A Finding Aid to the
Congregation B'nai Zion (Shreveport, La.)
Records

Manuscript Collection No. 651
Biographical Sketch

The Jewish community of Shreveport, Louisiana dates as far back as 1848, but a community wasn't founded until 1857. Originally named Har-El in 1861, services were conducted by Rabbi Julius Lewin at the home of founder Abraham Winter. In 1866, the congregation obtained a charter changing their name to Hebrew Zion congregation, and they built their first building in 1869, near the site of most of the cities churches.

The congregation joined the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in 1908, from that time forward affiliating with the Reform Movement. In 1914, a new building was constructed, and they changed their name to B'nai Zion a year later. At this time, the rabbi was Moses P. Jacobson.

In 1920, Abraham Brill was called to B'nai Zion, retiring in 1942. He was replaced by David Lefkowitz, Jr., who had served as his associate for some two years. In 1955, a yet more modern building was constructed. Lefkowitz retired in 1972. Since then, the congregation had been served by various rabbis. During this time, Lefkowitz served as Rabbi Emeritus until his death in 1999. In 2000, B'nai Zion Congregation numbers 300 families, and is served by Rabbi Harold L. Robinson.

Scope and Content

The Congregation B'nai Zion Records (Shreveport, La.) consists of annual reports, minutes, religious school papers and other materials dating primarily from the tenure of Rabbi David Lefkowitz.

Arrangement

Organized into three (3) series: A. Congregational Records; B. Religious School; C. Nearprint.

Terms of Access

The collection is open for use; no restrictions apply.

Preferred Citation

Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Congregation B'nai Zion (Shreveport, La.) Records and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:

[Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-651. Congregation B'nai Zion (Shreveport, La.) Records. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Provenance

Received from Leona Lefkowitz, Shreveport, La., August 1999.

Index Terms

Subjects

Jewish educators / Synagogues -- Louisiana -- Shreveport / Synagogues -- Organization and administration

Personal Names

Lefkowitz, David, 1911-1999

Corporate Names

Congregation B'nai Zion (Shreveport, La.)

Media

Minutes

Series A. Congregational Records, 1940-1972

Extent

0.8 linear feet (2 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note

The material includes temple bulletins, reports to the congregation, and board meeting minutes.
Arrangement

The series is arranged alphabetically by type of record, and chronologically within folders.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 1. Folder 1. Annual meetings, 1942-1963
Box 1. Folder 2. Building program, 1954
Box 1. Folder 3. Bulletins, 1940-1941
Box 1. Folder 4. Bulletins, 1942-1943
Box 1. Folder 5. Bulletins, 1946-1949
Box 2. Folder 1. Bulletins, 1952-1953
Box 2. Folder 2. Bulletins, 1954-1955
Box 2. Folder 3. Bulletins, 1956-1957
Box 2. Folder 4. Bulletins, 1958-1959
Box 2. Folder 5. Congregational report [Jewish Federation Campaign], 1951
Box 2. Folder 6. Congregational reports and installations, 1963-1965
Box 2. Folder 7. Congregational seder, 1942-1972


Extent 0.8 linear feet (2 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Contains records from the B'nai Zion Religious school, including curricula, schedules, attendance lists, grade reports and other material.

Arrangement The series is arranged in a chronological order.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 3. Folder 1. Building questionnaire, 1955
Box 3. Folder 2. Educational material.
Box 3. Folder 3. School year, undated
Box 3. Folder 4. School year, 1946-1951
Box 3. Folder 5. School year, 1952-1953
Box 3. Folder 7. School year, 1954-1955
Box 3. Folder 8. School year, 1956-1957
Box 3. Folder 10. School year, 1958-1959
Box 4. Folder 1. School year, 1960
Box 4. Folder 2. School year, 1961
Series C. Nearprint, 1981, undated

Extent 0.4 linear feet (1 Hollinger box)

Scope and Content Note Includes brochures and a historical essay by Leona Lefkowitz on B’nai Zion Congregation.

Arrangement The series is arranged alphabetically by topic.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 5. Folder 1. Brochures, undated
Box 5. Folder 2. Closing exercises, undated
Box 5. Folder 3. Nearprint, undated
Box 5. Folder 4. School paper, undated
Box 5. Folder 5. Term paper [Leona Lefkowitz], 1981