



Beth Abraham Cemetery

City of Pittsburgh Historic Landmark Nomination

Prepared by Preservation Pittsburgh



412.256.8755
1501 Reedsdale St., Suite 5003
Pittsburgh, PA 15233
www.preservationpgh.org

November 2023



HISTORIC NOMINATION FORM

Historic Preservation Staff Signature:

[Handwritten Signature]

Fee Schedule

Individual Landmark Nomination: \$100.00
 District Nomination: To be determined

**Nomination is incomplete without historic preservation staff signature

1. HISTORIC NAME OF PROPERTY:

Beth Abraham Cemetery

2. CURRENT NAME OF PROPERTY:

Beth Abraham Cemetery

3. LOCATION

a. Street: 800 Stewart Avenue

b. City, State, Zip Code: Pittsburgh, PA 15227

c. Neighborhood: Carrick

4. OWNERSHIP

d. Owner(s): Jewish Cemetery & Burial Association of Greater Pittsburgh

e. Street: P.O. Box 81863

f. City, State, Zip Code: Pittsburgh, P.A. 15217

g. Phone: 412-553-6469

5. CLASSIFICATION AND USE - Check all that apply

Type

Ownership

Current Use:

Structure

Private - home

Cemetery

District

Private - other

X Site

Public - government

Object

Public - other

Place of religious worship

6. NOMINATED BY:

- a. Name: Matthew Falcone & the JCBA
- b. Street: 1501 Reedsdale Street, Suite 5003
- c. City, State, Zip: Pittsburgh, PA 15233
- d. Phone: (412) 417-5910 Email: mfalcone@preservationpgh.org

7. DESCRIPTION

Provide a narrative description of the structure, district, site, or object. If it has been altered over time, indicate the date(s) and nature of the alteration(s). (Attach additional pages as needed)

If Known:

- a. Year Built: 1891
- b. Architectural Style: N/A
- c. Architect/Builder: N/A

Narrative: See attached.

8. HISTORY

Provide a history of the structure, district, site, or object. Include a bibliography of sources consulted. (Attach additional pages as needed.) Include copies of relevant source materials with the nomination form (see Number 11).

Narrative: See attached.

9. SIGNIFICANCE

The Pittsburgh Code of Ordinances, Title 11, Historic Preservation, Chapter 1: Historic Structures, Districts, Sites and Objects lists ten criteria, at least one of which must be met for Historic Designation. Describe how the structure, district, site, or object meets one or more of these criteria and complete a narrative discussing in detail each area of significance. (Attach additional pages as needed)

The structure, building, site, district, object is significant because of (check all that apply):

1. Its location as a site of a significant historic or prehistoric event or activity;
2. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related aspects of the development of the City of Pittsburgh, State of Pennsylvania, Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
3. Its exemplification of an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship;
4. Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;

-
5. Its exemplification of important planning and urban design techniques distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design or detail;
 6. Its location as a site of an important archaeological resource;
 7. Its association with important cultural or social aspects or events in the history of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
 8. Its exemplification of a pattern of neighborhood development or settlement significant to the cultural history or traditions of the City, whose components may lack individual distinction;
 9. Its representation of a cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related theme expressed through distinctive areas, properties, sites, structures, or objects that may or may not be contiguous; or
 10. Its unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh.

Narrative: See attached.

10. INTEGRITY

In addition, the ordinance specifies that "Any area, property, site, structure or object that meets any one or more of the criteria listed above shall also have sufficient integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship to make it worthy of preservation or restoration". (Attach additional pages as needed)

Narrative: See attached.

11. NOTIFICATION/CONSENT OF PROPERTY OWNER(S)

1.3(a)(2) Community information process.

Preceding submission of a nomination form for a District, the Historic Review Commission shall conduct at least one (1) public information meeting within or near the boundaries of the proposed district, which shall include at least one (1) member of the Department of City Planning and one (1) Commission member, to discuss the possible effects of designation. Notice shall be given to the owners of property in the proposed district in accordance with Section 1.3(b) below. The final public information meeting shall be held no more than six months before the nomination form is submitted.

1.3(a)(1)(a) Subsection F.

In the case of a nomination as a Historic District, by community-based organizations or by any individual, but in either event the nomination shall be accompanied by a petition signed by the owners of record of twenty-five (25) percent of the properties within the boundaries of the proposed District.

- Please attach documentation of your efforts to gain property owner's consent.-

** The nomination of any religious property shall be accompanied by a signed letter of consent from the property's owner.

12. PHOTO LOGS: *Please Attach*

13. BIBLIOGRAPHY: *Please Attach*

14. NOMINATION FORM PREPARED BY:

- a. Name: Eric Lidji for Preservation Pittsburgh & Preservation Pittsburgh
- b. Street: 1501 Reedsdale Street, Suite 5003
- c. City, State, Zip: Pittsburgh, PA 15232
- d. Phone: (412) 417-5910 Email: mfalcone@preservationpgh.org
- e. Signature: _____

CHECKLIST: Beth Abraham Cemetery complex

- #1-6 Nomination Form:** Address, Ownership, Classification, Nominator Info.
 - #7: Description
 - #8: History
 - #9: Significance
- #10 Integrity**
- #11 Consent of Property Owners**
- #12 Photographs of Property:** numbered and labeled
- #13 List of Supporting Documents**

- Fee**
- Hard-Copy nomination**
- Electronic nomination (Word Format for text).**

Nomination form is incomplete without the signature of Historic Preservation Staff.

Please email HistoricReview@pittsburghpa.gov to schedule a meeting.

Beth Abraham Cemetery
Historic Nomination Form
Addendum

7. Description

Beth Abraham Cemetery complex is located in the southern portion of Pittsburgh's Carrick neighborhood. Secluded from the public view by mature forests and hilly topography, the complex is roughly bounded by Mullolly Street to the south, Stewart Avenue to the east, St. George's Cemetery to the north, and Spinneweber Street to the west.

The primary entrance to the cemetery is marked by a large, wrought iron gate along Stewart Avenue. The words "Beth Abraham Cemetery Assn. Inc." appear within the archway, which is crowned by a Star of David. Through this archway a red bricked street cuts through the hillside, buttressed by a white, concrete retaining wall and serves as the central axis around which the cemetery is centered. This road is the lowest point of the cemetery, with hillsides covered with gravestones rising to the left and right. The road terminates at a loop towards the tree line that divides Beth Abraham Cemetery from St. George Cemetery and ancillary access roads to the left and right provide access to the old (eastern) cemetery and new (western) cemetery.

These two sections are visually distinct from one another in that the older portion of the cemetery is defined by a variety of headstones that are placed close to one another. The newer section is visually defined by relatively uniform headstones placed further apart from one another allowing for greenspace to be a prominent feature of this section.

With few exceptions, graves throughout are oriented along an east-west axis, with headstones largely placed at the westernmost point of each grave. Several small footpaths exist throughout the eastern, older section of the cemetery and remain the best means to access each section and gravesite, while a concrete-paved roadway that weaves throughout the newer section (and ties into Ivyglen Way upon exiting the cemetery) is the best vantagepoint within the cemetery to see the complex in its entirety.

8. History

Beth Abraham Cemetery is part of a complex of four adjacent and interconnected Jewish burial grounds along Stewart Avenue in the Carrick neighborhood of Pittsburgh: Beth Abraham Cemetery, the Shaare Zedeck Cemetery, the private Marks Cemetery, and the Gates of Wisdom Cemetery, which is also known as the old Shaare Torah Cemetery.

Site History – Pre-Construction

The land where Beth Abraham Cemetery would later stand was originally connected to several Native American tribes that changed over time. The Adena Tribe, the Hopewell Tribe, the Monongahela People were the original inhabitants of the land and, post-European contact, were later joined by refugees from other tribes, such as the Delaware, Shawnee, and Iroquois. Ultimately European colonists would settle this land, which became known as the Borough of Carrick in 1904. Carrick incorporated into the City of Pittsburgh in 1927 through annexation.

The land was privately held until in September 1891, when the recently formed Shaare Torah Congregation (under its original spelling “Sahro Torah”) purchased four acres in Baldwin Township from John and Mary Baumgarten for \$900. The vacant property was a two-dip hillside situated at a bend in Stewart Avenue [ACDB 729:558].

Over the next decade, Shaare Torah (also known by its English name “Gates of Wisdom”) divided this property into thirds. It kept one parcel for its congregational burial ground. It sold a second parcel in 1892 to Ahave Sholem Congregation for \$372 [Marks Family Papers]. Ahave Sholem and Shaare Torah went to court in 1901 and again in 1902 over disputes about the property line between the two parcels, as well as the joint use of coffins, burial equipment, and an “ohel” building used for ritual burial preparations [*Pittsburgh Press*, 1901; *Pittsburgh Press*, 1902; *Pittsburgh Post*, 1902]. Ahave Sholem never coalesced as a congregation, and its officers eventually became leaders at other, more enduring Jewish congregations in the city. In late August 1918, Ahave Sholem conveyed its entire one-acre cemetery plot to Shaare Zedeck Congregation for \$1. The agreement allowed several named members of Ahave Sholem to retain more than a dozen individual burial plots at the cemetery for their personal use in the future and also to have access to the “ohel” building as needed for performing burial rituals [ACDB Vol. 1241:597; ACDB 1909: 525]. One of those Ahave Sholem members was Louis Moskovitz, whose family later changed its surname to “Marks.” This family became the namesake for the “Marks Cemetery,” which the Jewish Cemetery & Burial Association now considers a separate cemetery contained within the complex [JCBA website; Marks Family Papers; Jewish Encyclopedia of Western Pennsylvania: “Ahave Sholem”].

Sometime before 1902, Shaare Torah sold the remaining two parcels at its property to Beth Abraham Cemetery. While the transfer of deed for this transaction has yet to be discovered in county records, newspaper articles from January 1902 reference an earlier decision by Shaare Torah to sell one third of its property to a group called “Anshei Russia” [*Pittsburgh Press*, 1902; *Pittsburgh Post*, 1902].) “Anshei” is Yiddish for “people of,” a terminology commonly appended to the name of Jewish congregations in America to represent its specific European roots. Beth Abraham was the first Jewish congregation in Pittsburgh to be founded by Russian immigrants and therefore most likely to “claim” the title Anshe Russia. Beth Abraham also had an existing relationship with Rabbi Moshe Shimon Sivitz, the spiritual leader of Shaare Torah [Feldman 78].

The two-acre parcel that Beth Abraham acquired from Shaare Torah was an L-shaped tract at the outer perimeter of the property. It had frontage on Stewart Avenue to the east and to the south [ACRO 1904, c1918]. By 1902, this tract already had at least 20 interments, the earliest dating to 1891. These early graves are located in “Section 4” of Beth Abraham Cemetery, according to its current layout. Section 4 runs parallel to the Shaare Zedeck Cemetery and to the “old” Shaare Torah Cemetery [Western Pennsylvania Jewish Cemetery Project]. A fallow strip currently separates Beth Abraham and Shaare Zedeck, although a line of trees and later a fence previously marked the boundary [MSS 333]. The absence of early Beth Abraham membership records makes it difficult to determine whether the people who were buried in Section 4 between 1891 and 1902 were affiliated with Beth Abraham Congregation or with some other congregation. Those who have been identified came primarily from Russia [City of Pittsburgh death certificates].

The officers of Beth Abraham submitted a plan to Allegheny County authorities in late June 1904 for subdividing its L-shaped property into individual plots. The plan called for a circular drive leading up from Stewart Lane to the east and a small building that was likely an “ohel” to be used for conducting Jewish burial rituals rites. The plan included 123 multi-grave plots separated by walkways and a small section of “single graves” [ACRO 1904]. A few weeks later, on July 5, the same officers proposed an amendment to the Beth Abraham charter that would allow the congregation to establish a cemetery [ACCB 35:509]. The move was controversial, with a large percentage of the congregation filing objections [*Pittsburgh Press*, 1904]. The court dismissed the objections on August 9, 1904, allowing the cemetery project to proceed [ACCB 35:510].

The delineation of cemeteries within the complex has long been confusing. A 1905 map presents the entire four-acre, three-cemetery complex as a single unit labeled “Hebrew Cemetery,” but it shows the Beth Abraham driveway and *ohel* on the eastern edge of the property, as well as the Shaare Torah *ohel* in the southeast corner of the property [Hopkins, 1905]. A 1916 map includes the demarcation between the Shaare Torah and Beth Abraham sections and appropriately labels each section. It shows the Beth Abraham drive and *ohel*, as well as the Shaare Torah *ohel*, but it makes no mention of Ahohe Sholem or the plots retained by its members. It does, however, show two additional buildings on the Shaare Torah property, which may have belonged to Ahohe Sholem [Hopkins, 1916]. An undated plat map created after 1918 demarcates the Shaare Torah, Shaare Zedeck and Beth Abraham sections while also including Ahohe Sholem ownership as a parenthetical note near Shaare Torah [ACRO, c1918]. The parenthetical note may refer to the unrelated Congregation Ahohe Sholem Lubovitch (which had been chartered in 1917 with Rabbi Sivitz listed as a subscriber) [ACCB 52:33; Feldman 147].

