

The JEWISH COMMUNITY of TOMS RIVER
Salutes the
American Bicentennial

HISTORY OF PIONEERS

*Reminiscences and Personal Histories
of the Jews of Toms River*

February 22, 1976
Congregation B'nai Israel

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Council of Jewish
Organizations
of the Greater Toms
River Area

HISTORY OF PIONEERS
Reminiscences and Personal Histories
of the Jews of Toms River

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Council of Jewish Organizations
Toms River, New Jersey

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. . . And all those, "Pioneers" who took the time to share their stories with us.

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PREFACE TO OUR PAST - PRELUDE TO OUR FUTURE

Our sense of history has kept the Jewish People together for over 4000 years. References to the past, identification with our peoples struggles, triumphs, ideals and perceptions of God have united our generations. We are a result of our history. Our continuing contributions to our own and the World's history is a result of our sense of history.

It is not surprising that we should take America's celebration of its history most seriously. Our sense of history tells us that we must. Our understanding of the role which Jews, Jewish ideals and biblical principles has played in America's growth reinforces our concern for American history. Our knowledge of the importance that America as a land of freedom has played In Jewish history reminds us of our essential link with American history.

The Toms River Jewish Community, in particular, recognizes its importance in the development of this area and manifold opportunities for economic, social and Jewish development which have been a part of our experience here.

This booklet, which the Council of Jewish Organizations of the Greater Toms River Area presents with much pride, is the result of our attempt to record some personal glimpses of our past. Through this look at a small slice of our local history, how we came here, what we were looking for, what we found, how we were received, we can better understand America's history and our unique contributions to it.

May we be blessed with many years of proclaiming liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof

Richard Hammerman
Rabbi, Congregation B'nai Israel

February, 1976
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NOTES ON THE SAMUEL KAUFMAN FAMILY

My father was very anxious to have his family out of Brooklyn as he had a sick daughter named Anna. He went to the mountains looking for a farm to buy. He did not like the schools there. He wanted to find a place that had a school for his five daughters, (my parents had seven daughters).

A friend told my father about Toms River, the town with 800 people and one policeman. He came to Toms River and liked the high school. My two older sisters attended the high school.

My father bought the "Wills" farm on the Old Freehold Road, a farm of 52 acres, which he farmed. He was the first Jewish farmer in Toms River. He came on March 19, 1910. He raised many crops; corn, wheat, potatoes and peanuts. He also had cows. He won many prizes for his vegetables in Grover's store on Main Street.

My family was the first to have chickens on his farm. We had the first hand incubator. The eggs were turned by hand, daily in this type of incubator. Because of his interest in both Palestine (now Israel) and chickens, he arranged to send White Leghorns to Israel. For many years he worked for Israel with Mr. Friedman, Mr. Sachs and Mr. Schein.

The younger girls attended a one room school on old Freehold Road called the Gowdy School; eight classes in one room. It was next to the Goldman farm. There was one teacher, Mrs. Goble. My father took us out of this school after one year. We five girls then drove to Toms River with a horse and wagon. My sister Henrietta did the driving as she was the oldest (when she graduated High School, there were eight in her class).

Henrietta and my sister Rose attended school at Trenton Teachers' School and became teacher. Later, when sister Henrietta married Mr. J. Samuelson, she was the first Jewish teacher in the Toms River School. She taught sixth and seventh grades.

We lived on the farm for 10 years. My father worked very hard with Mr. Mazur of the Jewish Agricultural Society to help get the Jews out of the sweat-shops of Brooklyn and New York and onto farms.

My father, Samuel Kaufman, was a man who could not read or write. He was a very successful man. He was a builder in Brooklyn. He loved the land and he was a great farmer. He was always ready to help anyone he felt needed help.

He and my mother, Roslie gave the land for the Jewish Community Center. They felt that the Jews who were coming to Toms River would need a place to meet. Mr. Jacob Wexler built the building.

After 10 years my father sold the farm to the Cohen Brothers and my father bought the Murray Feed Co. on Water Street. Mr. Samuelson, with my father, ran that feed company, which later became the United Feed Co. After the store on Water Street had a fire, a new building was built near the railroad on Flint Road.

When we moved to Toms River we thought we were going to the end of the world. Family and friends came to bid my parents "Good-bye" and just sat there and cried I can remember that well.

The house on the farm did not please my father, who was a builder. He would not let us move into the house as it was. He wanted us to have the comfort that we had in Brooklyn. There was a hotel called the Kessler Hotel on Old Freehold Road near our farm. We all stayed there until the house was finished with heat and a bathroom. Town people would ride out to see the house. In those days there were no bathrooms or steam heat in farm houses. When we sold the farm we moved to Highland Parkway.

When my sister Anne became very ill, my mother and younger sister Sylvia went to live in Tucson, Arizona. My mother would come home for awhile and then return. Sylvia remained with Anne and still lives there. My sister died there and is buried in Lakewood. My sister Rose was a teacher. She was teaching in Newark, got the flu, was ill for a very short while and died. She is buried in Lakewood.

My sister Henrietta helped run the United Feed Co. She married Mr. Samuelson and had one child, Rose Leslye, who is now in California with her two daughters. Henrietta died and is buried in the Toms River Jewish Community Center Cemetery.

My father retired and spent his winters in Daytona, Florida after my mother died. (She is buried in Lakewood). Later on my father made his home in Daytona Beach. When he died he was living with me. He is buried in the Toms River Jewish Community Cemetery. He was a great man, he did so much the building of Toms River. He owned the Park and Tilford Farms in Laurelton. He built farms there and sold them.

I was the only one of his daughters who gave him three grandsons and a granddaughters. He loved them all: Norman, George, Dick and Anne, and of course, my niece Rose Leslye.

I can assure you that I have not written you half the things my father did for people, putting them in business. Most of those people are gone now.

He never received any awards, medals . . . He never asked for anything from anyone. I will always love him and think of him as a great human being, always ready to help. He sent a boy in Israel through college although he never knew the boy.

He was not a religious man, but he believed in Israel and always told me, "Work for our Jewish people and also help others." He was great.

Lillian Kushinsky

THE SAMUALSON FAMILY

This is the story of the Samuelson Family in Toms River, as told by a son, Herman J. (Jerry) Samuelson (from 1912 though 1973).

In January 1912, my father Samuel Samuelson, a fifty year old carpenter from Brooklyn, bought a farm in the Pleasant Plains section of Toms River, and started a new life as a farmer.

It was a 72 acre farm located on the south east corner of the Church and Old Freehold Roads. For a total price of \$4,600, he also got three cows, three horses, about 100 chickens, wagons, machinery, etc. The house was small but satisfactory. There was no electric power so we used kerosene lamps and lanterns. To get water, we used a hand pump located in the kitchen. Outhouses were used for toilets.

There was another Jewish farmer living two miles away. His name was Sam Kaufman, and he was very cooperative.

Samuelson raised many vegetables which he sold to produce dealers in Toms River, Lakewood and Point Pleasant. One year he raised and shipped two carloads of watermelon for the Philadelphia market. He also increased his flock of Leghorns to 800 birds. There was only one commercial poultry farm in the neighborhood, the Raynor farm with 4000 layers.

One son, Jerry, was interested in farming. He attended the college of Agriculture at Cornell for four years, graduated, taught in Minnesota for two years and in New York for one year.

In February 1919, Mr. Samuelson sold his farm because of severe bodily injuries and illness so that he was unable to do any more physical work. He moved to Lakewood and lived in retirement until his death in 1946. The new owner was Jacob Wexler.

Jerry in the meantime married Henrietta, the oldest daughter of Sam Kaufman. A few months later (May 1919), Mr. Kaufman and Jerry bought the Murphy Feed Store, a small place located on Water Sreet. Mr. Kaufman was the silent partner, Jerry and Henrietta were the active partners and operators. They named the business, United Feed Co. The business grew and was successful almost from the start. Feed prices were low compared to the selling price of eggs. The war in Europe was over and many people left war torn Europe to come to a prosperous America to start a new life. To many, a farm was just the right thing to buy to start this new life, especially in Ocean County where farm land was low in price. Over the years, the newcomers were often White Russians and Hungarians, or Russian and Polish Jews fleeing from Communistic countries. During Hitler's time, many were German Jews and others fleeing from Hitler. Many left the cities to become poultry farmers because they wanted to start a new life in the country. Naturally, as the poultry business grew and expanded, the United Feed Co. grew and expanded, trying to keep up with the increasing demands for feed. We built a new modern feed plant in South Toms River and opened, branch stores in Lakewood, Point Pleasant, Freehold and Jamesburg. Other feed companies moved into Ocean County, but we did very well in spite of the new competition.

In 1940 my wife Henrietta died. She had been a wonderful helpmate to me and mother of our only child Leslye. Publicly she had been very active in health matters, especially in the battle against tuberculosis.

In 1940, Mr. Kaufman retired from the business and I became the sole owner. For the record I should like to mention the names of some of my co-workers who helped me operate this large business. There were my brothers Max and Harry Samuelson, and my close friend Jack Baer, all dead now. Also during those years there were Jack Rosenkranz, Max Spieler, Rubin Hoberman and Alton Estomin. I thank you all.

In 1946 I married Mrs. Helen Vincent of Washington State. With her extensive office and business training, she was of great help in operating our large business. The years rolled by, years of tension, years of responsibility, years of pleasure, years of worry . . . In 1960, after 40 and 1 years as owner of the United Feed Co., the business was sold to a young feed dealer from South Jersey and Jerry Samuelson retired from active life, at the age of 67.

All during those years, in spite of great responsibilities, I made the time to be active and take part in our Community affairs. With pride, but also with humility, I am listing some of them:

1. President - Toms River Community of Jewish Farmers
2. President - Toms River Kiwanis Club
3. President - NJ Feed Dealers
4. Vice-president - Lakewood B'nai Brith
5. Elected delegate - Republican National Convention
6. Elected representative - Republican State Committee

During those 60 years, I met and worked with a wonderful lot of men and women who helped the Jewish Community get better and better. I can't list them all, but I certainly thank them for their friendship and cooperation.

