

Bangor Hebrew Community Center

1938 - 1948



ABRAHAM M. RUDMAN

President, 1938-1940
Honorary President, 1942



ADOLPH B. FRIEDMAN

President, 1940-1942
Honorary President, 1944

Tenth Anniversary

OF THE

Hebrew Community Center

September 26, 1948

BANGOR, MAINE



SIDNEY SCHIRO
President, 1942-1944



MAX KOMINSKY
President, 1944-1946

The Hebrew Community Center

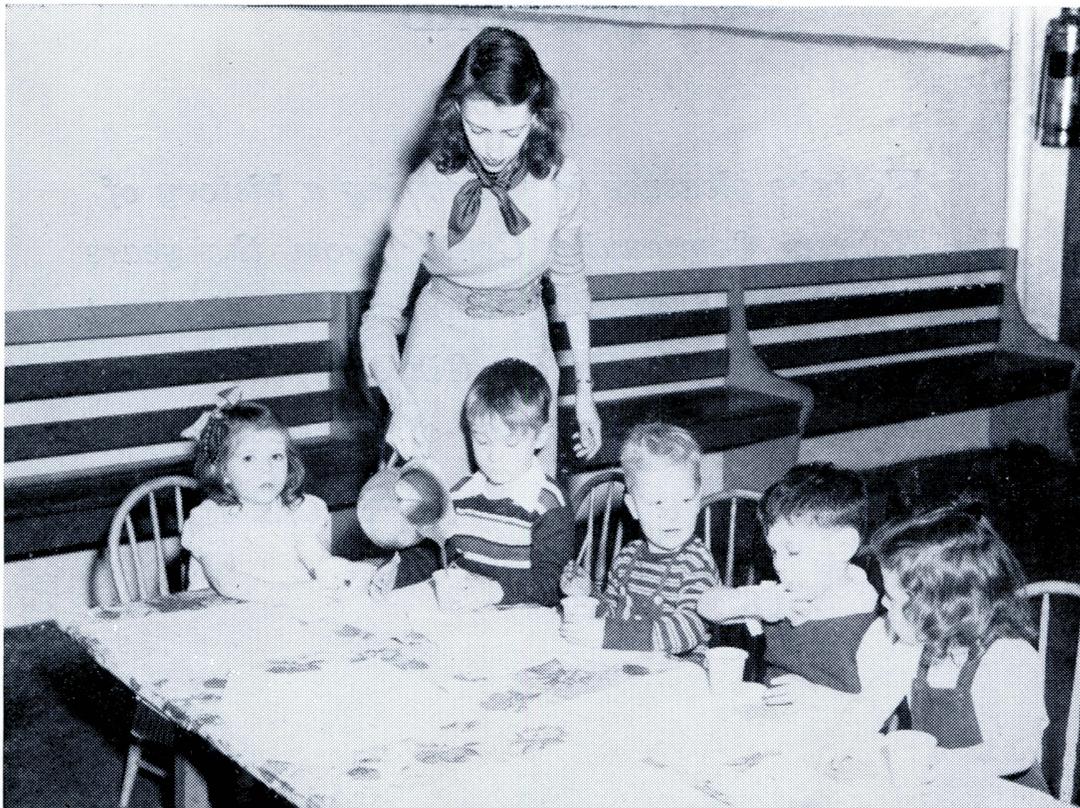
From 1938 to 1948

FOREWORD

We take pleasure in presenting a history of the Hebrew Community Center from the years 1938-1948. We wish to express our sincerest appreciation to Miss Sandra Ginsberg, the author, for her splendid presentation of the development of our Center.

In reviewing the first ten years of the Bangor Hebrew Community Center, we become aware that we have witnessed the development of an undertaking that has served the interests of Bangor Jewry and of the Bangor community as a whole. The establishment of this institution required a determination and strength of conviction that can be realized only in retrospect. The continued growth and progress of the Center through the years 1938-1948 readily warrants our investigation.

For almost twenty years, the school and meeting place for the Jewish people in Bangor was the Hebrew Institute on State Street. As the community grew in numbers, the Institute was soon outgrown. It could no longer serve the needs of its members. Its facilities were limited and the community soon came to the realization that additional programs for the children and the adults were essential to the well being of the Jewish people in the city.



A Center Nursery School class enjoying a snack.