Beth Abraham expanded its holdings in July 1918 by acquiring 4.514 acres of two-way dip hillside immediately north of its existing property from Peter and Margareta Franciscus Obringer for \$5,600 [ACDB 1931: 601]. The congregation left this tract undeveloped for 16 years while it sold plots throughout most of its original L-shaped property, what it currently known as Section 1 through Section 4. This included the establishment of a small children’s section at the bottom of Section 4, near the Shaare Zedeck gate at Stewart Avenue [Western Pennsylvania Jewish Cemetery Project].

Beth Abraham developed this northern addition through two expansion campaigns. The first occurred in phases throughout the mid-1930s. In August 1934, the congregation dedicated a section running through the center of the property, immediately north of its original acreage. A plan for this section delineated approximately 112 plots divided by concrete walkways. The steepness of the hillside required the section to be terraced. It was divided into two parts separated by a retaining wall with a stairwell cut through the center to connect the upper and lower portions. The concrete walls of stairwell were decorated with handmade images of a Star of David and a Menorah. The new section also included iron railings and gate. The gate initially had two dedicatory plaques listing the officers and directors of the congregation at the time of the dedication.

A few years later, Beth Abraham built a chapel opposite the section gate [*American Jewish Outlook*, 1937; *Jewish Criterion*, 1937; *Pittsburgh Press*, 1937] for an approximately \$20,000. To

commemorate the dedication in August 1937, the congregation added two iron plaques to the gate listing the officers and directors.

The new Beth Abraham chapel was designed by architect Alexander Sharove, who would later become the most prolific synagogue architect in Western Pennsylvania. The eldest of nine children born to Russian immigrants in Richmond, Va., Sharove (1893-1955) came to Pittsburgh on scholarship to the Carnegie Institute of Technology School of Architecture and studied under Henry Hornbostel. Sharove was an associate architect on the Hornbostel-designed main sanctuary of B'nai Israel Congregation in East Liberty (1923). As a principal in the architectural firm Sharove & Friedman, and later independently, Sharove was lead architect of the sanctuary addition at Beth Shalom (1931), and the social hall additions at B'nai Israel Congregation, Rodef Shalom Congregation, and B'nai Emunoh Congregation, as well as synagogues in Monessen, Kittanning, Washington and Johnstown and the Jewish Community Center in Morgantown, W.V. ["Sharove Family" exhibit]. The Beth Abraham chapel was a simple two-story blonde brick building with two wings. The chapel was demolished in 2019.

The lead contractor was Harry Lebovitz. Lebovitz immigrated to the United States from Romania in 1901 and was directed to Pittsburgh by the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. Trained as a carpenter, he joined large construction crews on projects including the Iroquois Building in Oakland, the home of banker R. B. Mellon, and the Westinghouse Electric Corp. plant in East Pittsburgh. As an independent day laborer, he oversaw thousands of home renovation projects. The Beth Abraham chapel was his largest project. He became a director of the cemetery association and was buried there, despite his Romanian roots [*Post-Gazette*, 1976, 1981; *Pittsburgh Press*, 1971, 1981].

The project utilized Jewish contractors and suppliers whenever possible: Morris Broido of Center Lumber Company (lumber), Emil L. Habers and Harry Wolkin of Standard Mantel & Tile Company (tile work), William Liff (brick work), David Molever (painting), Daniels Electric Company (electrical fixtures) and Borris Mandel (plumbing). (Mandel was buried at Beth Abraham in 1961.) The few non-Jewish contractors and suppliers often had existing relationships with the Jewish community. The roofer Frank Limbach worked on the new Montefiore Hospital in 1928. Brick supplier D. J. Kennedy Company regularly advertised in the *Jewish Criterion*. The only new relationship appears to have been with steel supplier Guibert Steel Company [*Jewish Criterion*, 1937].

Although the surviving records are unclear, the 1930s expansion appears to have included a new entrance from Stewart Avenue from the south with a large iron gate and a paved road into the cemetery. This is now considered the main entrance into the cemetery. With the dedication of this gate, the original entrance from the east was likely closed and the *ohel* demolished. The land occupied by the *ohel* and some of the driveway was cleared and became additional burial ground, which is now known as "Section 1."

The northernmost section of Beth Abraham Cemetery, on the hillside above the new entrance road, remained undeveloped until after World War II. These lands were "drained, graded, filled and generally improved and developed so that the capacity of the cemetery was more than doubled" throughout the late 1940s [*Jewish Criterion*, 1951]. The cemetery announced an

expansion project in 1951 and dedicated the new section in August 1953. The project created 213 plots in two large sections [MSS 333; *American Jewish Outlook*, 1952; *Jewish Criterion*, 1952]. The design standards of these sections reflected emerging ideas of cemetery landscaping in the midcentury, including wider spacing between graves and natural walkways, rather than concrete sidewalks [*Chronicle*, 1963]. The entrance to the 1953 addition included a stone gate topped with ironwork featuring the forms of a menorah and a Star of David and the name Beth Abraham in English and in Hebrew. The ironwork was later removed at an undetermined date. The stone gate currently features five plaques: 1) a list of the board of directors at the time of the dedication, 2) a memorial to past-president Abraham Sternberg, who died during the expansion, 3/4) empty boards installed on the inside lintel of the gate and made available to individual families, 5) a list of officers and directors from the 1960s [MSS 333].

The 1953 addition included a new road winding up through the expansion property. It connected back to the main road leading to the main gate at Stewart Avenue and initially reached a dead-end at the top of the hillside [MSS 333]. Beth Abraham acquired three small adjacent plots to the west in April and June 1956 and September 1957, allowing the road to connect to the Ivyglen Way, creating an additional entrance in the cemetery [Allegheny County Real Estate Portal, 138-L-40, 138-L-6, 138-G-140].

Beth Abraham acquired a final plot of land adjacent to the 1953 addition in 1964 [Allegheny County Real Estate Portal, 138-L-30; ACDB 4129: 498]. The plot is currently undeveloped. The association performed upgrades to the cemetery in the late 1960s and made occasional small improvements to the property over the subsequent decades. In the early 2000s, a small Holocaust memorial was installed just outside the 1950 gate [MSS 333]. The Jewish Cemetery and Burial Association assumed ownership and operations of the Beth Abraham Cemetery, the Shaare Zedeck Cemetery, and the Marks Family Cemetery in 2010 and the old and new Shaare Torah Cemetery in 2023 [JCBA website].

It is important to note that by religious law and tradition, Jewish cemeteries are almost always located outside of a city. It is only by happenstance that this complex today resides within Pittsburgh city limits.

9. Significance

- 1) *Its location as a site of significant historic or prehistoric event or activity*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

- 2) *Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural, historic, architectural, archeological, or related aspects of the development of the City of Pittsburgh, State of Pennsylvania, Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

- 3) *Its exemplification of an architectural type, style, or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

- 4) *Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history of development of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

- 5) *Its exemplification of important planning and urban design techniques distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design or detail*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

- 6) *Its location as a site of an important archaeological resource*

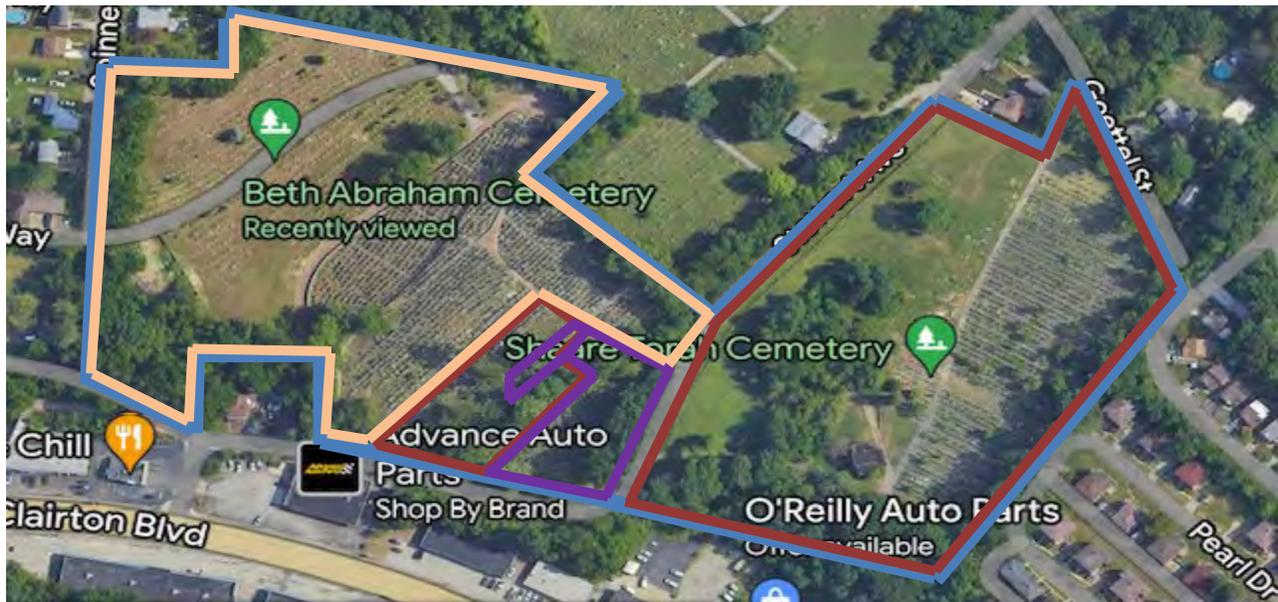
This resource does not meet this Criterion.

- 7) *Its association with important cultural or social aspects or events in the history of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States*

The four-cemetery complex in Carrick is the most complete surviving physical record of the Jewish ethnic milieu in Pittsburgh before World War II. The complex includes burial grounds for five of the six major Jewish ethnic groups represented in the Hill District of Pittsburgh: Lithuanian, Russian, Galitzianer, Romanian, and Polish. It should be noted that those buried within the complex belonged to Orthodox Jewish congregations. Orthodox Judaism is a decentralized branch of Judaism that emphasizes traditional practice and strict observance of Jewish law. Their religious beliefs and cultural history had great impact on the overall design of the Beth Abraham Cemetery complex.

The great migration that brought as many as 3 million Jewish people to the United States (and more than 75,000 people to Western Pennsylvania) between 1880 and 1924 was actually a series of small

migrations, each prompted by specific political or economic circumstances in countries, provinces, districts, and towns across Europe. As each new Jewish migrant group arrived in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, it usually coalesced around a congregation or fraternal order rooted in ethnically specific variants of the broader Jewish tradition. The Southern Germans who arrived in the late 1830s and 1840s founded Rodef Shalom Congregation. The Lithuanians who arrived in the 1860s founded Beth Hamedrash Hagodol Congregation. The Hungarians who arrived in the late 1870s founded Poale Zedeck Congregation. The increased rates of Eastern European immigration after 1880 brought a rapid expansion of new Jewish congregations in the region. These congregations represented immigrants from Poland, Galicia, and Romania, as well as previously underrepresented sub-regions of Lithuania and Russia [Feldman].



Blue: Overall Boundary of the complex; Orange: Beth Abraham (Primarily Russian); Red: Shaare Zedeck (Primarily Polish); Red: Shaare Torah (Primarily Lithuanian); Purple: Marks Cemetery & Oldest Row of Shaare Zedeck (Primarily Galitzaian and Romanian).

Lithuanians

The largest Jewish ethnic group in Pittsburgh were Lithuanians, known in Yiddish as *Litvaks*. They came from parts of present-day Lithuania, northeastern Poland, and western Russia, and they accounted for about half of the local Jewish population. The earliest Litvaks in Pittsburgh founded Beth Hamedrash Hagodol Congregation in 1869, but the community fragmented over the next 20 years, eventually dividing into four large congregations in the Hill District: Beth Hamedrash Hagodol Congregation, Beth Jacob Congregation, Tifereth Israel Congregation, and Shaare Torah Congregation.

Rabbi Moshe Shimon Sivitz was born in Lithuania and obtained his rabbinic training and ordination from the great Rabbi Yitzchak Elchanan Spektor in Kovno. Rabbi Sivitz left Europe for Baltimore in 1886 and came to Pittsburgh two years later to lead Beth Hamedrash Hagodol Congregation (then called B'nai Israel). He faced immediate opposition from a segment of the congregation who felt he was too inexperienced, leading to a split. A contingent hailing largely from the same

Lithuanian province as Rabbi Sivitz broke away in 1890 to found Shaare Torah Congregation. Rabbi Sivitz served as the rabbi of both congregations for several months, until he was asked to resign from Beth Hamedrash Hagodol. He shifted his pulpit to Shaare Torah Congregation.

For the next decade, Rabbi Sivitz was the “*mara d’atra*,” or primary rabbinic authority, for more than 4,000 immigrant Jews living in Pittsburgh and surrounding small towns. The role brought communitywide responsibilities. Rabbi Sivitz launched initiatives addressing orphans, medical care, homelessness, and Jewish education. The purchase of the Baldwin Township property was an effort to provide a burial ground for his new congregation and also to address the need for small Jewish burial grounds for the many new Jewish congregations emerging in the 1880s and 1890s [Jewish Encyclopedia of Western Pennsylvania: “Beth Hamedrash Hagodol,” “Shaare Torah Congregation”].

Russians

The second largest local Jewish ethnic group was from the Russian Empire. They came from parts of present-day Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova and were known in Yiddish as *Rishishes*. They accounted for about quarter of the local Jewish population.

