

Beth Abraham Synagogue

York Street
Bangor, Maine



Fiftieth Anniversary Commemorative Journal

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Journal Committee wishes to express its deepest appreciation to those who helped in the research for this history. Without their memories and written data, when available, this effort would not have come to fruition. We gratefully thank Rabbi Henry Isaacs, Jacob Striar, Philip Striar, Louis Cooper, Louis Rolnick, Diane Cutler, Bessie Wald, and the Reference Department of the Bangor Public Library.



Photo by Yehuda Inbar

FOREWORD

In a changing world, Beth Abraham has never changed. Physically, perhaps, but not spiritually. For there is more to this synagogue than cement and mortar and wood. External embellishments over the past fifty years have attracted the eye, but the underlying spirit has attracted the heart.

"Beth Abraham" literally means "House of Abraham." Among our first Patriarch's greatest attributes was his love for his fellow man - Abraham the Humanitarian. In his home all were welcome, from the weariest traveler to the wealthiest merchant prince. They were made to feel a part of Abraham's household - they were made to feel welcome - and they were told that they could always return and find a safe refuge in Abraham's house.

So, too, with this "Bais Avraham." Over the years newcomers to Bangor found a haven here - an orthodox oasis where one was never expected, and even those whose religious roots were not observant, found a place where they and their children could feel comfortable. The children have made Beth Abraham special. Whether it was the love of Torah or the lure of the "Candy Man," they have enhanced the service and made this synagogue unique. What seems so surprising to the visitor - the effortless ease with which the youngsters chant the age-old prayers, is really an ingrained part of their lives.

To be sure though, the original founders of Beth Abraham might be somewhat startled at the physical changes - they would be no less amazed at the role the women of the congregation have played in bringing beauty and order into a chaotic void.

Perhaps the Beth Abraham Synagogue can best be described in one word, *home*. Many people, members and non-members alike, have always found a "safe harbor" here, a place to worship in their own way - in peace.

The members of Beth Abraham, who belong to no special social strata, combine hard work and a love for their "shul" to keep it alive. And though the passing years are taking their toll of active members, the spark still remains. From one generation to another it has kindled a lifelong sense of Judaism. We hope and pray that the spark, and its flame, will burn eternally.

Norma Weiner Berg, Editor
Fiftieth Anniversary Journal
October 9, 1983



United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

June 21, 1983

Rabbi Henry J. Isaacs
c/o Beth Abraham Synagogue
York Street
Bangor, Maine 04401

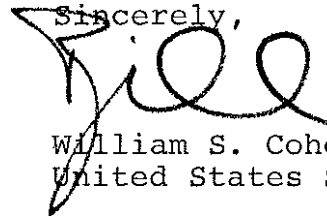
To the Members and Friends of Beth Abraham Synagogue:

I have many very fond memories of the York Street area. While the neighborhood itself has changed dramatically over the years, the Beth Abraham Synagogue has been an integral part of that neighborhood for as long as I can remember.

Congratulations to Congregation Beth Abraham for your fifty years of dedication and service to the community.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,



William S. Cohen
United States Senator

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

July 5, 1983

Beth Abraham Synagogue
York Street
Bangor, Maine 04401

Dear Friends:

I wish you on this 50th anniversary many more years of happiness and peace for all members of the Beth Abraham Congregation.

Your spirit of concern for the quality of life for your friends and loved ones has always been extended to others. May this tradition continue to enrich your own lives as well as the lives of all others in our local, state and national communities.

With best regards.

Sincerely,

George J. Mitchell

George J. Mitchell
United States Senator

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Beth Abraham Synagogue
York Street
Bangor, Maine 04401

Congregation members:

Shalom Alechiem!

Congratulations and best wishes on the Fiftieth Anniversary of Beth Abraham Synagogue.

The Synagogue has served its members as a gathering place for both education and spiritual comfort. At the same time its doors have always been open to the community.

From its beginning the members of the Synagogue have been active in the social and economic growth of the community.

It seems only appropriate that its members should pause at this important juncture in its history to document for further generations its beginnings and the many contributions it has made to the life of the community.

Warmest regards,



OLYMPIA J. SNOWE
Member of Congress
2nd District, Maine



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04888

JOSEPH E. BRENNAN
GOVERNOR

June 9, 1983

To the members, supporters and friends
of the Beth Abraham Synagogue:

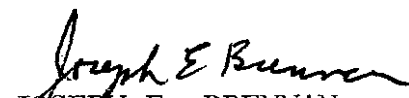
It is fitting to make a formal observance of
historically significant dates in the lives of people
and institutions.

On this, the celebration of the 50th anniversary
of the Beth Abraham Synagogue, please accept my
congratulations and the best wishes for now and for the
next 50 years.

As important as it is to mark such occasions,
it is also important to take time to reflect on all that
has been accomplished during the time leading up to now,
and to think about all that remains to be done in the time
to come.

May your thoughts be happy and your accomplishments
many.

Sincerely,


JOSEPH E. BRENNAN
Governor



City of Bangor, Maine

CITY COUNCIL

May 27, 1983

GREETINGS TO THE CONGREGATION BETH ABRAHAM

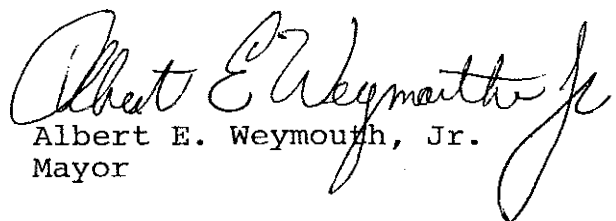
On the occasion of your Fiftieth Anniversary, October 9, 1983, and on behalf of the citizens of Bangor, the Bangor City Council and the City Administration, I offer you sincere congratulations.

We in Bangor greatly appreciate the many contributions that members of Beth Abraham Synagogue have made to our City over the past fifty years, and we recognize your dedicated service to the Beth Abraham Synagogue and to the City of Bangor as reflecting the pride that you have in both.

May your celebration be memorable, and your published Journal be a significant document of your first fifty years, as well as a guide to the next fifty and more.

Congratulations!

Yours sincerely,


Albert E. Weymouth, Jr.
Mayor



**JEWISH
COMMUNITY
COUNCIL**

28 SOMERSET STREET - BANGOR, MAINE 04401-5285 - TELEPHONE 945-5631

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June 6, 1983

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Congregation Beth Abraham
York Street
Bangor, Maine**

On behalf of the Jewish Community Council and the Jewish Federation of Bangor, I would like to extend congratulations and best wishes to the members of Congregation Beth Abraham on the occasion of the Synagogue's 50th Anniversary.

Louis H. Kornreich
President
Jewish Community Council and
Federation of Bangor



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Member

UNITED WAY OF PENOBSCOT VALLEY, INC





Be it known to all that
 We, the Members of the Senate and
 House of Representatives
 join in recognizing

the 50th anniversary of the Beth Abraham
 Synagogue in Bangor;

And be it ordered that this official expression
 of sentiment be sent forthwith on behalf of the
 Legislature and the people of the State of Maine

Given this 10th day of June 1983

at the State Capitol
 Augusta, Maine

James P. Conley
 President of the Senate
Joy J. O'Brien
 Secretary

John C. Merrill
 Speaker of the House
Ed Pent
 Clerk

Introduced by *Robert E. Murray*
 Rep. Robert E. Murray, Jr.
 COSPONSORED BY: Rep. John N. Diamond
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 Rep. Edward C. Kelleher
 Rep. Katherine K. Kehowitz

FROM: Bangor
 FROM: Bangor
 FROM: Bangor
 FROM: Bangor
 FROM: Bangor