Here are a few:

My father-in-law Sam Kaufman, His daughters Henrietta and Lillian, Albert Kushinsky, Hyman Novoselsky-the father of those fine Novins boys. Harry Dinnerstein-father of Martin and Lionel Dinnerstein. Sam Luria, Max Leet, Aaron Pincus, Jack Baer, Nathan Friedman family, the Wexler - Estomin families, Joe Hoberman, Old Man Rosenkranz, the Polsky's and Pyenson's, the Haft's, the Dardick's, the Robinson's, the Plaut's, the Ehrmann's and many many more . . .

In August I will have finished my 83rd year. Thanks to you all, they were happy years. May God bless you all, and may God bless America, where such wonderful things are possible.

H. Jerry Samuelson

THE ESTOMIN FAMILY STORY

In the Spring of 1918 my parents, Joseph and Mary Estomin with my brother Harold joined their relatives, the Wexlers, in a joint venture: farming. Coming from New York City to the good clean air for Harold, who was asthmatic, was just what the doctor ordered.

In the big old house on Old Freehold Road, formerly the Samuelson Farm, lived my grandparents Hyman and Rose Wexler, my uncle Abraham, my uncle and aunt Jacob and Sonia Wexler, their children Goldie, Ida, Isadore, Bennett and Samuel, my parents Joseph and Mary and my brother Harold. They ran a general farm growing corn, cabbages, beets; raising cows, horses and 500 chickens on the outside, and a boarding house on the inside. Friends and family with all their children were always coming from the City to the country.

At that time, Old Freehold Road was the main highway between Lakewood and Toms River, and our house became the focal point of the Jewish Community. There was no electricity in the rural areas so we had installed our own electric system. We had the tremendous Delco batteries which provided us with some of our needs.

My father continued to work in New York as a milkman for four years to supplement the family income. He came to Toms River every Friday night and went back every Sunday on the train from Lakewood. The trip to Lakewood by horse and buggy took longer than the train ride to NY.

Food shopping was a major outing to Lakewood to purchase flour, salt, sugar by the 100 Lb. bag and then visiting Jewish friends to exchange the current news. Once a week the Schochet came to the farms for the slaughtering of the animals for the table. Most of the food consumed was grown and canned by my mother, grandmother and aunt. Visitors from N Y brought delicacies we couldn't get here. Every Friday morning before daybreak my grandmother was up preparing for Shabbas; baking her Challah, bread, pastries for the Sabbath and the rest of the week. Then followed meat, chicken and whatever else was on the menu. This was all done on a wood and coal stove which also was part of the heating system for the entire house.

During the month of May 1920, my mother went to NY to await my arrival. Shortly after I was introduced to the "Family" and to Toms River. At the same time as my arrival, we welcomed a new neighbor: the Hyman Friedmans and their children Ida, William, Abraham and Minnie.

In 1924 my uncle Abraham brought his bride to live with us. A year later my cousin Beatrice was born.

The Jewish families already residing in Toms River were the Samuelsons, Kaufmans, Novins, Eichenbaums and the Max Leet family. As always, there was a strong need for Jews to get together. At first there were minyuns in individual homes and then they began to meet in the Wexler house for meetings and functions.

in 1924 my parents built their own home on Church Road which was a subdivided parcel of the original farm. My uncle Abe, his family and his in-laws, the Woloshins, built

their farm right next to ours from the same parcel. At this time my parents started poultry farming. The Jewish Agricultural Society was quite active helping Jews resettle on farms. In 1926 my parents were awarded an Outstanding Jewish Farmer of New Jersey Award from the J A S. Soon we had a capacity of 4,000 chickens which was considered one of the largest farms in New Jersey.

My first year of school was the first year of the motorized school bus and the opening of the brand new Hyers Street Grammar School.

Between the years of 1920 and 1925, there was an influx of Jewish families: the Newtons; Joseph Hoberman family with their children Max, Rubin, Morris, Julius and Ruth; the Karols and son Herbert; the Wallach's; Hilda and Jack Baer and their children Ramona and James; Morris Rosenberg family with their children Lillian, Helen and Oscar; the Meyers' with their children Charles, Rose and Morris; the Dinnerstein family; the Harris family; the Bulter's; the Kraus and the Levines had businesses in town.

The Poultrymans Service Feed Co. started as a feed Co-op servicing farmers. There was also the United Feed Co. owned by the Kaufman family.

The Federation of Egg Producers Co-op (FEPCO), an egg marketing co-op, was started in the 1930's to help the farmers sell their products.

As more and more Jews settled in Toms River, there was no place large enough to meet. So all the Jewish farm families got together and formed the Community of Jewish Farmers. The corner stone was laid in 1924. The land was donated by Max Leet and the building was built by Jacob Wexler and Morris Rosenberg. Mr. Rosenberg was later one of the Gaboyim of the Congregation B'nai Israel.

The Community was used by all factions for all purposes: religious, political., educational, social. Education was always uppermost in the minds of the people. There was a Jewish shule with teachers coming from NYC to teach Yiddish speaking, reading, writing, literature and history. There was a basketball team, softball team, etc. Jewish youth from Toms River, Lakewood and Farmingdale used to meet above Wolpin's Furniture Store on 4th Street in Lakewood for a social discussion club. It was there I met my wife to be, Eta Gelbaum.

In my high school graduating class there were 11 Jewish students out of a class of 104. Four of us were in the top ten, Most us went on to further our education.

At the beginning of WW II, I had to leave college to come home and work the farm. During the war there were very few young men left on the farms; essential work; food for the country.

In 1941 I married Eta Gelbaum and we started the whole cycle again in the big old house on the Old Freehold Road were my three children were born.

Alton Estomin

TOMS RIVER WAY BACK THEN (The Wexler Family)

By: Goldie Wexler Rothman

The year was 1918 just after the end of World War I. On the advice of his doctor that he could prolong his life only if he could live on a farm away from the city pavements, Jacob Wexler left his business as a building contractor behind him in New York City, and took his family to settle in Toms River. He bought a 75 acre farm from Samuel Kaufman, who was an early Jewish pioneer in the area and a wealthy man.

And so it came about that the whole Wexler clan settled into the old weather beaten house on Old Freehold Road. This family consisted of Jake and their five children, Goldie, Ida, Izzie, Ben and Sam, who was then not quite a year old. There were also Jake's sister and her husband, Mary and Joe Estomin, and their son Harold (Alton was born a short time later), together with Grandma and Grandpa Wexler and Uncle Abe.

For us children, this new life was a constant adventure. At the beginning there was no indoor plumbing or electricity. Pumping water at the kitchen sink was novel and exciting. However, this state of affairs was not novel or exciting to the adults in the house, and it was not long before indoor plumbing was installed, and electricity flowed through the house, powered by a Delco system in the cellar.

Cars were seen only infrequently and so our horses, were driven to town either drawing a buggy occasionally during the winter, or a sleigh, if there was enough snow.

We found out that our house had formerly been a way station for changing horses for the public coach that ran between Freehold and Toms River and other points south. Hence the name of our road. There was an immense red barn on our property which had housed the horses and which now was being used for our animals. During those early times, Old Freehold Road was the main road. There was no route 9 south of Cox Cro Road. A number of years later the existing Route 9 was built by convict labor. The children watched from a distance as the men worked, and the fact that they all wore striped uniforms intrigued us.

The year we arrived in Toms River was the first year all the children in the neighborhood were transported into Toms River to the central school. There had formally been a one room red school house where a single teacher taught all eight grades. Now the children were brought to the two-story building that still stands today. It contained classes from grades one through twelve. Our bus was an immense coach with a long line of seats facing each other, drawn by two horses.

At the time of my graduation from grade school and also from high school, I was the only Jewish child in the class. The scarcity of Jewish children did not last long. The school was shortly thereafter attended by many Jewish children. When my brothers were in high school, all three of them were star athletes. Izzie was on the football team. Ben was on the basketball and football teams, and also managed the basketball team. Sammie also was quite a hero; he starred on the baseball and basketball teams.

I can remember only a few Jewish families when we arrived in Toms River. There were the Kaufman's, the Novin's and a family named Eichenbaum who had farms on Old

Freehold Road. Max Leet had a dry goods store in town and the Meyers had their variety store on the premises about where it still is today. Toms River then was a lovely, sleepy town where everybody knew everybody else on a first name basis. The business section was confined to one block on Main Street with one or two stores on Water Street, and a couple of businesses on Washington Street. The Post Office occupied a part of the site where the First National Bank now stands, and one had to go up a number of steps in order to enter. Upstairs in this rickety building were the law offices of Judge Veeder for whom I worked several years. Early on, Joe Luria opened his department store opposite the post office.

Thinking back to those early days brings back pictures of the town as it was then. I cannot omit mentioning the Traco Theatre located on the premises where the Jersey Shore Savings & Loan Association is at the present time. The Theatre was owned by Joe Hirshblond, the father of Manny Hirshblond, who is now our Township Clerk. My sister Ida won 1st prize dancing the Charleston on the stage of the Traco.

Then there was the Ocean House on the northwest corner of Main and Water Streets, and the Marion Inn on the northeast corner. And occupying a commanding position looking toward Main Street was Berry's Hardware store on Water Street, on the site formerly occupied by the First National Bank.

During the late 1920's, Krause's Delicatessen and Luncheonette was on the corner of Main and Washington. Later Herb Resnick took this business over. It was just about this time that our first Jewish attorney, the late Albert Kushinsky, opened an office in Toms River. He later became an Assistant County Prosecutor and married Mr. Kaufman's daughter, Lillian who was then a widow.

Back then there was only one doctor in Toms River, Dr. Brower, and he was available day or night for house calls. He saved my brother Sammie's life when he had scarlet fever as a child.

During the early days while there were so few Jews in Toms River, we celebrated the High Holy days at the Novins' home. But as the number of Jews increased, our house, which was renovated by the addition of four bedrooms and oversized living and dining rooms, became the meeting place and Shule during the Holidays. Children's plays were presented there, and I remember that Purim was a favorite theme. I sure had a lot of fun being the director of these activities.

