The Filson Historical Society

Hadassah Louisville Chapter
Records, 1919-2004

For information regarding literary and copyright interest for these papers, contact the Collections Department.

Size of Collection:
2 cu. ft.

Location Number:
Mss. BJ H125
Hadassah Louisville Chapter Records, 1919-2004

Scope and Content Note

The bulk of this collection is made up of disassembled and complete volume scrapbooks documenting the volunteer work and fundraising of the Louisville Chapter of Hadassah, the Women’s Zionist Organization of America. Included are minutes, newspaper clippings, publications, bulletins, invitations, and photographs of events from 1919-2004.

Folders 1-4 consist of loose materials from the years 1919-1962 that did not come from scrapbooks. They contain minutes from the first four years of the Louisville Chapter of Hadassah, a 1928 manual for Hadassah Chapters, the early history of Junior Hadassah, and miscellaneous Louisville Chapter bulletins containing information on National Hadassah projects that the Louisville Chapter fundraised for.

Folders 5-22 are primarily disassembled scrapbooks. The materials include newspaper clippings, correspondence, bulletins, and photographs from 1943 to 2004. These materials document the various fundraising events sponsored by the Louisville Chapter such as the annual linen shower, donor affair, style shows, resale shop, and various theatre and music performances. The Louisville Chapter fundraised for National Hadassah supported programs in Israel such as the Jewish National Fund, Youth Aliyah, Israel Bonds, the Hadassah Medical Organization, Hadassah School of Nursing, Hadassah-Hebrew Medical School, Brandeis School for Boys, Alice Seligsberg School for Girls, and Hadassah Israel Education Services. Fundraising was also done for local programs and scholarships such as Young Judea, the Kling Scholarship, and the Suzanne Linker Cantor Cancer Fund.

Folder 13 consists of sign-in sheets for Life Membership Parties. Folder 20 contains miscellaneous materials including photographs, a postcard from the Hadassah Nursing School in Jerusalem, a brief history on the founding of Hadassah, a memorial service bulletin for Henrietta Szold, an article about the Louisville visit of Israeli diplomat Mrs. Ora Goitein, and a scanned image of National Hadassah Membership Award buttons. Folders 19 and 21 include materials related to Operation Beacon, an education program started by the Louisville Chapter to connect Kammerer Middle School, a local school, with Hebrew University Secondary School in Jerusalem, Israel via fax machine.

Volumes 23-27 contain one minutes book dated 1933 to 1935 and four scrapbooks dated 1959 to 1972. The materials include newspaper clippings, correspondence, bulletins, and photographs. These materials document the various Louisville Chapter fundraising events and causes mentioned in the previous paragraph. Folder 7 contains loose materials found in the back of Volume 25.
Folder 28 includes four museum items; a Hadassah pendant and three National Hadassah Awards for membership and fundraising in the form of buttons and ribbons on felt pads.

Digital materials include a video extracted from a flash drive (stored in Folder 19 with a detailed summary of the video contents) documenting Operation Beacon, a project sponsored by the Louisville Chapter of Hadassah to connect Kammerer Middle School with Hebrew University Secondary School in Jerusalem, Israel via fax machine. The goals of Operation Beacon were to create greater understanding among all people and to provide the students of Kammerer Middle School a way to communicate with students from other lands and cultures. An edited version of the video is available only for in-house research at the Filson and is stored in O:\DIGITAL COLLECTIONS – Reference Room Access\BJ H125 – Hadassah Louisville Chapter.
Historical Note

Hadassah, the Women’s Zionist Organization of America, was founded by Henrietta Szold (1860-1945) of Baltimore, Maryland in 1912 after her trip to Palestine where she was disturbed by the expanse of hunger and disease plaguing the residents. Hadassah, named after Queen Esther, was organized with a focus on nursing. Their first project was to send two nurses to Palestine in 1913 to aid new mothers and treat patients with trachoma. In 1918, their work expanded to creating the Hadassah Nurses’ Training School to train local women. The Louisville Chapter of Hadassah was founded in 1919 by a group of 15 women and focused on fundraising for the National Hadassah projects in Palestine. Szold went on to launch the Youth Aliyah program in 1933, to help Jewish children in Nazi Germany resettle in Palestine. Hadassah established the first teaching and medical center in Palestine in 1939, the Rothschild-Hadassah University Hospital on Mount Scopus. In 1948, the medical facility on Mount Scopus was forced to evacuate after a medical convoy was attacked, resulting in the deaths of 78 people. Hadassah built a new medical center in Ein Kerem, which opened in 1961. After the Six-Day War in 1967, Hadassah regained access to their original medical center on Mount Scopus. Throughout their medical service, Hadassah retained a strict neutral position and treated patients regardless of ethnicity, religion, or gender.
Folder List

Box 1
Folder 1: Minutes, 1919-1923
Folder 2: Hadassah Organization Manual, 1928
Folder 3: Junior Hadassah and Young Judaea, 1931-1945
Folder 4: Bulletins, 1941-1962
Folder 5: Scrapbook, 1951-1952
Folder 6: Scrapbook, 1954-1962
Folder 7: Scrapbook, 1963-1966
Folder 8: Scrapbook, 1972-1973
Folder 9: Scrapbook, 1973-1975
Folder 10: Scrapbook, 1976-1977
Folder 11: Scrapbook, 1977-1978
Folder 14: Scrapbook, 1980-1982
Folder 15: Scrapbook, 1983-1985
Folder 16: Scrapbook, 1985-1988 (1 of 2)
Folder 17: Scrapbook, 1985-1988 (2 of 2)
Folder 18: Scrapbook, 1989-1994 (1 of 2)
Folder 19: Scrapbook, 1989-1994 (2 of 2)
Folder 20: Miscellaneous, 1920-1997
Folder 21: Scrapbook, 1994-1999
Folder 22: Scrapbook, 2000-2004

Box 2
Volume 23: Minutes, 1933-1935
Volume 24: Scrapbook, 1959-1961
Volume 26: Scrapbook, 1966-1969
Folder 28: Pendant and Buttons on Felt, 1972-1987

Digital materials
These files are restricted to in-house viewing.
O:\DIGITAL COLLECTIONS – Reference Room Access\BJ H125 – Hadassah Louisville Chapter
Operation Beacon, 18-19 March 1992
Subject Headings

Art fairs – Kentucky – Louisville.
Benefit performances – Kentucky – Louisville.
Cancer – Research.
Fashion shows – Kentucky – Louisville.
Four Courts Louisville Hebrew Home.
Fund raising – Kentucky – Louisville.
Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center.
Hadassah – Israel.
Hadassah Medical Organization.
Hadassah (Organization) – History.
Hadassah, the Women’s Zionist Organization of America. Louisville Chapter.
Israel-Arab War, 1967.
Jewish Agency for Israel. Youth Aliyah Department.
Jewish Community Center (Louisville, Ky.)
Jewish National Fund.
Jewish women – Kentucky – Louisville.
Jewish women – Political activity – United States.
Jewish women – Societies and clubs.
Jews – Kentucky – Louisville.
Junior Hadassah (Organization : U.S.)
Louisville (Ky.) – History.
Szold, Henrietta, 1860-1945.
Thrift shops – Kentucky – Louisville.
Women volunteers – Kentucky – Louisville.
Young Judaea, Inc.
Youth – Services for – Kentucky – Louisville.
Youth travel programs – Israel.
Zionism – Kentucky – Louisville.