A Short History of Temple Beth Zion Sisterhood

Prepared by Michele Hope

May 3, 2011
Sisterhood of Zion
Daughters of the Star

- Annual Report of Sisterhood of Zion and Daughters of the Star of Buffalo, NY for 1891-’92 includes the Constitution of The Sisterhood of Zion and membership list.
- President’s remarks (Clara Desbecker Weill) indicate that the work of the Sisterhood divided into two distinct branches: philanthropic and social.
- The philanthropic (and educational) work done by the active workers of the Sisterhood was known as the “Order of the Daughters of the Star” which had its own general chairman.
- Rabbi Israel Aaron formed the group by calling a meeting in the Assembly Rooms of the Temple on Thursday afternoon, April 16, 1891. The organization initially had 52 members.
- The first annual general meeting held on Sept. 30, 1891.
Sisterhood of Zion
Daughters of the Star

- Primarily formed by wives of prosperous German merchants.

- Came together to help less fortunate Russian Jews fleeing pogroms.

- Bought a building on Buffalo’s east side to use to teach the American way of life.

- Eventually paid off the mortgage to that building.

Officers and Directors of the Sisterhood of Zion, for 1891-92.

General Chairman: Mrs. Henry Altman.

Mutual Benefit Ten.
Chairman: Mrs. Henry Altman.
Secretary: Miss Miriam Rosenau.

Mrs. Solomon Rosenau, Miss Ray Bergham,
Nathan Deshecker, Hattie Wolfe,
Miss Rose Aaron, Estelle Brock,
Sara Hirschfield, Helene Extein.

Miss Bertha Levy.

Education Ten.
Chairman: Rev. Dr. Israel Aaron.
Secretary: Mrs. Daniel Deshecker.

Mrs. Benjamin Deshecker, Mrs. Edmund Ullman,
Edmund Jellinek, Theresa Rosenberg,
E. H. Loser, Jennie Jellinek,
Mrs. Fred. Ullman.

Library Ten.
Chairman and Secretary: Mrs. Arnold A. Levy.

Mrs. Marcus Spiegel, Mrs. David H. Deshecker,
Israel Aaron, Joseph B. Mayer,
Johanna Deshecker, Alphonse Weill,
Nathan Wolff, Abram J. Elias,
Chronology

• **April 16, 1891** – 1st meeting of The Sisterhood of Zion called by Rabbi Israel Aaron; Mrs. Alphonse Weill was the first president.

• **March 6, 1910** – 1st meeting of Women’s Temple Society called by Rabbi Israel Aaron.; annual dues were 50 cents; Mrs. Edward Warner was the first president.

• **Jan 21, 1913** – Union of American Hebrew Congregations asked women attending the convention to form the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods (NFTS) – TBZ was a Founding Chapter.
Women’s Temple Society
Minutes of First Meeting - Sunday, March 6, 1910

Sunday, March 6, 1910. Meeting called to order by Mrs. Davison, as ladies president.

Dr. Green read the purpose and intentions of the Society, which was formed to(')

effect to be:

1. To work for the welfare of Judaism in general, to

promote the spiritual and material

welfare and interests of Temple Beth

And, to foster burned social

relationships and good fellowship among

its members, to welcome the stranger.

and to enhance the divine service, and
to aid all projects and enterprises

for the improvement and enlargement

of the usefulness and beneficial

power of Congregation Temple Beth

And.

A motion to accept

was made and carried that this Society
be called Women's Temple Society.

A motion that the membership of this
Society consist of the most devoted

members of Temple Beth And

Carried.

