

Jewish Historical Society of Delaware
Hadassah: Wilmington and Newark Chapters
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History

Hadassah, nationally, was founded and influenced by that late great American Jewish woman, Henrietta Szold, in 1912. From a small handful of women, who belonged to a study group, this nucleus has grown today to become the largest women's Zionist organization in the world and the largest volunteer women's group now numbering 325,000 members³ all over the United States and Canada. This program embraces medical care and social service to the people in Israel, and on the American scene, Hadassah strives to make Democracy work through the American Affairs project.

We in Wilmington, were fortunate to have had a great Jewish leader, the late Mr. Louis Topkis, who after returning from his visit to the then Palestine in the 1920s, asked his daughter, the late Mrs. Julius Wolson to get a Hadassah chapter started here in Wilmington. And so, on April 12 1929, Hadassah received its charter from National with 55 Charter members who elected Mrs. Julius Wolson as their first president.

They met regularly each month at the Adas Kodesh Synagogue with the Board meetings in individual homes. It was very interesting to read in the minutes of their ingenious ways and means of raising money for the various projects that are solely supported by Hadassah in the then Palestine, a network of hospitals, teacher's training school for nurses and child welfare. Jewish National Fund and in 1934, during the Holocaust, Youth Aliyah became part of their program. These last two projects are also supported by other organizations, but Hadassah is recognized today as the official representative of Youth Aliyah in the U.S. and Canada. Since 1934, 140,000 young Jewish people from 80 countries have been given new life and hope in Israel through this project.

But underlying all this fund raising that included bake sales, card parties, rummage sales, theater parties, and donor luncheons (by the way, we were the first to introduce Donor Luncheons in Wilmington), was a real concern and a real effort to promote Jewish education, thus forming study groups that encouraged book reviews, lectures on Jewish subjects, the study of the Bible and Hebrew, as well as subjects on the American scene, encouraging members to get to study about and know the political candidates and to vote. A monthly bulletin was issued by the chapter. National Hadassah Magazine is an excellent publication sent to members.

In the last 1930s our Jewish community bought a tract of land in the then Palestine that was called Nahlat Delaware (Land Territory) instigated by the late Harry Cohen and Hadassah helped to finance it over a period of several years.

When our membership grew to 1,000, it was suggested by National to form into two groups – an afternoon group that was voted by the members to be called Henrietta Szold, and an evening group that was called Emma Lazarus, with a chapter board. However, for many reasons, we had to go back to the one group for awhile. In 1973 the Wilmington Chapter had two groups. The Chapter group meeting in the afternoon with a membership of about 800 and an evening group, called 'Shalom,' with a membership of about 100. In April 1975, the creation of three groups was approved – Chai, Sabra and Shalom. We have 110 life members, and 6 associate members, Hadassah husbands. Life membership and Associate membership cost \$150.00. By the way, this is a wonderful gift for Chanukah, birthdays or anniversaries.

Our quotas for 1973 was \$21,000.00 that was filled. For 1974, we have a quota of \$22,125.00 plus an additional \$8,500.00 to be paid over a period of three years for the improvement of our Hadassah Medical organization and the rebuilding of our hospital on Mt. Scopus. Compare these figures with those of the first year of our existence \$797.00. During this recent emergency for help in our hospitals

³ source material prepared 1973.

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who were getting the most severely wounded soldiers since we do not have the most sophisticated and modern equipment, our members in response to a letter sent to National over \$2,000.00.

Young Judeah and Junior Hadassah were encouraged to become organized. Today we are hoping the continue our sponsorship of a Young Judea group with our Jewish Community Center. Some of the Junior Hadassah members are now affiliated with the evening group.

As a group, we cooperated with many agencies in the community, such as Federation, from which we receive an allocation, by supplying volunteer workers during their campaign, as well as Israel Bonds. We have been asked to have joint Cultural meetings with our Jewish Community Center. During the recent emergency for Israel, we encouraged our members to co-operate both financially and physically, to make phone calls and make personal visits to prospective contributors and purchasers of Israel bonds.

Since, nationally, we are divided into regions, we were first part of the Eastern Pennsylvania, Southern New Jersey and Delaware Region – but now that both Eastern Pennsylvania and Southern New Jersey are regions by themselves, since they have both grown so very large, we are now part of the Northern Seaboard Region that includes Delaware, Maryland and Virginia.

