

JHSGH Collection Policy

Purpose

The Jewish Historical Society of Greater Hartford serves as the repository for special collections, archival records, and cultural artifacts for the Jewish community in the Hartford and greater Hartford areas and supports the research of a wide public audience, including historians, community organizations, students, and other professionals and scholars whose work relies on primary resource materials, including manuscripts, media, digital files, and archival records. The Jewish Historical Society of Greater Hartford develops its collections primarily to support the research needs of its surrounding community and thus its collections encompass a broad sweep of community interests, both religious and secular in nature. The staff of the Jewish Historical Society of Greater Hartford is primarily responsible for the development of its collections, but operates in consultation with its operational Board of Directors and community colleagues.

The collecting mission of the Jewish Historical Society of Greater Hartford is twofold:

1. To preserve the official archives and manuscripts of organizations and individuals directly pertaining to or affecting the Jewish community in the Hartford and greater Hartford areas, insofar as they have permanent historical value.
2. To acquire, preserve, and provide access to a wide range of primary research materials in their original formats, including books, manuscripts, archival records, audio-visual materials, artifacts, realia, and other items (including digital objects) in support of the educational and research activities of its various constituencies.

Our mission to acquire and preserve materials is coupled with a commitment to outreach and access. Materials are described according to a combination of national standards established by the American Library Association and the Society of American Archivists. We are committed to collaborating with other educational and social institutions to achieve our mission objectives and to providing information concerning the JHSGH and its repository holdings through various media formats including public exhibits, book publications, and the worldwide web.

Scope

The Jewish Historical Society of Greater Hartford is committed to preserving archival materials in their original format or in the form of authenticated duplicates. Collections consisting of the record creation of corporate bodies and/or individual agents are to be of use for scholarly or community research and serve fundamentally as a means of preserving the historical evidence and the social memory of the Jewish community in the Hartford and greater Hartford area.

Definitions and archival materials to be collected:

Corporate Bodies (an organization or group of persons and/or organizations that is identified by a name and that acts, or may act, as a unit. *Typical examples of corporate bodies are associations, institutions, business firms, nonprofit enterprises, governments, government agencies, religious bodies, projects and programs, and conferences. Ad hoc events (such as athletic contests, exhibitions, expeditions, fairs, and festivals) and vessels (e.g., ships and spacecraft) also are considered to be corporate bodies.*)

Corporate bodies currently represented within the JHSGH collections include synagogues, social institutions and organizations, educational institutions, businesses, and entities associated with specific topic areas or events (i.e. Zionism, farming and agriculture, the Holocaust).

Synagogues: (*the following items are considered pertinent archival records for documenting synagogues*):

- annual reports
- artifacts (*small items with Director's consent*)
- awards (*certificates only*)
- board of directors/presidents information
- board/ trustees meeting minutes
- buildings/property (deeds, insurances, contracts, blueprints/plans, land surveys, maintenance/renovation)
- cemetery records (i.e. site maps, lists of deceased)
- sub-committees (minutes)
- constitution/by-laws/charters
- correspondence
- financial records (non-essential)
- education (adult, youth – i.e. syllabi, brochure, class descriptions, confirmations)
- fundraising
- guest books
- historical highlights/ milestone events/ anniversaries (i.e. event programs, tribute books)
- historical profiles
- holidays/celebrations (i.e. weekly programs, service bulletins)
- membership/founder's list
- mission and strategic planning (i.e. mission statements, vision statements, etc.)
- music (special programs, information related to cantor, choir, orchestration)
- newsletters/bulletins – (*monthly or regularly scheduled*)
- newspaper articles
- photographs (or other graphic media)
- publications (histories, directories, service, other)
- rabbis (biography, resume, letter of agreement, contracts, correspondence, sermons)
- scrapbooks
- social clubs (i.e. sisterhood, men's club)
- staff information
- treasurer reports
- yearbooks
- youth groups

Current Collection Objectives: To collect or reproduce records, manuscripts, or other secondary materials that can act as historical evidence for the functional operation and community life of the synagogue institutions in the Greater Hartford area over the life of their own histories up to the present day.

Note on existing JHSGH collections pertaining to synagogues: The current collections related to synagogues held by the JHSGH are broad and diverse. Collections documenting the history of The Emanuel Synagogue, Congregation Beth Israel and Beth El Temple of West Hartford are the most substantial. With certain exceptions, only a minimal amount of archival material is available at the JHSGH documenting many of the synagogue and religious institutions in the surrounding Greater Hartford area. Such collections generally consist of newspaper articles and newsletter bulletins. Acquiring materials to enhance these smaller collections and to selectively collect to address documentation gaps in its larger collections direct the JHSGH's present collecting priorities.