against Hitlerism, held mass protest meetings, and initiated a boycott against German-made goods. After World War II, the name of the Post was changed to the Kaufman-Harris Post, honoring Sidney Harris, the first Jewish youth of Paterson killed in action during World War II. The Post is in existence today.

Since 1981, Wayne Post 695 based at Temple Beth Tikvah, serves the greater North Jersey area. Its 94 active members comprise a "mitzvah brigade", visiting veteran hospitals, serving the needs of all veterans, combating anti-Semitism in all its forms, and continue to be involved in issues of concern to American Jewry.

CHORAL GROUPS, THEATER and RECREATION

JEWISH FOLK CHORUS

As Paterson prospered and grew, a Jewish Chorus, the Gezangs Verin, was formed by a group of immigrants. A local tailor became the conductor of the chorus which was also known as the Jewish Workers Chorus.

It was natural for the group to sing the folk songs of their people, nostalgic and dear to them. Before long they found that their songs could no longer be limited to mere nostalgia. Their songs had to be an expression of the life they were living and the folk songs gave way to songs that proclaimed a hope for a better future.

The singers sought out poets, composers and conductors and inspired them to write the kind of music that the Jewish people thirsted for, that reflected the pulse and rhythm of the people. Soon the chorus developed a repertoire of songs and poems by S. L. Peretz, Sholem Aleichem, Abraham Reisen, oratorios, cantatas and folk operettas.

Secular in nature, the chorus sang before many temple and church groups and gave concerts at the YM-YWHA. It organized large brotherhood concerts bringing together choruses of all races, creeds and religious denominations. The city of Paterson awarded the choir a certificate of honor for its meritorious services in furthering the cause of brotherhood.

The chorus was invited to sing in many different places and cities. Some of its outstanding performances were an appearance with Paul Robeson at Madison Square Garden to perform "The Ballad for

America", and it was the first chorus to sing Earl Robinson's "The House I Live In" and Paterson's own Millard Lampell's "The Lonesome Train".

At its peak the chorus had a membership of 125 men and women, and a separate chorus of 40 children. For 59 years the chorus sang, and was finally disbanded by attrition in 1972.

TEMPLE EMANUEL CHORAL SOCIETY

Temple Emanuel Choral Society, the only major Jewish choral group still in existence, draws its membership from the entire North Jersey area.

In 1931, a male glee club was started as an activity of the Men's Club of the temple with fewer than 20 members. However, realizing they needed female voices as well, it soon evolved into a mixed chorus.

Current membership includes men and women from all walks of life. The principal function of this group is to advance the cause of Jewish music, liturgical and secular. In addition, the Society undertakes the study and performance of the finest choral works of all nations and periods.

In the spring an annual concert is presented to the public at Temple Emanuel with orchestral accompaniment and guest soloists. Performances have been booked at Carnegie Hall, the Juilliard School of Music and other concert halls.

MEYER PARIS THEATER GROUP

During the depression years, Paterson's Jewish cultural life was enriched by the development of the Meyer Paris Theater Group originally known as the Yiddish Kunst Group.

Meyer Paris, author, playwright, actor, director and set designer, was the nucleus of this innovative group which made many appearances throughout Paterson: at YM-YWHA, Lazzara's Hall and East Side High School.

Often the group's activities were charitable fund raisers for Jewish organizations in Paterson.

WORKMEN'S CIRCLE CHOIR

The Paterson Workmen's Circle Choir was one of the earliest cultural groups in Paterson. It was founded during the 1920's by Jewish immigrant working men and women who found this opportunity to give expression to their love for Jewish song and music.

In the 1920's, the Choir was a renowned singing society of 50 members with many bookings in the metropolitan area. The group gave local performances in Central High School, Eastside High School, the YM-YWHA on Van Houten Street; but also appeared in the old Madison Square Garden and Town Hall in New York City.

Leo Low and Vladimir Heifetz, eminent composers of Jewish melodies and lieder, conducted the choir for many years.

The Choir disbanded in the 1960's.

PREAKNESS HILLS COUNTRY CLUB

The Preakness Hills Country Club was organized in 1936 as a golf and social club for Jewish men and their families. Its first and present home is on Ratzer Road in Wayne on the former Frew estate.

In addition to its recreational program, the club raises and donates funds for Jewish and civic causes.

CARING ORGANIZATIONS

"But if I am only for myself then what am I?"

Throughout history Jews have had a transcendent purpose, a sense that living a worthwhile life requires more than concern only for oneself.

From the start and to this day, the Jews of Paterson have followed this long established tradition and sacred obligation of mutual aid.

BARNERT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL CENTER

For 78 years the Barnert Memorial Hospital has served the health needs of the Paterson area. On November 29, 1908, the Miriam Barnert Dispensary opened its doors at 58 Hamilton Avenue as a facility "for the medical and surgical care of the sick, regardless of their financial ability to pay . . . regardless of their race, creed or nationality" observing Jewish dietary laws. Since Jewish as well as Italian doctors were denied the privilege of practicing in Paterson's other hospitals, Nathan Barnert was encouraged to establish a new one.