During our almost 44 years of existence, our leaders and members derived a great deal of knowledge and inspiration from various Regional Conferences and National conventions that has helped to make our chapter recognized as a real credit to Hadassah and to our community. We have hosted two regional conferences, the last one as recently as May 1973, that was acclaimed by our community and region as a real cultural treat.

The dedication and devotion of our members in Wilmington has added much to the development of Hadassah regionally and nationally. Through our Leadership Training program, we have helped to develop leaders from many projects in our own community. In a recent research survey that was sent to Board members of 25 organizations in Wilmington, asking to list the organizations whose influence is most recognized in the community, the result showed 1st, Jewish Federation, 2nd, Jewish Community Center and 3rd Hadassah.

To enumerate the names of the many devoted and dedicated women in our chapter during these past 44 years would take too much time, but I feel I would be remiss not to mention one of our women who for more than 35 years served as our Jewish National Fund chairman, Mrs. Morris Tanzer, now living in our Kutz Home. Also the name of Mrs. Amelia Finger, now living in California, who for many years served as educational chairman and leader of a study group as well as president. Also Mrs. Goldie Gluckman, who for many years served and inaugurated many new fund raising activities. Another name that bears mention is Mrs. Marion Strauss, who served in many, many capacities including president and also president of our region and now serving on the National Board Service committee on the Speaker's Bureau.

The presidents of Wilmington Hadassah are:

Bertha Abelman
Irene Abner
Judy Arenson, 1977-1979
Leslie Balick, 1979-1980
Dorothy Braderman
Faith Brown, 1990-1992
Lois Chalawsky
Helen Cooper, 1934

Lillian Cramer, 1933
Thelma Deitcher (Mrs. Louis Deitcher),
1954-1955, 1956-1957
Jean Drowos
Dora Eisenstat (Mrs. Sam Eisenstat), 1948-
1950, 1952-1954
Eleanor Falk (Mrs. Lloyd L. Falk), 1967-
1968

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Amelia Finger, 1930	Bryna Rappaport
Beatrice Fink	Zelda Rich (Mrs. Nathan Rich),
Dorothy Flippen	Celina G. Riebman, 1975-1977
Cissie Golden (Mrs. A.A. Golden), 1959-1960	Myrna Rubenstein (Mrs. Harvey Rubenstein), 1970-1971
Selma Goldstein	Carol Rumaner
Ruth Goodman (Mrs. Albert Goodman), 1992-1993	Marcia Shepard (Mrs. Marvin Shepard), 1971-1973
Ida Gostin (Mrs. David Gostin), 1955-1956	Sylvia Shtofman, 1935
Suzanne Grumbacher, 1995-1998	Marion Sklut (Mrs. Millard Sklut), 1950-1951
Linda G. Harwitz, 1986-1988	Gertrude Sollod, 1932
Goldie Katz (Mrs. David Katz), 1957-1959	Millie Stat (Mrs. Lewis Stat), 1951-1952
Dora Kaufman	Sharon Sternberg, 1998-1999
Barbara S. Keil (Mrs. Charles Keil), 1966-1967	Judy Stiebel (Mrs. David Stiebel), 1988-1990
Rosa Keil	Marion Strauss (Mrs. Nathan Strauss), 1960-1962
Annette Keller	Sylvia Strauss
Ruth Kerbel	Dora Stromwasser
Naomi Klein	Annette Toby (Mrs. Sol Toby), 1968-1970
Ruth Kordansky (Mrs. Leonard Kordansky), 1962-1963	Sandye Turnauer
Elda Kratka	Toby Weiner
Ida Kurland, 1936	Eva Weissman, 1999-2002
Maureen LaPorte	Zipporah Wolson, 1929
Dina Lipschutz, 1993-1995	Frances Zaret
Annette Loky	Marion Zimmerman (Mrs. Joseph Zimmerman), 1963-1965
Lelaine Nemser, 1985-1986	Esther Zinman
Lillian Ploener, 1931	
Rosalie Popper (Mrs. Peter Popper), 1973-1975	

For those of you who haven't already visited Israel, treat yourself and go to see with your own eyes the fruits of your labor, your magnificent 600 bed Medial Center in Ein Kerem in Jerusalem and your hospital that is being rebuilt once again on Mt. Scopus. You will also take pride in helping to see Eretz Yisroel reborn after 2000 years.