More and more Jewish people settled in our area. On Church Road, the Sachs, the Karols, and the Baer's (they later moved to Old Freehold Rd) arrived. The Hoberman place was originally west of Route 9. Later they relocated to Silverton Road. The Estomins left the old house and set up a chicken farm on Church Road. Our immediate family eventually left the old house and bought a farm adjacent to the Community House. The Pincus' were very early settlers, then came the Dinnerstein's, the Alex Cohen's and the Rosenberg's, all on Old Freehold Road.

Within a 10 year period ending in 1934, all of the Wexler children married. Ida married Jack Cherry of Canada; Izzie married Janet Sachs, a local girl; Ben married Ethel from Philadelphia; Pearl of Lakewood married Sammie; and I married Harry Rothman of the Bronx, and that is where I lived for the next 20 years, while the other children remained

in Toms River.

When we first came to Toms River, general farming was the rule. Our family had quite a number of cows, horses, a couple of goats and a number of chickens. The land was planted with corn and hay to feed the animals. We sold milk, cream and eggs to the people in Lakewood. The life was hard and money scarce. We were poor, but we children had no idea that we were poor. We were always just one step away from being unable to meet the mortgage payments. I remember that my father could rely on not being penalized if the payment on the 2nd mortgage, held by the Jewish Agricultural Society, fell in arrears. This organization sponsored the settlement of Jewish people on farms. In spite of all this, our childhood on the farm was ideal. We certainly were always happy, healthy and interested in the many projects that were part of our life.

In the 1920's, chicken and egg farming became popular in our area. So many people arrived and so many farms were being operated. This part of the country became known as an important egg center of the metropolitan area.

With this influx of new Jewish farmers, our house could not possibly accommodate all the people during the holidays and for meetings. A building plan was organized, and my father was commissioned to build a community hall. In the early 1920's, Toms River Jewish Community House was finished. The Community House became the social center of the Jewish farmers. To finance it, various projects were undertaken: dances masquerade balls, children's parties and stage presentations by adults and children. Meetings were enthusiastically attended, and after the business part, I can remember Mr. Pincus reading to us from Sholem Aleichem and my Aunt Mary singing some rousing Yiddish or Russian song, and everybody joining in. Those days were stirring and unforgettable.

The chicken and egg business continued to thrive until the late 1950's. Then, due to government lack of control of egg and feed prices, the farms began to fail. Shortly thereafter most of them went out of business.

Our dear mother died in 1943 and left a void in our lives.

As I consider our town today as compared with what it was almost 60 years ago, I cannot believe it to be the same place. It has turned into a bustling community, vastly increasing in population, with new shopping centers, many more schools, including a Community College, (one of the founders of which incidentally was the late Robert J. Novins), not to mention the ever growing real estate developments.

This place bears no resemblance to the slow paced little town to which we came in 1918.

THE NATHAN FRIEDMAN FAMILY

My father and mother, together with their four children, moved from downtown New York City to Toms River on May 30, 1920. I vividly recall the first day in Toms River. We came from the train to the farm in a Ford Model T touring sedan. The road (now Route 9) was an unpaved sand road. The farm consisted of a large house and a very large barn. There were several hogs, a horse and dozens of guinea hens. The house had no electricity. The modern conveniences consisted of an outdoor toilet, an outdoor open well and an indoor hand water pump. There was also a combination wood and coal stove in the kitchen used for cooking purposes and to heat the entire house. There were few homes in the area. Our closest neighbors was the Wexler family, and several others who are by now deceased. There was a one room schoolhouse nearby. The year we settled in Toms River was the first year school busses (2) were used to transport the children to school.

There was but a handful of Jewish families residing in the Toms River area in the early 1920s. There was no Community Center. However, even with no center for the Jewish residents to meet, there were religious services every Saturday and holidays at the home of Mr. Hymen Novins, the father of Ben and the late Bob Novins. The spirit of the handful of Jewish farmers was splendid. Never was there any disharmony or bickering. They had but one purpose in mind; to survive. The best way to survive was to organize. Some people suggested why don't we build a Community Center where all the Jewish people could meet and discuss their problems, and also of course, a place to worship. A short time later, on a Sunday afternoon, about a dozen and a half persons met at my father's home and decided to build a community building. Among those present at this initial meeting were Mr. Novins, Mr. Jacob Wexler, Mr. Mac Kenvin, Mr. Isaac Weinman and Mr. Morris Rosenberg. It was decided to erect the community building on an acre of land donated by Mr. Samuel Kaufman, owner of the United Feed Company. Land at that time was valued at about \$40 an acre. The Community was to be build an the corner of Old Freehold and Whitty Roads. Mr. Jacob Wexler and Mr. Morris Rosenberg were contracted to erect the building.

In 1925 cornerstone ceremonies were held and the birth of the Toms River Community of Jewish Farmers was held. When the building was completed it was so different from what it is today. The basement had a sand floor with a large wood furnace to heat the building. Therefore, during the cold months it was necessary for someone to come early and start the furnace and allow some time to heat the building.

With all the inconveniences, everyone enjoyed themselves. All came to the meetings; the spirit was excellent. It was an honor to be an officer and to be elected to the executive board. Now we need some of the pioneer enthusiasm today. As I recall, one person who did a great deal for the younger people was Goldie Wexler (Mrs. Goldie Rothman). She helped organize activities and social functions. Her efforts were wonderful.

Abe Freedman

THE PINCUS FAMILY (May 1971)

In another 7 months it will be 50 years since we have settled in Toms River. In 1921, the town and township had a population of 1700-1800 (now over 40,000). The streets were unpaved and often muddy with hitching posts on Main and Washington Streets and only one block of shopping places.

We were among the first of a wave of Jewish farmers, all starting a new life on land on a shoestring. If there are any analogies to be drawn with the first "halutzim" in Israel, it is sameness of ideas. To build a new life on land.; to escape the dreary city life in shops and so-called "businesses in the ghettos".

Even before these pioneers were established as self sustaining farmers, and everyone built and expanded and lived on credit, they built a Community Center embracing a synagogue, a children's Yiddish school, a center for cooperation and cultural activities (as well as social life).

We, the Pincus' came to Toms River as hardened workers of the land. I went through a two year course in Agriculture in the Baron De Hirsh Agriculture School in Woodbine, NJ and became a wandering farm worker on 17 farms in 9 states from coast to coast.

We settled on our first farm (two brothers) near Flemington, NJ (on a general farm). Two years later we came by ourselves to Toms River.

My life partner, Clara, had by that time developed a love of land, of creative farming, animals, vegetables, fruit trees and particularly flowers. The beauty of the fields and woods, sunrises and sunsets of every season have for many years (to this day) compensated for many tight situations and difficulties in which all newcomers to the Jewish Community were cheerful companions.

It didn't take long and Clara was teaching her gentile neighbors how to raise flowers, how to care for hens, and how to can and preserve fruits and vegetables. She received her first blue ribbons for flowers and preserves at the first County Fair in Beachwood (in the early 20's). At the same time she participated in the cultural and social life in the growing community; the Ladies auxiliary, the Folk Shule, etc. Our son was born in 1925. She raised him to a fine man, a good Jew and lover of land.

The building of farm and home has not deterred me from full scale participation in building the Jewish Community. I have served as three time (7 years) President of the Community of Jewish Farmers as well as recording secretary and member of the executive board for tens of years. I directed the Yiddish Folk Shule, formed the Yiddish dramatic club, presented several one act plays and community sings. I served as President of the first Jewish Feed Cooperative: the first Breed Improvements Group (we had 10 pens of pullets in the state laying contest). We had on our farm the champion white leghorn with 311 Eggs). I served as secretary of the White Oak Cooperative, the Federal Farmers Credit Union and the Federated Egg Producers Cooperative. I served on the Executive Board of the Ocean County Board of Agriculture. I served as chairman of the Patrons Committee of the White Oak Cooperative G.L.F. for 9 years; as director of the Federal Land Bank, as member of the Farm Home Administration Committee, as

member of the Coordinating Price Control Committee going to Washington, D.C. to boost egg prices through Government purchases.

Last but not least was leading a movement for the White Oak Cooperative for a Municipal Electric Plant in Dover Township. It was voted down in a referendum after a stiff fight. The archives (records and press releases, etc.) of the Community of Jewish Farmers are now in the Yiddish Scientific Institute in New York City, and have been used already by a writer of a book about the South Jersey Jewish Farm Colonies. Adding the participation in drives for Ambijau (the false dream) and various campaigns for Israel, it looks in retrospect like a worthwhile pastime.

Now being retired from actual farming, we are still the enthusiastic nature lovers as in our youth. And what could be more soul satisfying than watching a seed sprout and grow into a flower or vegetable, watching a tree (a blue spruce) grow from a six to eight inch stripling grow into a twenty foot beauty; watching a mighty oak tree (on our front lawn) stricken by lightning and dying from the top, come to life again and grow a new crown; watching white sand field growing nothing but pesky weeds grow darker and fatter after cultivation and heavy with good vegetation and fruitfulness.

This is the joy of farming and merging with nature that inspired tens of thousands of Jews in colonies in Israel, in the USA, in Argentina or Crimea. It shall never be forgotten.

A. Pincus

Jan. 18, 1976

THE BAER FAMILY

A letter from Hilda Baer

Dear Mildred (Robinson):

Please excuse me for not answering you sooner. I have been having difficulties with my eyes. I had my cataracts removed from my eyes. So far, they have not been able to fit me with the right kind of glasses. They have reground the lenses three times. So now I must get used to the new lenses. In the meantime I see double. One eye sees above the line and the other below the line. In order to see how to write this note to you, I had to cover one eye.

So please, you and other old timers remember what the Baer family did for our Community. At the same time the Community was very good to us, and I have nothing but good memories and wonderful thoughts of the years which we spent in Toms River. The good ones, the bad ones, the sad ones. I remember them all. Whatever I did for the communities at large, I did with all my heart, believe me.

Please excuse the appearance of this letter.

I hope you and your family are in good health. Sending you my best wishes.