Larger rented quarters at Broadway and Paterson Street were soon outgrown. In 1916 through the generosity of Nathan Barnert who donated sixteen city lots and $450,000 the 85 bed Barnert Memorial Hospital was formally opened at 31st Street and Broadway. In 1922 the hospital was approved as a Class A institution by the American College of Surgeons.

Between the years 1916 and 1955, the hospital operated a school of nursing offering a 3-year R.N. course. Since 1950 Barnert Hospital has added a degree in Medical Technology. Presently clinical instruction is offered to registered and licensed practical nurses in cooperation with area colleges offering degrees in nursing.

Throughout the years the hospital has expanded its facilities and increased its capacity. With a medical staff of 250 and over 900 other employees, Barnert Hospital today is one of the largest employers in Paterson.

The Barnert Memorial Hospital Center now includes a "family-centered" maternity unit, a blood bank, bone and arterial graft bank, tumor clinic, hearing and speech center, department of physical medicine, coronary care unit, center for occupational and preventative medicine, and a community mental health center.

DAUGHTERS OF MIRIAM CENTER FOR THE AGED

Upon its celebration of 60 years of service, in 1981, the Daughters of Miriam Center for the Aged was nationally acclaimed by civic leaders and President Reagan for "carrying on the teaching of your heritage in the Talmudic tradition of honoring the Mother and Father".

From its small beginning as an orphanage, the center has been hailed for its exemplary service to senior citizens and its innovative health and housing services.

The idea of a home as a shelter for both orphans and the elderly was first conceived in 1913 by a group of women of the Malbish Arumim Society which brought relief to poor Jewish families. Their work eventually led to the establishment in 1921 of the Daughters of Miriam Home for the Aged and Orphans at 469 River Street through a gift from Nathan Barnert in memory of his wife Miriam. By 1926 the Home had moved to its present location on Hazel Street in Clifton, an impressive structure with classrooms, gym, sick bay, dormitories, and common dining room.

It soon became apparent that old people and young children living under the same roof were not compatible. Their different needs created problems for both groups. A change occurred by 1950 when the Daughters of Miriam phased out its program for dependent children. With the help of the Jewish Social Service Bureau (now the Jewish Family Service of North Jersey), the children were placed in foster homes or given for adoption. By 1957 the Hazel Street Building was renovated and expanded; a nursing unit, a staff building and ambulatory wing were added, and the B'nai Israel Home for the Aged in Passaic merged with the Home.

Today, the Daughters of Miriam Center for the Aged, located on a thirteen acre campus on Hazel Street in Clifton, is a non-profit institution licensed as a skilled nursing facility and certified as an extended care facility. It is a complete community of over 1,000 people; a staff of 400 provides services to 650 aged people.

With the aid of a medical and dental consulting staff, a nursing and social service staff, the center serves the chronically ill and mentally impaired. A corps of dedicated volunteers works under

professional social service staff supervision. Women's auxiliary organizations from Passaic, Clifton, Fair Lawn and Paterson provide volunteers.

Daughters of Miriam pioneered the concept of apartment living for the retired, where independence is preserved while access to medical and social services is readily available. The Miriam Apartments I and II have 260 units whose self-sufficient residents carry on the activities of daily living which are all important at an advanced age. Residents enjoy daily hot dinners and the use of a library, a pharmacy, an auditorium, an arts and craft center, family counseling and health care programs, recreational and cultural activities, and a sheltered workshop as a therapeutic work program.

The spirit of Yiddishkeit prevails in the center where a full-time rabbi provides spiritual guidance and synagogue services are held. Kashrut is strictly observed.

BARNERT HOSPITAL LINEN SOCIETY

The Barnert Hospital Linen Society, a women's volunteer group, was formed in the late 1920's to provide the hospital with supplies of linens needed for day-to-day operation. Funds were raised by door-to-door canvassing, raffles, card parties and linen showers. The organization continued this form of assistance until the hospital developed a central purchasing system. From that time on the society continued to support the hospital financially.

The Society no longer exists.

BARNERT HOSPITAL LADIES AUXILIARY

The Barnert Hospital Ladies Auxiliary, the major fundraising organization of the hospital, was founded in 1919.

From that time to the present, a vibrant, active group of women has helped the hospital not only financially, but with a variety of support services. Volunteers staff the gift shop, provide patient escort services, push gift carts through the halls, work at the information desk and help with educational projects for children and adults.

Through the years, funds have been raised through an annual ball.

HEBREW LADIES BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

To serve needy members of the Jewish Community by providing food and clothing, the Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Society was founded in the middle 20's. Most of the ladies were affiliated with the Barnert Temple and meetings were held there or in the homes of members. The group flourished during the depression years but was dissolved in 1972 when government assistance through Social Security increased and a strong Jewish Federation of North Jersey emerged.

