

Jewish Buffalo Archives Project needs your help!

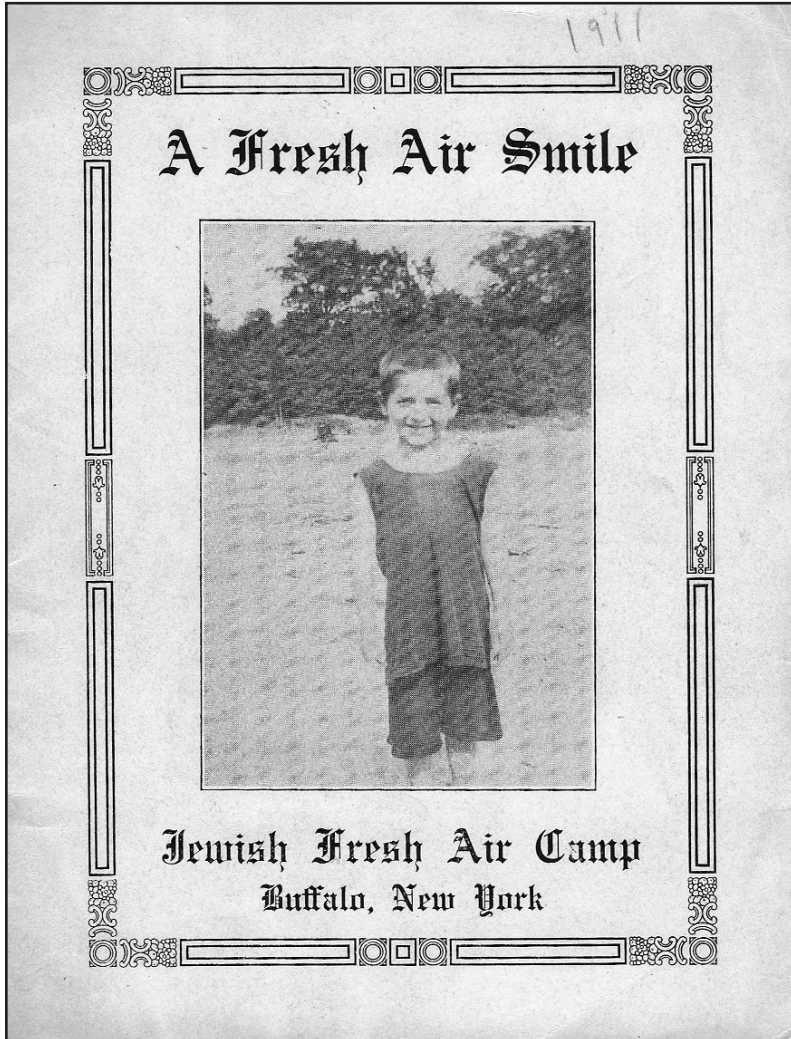
By CHANA REVELL KOTZIN, Ph.D

In addition to running a weekly mystery photograph, over the next six months, the Jewish Buffalo Archives Project in conjunction with the *Buffalo Jewish Review* will be running articles highlighting other areas of need for filling in gaps in our historical records, or expanding representation in the archival holdings we already have, in order to create a truly inclusive and expansive archives.

Much of the last five years has focused on surveying organizations who have opted to have their records surveyed and donated their records to benefit the community

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archive which is available to all parts of the community in perpetuity within a professionally managed archives within the University at



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Buffalo, University Archives. Through surveying and donation of archives, we have been fortunate to secure some of the oldest and largest archival repositories that include Temple Beth El, Temple Beth Zion, Jewish Community Center and Camps, and the Jewish

Federation of Greater Buffalo. I continue to survey institutions, groups and family records, but now spend most of my time working on the more time consuming task of organizing and labeling records, tracking down missing pieces, and writing overview histories as well as writing online "finding aids" (guides to materials for each person or group).

Even so, there still remain historical areas that the Jewish Buffalo Archives Project has not found materials, or has limited materials that would benefit from more additions. Ten areas of need are identified in this article, some of which will be outlined in greater detail in subsequent articles, alongside more information about the general survey and donation process.