In 1937, Mr. Nathan Liss of Millinocket purchased the Somerset Private School and presented it, in memory of his wife Dora, to the Jewish community of Bangor to be used as a Community Center. After much renovating and equipping, the building was opened to the public in the early fall of 1938.

The constitution of the Center, as adopted by the Board of Directors and the community, stated that the purpose of the institution was "To provide for the spiritual, educational, physical and social welfare of the Jewish community and to foster the Talmud Torah." It stated further that the Center should endeavor to develop "the highest ideals of American citizenship."

Under the presidency of A. M. Rudman and the executive director H. O. H. Levine, the Center endeavored to meet the goals set by the constitution. Each succeeding president and executive director added another step towards realization of these ideals. More and more has the Center come to be the focal point of all activities among the Jewish people.

At first it was necessary to solicit members to finance the Center, and in November 1938 the first membership drive was held ". . . . to enroll every Jew—young and old—in and out of town" However, when the Federation was established in 1943 and the Center received the bulk of its financial needs from that organization, the membership drives were eliminated and all contributors to the Federation campaign were automatically members of the Center. Thus, almost the entire community—men, women and children—shares in the continued welfare of the Community Center.



Learning to swim at the Center Day Camp.



JOSEPH EMPLE

President, 1946-1947
Honorary President, 1948



SHIRLEY BERGER

President, 1947-

II

Since 1938 the Center has continuously enlarged and developed its program, its facilities, its responsibilities, and its relationship with the community at large. Through its affiliation with the National Jewish Welfare Board the Center has become a member of a growing family of similar institutions throughout the country: and by means of its membership in the Bangor-Brewer Community Chest it has been in a position to offer its services and those of its staff to the entire community of Bangor.

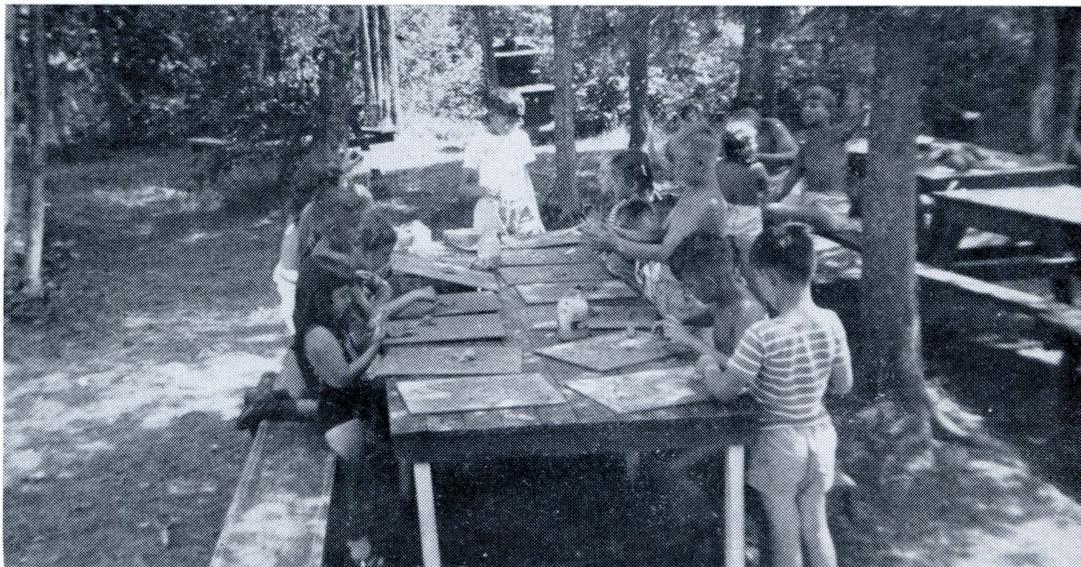
What did and does the Center have to offer to the Jewish and non-Jewish people of this city?

For the Youngsters

Activities for the youngsters have been recognized as being of the utmost importance. For by means of proper programs, supervised by interested and qualified personnel, the future adult may be shaped into that pattern which will make him a credit to society. The foundations for our continued existence as a people can be seen in the youngster who comes to the Center and participates in the activities offered.

The Nursery School, with its emphasis on inter-religious enrollment and the training it offers the children, has been duly acclaimed throughout the city. The Cub Pack, Brownies, Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts have added to the Center's prestige in the community and have contributed a great deal to developing healthy adults.