A motion that meetings be adjourned until

Carried.
Minutes of Second Meeting
March 20, 1910

Sunday, Mar. 20th, 1910. Second regular meeting of the executive committee.
The committee appointed to nominate the officers and directors of the Society reported as follows:
President, Mrs. Ed. Barner
Vice-President, Mrs. Herman Rieb
Treasurer, Mrs. K. V. Peters
Secretary, Mrs. Leo Lefar

Directors:
Mrs. Daniel Ochsner
Mrs. Frank Sisk
Mrs. David Goeckner
Mrs. Jacob Gitting
Mrs. Albert Ellsner
Mrs. Arthur Wrede
Mrs. Emmanuel Tschirn
Mrs. Konrad Peters
Mrs. Adolf Klock
Mrs. Carl Rieb
Mrs. A. D. Bruckheiner

Moved and carried that the nominees as reported be elected by casting and ballot.
Dr. Aaron vacated chair.
Mrs. Ed. Barner presiding.
Moved and carried that Dr. V. Mrs. Aaron be elected honorary directors of the Society, and that they have the same power as the other directors of the Society. Carried.

Moved and carried that the report of the ladies' society, consisting of the wives, daughters, and sisters of the members of Temple Beth Zion, be amended to read as:
The membership of this Society is to consist of the wives, daughters, and sisters of the members of Temple Beth Zion and others contributing...
to the support of this congregation and affiliated with no other congregation. Carried.

Mand & carried that dues of members of the Mission Temple Society to be $10.00 per year.

Mand & carried that this society hold quarterly business meetings. Upon motion meeting adjourned.
Some interesting items in Archives

- **Small, lined book** measures 8 7/16” x 6 3/4” x ¼”, black cover is torn around edges, some pages have separated from the binding but are in good condition. Contains minutes of first meeting of the Women’s Temple Society on Sunday, Mar 6, 1910. Contains meeting minutes through Wed., May 3, 1912. Also ledger of expenditures, dues and copy of constitution.

- **Larger, bound ledger** used as a scrap book, measures 10” x 8 ½” x 1 ¾”; black cover with red spine and corners; gold seal inside front cover reads “Besslers, Inc. 584 Main Street Buffalo, NY” with an embossed buffalo logo. Paper label on cover reads “Women’s Temple Society, Buffalo, NY, 1919-1923, Mrs. Henry Nathan, Pres.” Book appears to have belonged to Mrs. Nathan and contains personal correspondence written to her during her term as president.
Items in Archives

- Newspaper article dated Feb 6, 1920 entitled “Espousal of Radical Doctrines by Woman Lecturer Stirs Hearers to Great Indignation: Rabbi Kopald in Defense of the Speaker.”
- Multiple event programs, menus and newspaper clippings.
- Remarks offered as a memorial following the death of Rabbi Kopald.
- Program of the activities of the Americanization Committee, which worked with immigrant women and children in Buffalo.
- Program of 27th council of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the 4th Assembly of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, Buffalo, NY May 23-26, 1921. Includes Mrs. Nathan’s delegate ribbon, event tickets, etc.
Activities

Women's Temple Society
MUSICAL

NOVEMBER 29th, 1919, 3:30 O'CLOCK

Program

I—SONGS
1. Mai
2. J'ai pleuré au Reve
3. Fleurs de ma Paravent
4. The Island
5. Longing

Mrs. Margaret Adsit Barrell

II—
Scenes from Childhood—Op. 15
1. About Strange Lands and People
2. Carina Story
3. Catch me if you can!
4. Interesting Child
5. Contentedness
6. Important Event
7. Dreaming
8. By the Fireside
9. The Knight of the Holy-Horse
10. Almost too Serious
11. Frightening
12. Child Falling Asleep
13. The Poet Speaks

Miss Anita Frank

III—SONGS
Early
Lase
The First Primrose
Across the Hills
Ecstasy

Mrs. Margaret Adsit Barrell

IV—
(a) To the Sea
(b) Nocturne—Op. 15, No. 2

Miss Anita Frank

Sisterhood of Zion

TUESDAY MAY FIFTH 1903

Program

1. Vocal Duet
2. Mondo

“The Scapegrace,” a Cousin to All

Mrs. Pomeroy Dodge (of Newport) . . . . Mrs. Ed D. Hoffsler
Irene Quincy (Her Boston Niece) . . . . Mabel Altman
Nina Crossy (New York) . . . . Elsie Loos
Maud Lawton (Phila) . . . . Bertha Ulman
Evelyn Davies (Chicago) . . . . Bertha Wile
Alice Devalence (French) . . . . Ima Rosenheim
Elliot Champney (Nephew) . . . . Hugo Wittma

Program printed by Emery & Co. and the Riverside Offsetting Co.