I remain,

Sincerely yours,

Hilda Baer

PS: Remember me to your mother and to all the old timers.

THE MAX ROSENKRANZ FAMILY

Max Rosenkranz came to Toms River in 1923. Because of his agricultural background he was interested to settle in a farm area. He was referred by the Jewish Agricultural Society and settled here with his son Jack and later followed by daughter Mae. His younger four children were left in Europe (Poland) with their grandparents.

A year or so later he began farming on Church Road. It is still his home after more than fifty years.

The younger four children; Sid, Tanya, Ben and Bernice arrived in Toms River in 1929 just before the stock market crash.

The first Impression was the friendliness and closeness of all the Jewish families. The cooperative spirit was superb in every phase of the lives of our family. While the Community House was the focal point of all the Jewish family, the individual families like the Kenvin's and Bear's, stood out in our minds, especially Max Kenvin. Throughout the summer that we arrived, Mr. Kenvin visited every day to prepare us for the Toms River School in September.

Mr. & Mrs. J. Baer were our second parents. There was so much cooperation in everything. Early school years were most memorable. Teachers were much more professional and dedicated.

The community acted like an extended family. There was no such thing as a nuclear family. Every household could count on other members of the community for supportive aid. Five of the six children live in Ocean County and the sixth in Clifton. There are 12 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

The grandchildren have chosen varied ways of life. The oldest grandson is a Lieutenant Colonel in Air Force Reserve. Others became business men, a teacher, a banker, an anthropologist serving in Africa, a farmer in a cooperative with the Mennonites in Pennsylvania, a building project manager and an international trade coordinator.

The patriarch of the family, who is in his 95th year is still living in the old homestead, still alert and very interested in his family, Congregation and Community. His oldest great granddaughter is a college student.

THE BRAFMAN FAMILY THIS IS HOW WE CAME TO TOMS RIVER

In 1903 times were very bad. My father Morris Latterman was a house painter. When he had work, all he made was \$2.00 a day. It seems he had co-op farming on his mind, so he organized a group of painters, carpenters tailors and shoemakers (but none of them knew about farming) and they bought a farm in South Carolina. The land was poor, and they had no experience, so after two years, it fell apart. Some of the people went back to New York, others went out with a pack on their backs, peddling. My father became a share-cropper and stayed on a farm working hard for two years. My mother, with a bag on her back, picked cotton in 90 degree heat. I was a little girl of 7 who helped my mother picking cotton. Finally my parents couldn't take it anymore and came back to NY. But my father always wanted to work on a farm. He decided the first chance he will have, he'll go back on a farm. After 12 years in the painting business, he saved a few dollars, and said it is time to go back on a farm. On July 7, 1925 they bought a farm on Hooper Ave. and Chestnut St. My parents came here with my grandmother and sister. There was only six or seven Jewish Farmers. They had 1000 chickens and 1000 pullets. The first cold spell he was hit with chicken pox and it almost wiped him out.

But that didn't stop him from being active in the Jewish Community affairs and also being on the executive boards for 15 years working to build co-ops in Toms River like the FEPCO (Federated Egg Producers Assoc.), White Oak Co-op, and the first Credit Union in New Jersey. It is worth mentioning that when my father started to think about a credit union in Toms River, he found out that a law had to be passed in Trenton to allow credit unions to operate in New Jersey. So he got hold of people who represented Ocean County in the Assembly and Senate. It took a lot of time and hard work, but finally a law was passed that allowed us to have credit Unions in NJ. That is how Ocean County Farmers Credit Union was the first in the State.

Farming was hard work, 7 days a week for fourteen years.

My mother got sick and died in 1939. She was the first one to be buried on the Toms River Jewish Community Cemetery, After a while my father left Toms River to live in Florida.

What brought the Brafman's to a farm? Every summer I came here with my children to help my parents and breathe in the good country air. We were always thinking about settling on a farm. It was during the depression, jobs were very scarce. Finally in 1933, we followed our parents to Toms River, and bought woodland, cleared it and started a farm from scratch.

You could imagine how good it was when the farmer, got 19 cents per dozen for eggs. But we were young, and could take hard work. There was no automatic-feeders, no feed carriers and no water fountains, but we made a go of it. We were farming 27 years until times got so bad we had to give it up. Ten years later we sold the place. We moved into a retirement community and are still living in Toms River. As the saying goes,

“when you get the Toms River dust on your shoes you stay put.”

We raised two children with a good education in our Toms River school system. After high school they left Toms River for higher education.

Also my father's sister, the Cabapes, settled in Toms River on a farm. The Paul Brafman's family settled in Toms River on a farm.

The Brafmans

THE GOLDBERG FAMILY OUR FIRST WINTER & FOLLOWING YEARS IN TOMS RIVER

By Regina Goldberg

In October of 1927 my mother, Pauline Vormund, my sister Evelyn Weiss, brother-in-law and their two small children and I first came out to Toms River where my mother bought a poultry farm. She was in ill health and had been advised to try Toms River. At that time the farmers already here found it hard to make a living. So as a supplement their family income, some people rented out rooms. My mother rented a room to Mr. & Mrs. Socolow. She went out to help Mrs. Socolow feed the chickens, etc. and found she liked the life and felt better within 6 weeks than she ever felt in the City. We had come from Brooklyn - Ft. Hamilton Parkway-50th St. where we had a two family dwelling with a grocery and appetizing store below.

We sold that and moved here and bought the farm where Rose and Jack Fleischman now reside on Old Freehold Road. It was a hard struggle that winter. We all had our own chores to do, Chickens got sick, prices dropped and the winter was a hard one. The roads were unpaved. There were no shopping centers. There was only one bank, the Ocean County Trust Co., on the corner of East Water And Washington Sts. by the river. Small stores lined Main St.; A&P, Rays Drugs, Schwarz Meat Market.

The Bea Lea Cattle Farm owned by Mr. McGuire was across the street way back, as near the road were the corn fields. The corn stalks used to grow 8 feet tall. The clover field and hay were a sight to see in those days. The air was pure and always there was the odor of new mown hay in the air.

After a few years we sold that farm to Jack Goldstein's parents and we bought another farm; across the street of Todd Road which my mother and I managed ourselves.

My sister and family built their own farm next door to us. Across from them lived Morris and Sophie Myers, on a farm. By then the prices of eggs went up. I remember one time they were for \$1.00 a dozen and the future for the poultry farmers looked brighter.

We used to trudge in the snow to the old Jacob Wexler place where Mr. Rabinowitz would come on a Thursday and schochet chickens for the farmers.

During spring and summers besides the chickens, we had a cow and a garden and fruit trees which kept us busy no end. Preparing the ground, planting, waiting for the harvesting and then all the canning and preserving. Being we had chickens, a cow for milk, cream and cheese and all the vegetables and fruits. There was little else we needed.

We still had coal and wood stoves and furnaces. So we kept busy and there certainly was no time to brood like so many people do today - and no matter how much they have its never enough. We were happier then than people are today because the more they have the more they want.

We saw the youngsters grow up to be fine young men and women and get married and raise families of their own. I feel they may all well be proud of themselves for a job well

done.

Eventually roads were paved and widened. Super markets and shopping centers were built.

I too got married to a fine man, Nathan Goldberg. (May he rest in peace). It was in March, 1932. We then acquired the old farm back again, on Old Freehold Rd. where the Fleischman's live. We not only raised chickens, but our three lovely children, all born at Paul Kimball Hospital. The first few winters were very hard; there was lots of snow and the roads were impossible. When a child got sick, our family doctor, Blackwell Sawyer, could not make a house call. My husband would walk to town for medicine using McGuire's fence poles, barely visible (as they were mostly covered by snow) to guide him, and then followed other landmarks. One winter we had so much snow that tanks from the Armory came to clear it. I can't quite recall, but I believe it was the winter of 1946.

There was a George Washington dance at the Community Center that year and cousins of mine went to the dance and won the prize.

When we first came to Toms River, the Community Center was nothing like it is today. The cellar had a wood burning furnace and many a time my mother and I used to go early Friday afternoon to chip wood to fire the furnace so it would be warm enough to hold services. The floor was of dirt.

It's an unfortunate fact of life, that so many of the first families of Toms River are no longer with us, and are unable to see the changes progress has brought. The golf course, the parks, so many schools, etc. There was only one grade school and one high school in those early days.

If the old-timers could see Toms River and vicinity today they could not conceive or believe all the changes. The Post Office, the College, and Court House and numerous buildings, the Ciba Plant, amusement places, theatres, etc. All a credit to progress.

One by one, my loved ones left me as almost everyone in other families experience. In 1948 I lost my dear mother. A few years later my brother-in-law passed on. My children all grew up and did me proud honors in school. Before we realized it, they all were married within 1 ½ years and my husband and I were suddenly left alone. To my sorrow, he passed away January 19, 1970. Then I really felt alone despite the fact that I have 8 grandchildren "Kein a Horah" who try their best to keep me happy and proud of them.

Although I live part of the year (winter) in Florida due to my health, I am still a member of the Toms River Jewish Community Center and intend to remain just that, as Toms River will always remain my permanent home.

HAFT - GOODMAN FAMILIES

Harry Haft came to the United States from Russia with his parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters, in 1906. After traveling around the country, working at odd jobs, he settled with his parents on a farm in Brainerd, New-York (near Albany), which had been bought with the help of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS). It was there that Clara Duchin went for her vacation from her job in the garment industry in New York City (the type of work she had been doing since she was a small child in Russia). They were married in 1917 and stayed on the farm for a year or two, where their son, Isaac, was born. They moved to Crown Point, Indiana, where Harry worked in the steel mills of Gary and where their daughter, Edna, was born. They then moved back East to a dairy farm in East Greenbush, New York, where their daughter, Helen was born.

In 1927, they moved to a poultry farm on Old Freehold Road as partners with Clara's sister and brother-in-law, Louis and Ida Pyenson. Several years later they bought the farm across the street.

Edna recalls events from those early years such as the struggle to make ends meet and the financial help given by the Jewish Agricultural Society. The first year on the farm they had no chickens and they took in boarders, just as the Hafts had done in Brainerd, New York.