Russian Jews began arriving in Western Pennsylvania in the mid-1870s. The pace of immigration increased greatly with the rise in pogroms following the assassination of Czar Alexander II in 1881. Rabbi Lippman Mayer of Rodef Shalom Congregation in Pittsburgh founded the Cremeiux Society in 1874 and the Russian School in 1882 to address the economic and educational needs of the growing population of Russian Jewish refugees in Pittsburgh. Until their numbers justified the creation of new institutions, this population would have likely joined existing congregations downtown and in the lower Hill District or created small informal prayer groups for its spiritual needs [Feldman].

Sometime in the mid-1880s, a group of Russian Jews began meeting for prayer services in a rented room on Hazel Street in the lower Hill District. They were known informally as “Mazursky’s Congregation,” after their leader, Aaron Mazursky [Feldman, 76]. Mazursky and four other men chartered Beth Abraham Congregation in 1889, becoming the first congregation in the city to explicitly represent Jews from the Russian Empire [ACCB 12:461]. They later hired Rabbi Sivitz as their spiritual leader. In the late 19th and early 20th century, it was common in Pittsburgh for prominent Orthodox rabbis to lead multiple congregations simultaneously, with one serving as the center of his rabbinate. Within this framework, Rabbi Sivitz was most closely associated with Shaare Torah Congregation but was also the part-time spiritual leader of Beth Abraham Congregation, as well as other congregations in the Hill District. [PDir 1894, 1897].

Beth Abraham Congregation was unstable and soon divided in factions. This pattern of decentralization and fragmentation was a defining feature of the Russian Jewish community in Pittsburgh, according to local historian Jacob Feldman: “The Russians created more new congregations and societies than any other Jewish ethnic group in Pittsburgh. By the 1920s, they comprised 20 to 25 percent of its Jewish community, whereas the Lithuanians comprised 45 to 50 percent. But the Russians functioned in smaller units and their synagogues recurrently divided” [Feldman, 146].

Agudas Achim Congregation broke away from Beth Abraham in 1890 and dedicated a synagogue on Crawford Street in the Hill District in 1894. Beth Israel Congregation broke away from Agudas Achim in 1896 and later took over the Crawford Street synagogue. Beth Zedeck Congregation broke away around 1899 and received a charter in 1902. Beth Zedeck swelled in membership over the next three years with survivors of various Russian pogroms, including the infamous Kishinev pogrom in present-day Moldova. These newer members broke away from Beth Zedeck in 1905 to form Beth David Congregation. Beth David quickly began construction of a new synagogue on Miller Street in the Hill District but exhausted its available funds before completing the project. Through the mediation of Rabbi Sivitz, Beth David rejoined Beth Zedeck in 1906 to form a new congregation called Sahro Tefilah, later known as Shaaray Tefillah. The synagogue still stands and is likely the oldest extant Jewish building in Pittsburgh. A group broke away from Sahro Tefilah around 1911 Moogen David Congregation, which occupied a smaller synagogue next door on Miller Street. In time, Shaaray Tefillah became known locally as “the big Russian shul,” and Moogen David became known as “the little Russian shul.” When the Moogen David synagogue was foreclosed in 1934, a new group called Congregation Kehilleth Issac began meeting for services on Miller Street. It changed its name in 1936 to Beth Mogen David, suggesting some relationship to the former Beth David and Moogen David congregations. Some of the leaders of these breakaway groups attempted to form a Jewish community center in the Hill District in the mid-1920s called Ezras Tzadickim. [Feldman, 146-147; ACCB 18:127; ACCB 26:594; ACCB 32:252; ACCB 39:254; ACCB 40:148; ACCB 41:334; “Agudas Achim Congregation,” “Beth David Congregation,” “Beth Israel Congregation,” “Beth Mogen David,” “Beth Zedeck Congregation,” “Ezras Tzadickim,” “Congregation Kehilleth Issac,” “Moogen David Congregation,” “Shaaray Tefillah Congregation].

As these splits and mergers were underway, Jewish immigrants continued to arrive in Pittsburgh from other parts of the Russian Empire. A group from the province of Volinia in present-day northwest Ukraine formed Anshe Volinia in 1907. It later received a charter and expanded its membership, becoming known as Kether Torah Congregation [ACCB 48:508]. Also in 1907, a separate group from Lyubavitsh in present-day Belarus formed Anshe Lubovitz [ACCB 41:559]. In addition to these new congregations, the first decade of the 20th century also saw the formation of several *landsmenshaftn*. These non-religious Jewish fraternal aid organizations represented Jewish immigrants from towns throughout Europe, including Pliskov, Podolia, and Shpikov in Russia [Feldman].

During this dynamic decade, Beth Abraham pursued a different strategy than the other Russian congregations in the city. Instead of raising funds to build a synagogue—like Agudas Achim, Beth Israel, Shaaray Tefillah, and Moogen David, and later Kether Torah and Anshe Lubovitz—Beth Abraham rented meeting space. It eventually established a relationship with Shaaray Tefilah that lasted for decades. Beth Abraham first rented rooms at the Miller Street synagogue in the Hill District and followed Shaaray Tefillah to its new Bartlett Street synagogue in Squirrel Hill in the 1940s [MSS 333].

Without the demands of a mortgage or construction loan, Beth Abraham was able to acquire cemetery lands. Within a few years of purchasing its first parcel, Beth Abraham gradually ceased to exist as a congregation and became exclusively a cemetery association [Feldman]. This transition appears to be unique among the 80 known Jewish cemeteries in Western Pennsylvania. While many

area Jewish congregations have continued to operate their cemeteries long after closing their synagogues, and several non-religious Jewish fraternal organizations maintained cemeteries without ever operating a synagogue, no Jewish religious group ever deliberately chose to favor the growth of a cemetery over the growth of its congregation [Western Pennsylvania Jewish Cemetery Project]. Today, Beth Abraham is the third largest Jewish cemetery in Western Pennsylvania after the West View Cemetery owned by Rodef Shalom Congregation and the Beth Hamedresh Hagodol-Beth Jacob Cemetery. Rodef Shalom and Beth Hamedresh Hagodol were historically two of the oldest and large Jewish congregations in Western Pennsylvania. There are more than 4,000 burials at the cemetery, which certainly far exceeds the total membership of Beth Abraham during its 20 years as a congregation.

By becoming a cemetery association exclusively, Beth Abraham was able to attract a much wider range of people. Among the organizations in Pittsburgh representing Jews with ties to the Russian Empire, Kether Torah, Anshe Lubovitz, the Pliskover Free Loan Association, and the Podolier Society each established independent cemeteries for their members [Western Pennsylvania Jewish Cemetery Project]. Beth Abraham became the preferred burial ground for members of Shaaray Tefilah Congregation, the Shpikover Hilfs Verien, and possibly for members of Beth Mogen David Congregation as well—none of which established cemeteries of their own [MSS 333; MSS 361; Schachter]. It also became known as an all-purpose “Russian” cemetery, attracting families with historic ties to the *Rishishe* community who belonged to other congregations.

The shift was successful. Beth Abraham raised its initiation fees in 1924 in response to an extreme growth in membership [*Jewish Criterion*, 1924]. The structure of membership during those years is unknown due to insufficient records. A copy of the Beth Abraham bylaws from 1941—adopted following the 1930s expansion—provides the earliest look at the rights and requirements of membership. Beth Abraham membership was open to anyone Jewish over the age of 21. Each individual member was entitled to a grave for “himself, his wife and any unmarried children under twenty one (21) years of age.” Those who had joined the organization at an earlier date were given priority graves in “Sections 1, 2, 3 and 10.” It is unclear whether those distinctions match the current section designations with the exception of Section 3, which still has an old stone marker. The bylaws list a \$100 initiation fee with \$2 annual dues. The association also charged \$50 funeral expenses, which included traditional Jewish burial rituals overseen by the “chevra kadisha,” or burial society [Beth Abraham bylaws, MSS 333].

Galitzianers and Romanians

Galicia was a historic region of the Austro-Hungarian Empire covering parts of present-day southeastern Poland and western Ukraine. The first Galitzianer in Western Pennsylvania arrived in the 1870s. The local population remained small until the 1890s, when an antisemitic boycott in Galicia prompted a large Jewish outmigration from the region. Although the Galitzianers were always among the smaller Jewish ethnic groups in Western Pennsylvania, they formed clusters in the Hill District of Pittsburgh and in the nearby town of McKeesport, as well as enclaves in Braddock, Canonsburg, and Donora, and individual settlement all over the region. As this Galitzianer population was emerging, antisemitic policies also led to a large Jewish outmigration from Romania, bringing hundreds to Western Pennsylvania [“Galitzianers,” “New Light Congregation”].

The earliest Jewish immigrants from Galicia and Romania joined together in 1889 to charter Ahave Sholem Congregation. These two distinct ethnic groups were likely united by a mutual preference for the “Nusach S’fard” prayer book, rather than the prevailing “Nusach Ashkenaz” prayer book used by all other local Orthodox congregations in Western Pennsylvania at that time. Nusach Sfarid was developed by Ashkenazic Jews who wanted to incorporate certain Kabbalistic components from the Sephardic rite. As an early proponent of this prayer book, Ahave Shalom was likely the first Chassidic congregation in the region [“Ahave Sholem Congregation”].

As Jewish immigration to the region accelerated through the 1890s, each of the contingents within the congregation grew large enough to split. The Galizianers started Machsikei Hadas Congregation. The Romanians started Ohel Jacob Congregation, which later changed its name to Oir Chudesh and remains active under its English name New Light. Rabbi Sivitz was a part-time spiritual leader at both of these new congregations.

This split forced Ahave Sholem to dissolve soon after establishing its cemetery in 1892. As part of the sale of its cemetery to Shaare Zedeck, Ahave Sholem retained several individual plots. Today, the earliest Galitzianer and Romanian burials in the region can be found within the Shaare Zedeck and Marks cemeteries. In fact, several founders of Machsikei Hadas Congregation and New Light Congregation chose to be buried at Shaare Zedeck, rather than at the congregations they respectively founded.

Polish

Shaare Zedeck was the only congregation in Pittsburgh explicitly representing Jewish immigrants from Poland. It began meeting around 1895, received its charter in 1900, and built a new synagogue on Townsend Street in the Hill District in 1907 [Shaare Zedeck Hadlukah banquet program]. Shaare Zedeck remained in the Hill District until the late 1940s, when it relocated to 5751 Bartlett St. in Squirrel Hill. The congregation merged with the newly formed Young Israel of Pittsburgh in the 1970s. The merged congregation is now at 5831 Bartlett St. The memorial plaques from Shaare Zedeck—many corresponding with the cemetery—now hang in the sanctuary of Young Israel.



First Generation Headstones

Finally, it is important to take note of the stylistic evolution of the tombstones within the cemeteries through the lens of cultural assimilation of all of these different groups of immigrants into American society. The cemeteries of Beth Abraham are exceptional in this regard because it is rare that this multi-generational change is visualized in a single place.

Within these cemeteries, the tombstones of first-generation immigrants typically fully embody stylistic designs that were popular in Eastern Europe and the Pale of Settlement. Graves were placed very close together, headstones were typically as tall or taller than an average person, graves were typically covered with stone or concrete, and it was fairly common for headstones to include Jewish imagery (crowned hands, priestly blessings, etc.) and place visual prominence on Hebrew lettering either to the exclusion or minimalization of English lettering.

The tombstones of second-generation immigrants are markedly different. Gravesites are typically placed further apart from one another and while they retain their emphasis on height, they often askew traditional visual elements for more universally recognizable Jewish symbols, like the Star of David or the Tablets of the Commandments. While Hebrew lettering remains present in nearly all from this period, emphasis is usually placed on English lettering by size and prominence of location. We also start to see new artistic expressions that eschew traditional gravestone forms arise. A prime example of this can be seen in the tombstone of Charles C. Blank. Its curvilinear design is meant to reflect members of the Blank family and its unique design can be attributed to the Blank family's work in gravestones.

The tombstones of second-generation



Blank Family Memorial



Second Generation Headstones

The tombstones of the third-generation immigrants are stylistically reflective of the most common tombstones used throughout America. Blocked stone, with rounded tops that are roughly waste high are commonplace throughout the newer section of the Beth Abraham cemetery complex. Many incorporate common Jewish symbols, like Stars of David and menorahs and English lettering typically takes prominence though Hebrew lettering continues to be prominent throughout. The large stone blocks that are commonplace on top of the graves in the older sections are entirely absent here.



Third Generation Headstones

Viewed collectively, these stylistic changes over time in gravesites within Beth Abraham Cemetery complex show the gradual acculturation of Jewish-Americans, specifically those who practiced Orthodox Judaism, are representative of how some customs and preferences changed over time.

Further research through individually documenting each grave site would reveal deeper insight into this area and is highly recommended.

- 8) *Its exemplification of a pattern of neighborhood development or settlement significant to the cultural history or traditions of the City, whose components may lack individual distinction*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

- 9) *Its representation of a cultural, historic, architectural, archeological, or related theme expressed through distinctive areas, properties, sites, structures, or objects that may or may not be contiguous*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

- 10) *Its unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh*

This resource potentially meets this Criterion.

10. Integrity

Beth Abraham Cemetery complex retains integrity of location, design, workmanship, and materials. Its location includes the original 4 acres purchased by Shaare Torah Congregation from John and Mary Baumgarten. Though it has expanded to include other parcels over time, the function of these new parcels were also used as cemetery space.