Riverside Press, Santa Monica, California.

Emery & Co., publisher.

Miss Anita Frank
Dramatic Arts

Dorothy Marie Seidenberg, Lyric, Soprano

The Beau of Bath

A One Act Play

John Bramston

Maidy Carte

Miss Mc Meny

Mona Zulina

CHARACTERS:

Milton Guggenheimer

Miss Janeth Michael

Miss Martha Gump, Harp

Mary Magner, Neville Horder

Marie Seidenberg

The first weekly meeting of the

Child Study Class will be held

at Temple Beth, 79 Inwood Place,

Jan 5, 1922 at 2:30 o'clock

afternoon. All members will be

presented at 3:00 to open the class.

At this meeting the membership list

will be closed and a new
terms of all will have to be

nominated and

1st to the Secretary of

the meeting. Must do so by mail print

Minnie K. Levi, Fin. Sec.
THrift Luncheon

The H.C.L. is going higher! The bottom of the purse is drawing nigher!

Today the time we cannot drift, but must study and practice ways of thrift.

thrift Luncheon and we know it’s done, Tuesday, March 9th.

THROUGHLY: Members one and all of the Women’s Temple Society, Miss

Ruthe, for the kind of meeting our U. S. A. has asked us to hold.

The Temple Beth-Zion and

The Women’s Temple Society cordially invite its members to welcome

Rabbi and Mrs. Louis J. Kopald

on Wednesday evening, the fourteenth of April from eight-thirty to ten-thirty o’clock

The Temple Centre
PROGRAM
TWO—ONE ACT PLAYS
BY
JOHN KENDRICK BANGS
Given under the auspices of the
WOMEN'S TEMPLE SOCIETY
TEMPLE CENTER
Monday Evening, February 20th, 1922

"A PROPOSAL UNDER DIFFICULTIES"
CHARACTERS

Robert Yardsley                        Allen Morris
Jack Barlow                           Jerome Kirtz
Dorothy Andrews                      Evelyn Alpern
Jennie                               Adelle Land
Hicks                               Whois Knott

Scene—A New York Drawing Room
Time—Now

GROUP OF SONGS
BY
MRS. ARTHUR FULLER
Accompanied by Mrs. Edward H. Warner

"THE REAL THING"
CHARACTERS

Michael McGinnis
Mrs. Bridget O'Hara
Mrs. Theodore Perkins
Mrs. Delaney Pell
Mrs. Bresnahan

Maurice S. Tahor
Miss Marjorie Elston
Mrs. Neville Holdaway
Mrs. Anna Lister
Example of Yearbook – 1949-1950

The Sisterhood
of
Temple Beth Zion
599 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York

1949-1950

MRS. MEYER H. RIWCHUN

Every organization is the lengthened shadow of its leader. The work of the organization reveals the loyalty, enthusiasm, and imagination of the person who occupies the position of president.

Mrs. Meyer Riwchun has served as president of our Sisterhood for nearly four years, and in that time, Sisterhood’s ever widening scope of service has indeed been the reflection of her inspiring leadership. With the impetus and stimulation which Mrs. Riwchun has supplied, we as devoted assistants have striven to serve our organization, our Temple, and our community, after the pattern she has so beautifully set.
Committees - 1949

- Uniongram
- Publicity
- Ways and Means
- Notices
- Cookbook
- Volunteer Office Force
- Judaica Shop
- Addressograph
- Children’s Dancing Class
- Peace & World Relations
- Budget
- Interfaith

- Rummage Sale
- Library
- Religion
- Youth Activities
- Sunday School
- Foster Children
- Membership
- Workshop – sews aprons, layettes, etc. for charities
- Programs
- Inter-Organization Activities
Committees (continued)