Harry and Clara worked side by side, borrowing money and re-investing any profits into building new coops, barns for feed, modernizing with automatic waterers and feed carriers.

Harry died at the age of 58 in 1942, and Clara ran the farm after that, until 1961, when she sold it. She lived across the street in an apartment in her sister's house (the Dardicks) and finally, with her daughter and son-in-law, Irv and Edna Goodman, until her death at the age of 81 in 1973.

The Haft children grew up on the farm. Helen left permanently when she went to college. Isaac stayed until he was drafted in WW II. He returned with his wife, Lucille, and ran the farm with his mother for several years until the economic conditions in poultry farming forced him to look for other sources of income. He worked as a project engineer and died in California at the age of 50, in 1967.

Edna Haft met Irvin Goodman in 1938. He had moved to a farm on Silverton Road with his mother and stepfather, Mr. and Mrs. Max. J. Smith. They were married in 1940, had a small farm on Vermont Avenue and then moved to the Haft farm after her father died. After Irv spent a couple of years in the Army, they bought a farm on Old Freehold Road, which they farmed until 1952, when adverse economic conditions forced them to sell it. They moved to Clayton Avenue, where they have been living ever since. Their three children, Fred, Joan and Lois, live in Maryland, Wisconsin, and California, respectively.

Reminiscing about the Jewish Community Center, Edna recalls that, while her father was not religious, he was willing to join the services when they were short of men. He also made sure that the furnace was lit (wood and coal) whenever there was a meeting. The meetings were the social events and the children were usually present as baby-

sitters were unheard of in those days.

The Hafts were very active in the Zionist organizations, which also met in the Community Center. Harry was active in the buying and selling of cooperatives in the 30's and Isaac continued in the 40's and 50's.

The Haft children attended the Jewish school (Edna, later on, worked for a Zionist organization as typist on a Jewish typewriter, thanks to what she learned in that school).

The Goodman children participated in the events run by the Ladies Auxiliary; mainly the day camp and, the highlight in their memory, the square dance lessons.

It has been a great source of personal pleasure to see the Community building develop from a dirt floored basement with a coal furnace to the modern, air conditioned building of today.

THE PYENSON, DARDICK, AND ROBINSON FAMILIES

Papa and mama Levich and Ida Pyenson, with Jacob and Mildred, aged 7 and 5, moved to a farm in Toms River in October, 1927. They left a thriving hand laundry business in New York City to try to regain Papa's health on a farm.

The farm was (and is) on Old Freehold Road, just a little south of the Toms River Jewish Community center. Even though there were few neighbors around we were not lonely. Mama's sister and brother-in-law, Clara and Harry Haft, were partners on the farm when it was bought. Our cousins, Izzy, Edna and Helen were all in our age group. City relatives visited often with many more cousins. There was always someone to play with.

Needless to say the fresh farm air did not cure Papa's leukemia. He died in July 1928. Over the next few years the Haft family moved to the the next farm across the street, and Mama married Harry Dardick, a second cousin.

One of the reasons the Pyensons and Hafts chose the farms they bought was their closeness to the Jewish Community Center. Thus the Jewish Community Center became the focus for all our social activities. Harry and Ida Dardick never put aside their responsibilities to the Jewish Community Center. Harry held many offices and Ida worked in the Ladies Auxiliary throughout all its existence.

The struggle on the farms is well documented. The work was hard, the hours were never-ending and the financial returns were small. But there is a lot to be said for living in a small Jewish Community. The early Jewish farm families devoted themselves to giving their children what they deemed was important. They established a Sholem Aleichem Folk Shule where we, the children learned to read and write Yiddish. We Learned Jewish History. We gained insight into our Jewish Holidays. We learned Jewish songs. We recited Jewish poetry. We listened to the literature of Sholem Aleichem and I. L. Peretz. Our parents created an identity and haven for us in a hostile world.

The adults meanwhile struggled to survive harsh economic conditions. They organized purchasing co-operatives, the White Oak Poultrymen's Cooperative for equipment and the F. L. F. for buying feed, and the egg marketing co-operative FEPCU, (the Federated Egg Producers' Co-operative Association, Inc). The local Credit Union was also established in the 1930's to ease the credit squeeze.

The 1940's brought great changes to the area. Because of WWII, egg prices rose sharply. Farms expanded. Refugees from Nazi persecution settled on farms. City workers sought a new way of life and came to the farming area. The Jewish Community Center grew by leaps and bounds. Politics in the Community Center became almost unruly for awhile. Different factions developed. Personal animosities developed. But time smoothed out the problems and the Jewish Community Center survived.

One of the big fights in the Community Center revolved around its name. When the Community was established it was called the Toms River Community of Jewish Farmers. As the membership dwindled, a group proposed to omit Farmers and call the organization the Toms River Jewish Community Center. Sentiment lost and the name

was changed.

Meanwhile, we, the second generation, grew up and married. With a great sense of adventure we married "out of our home town". The Toms River young people and the Lakewood young people found each other. I married Ephraim Robinson, from Lakewood. Effie took his place in the Community and served the co-operative movement well during our farming years.

When farming fell to pieces in the 1960's, Effie went to work for the Farmers Home Administration, part of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and I went to Douglass College in New Brunswick to become a speech therapist. Thus the occupations of the Jewish population in the Toms River area changed from a farming population to a non-farming population, but the interest in Jewish affairs has remained strong. The need to identify with and work for Israel seems to exist in enough people to provide leadership for both the Congregation B'Nai Israel and the Toms River Jewish Community Center and to see that we have United Jewish Appeals and Bond Drives and many other Jewish activities. This is what makes living in this area worth-while.

Mildred Robinson

BELYEV FAMILY
IN MEMORIAM: NATHAN AND IDA BELYER

Nathan and Ida Belyer settled In Toms River around 1928. They came from North Jersey where Mr. Belyer ran his own trucking business, Bel-Trucking.

The Belyers settled into poultry farming along with the handful of Jewish farmers already here. Mr. Belyer immediately became involved in the embryo co-operative movements in the area.

Mr. Belyer was a capable, educated man who undertook the bookkeeping involved In many of the organizations. He was the secretary for the Farmers' Credit Union for almost all its years.

At the start of the White Oak Poultrymen's Co-operative Association, Mr. Belyer kept the farm supplies of the Co-operative in his cellar. He was disturbed from his own work many times a day when someone drove up to buy an egg basket, a chicken crate, a water pail or some other necessary piece of equipment. He greeted each person pleasantly, even as he left his own work to attend to the business of the White Oak Poultrymen's Co-op.

Thus Nathan and Ida Belyer took their places in the Toms River Community of Jewish farmers, always helpful, always pleasant, and in Nat Belyer's case, always with the right word when there was a question of the direction an organization should take.

They left no children and the world is probably a little worse off for it.

Nathan Belyer died in 1974

Ida Belyer died in 1975

THE FRIEDMAN AND ROSEN FAMILIES

I was born in 1933 in Paul Kimball Hospital. At the time we lived on a farm with my grandparents Meyer and Ray Friedman and the Zalkin Schein family (the present Manfred & Hilda Lindauer farm) in Whitesville.

Earliest memories are of the Friedman House, a Kosher boarding house with lots of fresh air and fresh eggs. A sign nearby was offering acreage on Route 9 at \$100.00 per acre. The boarding house guests were Labor Zionists, Yiddish speaking, and always singing. There were always appeals for U.J.A. and J.N.F.

Dad peddled eggs in New York City to the boarders who had visited the farm. We had our own cows. Buba made her own pot cheese, butter and buttermilk.

I attended Yiddish school at the Toms River Community of Jewish Farmers. We had Chanukah plays in Yiddish. My best friend was Leonard Baer.

When it came time to be Bar Mitzvah, I went to Lakewood with Arthur Maron to the Rebbe who prepared us. (Arthur is now a Doctor and has also been President of his synagogue.)

Summers were spent carrying pails of water to the chickens in the shelters. My hair was sandy colored and I was very dark tan from the sun. I truly had pine needles in my hair and sand in my toes from running around in the woods.

Jewish Community life seemed to be part of everyday living. Mother with Haddassah, Dad with the Cardoza Club, Buba with Pioneer Women and Zeide with Farband. People were always coming and going for all Jewish causes. Living at a boarding house, visiting speakers were invariably guests at the Friedman House.

As a teenager, we had a Community Center basketball team. Sammy Wexler was the coach. I belonged to the Episcopal Church Boy Scout Troop and did a lot of hiking and camping in the woods where Silver Ridge is now. We swam in the creek (the North branch on Route 70 before Route 70 was there).

At 16, I met Fran Solomon who made a lasting impression. After attending Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute for 5 years, marrying Fran and working for G. E, it was back to Toms River in 1957. I became a member of the Congregation Board and President from 1969-1974.

There have been many changes in the last 43 years. Our four children are blessed with advantages provided by so many who have worked to improve the facilities and content of our Jewish Community.

In the 1930's, Toms River was a town where you not only knew all 2000 inhabitants, but you also knew their license plate numbers.

The Jewish Community changed from almost all poultry farmers to hardly any. Our village has become a city, and life, will never be the same.

Were the "good old days" better? They were good, today is better, and tomorrow, we hope will be best of all.

Zev Rosen

HOROWITZ FAMILY MY EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

Philip Horowitz

The early part of 1928, I took my first trip out of New York City. My father was told by his doctor that it was urgent that he leave New York for his health and settle someplace in the quiet of the country. This meant leaving the luxury surroundings of the Bronx and the garment loft on 7th Ave.

The guiding arm for Jews wishing to settle in the country was the Jewish Agricultural Society. They pointed us towards Toms River where Pop and I went to survey possible sites for a chicken farm. I was 7 years old and remember the trip from the Bronx. It was an expedition of subways, ferry and trains. We were met in Toms River and shown around to various sites. I recall one place Pop thought unsuitable because of its location. It was a property on Route 37. (He was right, as the location was only good for shopping centers).

Well our dream farm was chosen on Long Swamp Road, later changed to Broadside Drive, which sounded more fashionable to developers.