The cemetery complex's integrity of design, workmanship, and materials are evident in this historic treatment of the landscape and in the complex's well-preserved historic gates, graves, and retaining walls. All are in excellent condition and while the absence of the chapel is a loss for the overall complex historical narrative inherent to this site, it does not substantially change the feeling or association conveyed by the site itself.

Beth Abraham Cemetery
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Map (0138-L-00050-0000-00)

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Map (0138-L-00054-0000-00)

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Map (0138-L-00040-0000-00)

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Map (0138-L-00006-0000-00)

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Map (0138-G-00140-0000-00)

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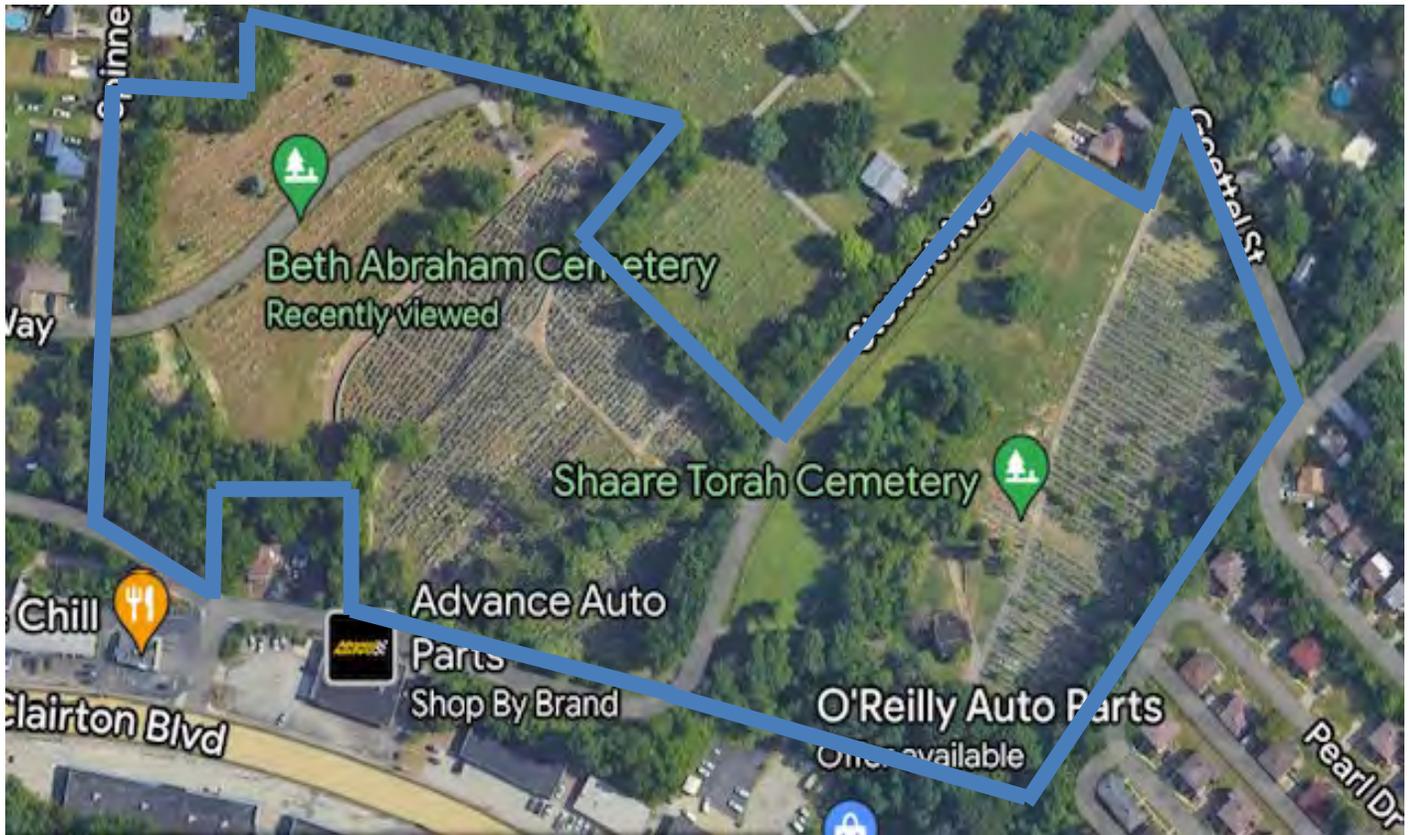
"Ahave Sholem Congregation"

“Beth Israel Congregation”
“Beth David Congregation”
“Beth Mogen David”
“Beth Zedeck Congregation”
“Beth Hamedrash Hagodol Congregation”
“Beth Jacob Congregation”
“Congregation Kehilleth Issac”
“Ezras Tzadickim”
“Galitzianers”
“Machsikei Hadas Congregation”
“Moogen David Congregation”
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Beth Abraham Cemetery
Historic Nomination Form Photo Logs



Areal with Resource boundaries marked in blue.



Photographs

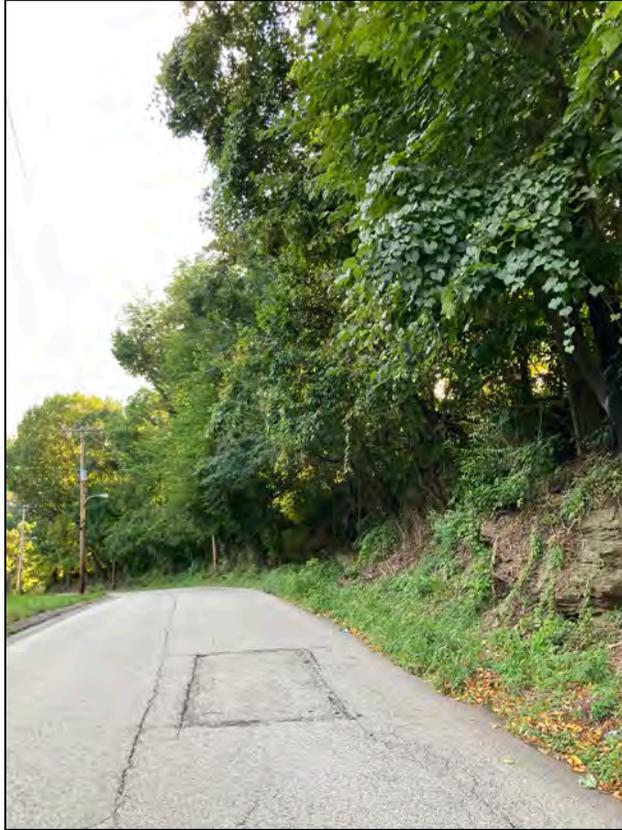


Photo 1: Beth Abraham Cemetery (Sept. 2021). View of original entrance along Stewart Avenue heading south. Entrance was discontinued in the 1930s.

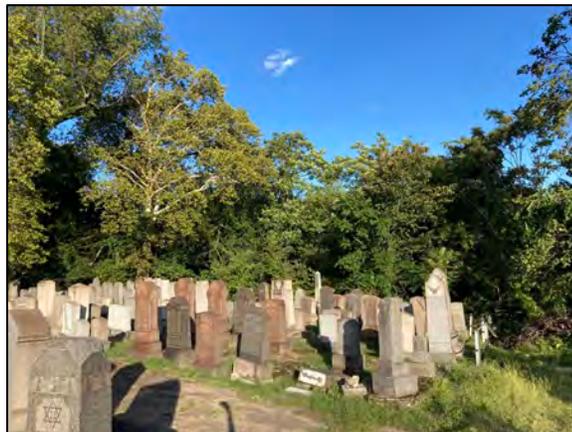


Photo 2: Beth Abraham Cemetery. View of current "Section 1" showing overgrown driveway leading up from Stewart Avenue. Location of "ohel."

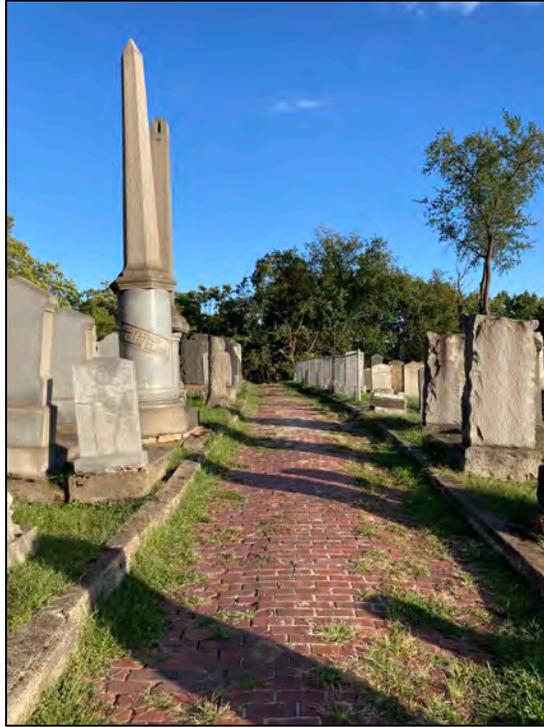


Photo 3: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Brick drive leading to “Section 1.”

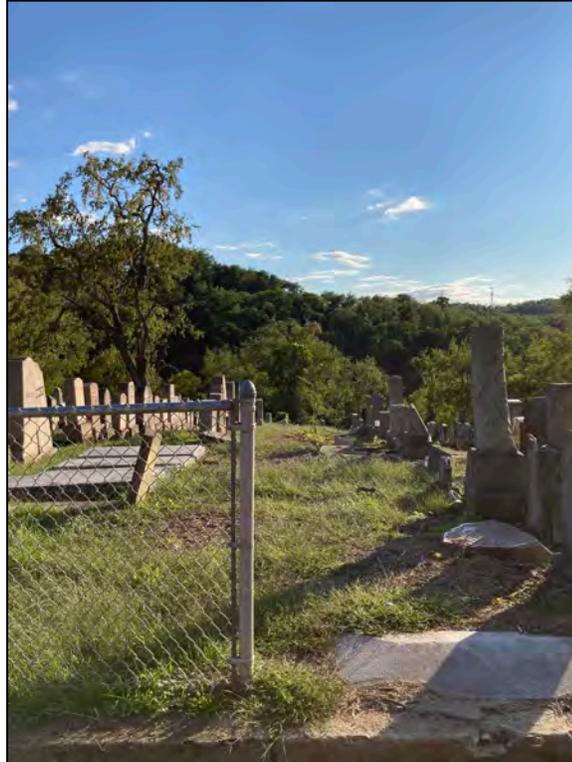


Photo 4: Beth Abraham Cemetery/Shaare Zedeck Cemetery. Fence marking the end of Shaare Zedeck Cemetery and the beginning of “Section 4” of Beth Abraham Cemetery. Fallow patch marks location of former fence between cemeteries.



Photo 5: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Grave of “Baila bat Aharon Moshe” died 1894 in “Section 4.” One of several early interments.

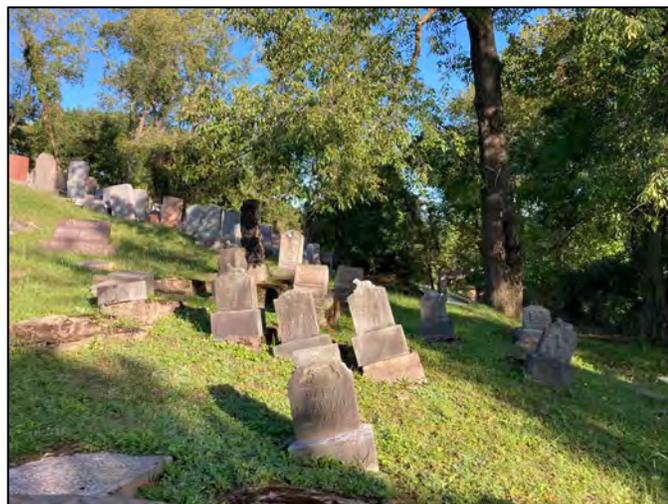


Photo 6: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Children’s section at the bottom of “Section 4” near Stewart Avenue and the entrance to Shaare Zedek Cemetery.



Photo 7: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Detail of grave of Herbert Serbin.

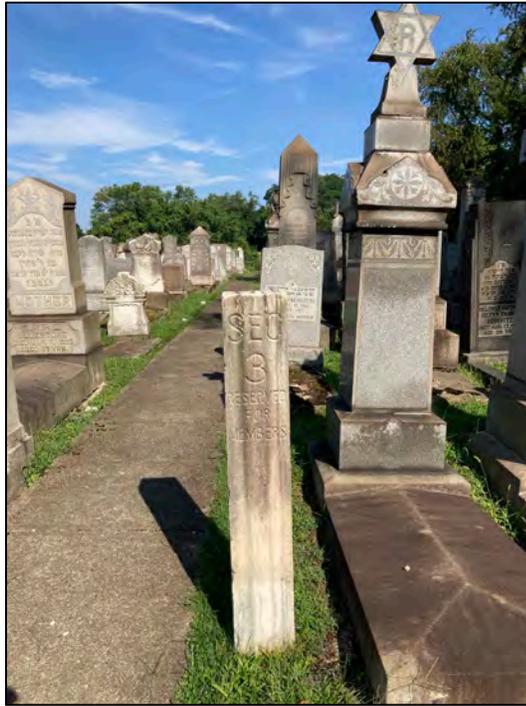


Photo 8: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Stone marker for Section 3.