In the face of the critical situation we find in Israel today, after the Yom Kippur war, and the previous precarious events of war in 1948, 1956, and 1967 I'm sure I speak for all of us when I say that as American Jewish women, we are thankful for our awareness of our role in the destiny of our people through our work in Hadassah and adhering to our motto from our prophet Jeremiah – "The Healing of the Daughter of my People."

Dora T. Eisenstat (Mrs. Sam)

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This collection contains records, photographs, newsletters, and memorabilia from the local Hadassah chapters as well as some material from the regional and national level. The materials span the years 1937 to the present. Items are arranged as follows:

BOX 1:

- Series 1 Local Chapter Records
- a. Miscellaneous and Specific Records
 - 1. Wilmington Chapter – Stationary, etc., n.d.
 - 2. Wilmington Chapter – “Komida” Journal, ¹ 1943
 - 3. Wilmington Chapter – Miscellaneous Records, n.d., 1948
 - 4. Wilmington Chapter – Annual President’s Report, 1959-60
 - 5. Wilmington Chapter – Miscellaneous Records, 1950s
 - 6. Wilmington Chapter – Miscellaneous Records, 1960s
 - 7. Wilmington Chapter – History (typescript), November 12, 1973
 - 8. Wilmington Chapter – Miscellaneous Records, 1970s
 - 9. Wilmington Chapter – Miscellaneous Records, 1980s
 - 10. Wilmington Chapter – Miscellaneous Records, 1987-1989
 - 11. Wilmington Chapter – Miscellaneous Records, 1990s
 - 12. Wilmington Chapter – Miscellaneous Record, 1997-2000²
 - 13. Wilmington Chapter – Miscellaneous Records – service marking merger of Chai and Shalom groups of Hadassah chapter prepared and performed by Rabbi Peter Grumbacher, n.d.⁴

 - 16. Wilmington Chapter – Book Group, 1997-2000³

 - 18. Newark Chapter – Miscellaneous Records, 1990s
 - b. Photographs
 - 1. Wilmington Chapter – Miscellaneous Photographs
 - c. Newspaper Clippings and Publicity
 - 1. Wilmington Chapter – Publicity: Newspaper Clippings, 1940s-1950s
 - 2. Wilmington Chapter – Publicity: Newspaper Clippings, 1940s-1999s
 - 3. Wilmington Chapter – Publicity: Newspaper Clippings, 1997-2000⁴
 - d. Newsletters
 - 1. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 1950-56
 - 2. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 1957
 - 3. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 1958

⁴ Suzanne Grumbacher, donor.

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4. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 1959
5. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 1960-1964
6. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 1965-1968
7. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 1970-71
8. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 1972
9. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 1973
10. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 1974-1976
11. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 1977
12. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 1978
13. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 1979
14. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 1980, 1985-1986
15. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, 1987
16. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, 1988
17. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, 1989
18. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 1990
19. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, 1991
20. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, 1992
21. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, 1993
22. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, 1994
23. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, 1995
24. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, 1996
25. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, 1997
26. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, 1998
27. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, 1999
28. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 2000
29. Wilmington Chapter – Newsletter *The Hadassah Bulletin*, (incomplete), 2001
30. Newark Chapter – Newsletter (incomplete), 1994
31. Newark Chapter – Newsletter (incomplete), 1995
32. Newark Chapter – Newsletter, 1996
33. Lower Delaware Chapter – Newsletter *Bulletin*, 1997-1998

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- Series 2 Regional Records
 a. Miscellaneous Records
1. Northern Seaboard Region – Miscellaneous Records, 1970s
 2. Northern Seaboard Region – Miscellaneous Records, 1980s
2. Northern Seaboard Region – Miscellaneous Records, 1990s
3. Northern Seaboard Region – Miscellaneous Records, 1998-1999⁵
- b. Newsletters
1. Northern Seaboard Region – Newsletters, (incomplete), 1989-1994
 2. Northern Seaboard Region – Newsletters, (incomplete), 1997-2003⁶