The Day Camp, which was inaugurated in 1945, has attracted more and more children to its program and activities. The Jewish and American holiday celebrations, the Junior Lyceum, the athletic activities all have contributed to enriching the children's program.



An outdoor Arts and Crafts Class at Day Camp.

For the Teen-Agers

The use of club groups for the welfare of the teen-ager has been consistently advocated in the Center. From center clubs to Young Judaeon groups to the fraternity and the sorority all have had a hand in helping shape the adolescent throughout the ten years since the Center was established.

The ability of the teen-ager to express himself upon those subjects which interest him, the desire to render service to the community in which he finds himself, and the ability to relate to the world at large are results of the Center's efforts in behalf of the members of this group.

Through the medium of various activities and programs the Center has, for the last ten years, assisted the teen-agers to bridge the difficult gap between childhood and adulthood.

For the Young Adults

An indication of the growth and development of the Center is suggested by the emphasis given to and attention directed towards the young adults.

As was the situation throughout the country, centers and similar institutions paid little attention to the young adult and his problems. It was not until a short time before World War II that the young adult was brought into the family at the centers, and it was only after the war that he came into his own as a member of an important group in our society.

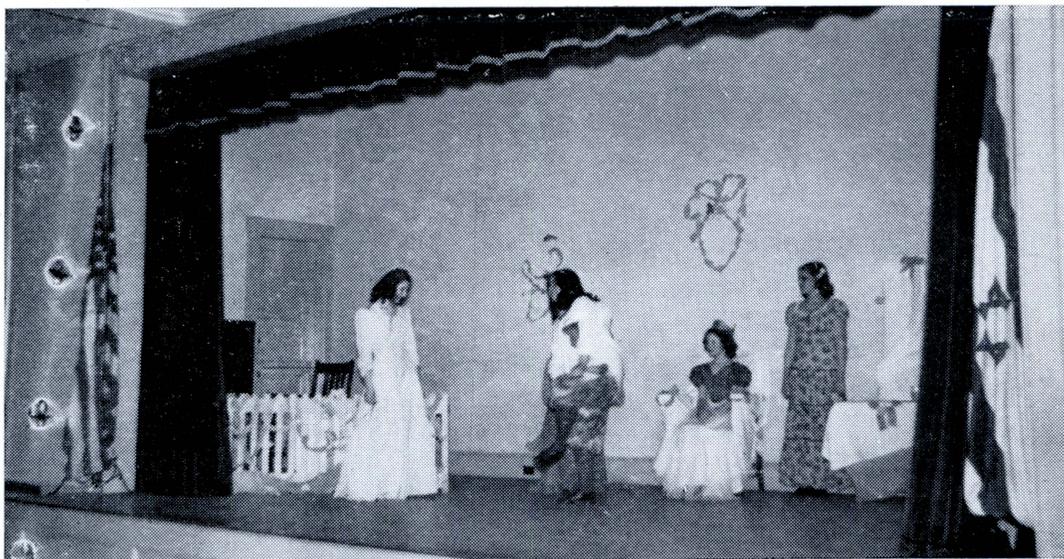


Spending a social evening in the Youth Lounge.

In the Center the young adult is recognized as an integral part of our community. He is given representation to the Board of Directors, he is permitted to vote for officers and he has an important voice in Jewish community affairs. He is given more responsibility to decide what his own programs should be, and he is encouraged to exercise his own talents to help him bring his ideas to realization. To him has been given the ever popular Yom Kippur Ball as his partial contribution to the Center's program. More and more he is being brought into the total community as a member of the last group before complete adulthood.

For the Adults

By and large the adult is left to his own resources. The organizations responsible for adult activities are the B'nai B'rith, B'nai B'rith Women, Zionists, Hadassah, Center Sisterhood, and Ladies Aid. However, to supplement their programs, the Center has, for many years, sponsored the Jewish Forum. This activity has enabled the members to listen to outstanding speakers and artists such as Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Pierre Van Passen, Ludwig Lewisohn, Rabbi Joshua L. Liebman, Max Lerner, Prof. Salo Baron, Dr. Emanuel Neuman and many other well known personalities. The Open Forums have encouraged many persons to acquire information on local and national problems of interest to all. Musical groups, book reviews and dramatic programs have all helped round out the activities for the adults.



A night at the theatre in the Center Auditorium.