Now the time came to move and shortly before Thanksgiving we packed and again took the journey to far away Toms River; Mom, Pop and five children. We arrived early that day and awaited the truckers. I remember the day well. It was cold and dreary around the house, with 2 older sisters wondering what we were doing here (I can imagine how the early settlers felt).

The chill of the day was not helped by the coal furnace in the basement with only one heating outlet in the center of the dining room floor, (so unlike the modern houses moved into by later farmers).

Well, the truckers finally arrived about 8 hours late due to their finding some wine Mom had made for the holidays. That cold day we all stood gazing out the window at a barn and a strange building called a coop. I kept asking where the candy store is, forgetting this wasn't the Bronx.

Things have a way of falling into place and taking shape. We started school and made friends with neighbors who were happy to see that we looked human.

We soon received cute little baby chicks which grew up to be very stupid. They were raised in quaint little buildings called brooder houses. This part was fun for about 3 days. Then I found myself pushing a wheelbarrow around for hours; feeding, watering and lugging pails of coal to each brooder house to keep the stoves going for heat. I forgot to mention, we had no water in the fields so we would carry 2 pails at a time from the house about 1/2 mile away. I was developing muscles you can't get in the Bronx. Later on we had the luxury of a hand pump for water installed in the fields.

Time passed and soon these cute chicks were laying eggs, and the fruits of your labor were seen. Now we had to prepare new quarters for these chickens called laying houses. You prepared like it was a festival, spreading litter on the floors, hanging up

nests, arranging feed hoppers and egg shell boxes - what funny names.

Now we went out in the night and caught the pullets as they were called, and carefully stuffed them in crates. Being we had no other transportation, I learned to stack these crates high on a wheelbarrow and push them like a donkey to their new quarters. As I write this, I don't know if I was strong or stupid.

Well, we were now in full swing; eggs coming in for real money. I started to learn new words like "go pack the eggs", "candling", "wet mash" and "go clean the dropping board." Soon we progressed to a horse and some cows. Again some new expressions "go clean the barn". It seemed all you did on the farms was clean something. The horse relieved me of some work but also moved very slowly. I recall riding to Lakewood, via horse and wagon, to go to the Schchet with Pop. What a fun day; 10 hours round trip.

We were eating well, and in the spring, planted large gardens, did canning and prepared for another season, a little wiser and more adept at raising chickens.

Time passed and I became an expert at culling chickens (catching a chicken with a hook on the run), milking cows and brushing on black leaf forty (not a job for city people). All these chores were sure to help me in later life when I opened a dress shop. We also knew the summer was over when all the relatives left and promised to return for Thanksgiving.

By now we were learning how to cope with coccidiosis production drops, molting birds, water pipes breaking, high feed costs, low egg prices and a hundred other things.

We looked forward to meetings and get togethers at the Jewish Community Center where we discussed everything and found out your problems were not unique. Work was hard and somehow you added to the size of your farm, improved your standard of living, bought a car and developed a closeness of family interest. Time passed and we all went our separate ways.

Now we all have the fine conveniences of modern living. I don't push wheelbarrows anymore, haven't cleaned a dropping board in years, and as I look back I often day dream of sitting in the warm brooder house with the chirping and lovely aroma of small baby chicks, which now seems like a different world ago.

KOLB AND SOLOMON FAMILIES
RECOLLECTIONS OF A SUMMER VISITOR

By Selma Kolb Solomon

I came to Toms River for the first time in February of 1928. I came to spend a week with my uncle and aunt and cousins, the Max Horowitz family, who had recently moved to Toms River (Long Swamp Rd then, Brookside Dr. now).

I remember it had snowed and Uncle Max took me for a ride in his sleigh pulled by a horse. He had no car, as yet. What a thrill. Also, the children of the area were ice skating on the cranberry bogs across the road from the Horowitz farm.

Besides the chickens he raised for profit and food, Uncle also had cows and a horse for transportation. Truly a story book atmosphere for a city bred child.

In later years I and my family came to Uncle Max and Tante Molly's for a week or two during the summer months. You see, Uncle Max was my mother's brother and they were all very close. During our summer vacations in the early years, Uncle would take all of us to Money Island in the horse drawn wagon for swimming and playing with other "kids". Here I met the Kassenoff boys and others, some of whom are no longer with us.

In later years, while in my teens, we started visiting my other aunt, Ida, who had married a farmer named Philip Smith of Church Rd. Here I met the Sachs family, the Goldstein family, the Margolin family and many other young people.

I remember going to a rehearsal of a show that was to be put on at the Community, but everyone was at the Wexler home and Goldie was directing this production. It looked like great fun, but I left before it was put on.

During the war years, Toms River was a thriving "small" town. Its farmers were for the most part doing well. Change had not yet begun. I came to live with my Aunt Ida on Church Rd. and started work at Camp Evans. During this time my friends were Ethel and Bernie Sachs, Mary Goldstein and Ruth Hoberman. Most of the boys were in the service. For entertainment we went to dances sponsored by the Jewish Welfare Board.

After the war, while visiting my Aunt Ida I met my husband, and you all know what happened after that.

Changes in the town started taking place shortly thereafter. The town started changing, housing projects started and area schools were coming into being. Just before the North Dover Elementary School was completed in 1956, we moved from Church Road to Corwill Terrace and the explosion was underway.

BRESLOW FAMILY

By Helen Breslow

On the last day of the year 1929, our family, my children Rebecca, 8 and George, 3, with my beloved husband, Nathan, came to Toms River to find an "easier" life on a farm. It turned out to be a very hard one. We had bought Dinnerstein's farm on Old Freehold Road with three mortgages. My husband, nevertheless, kept his job in New York City from Saturday through Friday and developed a wholesale egg distribution business while my brother-in-law worked the farm. I drove a truck to pick up eggs from the farmers, and had a 1924 Dodge sedan; crank start. Its radiator leaked and I always carried a bucket of water.

When the banks closed during the Depression one of the two banks in Toms River didn't close and fortunately we were able to honor our obligations to the farmers by taking in boarders. The farmers themselves used to drive to Lakewood to meet my husband at the bus terminal to bring him home every Friday night. All of the farmers worked hard to survive. There were no lights on the roads and my boarders and visitors from New York were afraid to go out at night, in the dark, and were amazed at the bravery of the farmers.

In those days there were a few Jewish merchants and professionals in town, but our life was involved with the farmers, and we immediately joined the Community of Jewish Farmers. We were a handful of people, perhaps 20, in plain farm clothes. There was hardly any activity. Meetings were monthly. It made a poor impression upon me. Yet, this Community of Jewish Farmers was to become my second home.

Through the years I was to serve as board member, vice-president, and president. I was responsible for bringing in speakers for discussions on contemporary issues and all the members soon looked forward to meetings which were interesting and enlightening, touching upon every facet of Jewish life. Of course, we had strong political differences among us and many times I had to alert the speakers to proceed cautiously.

While I was continually devoted to this second home through its dynamic growth it had its many tribulations, but I, nevertheless, enjoyed this work immensely. I felt a serious responsibility to the Community and to Jewish aspirations. From its beginnings I introduced the United Jewish Appeal through our programs, continuing to lead this drive for 35 years. I also helped establish the Jewish National Fund and the Israeli Bond drive.

After the creation of the State of Israel, I further brought in many films and speakers. By the time I left Toms River in 1973, we had drives reaching a mark exceeding the \$60,000 level.

Following the establishment of the Congregation, a great split between it and the Community resulted, with the Congregation then holding its own UJA drive. In time, a reunification of this UJA drive was effected.

To this day, I correspond with some of our early Community founders now scattered throughout various parts of the country.

P.S. I feel particularly pleased and honored that you have called upon me and my recollections with respect to the development of the Jewish presence in the Toms River history which has been such an important part of my life as well as that of my husband and family.

THE KASSENOFF FAMILY

We arrived in Toms River in the spring of 1929. My late husband decided it would be a very nice place to raise a family.

We bought a seven room house on Bay Avenue, which at that time was called Beaver Dam road. It had kerosene lamps for light, a well on the back porch, a hand pump, an outhouse and a coal stove which was used for heat.

The first thing we did after purchasing our home was to go into town to Brant's Lumber Company to get an estimate for renovating the house. The manager greeted us and asked whose house we had bought. When we told him he laughed and said, "I know that house, it belonged to Indian Tom. It is called Tom Tit's Homestead." When we were leaving the store, he called us back and said, "Let me give you a bit of advice, if the mosquitoes don't get you, the natives will."

Talking about mosquitoes, in the early years they were unbearable, but as time went on, they sprayed the bogs, etc. and thereby got rid of most of them.

The house was renovated with all modern conveniences. When the natives heard we had installed a bathroom with running water, they came to ask if we would let them see it. They had never seen a bathroom before and they were simply fascinated. Only Indian Tom thought we were very foolish to have a bathtub with all the water that the lakes around us provided.

When we got settled, a committee of Jewish women from the community center came to greet us. They told us all about the community house, that it was not only for social purposes, but it was also a synagogue. They invited me to join them in all activities and become a member. I did join the Community and have remained a member all these years. Needless to say, I have spent many happy hours there.

If you did not want to travel to the synagogue on religious holidays, the people living near the synagogue opened their homes to you and invited you to be their guests for the duration of the holidays. The invitation meant that you slept at their homes and enjoyed the holidays with them.

We also found our neighbors very friendly. They would bring us vegetables from their gardens and also gave us berries and fruit from the trees that they had on their land. If you let your neighbors graze their cows on your pasture, they gave you all the milk you could use. If you bought milk, the price was 8¢ a quart.

We all traveled by horse and buggy and when your neighbors went into town, they always offered to take you along. If you were busy and couldn't go along, they would do your shopping. We had dirt roads without any lights. We never closed our doors. Everyone knew everyone.

The shopping area in town consisted of a small store which was our post office, a grocery store, gentile butcher, Meyers Store, and Purpuri Shoe Store. The kosher butcher and baker came from Lakewood once every two or three weeks with their wares. We also had a grocery store on wheels and a huckster selling fruit.