Photo 9: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Marker for Edel Slobadsky, president of Beth Abraham Congregation when it purchased cemetery and revised charter.



Photo 10: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Gate to 1930s addition.



Photo 11: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Detail of 1934 plaque 1.



Photo 12: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Detail of 1934 plaque 2.



Photo 13: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Detail of 1937 plaque 1.
 Photo 14: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Detail of 1937 plaque 2.



Photo 15: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Stone marker for Section 6.



Photo 16: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Star of David design in concrete stairwell between “Section 8” and “Section 9” in 1930s addition.

Photo 17: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Menorah design in concrete stairwell between “Section 8” and “Section 9” in 1930s addition.



Photo 18: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Concrete stairwell and walkway separating “Section 8” and “Section 9” in 1930s addition.

Photo 19: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Concrete stairwell and walkway separating “Section 7” and “Section 8” in 1930s addition.



Photo 20: Beth Abraham Cemetery. “Section 7A” in the 1930 addition near the main entrance to the cemetery.



Photo 21: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Gate to main entrance from Stewart Avenue. Presumably added as part of the 1930 addition.



Photo 22: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Stone gate to 1950s addition showing four plaques and c.2006 Holocaust memorial.



Photo 23 & 24: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Details of plaques.



Photo 25 & 26: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Details of plaques.

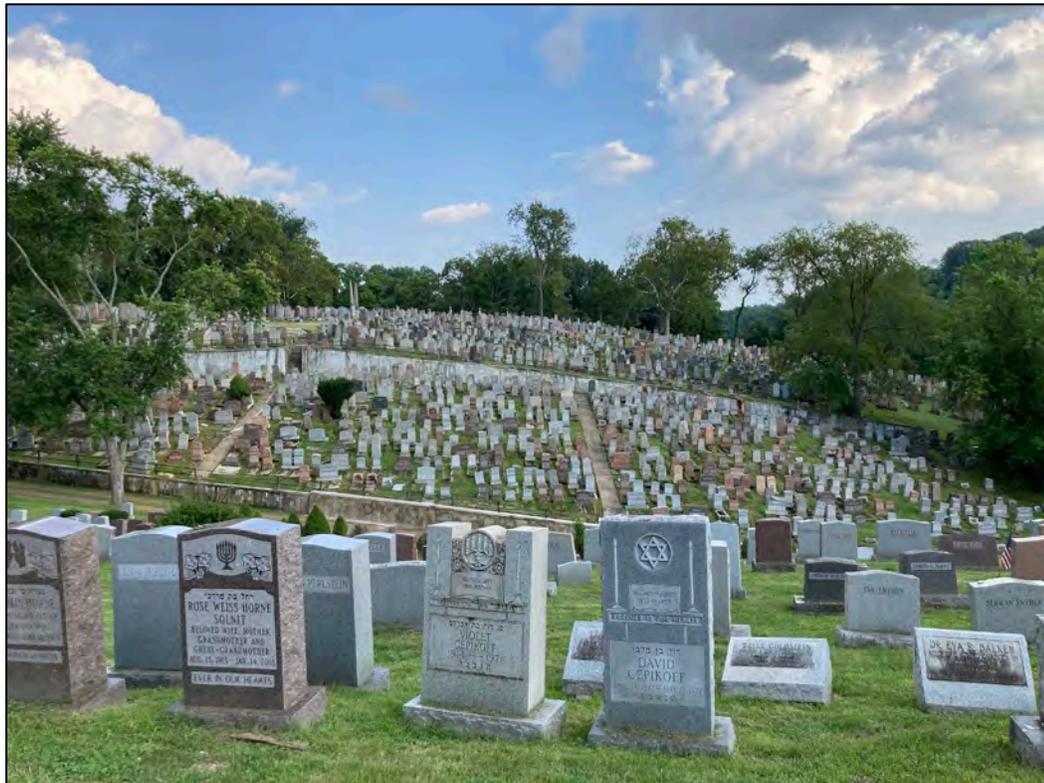


Photo 27: Beth Abraham Cemetery. Overview of Beth Abraham Cemetery from Ivyglen Way through 1950s addition southeast showing 1950s addition in the foreground, 1930s addition in the midground, and 1900 original section in background.



Photo 28: Shaare Zedek Cemetery. Gate.



Photo 29: Marks Cemetery within the Shaare Zedek Cemetery.



Beth Abraham Cemetery Complex – Shaare Torah Cemetery Section Photo Key



Photo 30. Shaare Torah Cemetery Section – Northeastern View from the lower Main Throughway

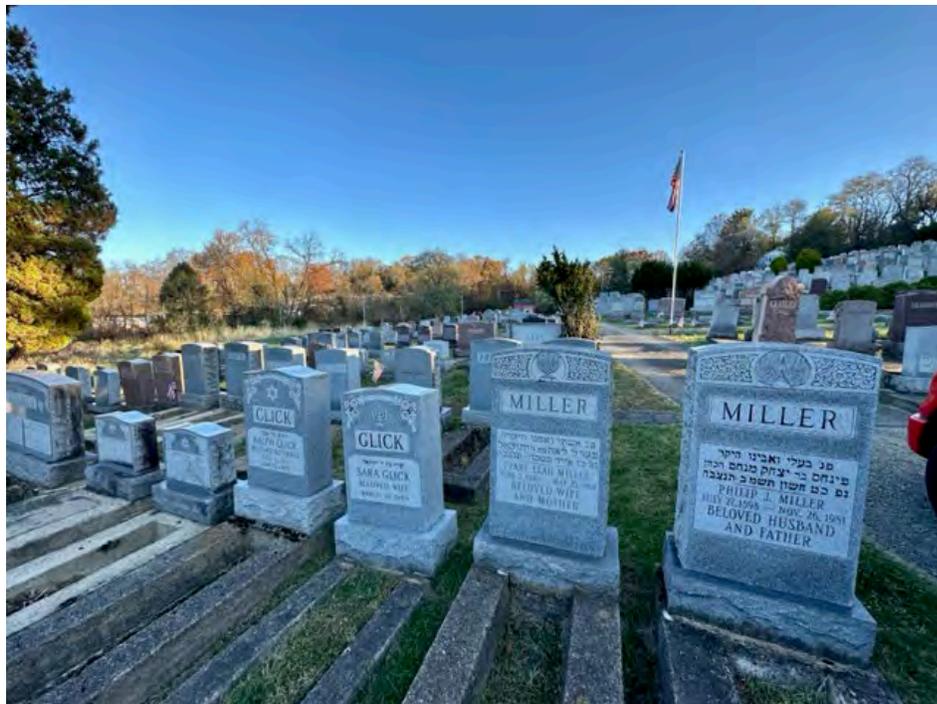


Photo 31. Shaare Torah Cemetery Section – Northwestern View from the lower Throughway.



Photo 32. Shaare Torah Cemetery Section – Southeastern View from the middle of the Main Throughway.

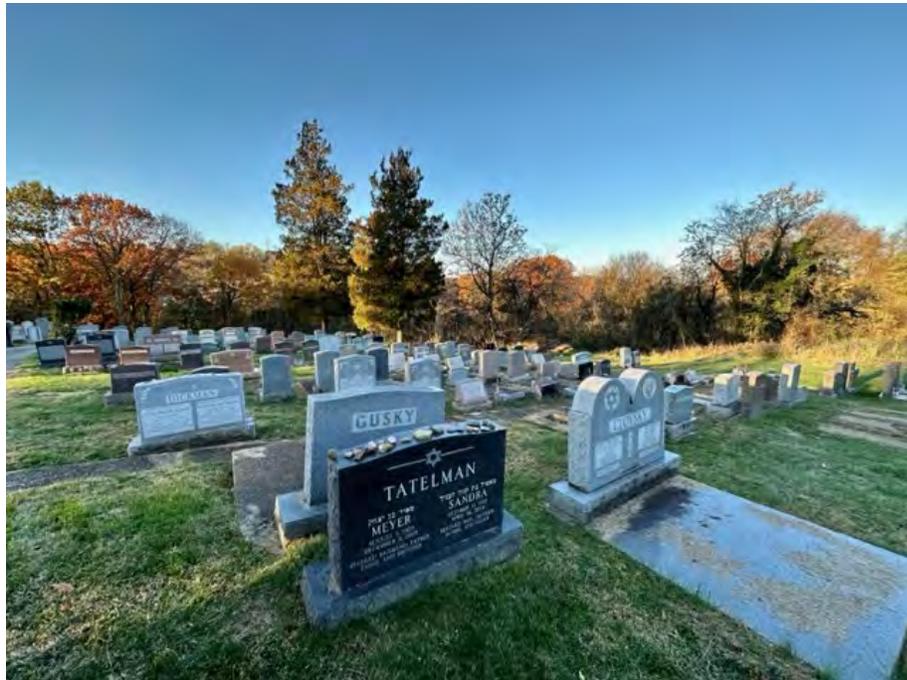


Photo 33. Shaare Torah Cemetery Section – Northwestern View from the middle of the Main Throughway.



Photo 34. Shaare Torah Cemetery Section – Southwestern View from the upper Throughway.



Photo 35. Shaare Torah Cemetery Section – Gate & Southwestern View from the upper Throughway.

Beth Abraham Cemetery
Historic Nomination Form
Supporting Documents

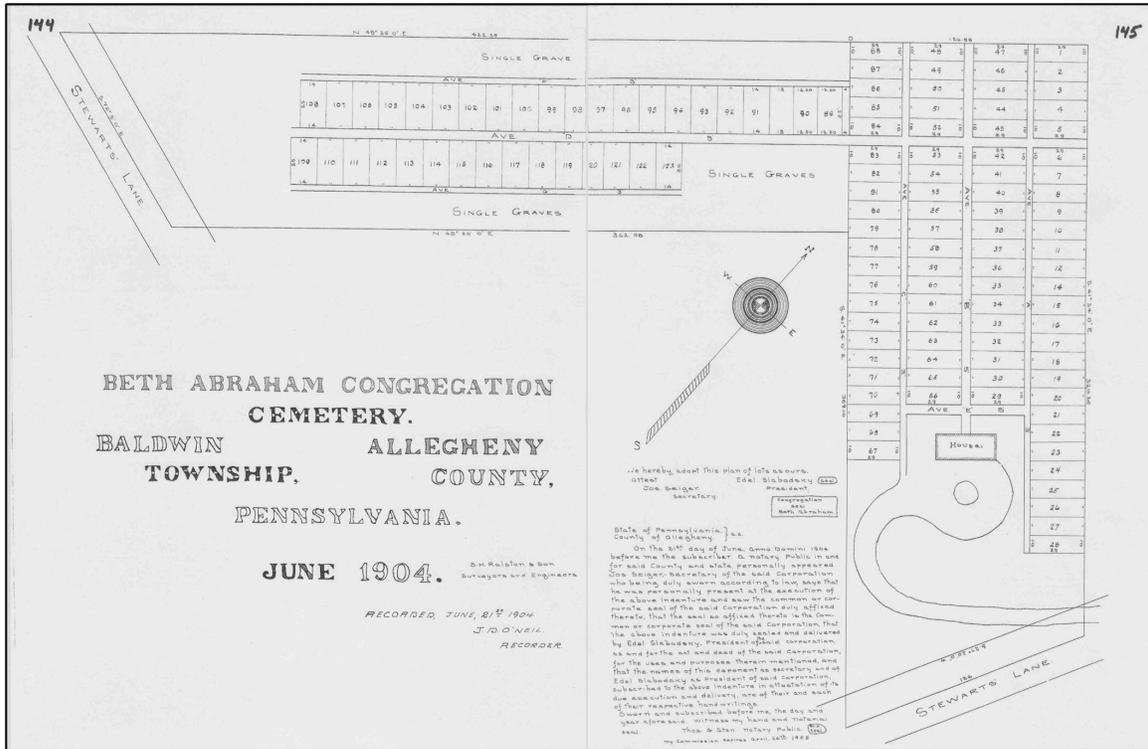
Historic Maps



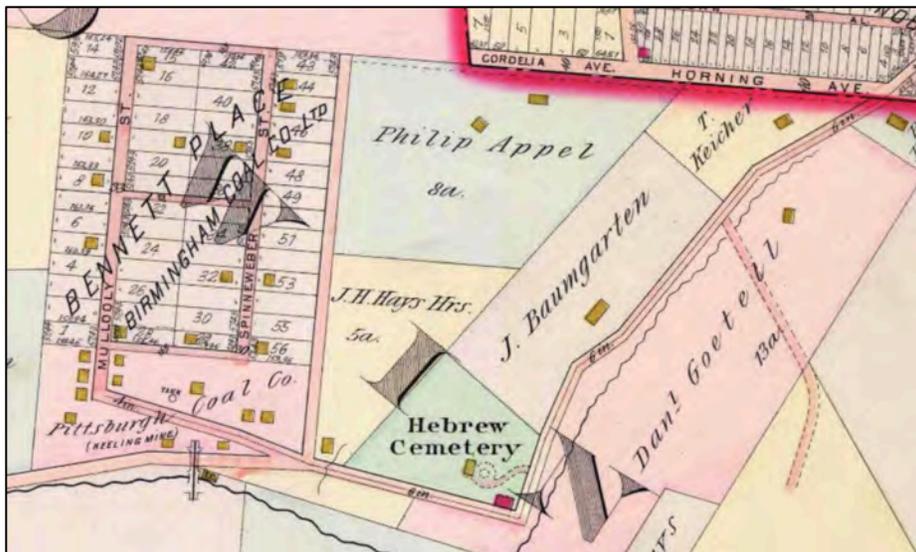
Site of Beth Abraham/Shaare Zedeck/Shaare Torah cemeteries on 1886 map (Hopkins, 1886)
This map shows Stewart Lane running through the Alex McCleary property and the neighboring Hays property. The map is oriented differently than subsequent maps.