Please don't assume we already have the records, or that the amount of materials you have is too small for a collection, or that someone else has probably given similar materials already. The reality is that much archival material survives by the act of one or two people from each organization, and family individual papers are always unique. We remain interested in areas of

civic, business, religious, political, and social activities with materials for individuals, families or group/organizational historical papers in the following formats, but are not completely limited to these alone – so always ask!

For individuals: Letters/email, memoirs/reminiscences, diaries/blogs, scrapbooks/photo albums, professional papers, genealogical information, speeches/lectures, articles/essays, subject files, legal documents, minutes/reports, brochures and fliers, awards/certificates, **photographs**, films/videos/audio tapes (including identifying information is helpful), websites printouts and in digital form.

For organizations: Architectural records, Articles of incorporation, charters, Audio recordings, Budgets, Bylaws and revisions, Clippings, Constitution and revisions, Correspondence/email of officers, Directories, Handbooks, Memoranda, Minutes of meetings, Membership lists, Motion picture

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film, videotape, audio recordings, DVDs, and CDs, Newsletters and other publications (generated by the organization), Organizational charts, Pamphlets, brochures, fliers, etc., **Photographs**, Planning documents, Press releases, Reports (annual, committee, etc.), Rosters, Subject files, Websites and blogs, printouts and in digital form.

Please can you help us find these types of materials for these groups:

(1) Jewish women's voluntary groups: for example the National Council of Jewish Women (to augment materials donated by Muriel Goodman and Ethel Melzer), Pioneer Women (no materials), Jewish Women International/B'nai B'rith (to augment materials donated by Annette Blanchard), and Jewish women's groups such as the Pythian Sisters, and other cultural groups like the Jewish (Women's) Liberal Arts Club. This is a brief listing of the many Jewish women's organizations (outside of synagogue sisterhoods), but there are many more and this is an area of critical need.

(2) Jewish Businesses: from a one person shop to large manufacturing concerns, from commercial ventures to professional outlets, from delis, and groceries, to glass manufacturers, scrap dealers and farmers as well as shochetim, wig makers and Judaica stores. I will have a special separate article about businesses in February. This is an

area of very critical need.

(3) Orthodox synagogues in Niagara Falls, all parts of Buffalo city and Greater Buffalo Suburbs. We are underrepresented in this area, and are anxious and eager to work with current and former members and leaders of synagogues that hold records.

(4) Rabbinic and Cantor papers: It is a little known fact that rabbis own their own papers of sermons and writings, and cantor's own their own arrangements, therefore it is not a given that these will appear in synagogue archives. In Buffalo, the only rabbinic papers we hold are from Rabbi Isaac Klein and a small amount of materials relating to a number of Temple Beth Zion rabbis.

(5) Jewish credit unions and hometown associations (including landsmanschaften, e.g Nashelskers and Sokolifkes for which there are several different spellings), Workman's Circle (as well as their school), and many more.

(6) Family and personal records, especially diaries, memories recorded in any format, articles, genealogical studies, books. We have a few families who have donated their records and these have been incredibly helpful in many areas including the East Side, but we really need many more in order to have a much richer and fuller appreciation of Jewish life from 1847 onwards.

(7) Neighborhoods – especially the east side, Humboldt, and North Buffalo. Please don't assume we have photographs of shuls, school or businesses in these areas!

(8) Cemetery records from any defunct Jewish synagogues or home town associations.

(9) Jewish men's and women's masonic organizations.

(10) Local artists, authors, and musicians (please note, you do not have to give up copyright to lodge your materials, and you can determine how recordings/works can be made available).

Please contact Chana Revell Kotzin, Director, Jewish Buffalo Archives Project, if you have any leads or would like to discuss a particular donation at 716-204-5388 or email archivesproject@bjebuffalo.org. You can also visit the Jewish Buffalo Archives Project at 2640 North Forest Road, Getzville, NY 14068, however as this a part-time position, and there are times when I am offsite conducting surveys or oral histories, it is always best to make an appointment to avoid disappointment. In addition, I can also visit your home or organizational location if more convenient.

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