The only means of transportation to New York was by railroad. The Jersey Central went as far as Hoboken. From there you had take a ferry across the river to New York. Trains ran only once a day in either direction.

Dr. Sawyer was our physician in those days. When he was on his way back from visiting patients and he passed your door, he always stopped in for a social visit. If by chance at that time you didn't feel well, he always gave you free medical advice. If you offered him money, his answer was always, "remember this is a social visit." He would not accept any money but would join us for a cup of coffee.

We never saw much of the people around us as they were always very busy, but if things went wrong, it would amaze you to find out how fast the news got around. Then everyone would stop whatever they were doing and offer their services, no matter how long it took.

In those days, there was also a custom for the young folks who were getting married. They would come to your house and introduce themselves, tell you their plans and then ask you if you had anything for the bride. The first time they came I asked what they would like. They said anything I had at home that I had no use for such as a pot, pail, broom or whatever I had handy. They always started out married life living in a small chicken coop until they built their own log cabin.

We also had free service from the County Agent. If you wanted to learn how to can, make jam, sew or do anything at all, they would send a member of their staff to teach you at your home, provided you had at least eight other women to learn with you. They would come time and time again until you could do it all on your own.

Our telephones consisted of party lines. If you were nosey, you could hear all the gossip in town by just picking up the telephone. Many times when you wanted to make a call and picked up the telephone you would hear the wagging tongues.

Our school system was very much advanced. At that time they were teaching the children agriculture, carpentry and mechanical work. If you had trouble with your car, all you had to do was to bring it to the school. The teacher would show the children how to fix it and they would repair your car at the same time. All you had to do was to pay for the materials needed. They did a terrific job. Educators would come from other states to study our school system.

Land sold for \$25.00 an acre for woodland and \$50.00 an acre for clear land.

When I visit my relatives in Toms River now, I see where they brought the city into the country. I liked Toms River the way it was. I know we have to progress with the times, but I must admit it isn't as beautiful as my memories.

(Mrs.) Frieda Kassenoff

THE JOSEPH SHAIMAN FAMILY

Joseph Shaiman first came to the Lakewood area as a visitor in 1929 from the Bronx, New York, where he resided with his wife, Gertrude, and his sons Bernard and Hyman.

When the depression of the 1930s hit the country, he lost his job as a carpenter on high rise buildings in New York City.

In 1931 he purchased sixteen acres of land on Chestnut Street in Lakewood, keeping eight acres for himself, and selling the other eight. On this site he proceeded to construct what at that time was considered one of the most modern poultry farms in the area. The entire farm including the living house was built by himself.

Almost all of the buildings are still in use at the present time. The farm and also some additional rented units in the Toms River area were in continuous operation until 1963 when economic conditions in the poultry industry made it necessary to discontinue operation.

Mr. Shaiman passed away in 1963. He is survived by his wife, Gertrude, his sons, Bernard and Hyman, and four grandchildren, Leo, Andrew, Joseph and Michael, all residing in the Lakewood - Toms River area.

THE LOUIS POLSKY FAMILY

Kindly forgive me, if in telling you of the founders of Jewish communal life in Toms River, I may be editorializing. The present is so shabby when compared to the past, that I wish with all my heart that we could emulate the Cohens, Socolows, Dardicks, Estomins, Ledermans, Sachs, Pincuses and all the other fine Jewish families that settled and pioneered this area.

It all began in the late twenties and early thirties. There were four Yiddish newspapers, reflecting every shade of opinion. The Yiddish theater was represented in every Jewish enclave in New York, Brownsville, the Bronx and the lower Eastside had their own attractions. Not every production was a work of art. We did have Maurice Schwartz's art theater. I shall never forget the Elder Schildkraut's "Bronx Express".

On the educational level, the children of the founders went either to the Arbeiter Ring (Workmen's Circle) or the Sholem Alechem Folk Shule (school). Ours was a secular education. There was no Alef Beys biz Bar Mitzvah schooling for us. Most of us went on into our late teens, studying our great Y. L. Perez, Hirshbein, Sholem Alechem, and others in the original Mama Lushen. We were taught of the trials and tribulations of our ancestors living in the anti Semitic overt atmosphere of Poland Russia and the Baltic States. We were also well informed of the covert brand that characterized the so-called western European countries. We used to attend these Mitel Sheles or high schools on an eight hour daily schedule on Saturdays and Sundays. I might add that we were rounded in the history of our people, their philosophy and life in the world over. We spoke, read and wrote the language of our heroic brothers and sisters of the Warsaw Ghetto.

As to my parents' background, they fled Russia during the pogroms following World War I. They fled a country that can only be compared to present day South Africa. The Czarist regime practiced the same apartheid as Kissenger's Angolan ally. Jews could not own land. Secular education was almost unattainable. Moscow was off limits after dark. Each Jew had to carry papers marked "Yevrei" or Jew. This was the polite expression. The most used was "Jid!" or Sheeny. The most common saying was "beat Jiddy and save Russia."

To establish a life that was denied them in the old world, to live with people of varying political persuasions, but of the highest cultural background, to own land not for speculation, but to work it and harvest it, to be no longer "luft menshen", but productive to be able to call your neighbors brothers and sisters at community meetings or chaver or chaveret; these were the rewards of settling in Toms River.

In 1932 after we lived in Toms River for a year, some scornful landsmen asked my dad how much he made that year. When he gave them the five hundred dollar figure, they were dismayed. In reply, he said, "how much of a dollar value will you put on my twenty apple trees in blossom." You might ask, how we could survive on such a meager income.

My grandmother and I demolished an old barn for heat. In her seventies, she could swing an ax as well as Carrie Nation. I milked three cows before the school bus came. At ten cents a quart we made more on them, than on the two thousand chickens we had. We also had an acre garden.

Old Freehold Road in those days was called by the long time residents "Jerusalem Avenue". Where the present golf course is situated was the biggest dairy farm in the area. When Mr. Mc Guire, the owner was on his death bed, he requested that his Jewish neighbors act as pall bearers. His reasoning I surmise was that the people who gave him his land would ease his way to heaven. We were looked upon with awe, tempered with curiosity. In my high school graduating class there were only three Jews.

We had our amateur Yiddish theater. Bernie Sachs' Father played the lover of my teen aged sister. The efforts and the rewarding receptions given these Yiddish plays was a sheer joy to behold. We used to assemble on summer evenings near the Toms River Jewish Farmers' Community House. There was adjacent to it a refreshment stand run by the Golubchick family. Long before the days of car pools, when you could reach your neighbors on the party line, you would ask them if they needed a ride into town. You could not walk the length of a few houses without being called in for tea or a drink. When sickness hit our chickens, it was the practice of a half dozen neighbors to come and help us vaccinate. To illustrate the morality of the times, Dr. Sawyer spoke in our community center on behalf of socialized medicine. Anytime he visited a family in need, he would forgo his fee and leave money on the table.

In closing, I can only sum up that in writing of the past, I am saddened by the present. Will our people live a moral life like the founders of our Jewish community? Will love of fellow Jews and mankind in general supercede the profit motive? Please understand that in writing of the past, I have not lost hope for the resumption of the goals and aspirations of the founders of the communal Jewish life in Toms River.

Louis Polsky

SCHEIN FAMILY A TRIBUTE TO ZALKIN SCHEIN

Historical tradition, although highly prejudicial, had prevented Jews from owning land. To establish a Jewish farming community in the central part of New Jersey, particularly in the Toms River area, proved to be a minor miracle. It evolved gradually. Jews from all walks of life, especially from the metropolitan area, gravitated towards Toms River, joining friends and relatives.

We arrived In 1932, when I was nine years old and my brother Davey was six. Life was primitive at that time. We had no means of transportation. We depended upon neighbors and itinerant peddlers for all our needs. Our butcher, our grocer, our barber, all came to us. We had our own cut rate dry goods man who arrived monthly, which was cause for great celebration.

Each of us had a responsible part in the operation of the farm. Young as we were, we each had our share to do. Davey and I used to have contests as to who could grade the eggs faster. Imagine how gullible we were! The one who did it the fastest had the honor of grading all the eggs. I usually won, so I thought! And only because I was older. But then Davey had to collect all the eggs. I hated to do that because the hens would always pick at my hands as I tried to remove the eggs from under them.

There was no automation at that time. We were fortunate that we had plumbing in the coops. At least the water was in each room. But we had to clean the fountains with a scrub brush; put the mash and grain under the hoppers; chase the birds up in the roosts; put the baby chicks under the hoovers at dusk; pull them out of the corners where they would push and shove in a suicidal attempt to suffocate themselves and each other; crawl into the shelters to grasp the chickens by the legs to put into crates and transport them into the coops. And how the chickens protested. They would peck at us, beat us with their wings, deafen us with their squawks. Then we had to chase them off the trees, but instead of flying down, they would fly higher. This was an opportunity for Davey to test his marksmanship by throwing stones and branches until they flew down.

It was a hard life, as I said, but it was good, because we did everything together. The closeness of the family was never equaled. We had mutual trust and respect for one another, because we were all important cogs in the wheel, completely dependent on each other.

In the evenings, after supper, Daddy provided us with the basic rudiments of our Jewish education. It was during those formative years that I developed a love for our cultural heritage, which has remained with me until today. We did not get a formal Hebrew education until a shule was established In the Community Center with classes for children.

It was a great day in our lives when Daddy went for his citizenship papers. He had to go to Trenton. It was July 10, 1936. The whole farm was our responsibility. How proud we

were! I was thirteen years old, and David was ten. The temperature at that day rose to 102.

We had to hose down the roofs, and constantly carry water to the ranges. I had frightened by mother half to death, because at four in the afternoon I complained of a severe headache. Mom looked at me; my eyes were bulging and my face was a deep purple! Somehow she knew that I had suffered a minor sunstroke. How Angry I was because I had failed my father's faith in me! I could not keep the responsibility intrusted to me.