Commented [GP1]: Accession 7/13/1017 from Rhoda Dombchik

BOX 2:

- Series 3 National Records
- a. Miscellaneous Records & Publications
1. National Office – Promotional matchbook, n.d.⁷
 2. National Office – Signature of Henrietta Szold, n.d.
 3. National Office – Silver Jubilee Yearbook, 1937
- b. Newsletters
1. National Office – *Hadassah Headlines*, (incomplete), Winter 1988
 2. National Office – Planned Giving and Estates Newsletter *Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow*, (incomplete), 1998-1999⁸
- c. Program and Educational Materials
1. National Office – Program and Educational Materials, 1950s
 2. National Office – Program and Educational Materials, 1950s
 3. National Office – Program and Educational Materials, 1950s
 4. National Office – Program and Educational Materials, 1950s
- d. Promotional and Informational Materials
1. National Office – Promotional and Informational Materials, 1950s-1980s
 2. National Office – Promotional and Informational Materials, 1950s-1980s
 3. National Office – Promotional and Informational Materials, 1950s-1980s

BOXES 3 & 4:

- Series 4 Awards and Memorabilia

BOX 5:

- Series 4 Awards and Memorabilia
1. National Awards to Chapter, 1984
 National Hadassah Membership Award, New Members, January 1984
 Most Improved Chapter Award to Northern Seaboard Region, May 8, 1984

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2. Membership Certificate of Merit, n.d., c. 1997⁹
3. Statement in Recognition of the Wilmington Chapter of Hadassah, State of Delaware – Office of the Governor, 1998

Series 5

Events and Lists

a. Event Invitations & Programs

1. Programs – Wilmington Chapter, (incomplete), 1930s
2. Programs – Wilmington Chapter, (incomplete), 1940s
3. Programs – Wilmington Chapter, 1950-1955
4. Programs – Wilmington Chapter, 1956-1959
5. Programs – Wilmington Chapter, 1960s
6. Programs – Wilmington Chapter, 1970s
7. Programs – Wilmington Chapter, (incomplete), 1980s
8. Programs – Wilmington Chapter, 1990s
9. Programs – Newark Chapter, 1980s
10. Programs – Newark Chapter, 1990s

b. Board Lists

1. Board Lists – Wilmington Chapter, (incomplete), 1950s
2. Board Lists – Wilmington Chapter, (incomplete), 1960s
3. Board Lists – Wilmington Chapter, (complete), 1970-1976
4. Board Lists – Wilmington Chapter, (incomplete), 1980s
5. Board Lists – Wilmington Chapter, (incomplete), 1990s

c. Membership Lists

1. Membership Lists – Wilmington Chapter, 1954-1955
2. Membership Lists – Wilmington Chapter, 1955-1956
3. Membership Lists – Wilmington Chapter, 1956-1957
4. Membership Lists – Wilmington Chapter, 1957-1958
5. Membership Lists – Wilmington Chapter, 1958-1959
6. Membership Lists – Wilmington Chapter, 1959-1960
7. Membership Lists – Wilmington Chapter, 1960-1961
8. Membership Lists – Wilmington Chapter, 1962
9. Membership Lists – Wilmington Chapter, 1964
10. Membership Lists – Wilmington Chapter, (incomplete), 1980s
11. Membership Lists – Wilmington Chapter, (incomplete), 1990s
12. Membership and Miscellaneous Lists – Wilmington Chapter, n.d.

ON SHELF:

Series 6

Scrapbooks

- a. 1975-1976
- b. 1976-1977
- c. 1977-1978

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- d. 1978-1979
- e. 1979-1981
- f. 1978-1988

Note: additional materials may be found in the general photograph files and in the Bluestone Collection.

¹ Accession 1992.4 Gift of Mutzie Bellak

² Accession 2003.13 Gift of Rose (Mrs. Isadore) Zinman Reitzes

³ Accession 2003.13 Gift of Rose (Mrs. Isadore) Zinman Reitzes

⁴ Accession 2003.13 *ibid.*

⁵ Accession 2003.13 *ibid.*

⁶ Accession 2003.13 *ibid.*

⁷ Accession unknown, Gift of Sadie Cohen

⁸ Accession 2003.13 Gift of Rose Reitzes

⁹ Accession 2003.13 Gift of Rose Reitzes