Beth Abraham/Shaare Zedeck/Shaare Torah cemeteries on 1896 map (Hopkins, 1896)
A “Hebrew Cemetery” located at a bend in Stewart Lane. The cemetery belonged entirely to Shaare Torah Congregation at the time. No buildings are listed on the property.

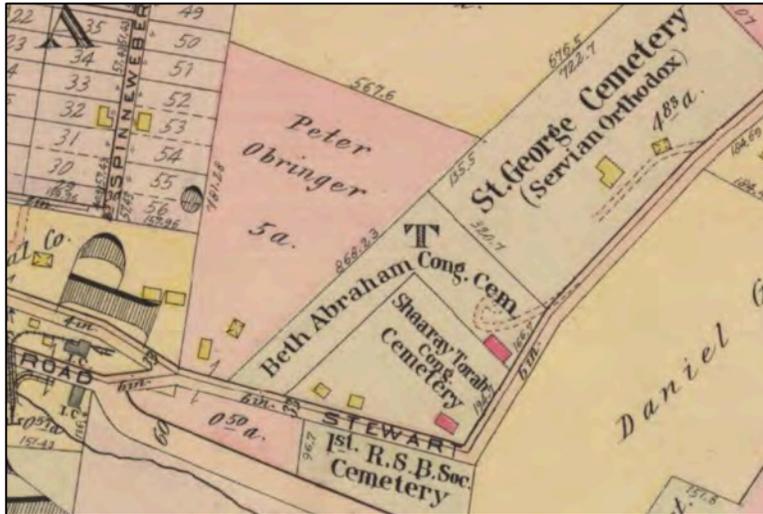


Beth Abraham Cemetery plan from 1904 (All. Co. Recorder's Office, 1904)
 Beth Abraham Congregation presented a plan for its cemetery in June 1904. It included a drive from Stewart Lane and an "ohel" building. The plan seems to accommodate some of the pre-existing "single graves" created before Beth Abraham acquired the property.



Beth Abraham/Shaa're Zedeck/Shaa're Torah cemeteries on 1905 map (Hopkins, 1905)
 A single "Hebrew Cemetery" located at a bend in Stewart Lane. By 1905, the cemetery had already been divided into thirds: Shaare Torah Congregation, Ahave Sholem Congregation, and Beth Abraham Congregation. The circular drive and associated "ohel"

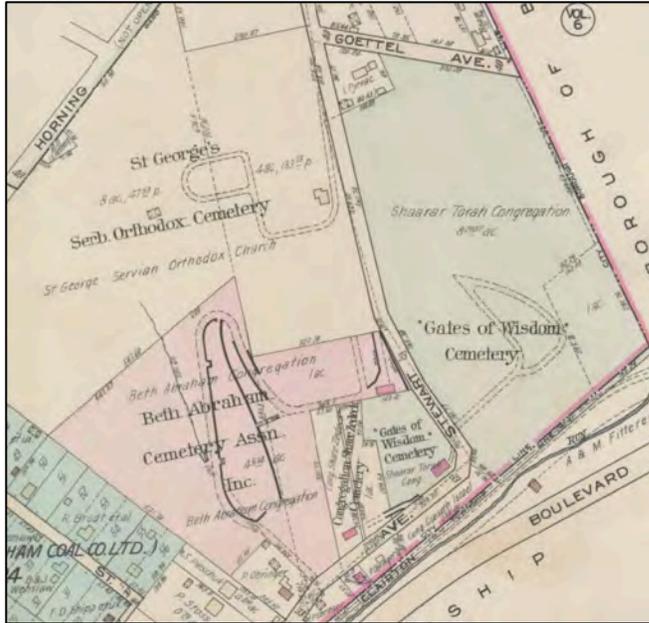
building had been proposed by Beth Abraham in 1904. The building in the lower corner was most likely an “ohel” belonging either to Ahave Sholem or to Shaare Torah.



Beth Abraham/Shaare Zedeck/Shaare Torah cemeteries on 1916 map (Hopkins, 1916)
Beth Abraham Cemetery now delineated with circular drive and associated “ohel” building in a different location than the 1905 map. Shaare Torah and Ahave Sholem cemeteries presented as a single unit with three associated buildings in two groupings.



Baldwin Township plat map (All. Co. Recorder's Office, c.1918)
This map shows Beth Abraham Cemetery following its 1918 addition but also delineates the boundaries of its original purchase c.1902. It includes the Shaare Zedek and the Shaare Torah Cemetery and makes a note of the Ahave Sholem ownership.



Beth Abraham/Shaaere Zedeck/Shaaere Torah cemeteries on 1934 map (Hopkins, 1934)
 This map shows the Beth Abraham Cemetery at its full extent, complete with the infrastructure of the 1934 addition. It shows the location of the “ohel,” and it seems to indicate that the original entrance had been closed in favor of the current entrance.

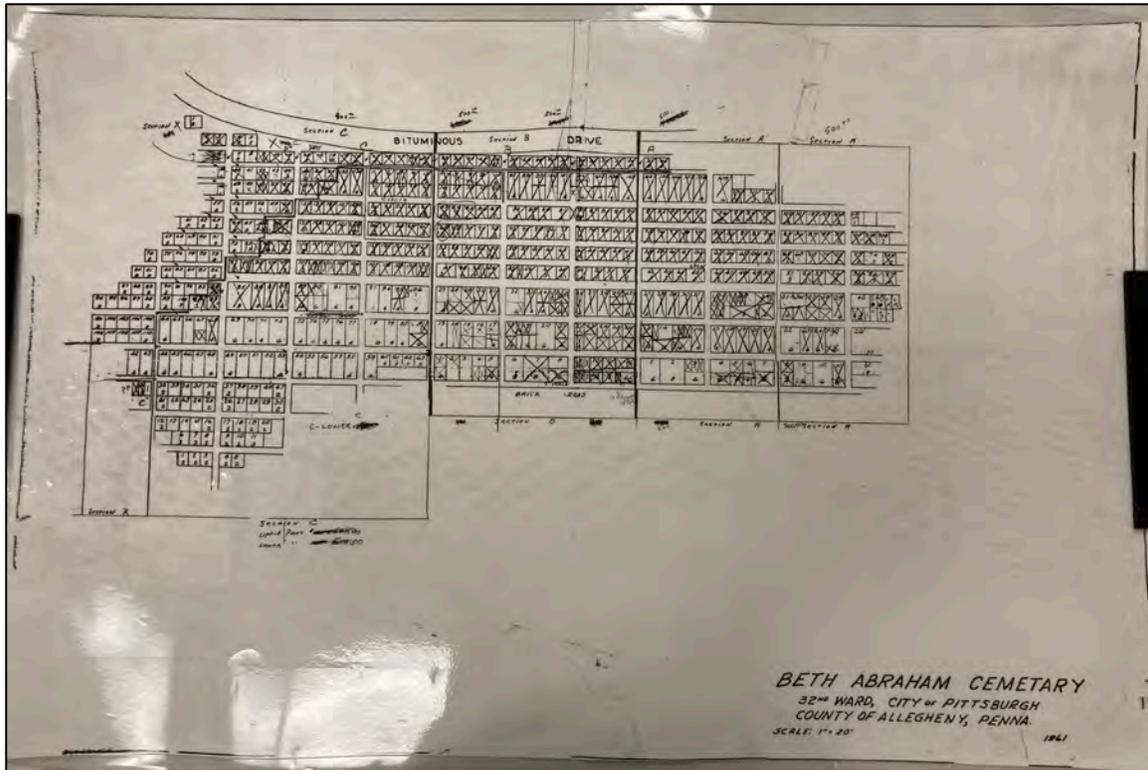


Aerial image of Beth Abraham/Shaaere Zedeck/Shaaere Torah cemeteries after 1956
 Beth Abraham Cemetery Records, MSS 333, Rauh Jewish Archives at the Heinz History Center.
 This aerial image shows all three additions of the Beth Abraham Cemetery, as well as the Shaare Zedeck and Shaare Torah cemeteries. It shows a line of tree separating Beth

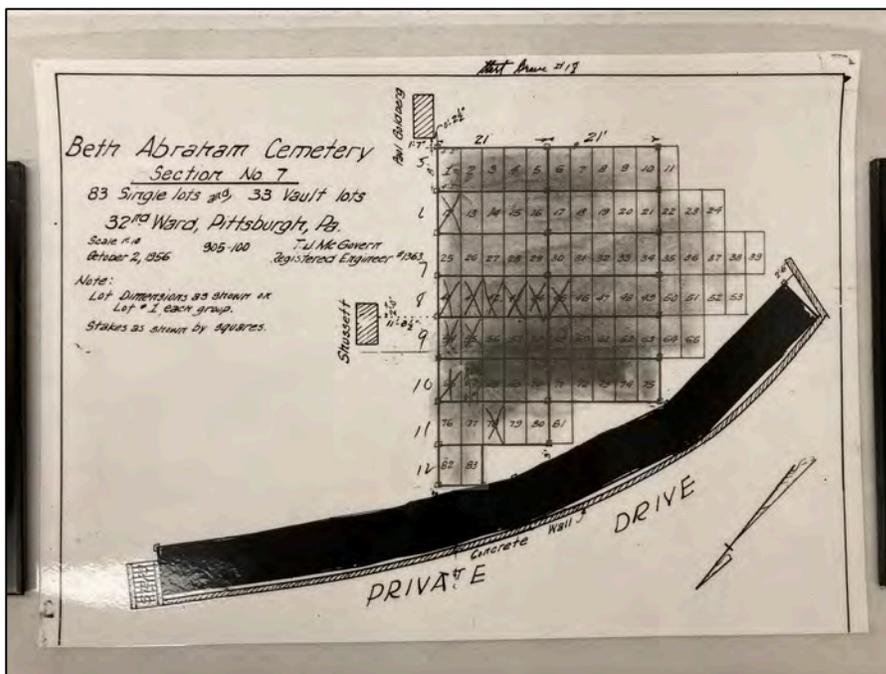
Abraham “Section 4” from the Shaare Zedeck cemetery. It also shows the remnants of the driveway that once connected “Section 1” down to Stewart Lane. The “ohel” is gone.



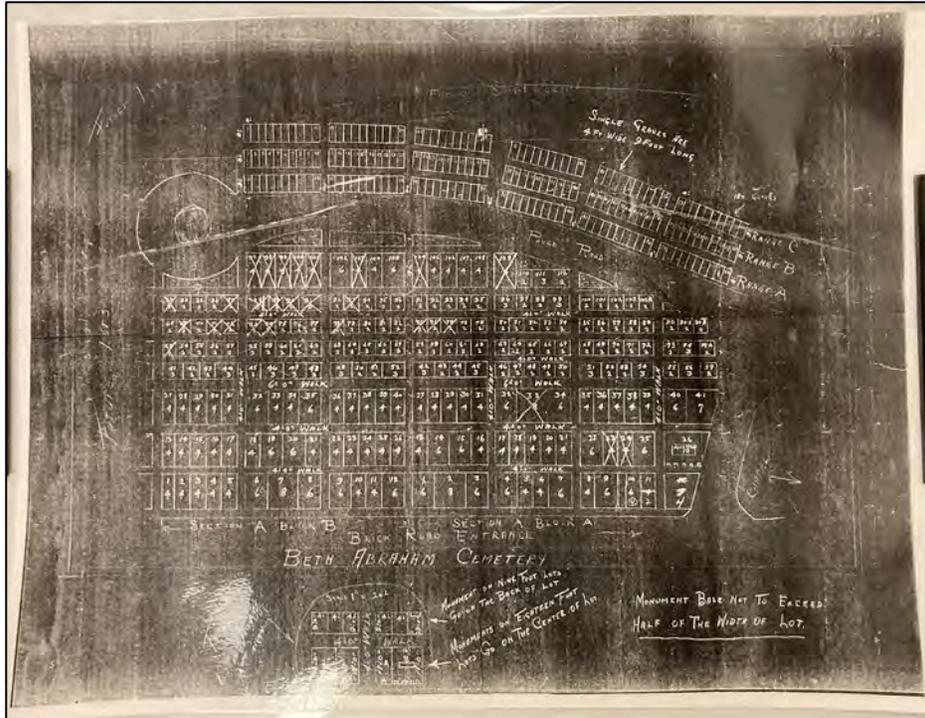
Plan for Beth Abraham 1950s addition, undated.
 Beth Abraham Cemetery Records, MSS 333, Rauh Jewish Archives at the Heinz History Center.
 This plan shows “Section F” and “Section G” at the outermost edge of the cemetery, as well as the chapel near the 1930s addition and the road connecting to Ivyglan St.