HACHNOSAS ORCHIM

Transients seeking temporary food and lodging at no cost could find shelter at the Paterson Hachnosas Orchim (Jewish Travelers Aid) organized in April, 1900. Most of these transients were referred by rabbis or the various synagogues and later by the YM-YWHA and other Jewish agencies.

The institution, supported by contributions and some very generous donors, maintained its most recent facility of five cozy rooms in a two-family house on 12th Avenue. The building was sold in the late 1960's and the money from the sale was invested in Israel Bonds and funds to be distributed to the needy.

HEBREW FREE LOAN ASSOCIATION

To provide crucial financial assistance to members of the Paterson Jewish community who were unable to get help elsewhere, the Paterson Hebrew Free Loan Association was formed in 1900. Its founders established a fund to lend money in amounts of $10 or $15 to those in need. To maintain the borrower's self-respect, loans were made anonymously at no interest. This policy still prevails, though the loan limit is now $1,000. Loans are not treated as charity. Instead, the borrower signs a note of obligation to the Association.

Funds are raised from membership dues and public donations, often from people who themselves were assisted by the Association. Endowments also have been provided by the Barnerts and other civic minded Jewish citizens. Today there is a perpetual fund for extending loans to needy people in financial difficulties.

To date the Association has granted over 25,000 loans amounting to over $1,500,000 to Jewish people in the area for educational, medical, and business expenses, and has helped establish and maintain families in their households.

Until 1974 loans were limited to Paterson residents. However, loans are now authorized to residents of the North Jersey Federation area. In cooperation with the Jewish Family Service, loans are being extended to newly arrived immigrants.

The Hebrew Free Loan Association is presently housed at Temple Emanuel.

MALBISH ARUMIM

With the avowed purpose of clothing the poor, the Malbish Arumim was founded around the turn of the century by the wives of the members of Congregation B'nai Israel, the "Big Shul on Godwin Street". Like other organizations during the early years, they raised money to clothe the poor by collecting nickels and dimes through door-to-door canvassing.

The organization no longer exists.

MOAS CHITIM FUND

"Moas Chitim" means money for wheat. In 1927, in accordance with a provision in Nathan Barnert's will, the Moas Chitim Fund was established to enable the synagogues of Paterson to distribute Passover matzos among the Jewish needy.

Today, under the supervision of an administrative committee of lay persons, the distribution of Passover provisions continues.

ADDITIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Following is a list of organizations about which we have no current information:

Avram Zev Congregation
Yanover Lodge
Brotherhood Club
Zion Camp #6
B'nai Sholom
Americus Lodge #265 I.O.O.F.
Nathan and Miriam Barnert Lodge
Passaic Independent Club
Independent Lodzer Ladies
Eastside Hebrew Center

Sons of Israel
Stein-Joelson Lodge
Amelia Lodge
Knights of Pythias
Emma Lazarus Club
Talmud Torah
Vreeland Ave. Center
Jewish Fraternal and Cultural Club
Mizrachi Organization
Beth El Congregation
Central Yiddish Culture Organization
Silk City Benevolent Association
Clinton Street Talmud Torah
Congregation Linith Hasedeck - Carroll Street Synagogue

CEMETERIES

The Jewish cemeteries of the greater Paterson area were started by synagogues, landsmanschaft societies, fraternal and service organizations. More than twenty cemeteries were organized in this way.

After many years some of the sponsoring organizations became defunct; cemetery committee members died or moved away, and the cemeteries needed care and attention. The Jewish Federation of North Jersey developed a plan to maintain the cemeteries in perpetuity following an approach set by Cleveland and Toronto.

They created an independent corporation called the Cemetery Association of the Jewish Federation of North Jersey, Inc. This association maintains the independent Jewish cemeteries in a manner that is in keeping with the heritage and tradition of the Jewish people.

A series of meetings was convened with the independent cemeteries to explain the purpose of the corporation. The educational and informational meetings are still going on. To date several cemeteries have become members of the Cemetery Association, while others still maintain their independence.

ADDENDUM

The more than 80 tapes of interviews conducted by Jerome Nathans, Reeva Isaacs, and Lynn Corn Sussman deal with: reminiscences of Paterson since the turn of the century; the beginning of the Jewish communities of Fair Lawn and Wayne; memories of the early silk strikes; the Yiddish theater in Paterson; choral groups organized during the silk strike, and much more.

If you wish to correct or add any information to our ongoing project, please call Charles Goldman Judaica Library (201) 595-0100 Ext. 36 or send written material to the library, 1 Pike Drive, Wayne, N.J. 07470.

The 1st edition 1986 was made possible by contributions from the following:

Arthur and Sallie Wichman Philanthropic Fund

Lynn Corn Sussman in memory of husband Bernard

Evelyn and Morris Hochman in memory of brother Oscar Berman

Belle Lewis

Jerry Nathans

Y.M. – Y.W.H.A. of North Jersey

Lee L. and Adele S. Dresner Philanthropic Fund

CONTRIBUTION	$1.00
MAILED	$2.00