- Special Events
- Canteen – caters Sisterhood and Men’s Club events.
- Dining Room – sets tables, cooks and serves monthly Men’s Club meetings.
- House – fundraises, furnishes, and decorates Temple.
- Hospitality – hostesses at Temple affairs.
- Alter Flowers
- Social Correspondence
- Service to the Sightless
- Volunteer Service of the Veterans Hospital
The Sisterhood of Temple Beth Lion requests the honor of your presence at a Luncheon commemorating their Fiftieth Anniversary on Tuesday, March eighth, nineteen hundred sixty at twelve-thirty o’clock at Temple Beth Lion, 599 Delaware Avenue R.S.V.P. Card enclosed
50th Anniversary Celebration Program

The Presidents of Sisterhood

Mrs. Edward Warner
Mrs. Israel Aaron
Mrs. J. G. Joseph
Mrs. Leon Watters
Mrs. Charles Bock
Mrs. Irving Block, Sr.
Mrs. Max Lewis
Mrs. Stanley Falk
Mrs. Joseph I., Fink
Mrs. Sidney S. Wallens
Mrs. Sol G. Levy
Mrs. D. Bernard Simon
Mrs. Emanuel Hirsch
Mrs. Meyer H. Riechun
Mrs. Elmer I. Levy
Mrs. Benjamin E. Obetz
Mrs. Jacob Fruchtsbaum
Mrs. Irving Hyman
*Deceased

Menu

Sherry Wine
Chicken a la King in Patty Shell
Fruit Sherbert Tossed Salad
Rolls Butter
Birthday Cake
Coffee Tea
Sample info from 1960’s

- Minutes of opening board meeting of 1960 season; 922 members.
- Newly formed Suburban Nursery School has a maximum capacity of 25 students. (Sep 20, 1960).
- Total budget for 1960-1961 is $14,800.
- Book review on Dec 20, 1960 will be “Goodbye Columbus” by Philip Roth.
- Dancing school for the 6th and 7th grades had 199 students.
- Sisterhood annual report, May 9, 1961; contains extensive committee reports.
- Note from Blanche Levy, Social Secretary to the president indicating that she had written 353 notes; many were notes of thanks after the temple burned (Apr 2, 1962).
Sisterhood Of Beth Zion To Be Honored

CHICAGO, Nov. 1—The Sisterhood of Temple Beth Zion, Buffalo, will receive special honors as one of the founders of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods at the organization's 35th anniversary convention in the Hotel Conrad Hilton here Nov. 18-21.

Mrs. Albert A. Germain of Highland Ave., Buffalo, president of the Sisterhood of Temple Beth Zion, will be presented a plaque for her Sisterhood at a Golden Jubilee Honors Luncheon Tuesday, Nov. 19. Other delegates from her group who will participate in the convention include Mrs. Arthur E. Lewis, Mrs. Benjamin E. Oden and Mrs. Jacob Fruchtabum.

The National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods will hold this celebration of a half-century's service to Jewish and humanitarian causes on the occasion of its 24th Biennial Assembly.

Named to Jewish Post

CHICAGO, Nov. 22—Mrs. Jacob Fruchtabum, of 12 N. Platte St., Buffalo, was elected to the Board of Directors of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods for a term of four years at the close of the organization's 35th anniversary convention here. She is a past president of the Temple Beth Zion Sisterhood, Buffalo, and takes part in many other Jewish and civic activities.

Chairmen of Sisterhood Ball

Mrs. Newman

Mrs. Newman is chairman of the committee for the Jewish News, April 15-21.

Mrs. Lehman

Mrs. Newman and Mrs. Howard A. Newman, co-chairman of Temple Beth Zion Sisterhood, are to receive a special award at the league's annual meeting.

Aid Temple Sale March 12

Mrs. Setters

Mrs. Jacob J. Setters is chairman of the committee for Temple Beth Zion Sisterhood. Plans are underway for the sale of the temple, and more than 110 women are working on it.