Map for Beth Abraham 1930s addition, 1961
 Beth Abraham Cemetery Records, MSS 333, Rauh Jewish Archives at the Heinz History Center.



Map of Beth Abraham "Section 7" in 1930s addition, 1956
 Beth Abraham Cemetery Records, MSS 333, Rauh Jewish Archives at the Heinz History Center.



Map of Beth Abraham 1930s addition, undated
Beth Abraham Cemetery Records, MSS 333, Rauh Jewish Archives at the Heinz History Center.
This map shows early plans for the 1930s addition, as well as early abandoned plans for a strip of what became the 1950s addition. The map includes a driveway along the location of the current main entrance, but it terminates in a dead-end circular drive.



Allegheny County GIS Viewer

Beth Abraham/Shaaire Zedeck/Shaaire Torah cemeteries

Current property map. Beth Abraham Cemetery includes 138-L-50, 138-L-40, 138-L-6, 138-G-140, and 138-L-30. Shaare Zedeck is 138-L-54, Shaare Torah is 138-M-1.



Allegheny County GIS Viewer

Beth Abraham/Shaare Zedeck/Shaare Torah cemeteries. The blue line marks the boundaries of the original Shaare Torah property. The red line marks the boundary of the 1904 Beth Abraham plan of lots. The white line marks the boundary of the 1930s addition. The green line marks the boundary of the 1950s addition. The yellow numbers mark sections throughout the cemetery.

Other documentation

No. 466 MARCH TERM, 1889

"Base Avroham" Charter of

Whereas we the undersigned citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

whose names are subscribed to this Charter or certificate of incorporation have associated ourselves together for the purpose and upon the terms and by the name herein stated under the provisions of an act of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania entitled an act to provide for the incorporation and regulation of certain corporations approved the twenty ninth day of April in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy four and the several supplements thereto, we do therefore set forth and declare that,

1. The name of the corporation is the "Base Avroham" (the House of Abraham).
2. The purpose for which this Corporation is formed are to exercise religious worship according to the doctrines, discipline and uses of the Hebrew Church.
3. The business of the corporation is to be transacted in the City of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
4. The Corporation shall have perpetual succession by its corporate name.
5. There is no capital stock nor are there any shares of stock. The names and residences of the subscribers appear by their signatures hereunto.
6. The number of the directors of the Corporation is fixed at five and the names and residences of those who are chosen directors for the first year are as follows:
Moses Soubouff, Aaron Mozersky, Morris Gelberg, Jacob Feldman, Henry Mozersky.

Page 114 of 114

The corporation has no capital stock, fees for membership and annual dues from members will be assessed as the corporations by its By. Laws may determine which fees and dues will be applied to promoting the purposes for which

EXHIBIT "A"

the corporation is formed. Witness our hands
and seals this 25th day of January 1889.

Residences

Moses Sobcaff
Aaron Mozeraky
Moris Gelberg
Luk Feldman
Henry Mozeraky

Moses Sobcaff resides at 87 Baldwin St. Pittsburgh
Aaron Mozeraky resides 31 Hazel St.
Moris Gelberg 62 High St.
Jacob Feldman 31 Hazel St.
Henry Mozeraky

Before the subscriber the Recorder of
Deeds for the City of Pittsburgh and County of Alleg-
hany in _____, personally came Moris Gelberg, Jacob
Feldman, Aaron Mozeraky three of those who
have subscribed the foregoing Articles of incorpo-
ration who in due form of law acknowledged the
same to be their act and deed and the act and
deed of their said associates according to the
Act of Assembly in such case made and provided.
In Testimony Whereof I have hereunto set my
hand and fixed my official seal the Twenty
ninth day of January A.D. 1889.

Wm. H. Graham (Official Seal)
Recorder of Deeds

Due notice of publication attached hereto.

Allegheny County } And now Feb. 28th 1889
City of Pittsburgh ss. } the foregoing certificate of
incorporation having been
duly acknowledged before the Recorder of Deeds of
Allegheny County and the same duly certified
under its hand & official seal of the said Recor-
der of Deeds and having been presented to me the
undersigned a law judge of the said County ac-
companied by proof of the publication of the
notice, such application, I certify that I

Beth Abraham Congregation charter, 1888-1889. Lists the charter members of the congregation including Aaron and Harry Mozerky of Hazel Street in the Hill District.

In Re Charter of the Base Abraham Congregation
 Amendment. In the Court of Common Pleas
 No. 1 of Allegheny County, Penna.
 No. 466 March Term, 1889.

To the Honorable, the Judges of the said Court:

The Base Abraham Congregation hereby certifies under its corporate seal, that it is a corporation created and existing under the Corporation Act of One Thousand Eight Hundred and seventy four and its supplements, as is shown by its charter dated the 25th day of January, 1889, a true copy of which is herewith submitted; that it is included in the class of corporations referred to in Section 42, Corporation Act of One Thousand Eight Hundred and seventy four and its supplements. That in pursuance of said corporate actions duly had, it is desirous of improving and amending or altering the articles and conditions of its said charter in accordance with the provisions of the said last recited Act in the following particulars, that is to say:-

First:- Said corporation shall have the right to purchase real estate not in excess of the amount allowed by law for the purpose of establishing a cemetery where the bodies of the deceased members of said congregation or any member of their families may be interred.

Second:- Any property, real or personal which shall hereafter or hereafter have been or be bequeathed, devised, or conveyed to said corporation, shall be taken and held over unto it, subject to the control and disposition of the lay members thereof, or such constituted officers or representatives, as shall be composed of a majority of lay members.

Wherefore, the Base Abraham Congregation prays that the said amendments may be approved, and, upon compliance with the provisions of said Act, be deemed and taken to be a part of its charter.

In Testimony Whereof, the corporate seal of the Base Abraham Congregation has been hereto affixed and duly attested this 5th day of July, 1904.

Attest
 Joseph Seiger, Secretary
 Edel Slobodsky (Corporate Seal) President

State of Pennsylvania } ss. Be it remembered that on the
 County of Allegheny } fifth day of July, 1904, before me the
 Recorder of Deeds in and for said County
 personally appeared Edel Slobodsky, President and Joseph Seiger

EXHIBIT "B"

Secretary, of the above named corporation, who being duly sworn depose and say, that they were personally present at the execution of the above written certificate and saw the common seal of the said corporation of the Base Abraham duly affixed thereto, that the seal affixed thereto is the common and corporate seal of the said corporation, and that the above written instrument or certificate was duly signed, sealed and delivered by, and as, and for the said and Deed, of the said Base Abraham for the uses and purposes therein mentioned and that the names of these deponents subscribed to the said certificate as the President and as the Secretary of the said corporation in attestation of the due execution and delivery of the said certificate, are of these deponents own, proper and respective hand writing
 Sworn and subscribed before me
 the day and year above written
 Witness my hand and official seal.
 J. C. (Official Seal)
 Recorder

Edel Slobodsky
 Jos. Seiger

Order of Court

And now to wit, this 9th day of July, 1904, the within certificate having been exhibited to the Court, upon examination thereof, it is found that the improvements, amendments, or alterations therein desired are lawful and beneficial and do not conflict with the requirements of the corporation act of 1874 and its supplements, or of the constitution of this Commonwealth, it is therefore ordered that notice thereof shall be given as provided in the third section of said recited Act
 By the Court.

Decree.

And now to wit, August 6th 1904 the within certificate having been presented, and it appearing that the Order of Court heretofore made had been duly complied with, it is therefore ordered and decreed that upon the recording of the said certificate with its instruments and this decree in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds in and for said County which is now hereby ordered said improvements, amendments, or alterations shall be deemed and taken to be a part of the charter of the Base Abraham Congregation
 By the Court.

And now August 9-1904, exception dismissed
 Recorded August 11, 1904
 By the Court

Beth Abraham Congregation charter amendment, 1904. The amendment allowed the congregation to establish a cemetery. Amendment notes "exception dismissed."

**PURCHASE OF CEMETERY
DISTURBS A CONGREGATION**

**Members Object to Petition
Change in Charter.**

behalf of Attorney A. O. Stein, in
Henry Light, Samuel Kra
Base Abra- not cent of the Congregation
filed objections ham, in Townsend street,
amendment of the to the petition for the a
egation, which they charter of the congre
rmit the church to say is designed to be
buy a cemetery.

allege the proposed The objectors
amendment is
inst the wishes of 80 per ssembly and aga
congregation. It is alleged cent of the
petition is filed both for the iv- that the pe
no right to ask for such an ers have
ment and were given no authority amendi
o so. When the petition comes oe- to d
the court it is expected almost the
sole congregation will appear for and
against the proposed amendment. The
objectors say they do not want to pur-
chase the cemetery.

Pittsburgh Press, July 15, 1904

Beth Abraham Cemetery Chapel Dedication Sunday

On Sunday, August 22, at 1 P. M., the Congregation Beth Abraham Cemetery Association will dedicate the new beautiful chapel just erected on the new grounds of the cemetery, located in Carrick.

The officers and directors invite all members and friends to be present to witness the spiritual ceremonies in honor of the dedication of this chapel.

The ceremonies will be conducted by Rabbi A. M. Ashinsky, Rabbi B. A. Lichter and Rev. J. Julius Bloom. Speakers: Honorable Elder W. Marshall and Leonard S. Levin, Esq.

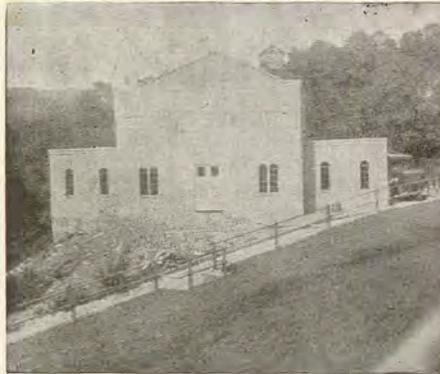
Dedication Committee: Jerome Solomon, Esq., Chairman; Alexander Randall, Assistant.

Officers of the Organization:

S. Shafer, Pres.
David Solominsky, V. Pres.
M. Ostrovsky, Sec.
S. Malitovsky, Treas.

Building Committee:

Jacob Grossman
David Kart
Louis Sniderman
Louis Mandelblatt
M. Fiman



Everybody is Welcome
to Join in the
Dedication Services

Route: Through the Liberty
Tubes, turn left, out Saw
Mill Run Boulevard and
about one-fourth mile on
Route 51.

The following concerns congratulate the officers and directors of the Beth Abraham Cemetery in their efforts and on an ambition realized.

Roofing by
FRANK LIMBACH

ROOFING
&
SHEET METAL

1722 E. OHIO ST.
CE 5600

Lumber and Millwork
By
Center Lumber Co.

LUMBER
&
MILLWORK

1848 CENTER AVE.
GR 1240

Tile Work
Standard Mantel & Tile Company
1106 FIFTH AVENUE AT 8459

Brick Work
WILLIAM LIFF
5552 BLACK STREET MO 2610

Steel Work
JOSEPH STEVENS, Rep.
GUIBERT STEEL COMPANY
FE 2960 3201 W. CARSON ST. FE 4740

Painting
DAVID MOLEVER
6318 ALDERSON STREET JA 2626

Architect
ALEXANDER SHAROVE
BERGER BUILDING CO 0885

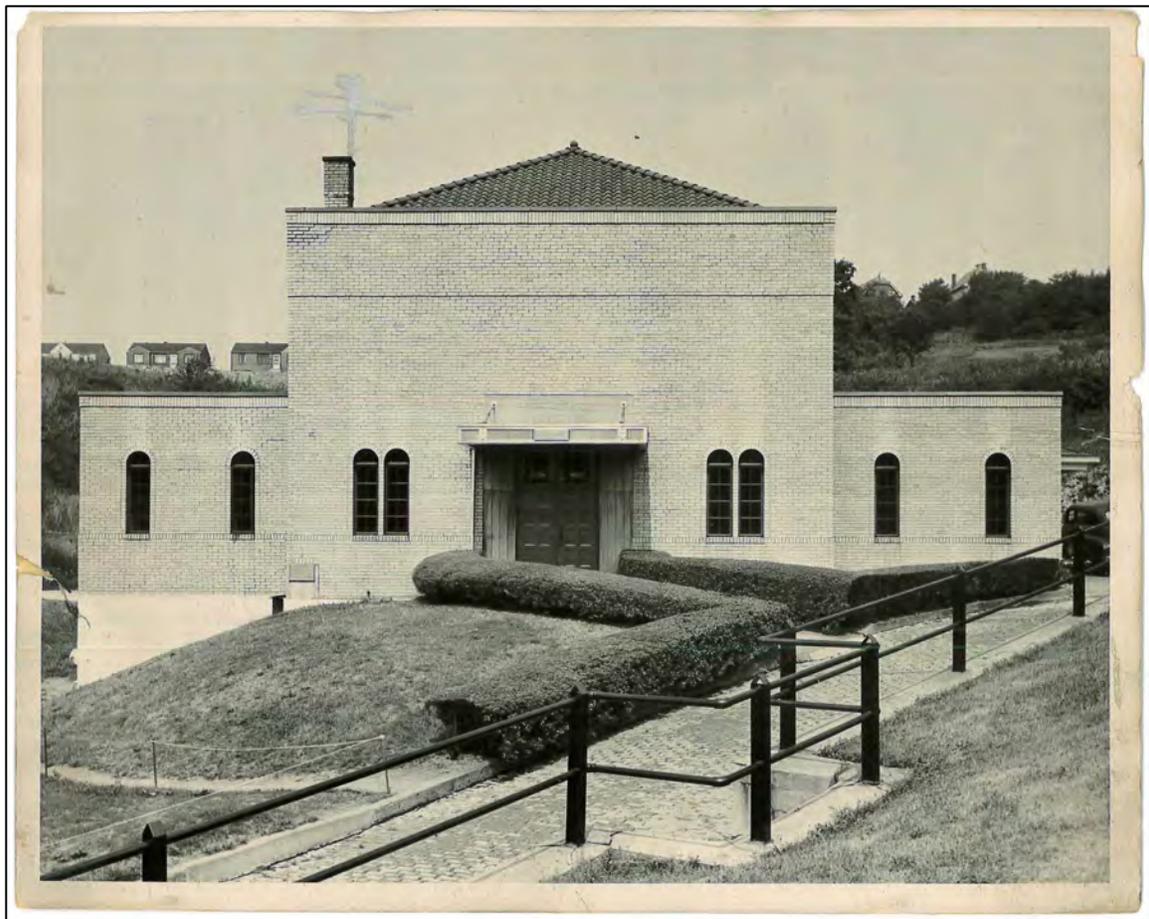
Bricks for Construction
D. J. KENNEDY COMPANY
BUILDERS SUPPLIES
7535 THOMAS BLVD. CH 7100