For the Community

As a member of the Community Chest, the Center has opened its programs and activities to anyone interested in attending them. The Center has cooperated in city-wide celebrations and functions. As a member of the USO, the Center participated, together with the other agencies, in making the serviceman more comfortable in Bangor.

During the recent war, the Center and its organizations were active in inaugurating First Aid courses, selling bonds, sending packages to servicemen for various holidays, and in caring for the needs of some of the patients at Togus Hospital. Many are the community organizations which use the Center facilities. Our institution today is an integral part of the Group Work facilities in Bangor.

III

Four factors have influenced the development of the Center and have contributed greatly to the continued progress and growth of the institution. These were the support of the Jewish community, the presidents of the Center, the executive directors, and the Community News.

The continued support the Center has had from the community during the ten years of its existence, is the one reason why this institution has reached its present stage. It is indicative of the fact that the Center is filling an important need within the lives of its members.

The Center has been fortunate in having had able and interested presidents whose willingness to accept their responsibilities has enabled this institution to reach its tenth anniversary. A. M.



The Center participates in a Brotherhood Program.

Rudman, A. B. Friedman, Sidney Schiro, Max Kominsky, Joseph Emple, and Shirley Berger have given of their time and energy to help realize the goals set in 1938.

In every institution catering to the needs of a community, it is necessary to engage a professional person to direct the policies established by the Board of Directors, to determine and bring to fruition the wishes of the members, to administer the facilities, to interpret the Center to the community, and to help bring into actuality the ideals set for the institution. Dr. H. O. H. Levine, Joseph Perlberg, and Irving Ribner have been the executive directors who have helped the Center reach its present stage of development.

The Community News, which was started in 1938, has been the medium by which the Center activities were announced, policies explained, and Center ideals interpreted. Its columns have always been open to all readers for comments and criticisms. The News is sent to all parts of the country, and many who have left Bangor maintain their relationship with the community by means of the News which they receive.

IV

Since 1938 when the Center was opened, much has been done to improve its facilities. The Brown Lounge, a gift presented in 1940 in memory of Abram I. Brown, is the most beautiful room in the Center. The Library, furnished by Adolph B. Friedman and James A. Cahners in 1939, has one of the finest collections of Judaica in the city. The arts and crafts room, established in 1946 in memory of Sarah J. Viner and Harry Viner, is in constant use throughout the year.

In 1947 a large tract of land was added to the Center. Through the efforts and personal contribution of Joseph Emple, the former Hinkley Estate was purchased for the institution. This area is used for supervised outdoor activities and for the Day Camp children.

Ten years are not a long period in the life of an institution. Yet, within that time the Center has become indispensable to Jewish life in the community. It has made itself a force for the good in the general community. It has become the central meeting place for young and old, male and female. It has progressed steadily towards the realization of its goals and towards the development of the healthy adult. It has become a unifying force within the community. The Center is no longer an experiment. Its reason for existence has been determined in the ten years since its founding.



The Arts and Crafts Program contributes to the development of the future adult.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers

A. B. FRIEDMAN, *Honorary President*
A. M. RUDMAN, *Honorary President*
SHIRLEY BERGER, *President*
JOSEPH EMPLÉ, *1st Vice President*
DONALD DAY, *2nd Vice President*
LEE GINSBERG, *Secretary*
SAMUEL LIEBERMAN, *Treasurer*

Board of Directors

EDWARD ALLEN
MANUEL BERGER
SHIRLEY BERGER
MOSES BYER
MRS. MARTIN E. CANTOR
ISRAEL CUTLER
DONALD DAY
JOSEPH EMPLÉ
HAROLD EPSTEIN
MRS. HAROLD EPSTEIN
GEORGE GINSBERG
MRS. GEORGE GINSBERG
AARON GOTLIB
EDWARD GROSS
PHILIP KAMINSKY
DR. HOWARD KOMINSKY
MAX KOMINSKY
SAMUEL LIEBERMAN
MYER MINSKY
MRS. MYER MINSKY
HARRY RABEN
JACK RAPAPORT
DAN ROSEN
DAVID ROSEN
MORRIS RUBIN
SAMUEL RUDMAN
SIDNEY SCHIRO
HENRY SEGAL
MORRIS SHAFMASTER
DR. JAMES SIEGEL
ABE STERN
HARRY STERN
MRS. HARRY STERN



Hebrew Institute

1920-1938