Mrs. Grant

The revised edition of the Temple Beth Zion Sisterhood's cookbook contains several recipes of members of the Sisterhood and the congregation. The sale will be under the supervision of Mrs. Harold L.
Sisterhood pledges $100,000 to new building for Chapel

Revue to Boost Chapel Fund
Sisterhood Succeeds at everything it puts its mind to:

- Sisterhood to serve as guides of the new building during the dedication of the new building on Apr 19-23, 1967.
- Sisterhood raised $300 to adopt three Soviet Jewry families.
- Program for the dedication of the Ark curtain in the Sisterhood Chapel at TBZ on Jan 17, 1975. The artist was Harvey Breverman, a professor of art at the University at Buffalo. Sisterhood women did the actual needlework to produce the curtain.
- Sisterhood Sabbath
- Annual Candlelight Ball
70th Anniversary

TEMPLE BETH ZION SABBATH
SERVICE HONORING SISTERHOOD'S
70TH ANNIVERSARY

Friday Evening, April 4, 1980

Rabbi Martin L. Goldberg
Rabbi Stephen A. Karol
Michael Burke, Choir Director & Organist
Dr. Joel N. Bernstein, Cantorial Soloist
ORDER OF SERVICE
Shabbat Candle Lighting, pg. 142 Joan Shatkin, President, Temple Beth Zion

Readers:
Ruth Rachman - Vice President of Sisterhood
Norma Davis - Past President of Sisterhood Member, Executive Board District #3 of Temple Sisterhoods
Patricia Greenky - Script writer with Halle Block
Lila Obletz - Past President of Sisterhood Past member Executive Board of N.F.T.S.
Ada Levy - Past President of Sisterhood
Ruth Fruchtbau - Past President of Sisterhood Past President District #3 Temple Sisterhoods Past member of Executive Board of N.F.T.S.

Introduction of Speaker - Shirley Lasser, President, Temple Beth Zion Sisterhood

Anthem
Adoration Kaddish Benediction
Chairman of Oneg Shabbat: Lydia Shapiro, Vice President of Sisterhood
Chairman of Sisterhood Anniversary Sabbath: Bernice Cohen, Past President of Sisterhood.

Following services there will be an Oneg Shabbat in the Rabbi Joseph L. Fink Auditorium sponsored by Sisterhood. All are most cordially invited to attend.

CALENDAR
Mon. April 7 -- 10:30 Last day Passover, Yizkor Memorial Service.
Fri. Apr. 11 -- 12 noon Sisterhood Donors Luncheon featuring Dessa Meyerson.
Apr. 11-13 -- Y.P.S. Debate Weekend
Sun. Apr. 13 -- 9:30 A.M. Achim Discussion Group 1 P.M. Yom Hashoah Observance at Amherst Jewish Center.
Mon. Apr. 14 -- 12:15 P.M. Dr. Goldberg's Luncheon Study Group.
May 4 -- Walk-A-Thon for Israel
May 17 -- Young Women's Group Goods & Services Auction. Call Susa Altman 688-8264 or Lynn Fingeret 634-1675 if you can help.
Young Women’s Group – 1974-1983

- In Sept 1973, the Young Women’s Group of Temple Beth Zion was founded with it’s own Constitution and By-Laws.
- Letter sent to Rabbi Goldberg, indicating that the group had formed and was comprised of women who primarily lived near the Suburban Building of TBZ (dated Dec 13, 1973).
- Formed to attract younger women and to “enable them to strengthen their Jewish identity.”
- Memorandum of Agreement to merge with Sisterhood in 1983.
Young Women’s Group Activities

- Goods & Services Auction
- Family Chanukah Party
- Baking for Oneg Shabbats
- Delivering Welcome Baskets to new members of TBZ
- Assists in planning Consecration
- Sock Hop
- Bake Sale
- CPR course
- Speaker luncheons
Service to the Sightless – 1930’s-2001

- Formed under the auspices of Sisterhood, but a separate entity with its own by-laws.
- Started to provide Braille transcription.
- Fundraising donations to countless international, national and local organizations providing assistance to the blind and near-blind.
- Reading for the blind, visiting and entertainment.
- Awards to students at the NYS School for the Blind in Batavia.
- Braille Bridge Day fundraiser.
- Cradle Beach.
Certificate of Appreciation

Presented to

[Handwritten name]

Your contribution to the Buffalo State Hospital's Volunteer Program is deeply appreciated. This award certificate is being presented as a lasting momento of our gratitude.