Plumbing
BORRIS MANDEL
204 CRAFT AVENUE MA 0484

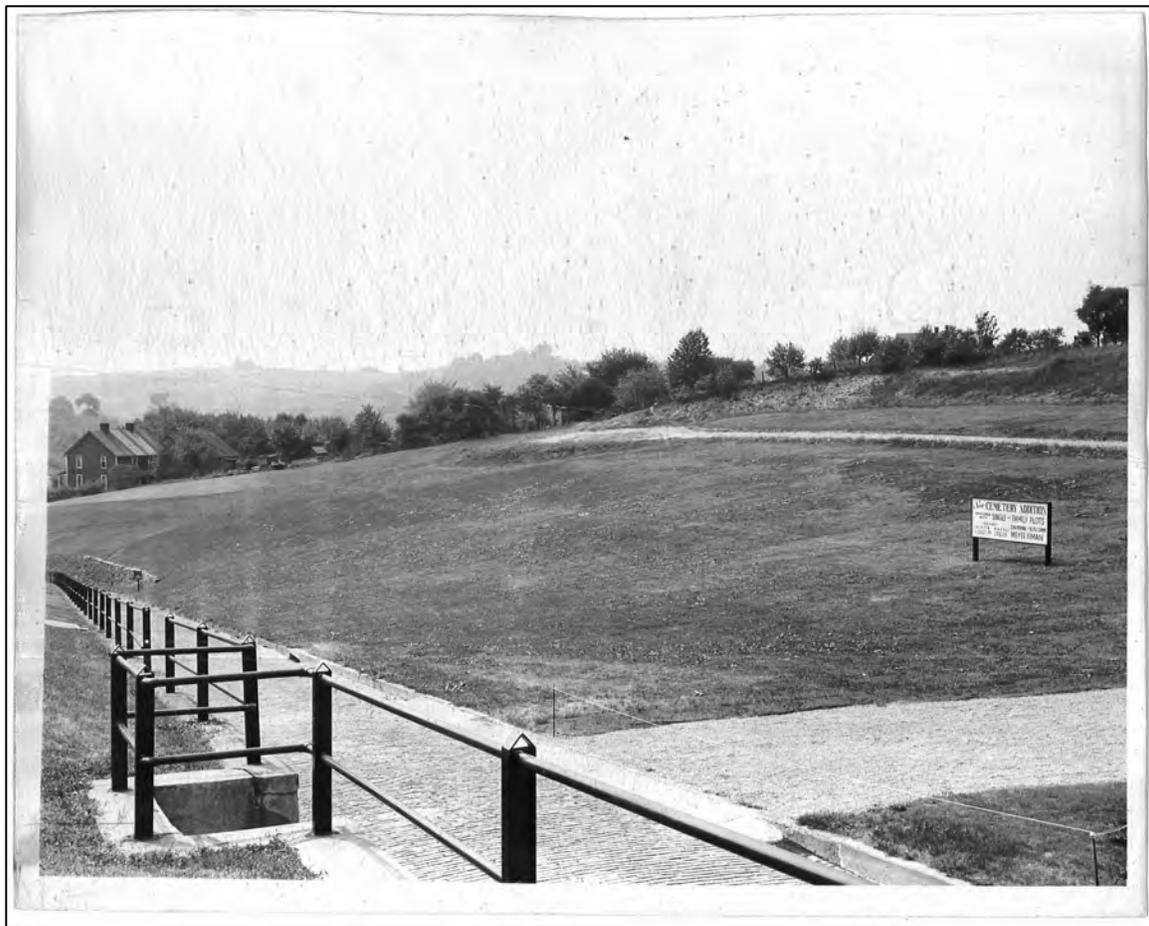
Electrical Fixtures
1852 CENTER AVE. **DANIELS ELECTRIC COMPANY, Inc.** ATlantic 6163

Jewish Criterion, Aug. 20, 1937

Advertisement for the dedication of the Beth Abraham Cemetery chapel. Lists the contractors and suppliers for the project. Presents an agenda of speakers.



Beth Abraham Cemetery chapel (1937)
Beth Abraham Congregation Records, MSS 333, Rauh Jewish Archives.



The 1950s addition of Beth Abraham Cemetery, c.1951. Shows railings of the 1930s addition to the left, the main road, and the one-way road into the expansion area. Beth Abraham Congregation Records, MSS 333, Rauh Jewish Archives.

Beth Abraham Congregation Adds New Cemetery Grounds



Meyer Fiman

The Beth Abraham Congregation, of 5741 Bartlett Street, one of the oldest Orthodox Congregations in the City of Pittsburgh, organized in 1890 by a group of then outstanding Jewish citizens of the community, has recently developed and completed a new addition to their present Cemetery Grounds in Carrick, for the needs of its members and the general local Jewish Community.

The developing and beautifying of the new addition was done under the supervision of Mr. Meyer Fiman, of the Morrowfield Apart-

ments, chairman of the Building Committee. Chairman Fiman was ably assisted by members of his Building Committee: Morris Ben-Kovitz, Max Blank, Frank Brenner, Israel Chodock, Nathan Frank, David Gondelman, David Kart, Harry Lebovitz, M. A. Marcus, Harry Morris, Abe Opter, Jacob Ryave, William Silverman, Morris Nydes and Meyer S. Sikov, Counsel for the Congregation.

The Congregation Chapel was erected in 1937, during the administration of the late Sol Shaffer, president; David Solominsky, vice president; Mr. Moishe Ostrosky, secretary; and Mr. Jacob Grossman and Mr. Samuel Malitovsky, treasurers, all of whom have since passed away. It was these men who were instrumental in the erection of the Chapel on the Cemetery Grounds. They built well and wisely, and are gratefully remembered by the present members of the Congregation and the Community.

Mr. Fiman and his Committee will be in attendance at the Cemetery Grounds every day except Sabbath, between now and the Holy Days, September 19th, where those who are interested in Plots of ground may inquire. After September 19th, the Committee will sit in the Offices of the Congregation on Bartlett Street.

Ka-El Family

The Ka-El Family Club will meet Sunday, September 14, at 8:30 o'clock at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Julius Wolf, 1619 National Street, Stanton Heights.

Jewish Criterion, Sept. 12, 1952

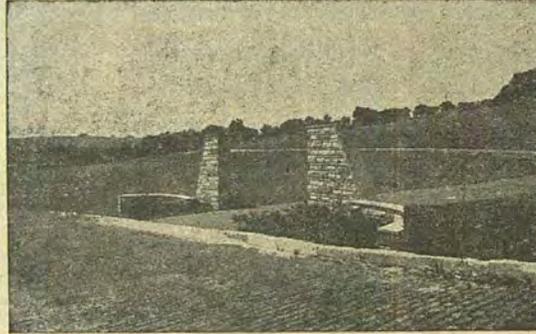


Bella Chodock photographs of Beth Abraham Cemetery addition dedication, August 1953. Shows the original ironwork atop the gate, as well as the four original plaques. Beth Abraham Congregation Records, MSS 333, Rauh Jewish Archives.

Beth Abraham Memorial Park

MEYER FIMAN, Chairman—HAZEL 1-7828

THE PUBLIC is offered a family burial estate in one of Pittsburgh's finest Jewish cemeteries. Everlasting constant supervision is always maintained to beautify and give comfort with satisfaction to members of families visiting the resting place of their dear departed ones.



A view of the newly constructed gateway entrance to the new addition to the beautiful cemetery grounds. Located on Rte. 51 in Carrick, Pa.

The prices for all lots are uniform and deed of ownership to plots are issued, so that you may know that such single or family plots remain forever the property of every individual purchaser and their families.

Cemetery representatives are available at all times. For detailed information phone or write. All inquiries will be given prompt attention.

BETH ABRAHAM CONGREGATION

5741 BARTLETT ST.

JA. 1-0101

PITTSBURGH

Louis Ostrosky, Pres.

Dave Kart, 1st V. Pres.

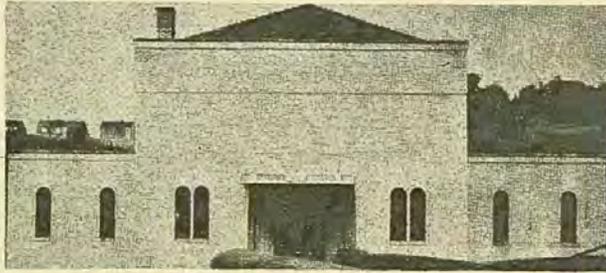
Abe Opter, 2nd V. Pres.

I. Aleck Brand, Secy.

Benjamin Hartsberg, Treas.

American Jewish Outlook, Aug. 31, 1956

Shows the stone gate without ironwork or plaques, suggesting that this photograph was actually taken before the August 1953 dedication, despite claim of "newly constructed."



Chapel

BETH ABRAHAM MEMORIAL PARK

Located in the City of Pittsburgh, off Saw Mill Run Boulevard. Through Liberty Tubes, turn left four miles to Stewart Avenue, 15 minutes ride from Squirrel Hill, 10 minutes from downtown.

Burial plots, single or family units, reasonable priced, can be paid out over a period of time. The prices for all lots are uniform and deeds of ownership to plots are issued so that each single or family plot remains forever the property of every individual purchaser and his family.

We invite your inspection of our new development. You will find modern uniformity of all monuments and markers—completely lawned, no concrete walks. Plots ideally spaced with set off walks for easy approach by visitors.

For Appointment To View Same

Call HAZel 1-7828, Ask for Mr. Meyer Fiman

CEMETERY COMMITTEE WILL BE AT CEMETERY EVERY SUNDAY BEGINNING AUGUST 25 — 10 A.M. TO 5 P.M.

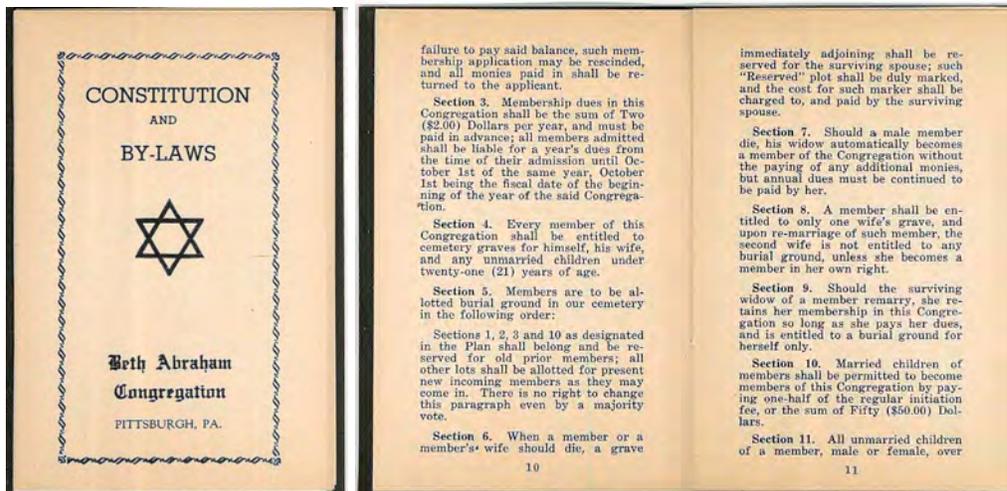
BETH ABRAHAM CONGREGATION

I. H. STEIN, President

Jewish Chronicle, Aug. 23, 1963



Beth Abraham Cemetery representative unweiling Holocaust memorial outside gate to 1950s addition, 2006. Beth Abraham Cemetery chapel can be seen in the background. Beth Abraham Congregation Records, MSS 333, Rauh Jewish Archives.



Beth Abraham Congregation constitution and bylaws (1941 revision) showing title page and interior sections covering the rights and responsibilities of membership. Beth Abraham Congregation Records, MSS 333, Rauh Jewish Archives.