[Handwritten name]

Co-ordinator of Volunteer Services

[Handwritten date]
WHEREAS, the Service to the Sightless Group started out in 1933 as a Braille group for the blind and expanded in 1946 to do not only braille, but also community service work; and

WHEREAS, programs for the sightless carried on throughout the year include visiting and reading in hospitals, private homes and Rosa Coplon Home, chauffeuring, and arranging for picnics, holiday parties and educational tours; and

WHEREAS, additional activities are carried out throughout the year in the form of services and financial support to many blind organizations and

WHEREAS, these services are provided by group members in Buffalo, Batavia and Gowanda;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, EDWARD V. REGAN, Erie County Executive, do hereby proclaim the week of May 18, 1975 as

"SISTERSHOOD OF TEMPLE BETH ZION SERVICE TO THE SIGHTLESS WEEK"

in Erie County and commend the members of this group for their outstanding generosity of time, effort, and financial support directed toward making life more pleasant for those citizens hampered by sight loss.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have caused the Seal of the County of Erie this 18th day of May, 1975, to be affixed hereto.

EDWARD V. REGAN
Archives

- On July 31, 1989, Irene Goldberg and Ruth Fernandez sent a letter to past presidents asking them to donate their papers to the Temple Archives.
- A form was sent to the past presidents from the Archives committee which asked a series of historical questions.
- Hannah Falk states, “I am not sure these dates are correct; after 55 years, I guess I am entitled to forget. It was a year that I enjoyed immensely…” Temple records show she served 1932-1933.
- Today, the Archives preserves material from 14 past TBZ Sisterhood Presidents.
Sisterhood Presidents – 1891-1977

- 1891-1910 CLARA WEILL
- 1910-16 MATILDA WARNER
- 1916-19 EMMA AARON
- 1919-24 GERTRUDE W. NATHAN
- 1924-27 STELLA BOCK
- 1927-28 LUCILLE BLOCK
- 1928-32 PAULINE LEWIS
- 1932-33 HANNAH FALK
- 1933-34 JANICE FINK
- 1935-37 MILDRED WALLENS
- 1938-41 BLANCHE LEVY
- 1941-43 DOROTHY SIMON
- 1943-46 HELEN HIRSCH
- 1946-48 ANNE RIWCHUN
- 1948-54 MILDRED LEVY
- 1954-56 LILA OBLETZ
- 1956-58 RUTH FRUCHTBAUM
- 1958-60 IRMA HYMAN
- 1960-62 MIRIAM TABANKIN
- 1962-64 EVELYN GERSTMAN
- 1964-66 BABBETTE LEWIN
- 1966-68 ARLENE ARBESMAN
- 1968-70 ADA LEVY
- 1970-72 RUTH SETTERS
- 1972-74 STELLA ZIFF
- 1974-76 LOIS ROSENTHAL
- 1976-77 BERNICE COHEN
Sisterhood Presidents – 1977-2011

- 1977-79  NORMA DAVIS
- 1979-81  SHIRLEY LASSER
- 1981-83  RUTH RACHMAN
- 1983-86  RUTH FERNANDEZ
- 1986-88  NANCY BORINS
- 1988-89  LYNN SOLOMON
- 1989-91  MYRA FALK
- 1992-94  RUTH FERNANDEZ
- 1994-97  HALLI GLINA
- 1997-99  SUSAN BRUCKHEIMER
- 1999-2001 ELAINE KLEIN
- 2001-04  LYNN KLEIN
- 2004-05  ELNORA BALSER
- 2005-07  SUSAN BRUCKHEIMER
- 2007-09  SUZIE SOLENDER
- 2009-11  SHARON WINER
- 2011-2016 KAAREN NORMAN
Happy 100th Anniversary
Temple Beth Zion Sisterhood

May you go from Strength to Strength