At this time we were becoming very much aware of what Zionism meant to our parents and how It permeated our whole life style. Dad and Mom had met in Baltimore at a Poale Zion meeting. When they had married and I was born, I too, attended these meetings, asleep on two chairs facing each other. I was born a Zionist, and our home has been saturated with it ever since. We adored listening to his stories of his days in the Jewish Legion during World War I, and what an activist he was to the point that they had to isolate him from the rest of the troops: otherwise they would have all deserted and remained in Palestine.

To live in Israel, the State, was his dream. Living on the farm was the closest that Mom and Dad could get to the life they would have liked In Israel. They became extremely active in all Zionist endeavors. It was Dad who originated the Yom Kippur Appeal for the Jewish National Fund in the Toms River Jewish Farmers' Community Center. But Zalkin Schein did not do it alone. He had a great deal of support from Alex Golden, Max Smith, Morris Goldsmith, and reluctantly at first, Max Rosenkrantz. Surprisingly enough, it is Max Rosenkrantz to this day, who is still instrumental in seeing that this drive continues. Imagine, an appeal for money on the holiest day of the year, Yom Kippur! But it worked.

It was Daddy who originated the Third Seder in the area for the Jewish National Fund. We all had First Seders and Second Seders, but who heard of Third Seders? Daddy did, and it worked. To this day it is an annual drive that nets thousands of dollars for the Keren Kayemet.

It was Daddy together with Alex Golden who took mysterious trips to Asbury Park to visit Zimel Resnick on "Business". We later found out that they were gun runners for struggling Israel (not yet a state), secretly and also illegally purchasing guns and ammunition to supply the Hagganah. We also found out later how the ship "Exodus" came to be. These were stories Daddy NEVER told us, but of course we knew.

My parents were exceptional people. Daddy was tall, handsome, courageous, dedicated, honest, and extremely eloquent. Mom gave him the support, the practicality, the persistence, and the drive that he needed. They were an unbeatable combination. No one could resist them. Zionist organizations spread like wildfire; Farband, the Poale Zion, the Pioneer Women, Kadimah, the Colonel Marcus Group, the Gold Myerson Club, Habonim, and others.

Their success also was attributable to the fact that they always worked in committees. Mom or Daddy never drove a car. Daddy said he wouldn't, Mama tried it once, but headed straight for the barn, so that was the end of that. Wherever they had to go, someone had to drive them, ergo the committee! He needed a committee to go from

farm to farm collecting for the United Jewish Appeal. He needed a committee to go from hotel to hotel making appeals to the guests to contribute to the Jewish National Fund. It wasn't easy. It was demeaning at times, embarrassing and frustrating. But his goal was so clear that he knew he had to do it, and fortunately for the community, and for Israel, he did it well.

At last the dream Came true. On Novetber 29, 1947, Israel was declared a state by the United Nations. My parents wept; we wept; it was a miracle, a "nes". Six months later Daddy, Mom, and my little brother Harry, who was twelve years old, packed up and moved to Israel. Dave had already gone on his own. I was married with two little daughters and had to remain here in the states. Daddy was 56 years old at the time; Mama was 52. This is late to start one's life all over again. But they were indomitable. He realized his dream. Few people on earth can reach such fulfillment in life. I am only thankful that he did not live long enough to realize that the birth of Israel created more tragedies and, hardships to a degree that is inconceivable in a so-called civilized world. He died at the age of 62, quickly, while speakng with some Israeli friends, and is now at rest in Avichall, the memorial of the Jewish Legion in Israel.

Mama is still living In Israel. Her two sons and their six children, who are all Israelis, are living and fighting for the very survival of Israel and of Jewry the world over.

I fervently believe that his dream will surmount all obstacles. The memory of Zalkin Schein will live forever in the Jewish Community of Toms River. His contribution to the community and to Zionism will never be forgotten. His was the spark that ignited that small group of Jewish farmers in becoming a vibrant and active community wholly conscious of their obligations as Jews and as Zionists.

Hilda Lindauer, his daughter

THE MARCUS ZEITZ FAMILY

I came to the United States in 1922 to stay with relatives whom I never met before. I was the only one of a large family who came to this country with the hopes of getting the rest of my family into the United States. Of course, as a young girl, I had to work for a living. And it wasn't too long before I met Marcus. We were married in 1925 and we both worked. Then unfortunately Marcus became ill and had to go into the hospital. So, of course our plans to bring the rest of my family here was out.

In the early 1930's Marcus was released from the hospital after a 31/2 year stay. He had pneumonia which developed into a serious lung condition. Returning to his profession of working in the shoe industry was not advised by the doctors because the dye of the leather was unhealthy for him. The doctors suggested that his new line of work be of an outdoor nature.

Throughout his illness, I was working as a sample maker for a manufacturer and tried to be the mainstay of our family life. This was not easy.

A friend of our's from Connecticut, who also had a chicken farm, suggested to Marcus that he speak to the people from the Jewish Agricultural Society for possible assistance in finding work that would be suitable to his new needs. Much discussion was held with these people. At first, they were not overly confident that we were suitable people to work on starting a farm. They thought we were too young and inexperienced in dealing with hard work. Only Marcus convinced the Agency that being young was an advantage to starting a farm. He didn't want me to continue being the sole financial support.

During this part of our life, I became pregnant and again our life took another course. One must remember that my husband was not able to work at all during this time.

Finally he made the decision against the advice of many people, to start a chicken farm. This negative advice included family, the Jewish Agricultural Society, and sometimes me. As the result of his decision, eight acres of land were purchased in Toms River, New Jersey. In February of 1932, with borrowed money on our life Insurance policy, a small savings, and family loans, Marcus and I embarked to Toms River with our 5 month old son, Stanley. As was predicted by the Society, the hard work began.

The first building to be erected on this farm was naturally the chicken house which when completed, had the capacity to hold 1,200 chickens. This was built by a contractor, and Marcus finished building by himself all the extra equipment. With the ensuing years, he continued to add on many additions to this building. The first baby chicks arrived in March and April of that year.

During this time, the family lived next door in a rented room. Our house was being built and in June, although not completed, we decided to move in.

To supplement our income I took in two children as boarders. They stayed for two years and I also had weekend boarders. As you can tell, our life was a very difficult one. The farm was not a one man operation but the combined efforts of a husband and wife team.

In 1934 a representative from the Jewish Agricultural Society came to see us. He was amazed to see how we progressed in developing the farm. Through his changed opinion the Society granted us a loan. We were then able to enlarge the farm and

make improvements on our facilities.

In March 1937 our daughter Jessica was born. She brought happiness into our difficult years. Our farm, family and social life continued to grow over the many years.

Marcus pioneered with a building called "The East-West Building". His thinking was that it would provide more light for the chickens. Early morning light on the East side and late afternoon light on the West side. It was also cheaper to operate because it was a double building with a central track. This pioneering was recognized in several poultry farming magazines, and Rutgers School of Agriculture. Students from this school were brought to see this building.

In 1947 we sold our farm on Bay Avenue and started a new farm on Hooper Avenue in order for us to have a more modern and functional farm. A new phase also unfolded, new hardships. The planning of the farm was a project for the entire family. Stanley was 15 and Jessica 9 years old. Our hope was that Stanley would remain on the farm. This was the hopes of many farmers, that their children would continue the poultry industry.

One can never predict the future of an industry and the desires of ones children. We all know what happened to the farming industry. Stanley, on the other hand, developed other interests. His thirst for knowledge in science eventually led him to become a doctor.

Stanley graduated from Toms River High School in 1950 with honors. He entered New York University for his undergraduate work with a 4 year scholarship. He took part in many activities while attending NYU. In 1958 he finally aspired to his dream of becoming a doctor by graduating from Bellevue Medical School. Throughout these many years of schooling, Stanley worked at various jobs to supplement his income. Today he happily lives in Seattle, Washington with his wife Nancy and three children, Deborah 14, Harold 13, and Rebecca 11. There he takes an active role in many activities involving his medical profession and Jewish Community life.

Jessica is now living in Easton, PA with her husband Herman Ytkin. Her children are Neil 16, Rochelle 14 and Steven 12. She too takes a very active role in her Jewish community life.

Marcus lived to see many of his dreams come true. Most of all to see the children happily married and have the pleasure of six grandchildren. He too, participated in many activities in the Jewish community. Unfortunately his retirement was cut short by his death in May of 1969.

The farm on Hooper Avenue was sold and I have chosen to continue living in Toms River where I have many good memories of long years of association with my fellow farmers.

Pearl Zeitz

MEYER SHENKIN FAMILY

Mr. & Mrs. Meyer Shenkin came to Toms River in May 1933. They wanted to be near the center of Toms River Jewish life, so they settled on the Old Freehold Road near the Jewish Community Center. They built a modern farm and home. Mr. Shenkin believed in being active in the area where he lived. He left his other affiliations in New York City and became a very active member of the Jewish Community Center and its Religious affairs. He was influential in enlarging the religious activities of the Jewish Community Center.

It was through his efforts and knowledge that the Jewish Community Center started the first Jewish cemetery. This was in 1939. No longer was it necessary to take the dead to Lakewood or elsewhere. The Chevra Kadisha and officers of the Community met once a year at his home. Mrs. Shenkin always had a good dinner awaiting them. Everything was always done in a friendly, personal manner.

It was in March 1946 that the Religious arm of Community delivered a Torah from the home of Mr. & Mrs. Shenkin to the Community. This was done in the Old Country fashion and many people walked from his home to the Community building.

One month later on April 17, 1945 at the age of 69, Mr. Shenkin died, greatly missed by family and all the people in the area.

THE OSKAR EHRMANN FAMILY

August 26, 1937 was probably the one day in our lives that had more to do with shaping our future than any other. It was the day we arrived In Toms River.

We had landed in America on June 1st of that year after leaving Nazi Germany. Even though we lived for four years under the Nazi yoke and had felt the Nazi sting on many occasions, my parents' foresight had saved us much grief, perhaps our lives.

Our intention had always been to settle on a farm rather than to stay in a city. My father, who had been an independent business man in Germany wanted to be independent here also, and farming seemed the answer.

We felt no qualms about leaving the village of Nussloch, Germany, where our family's ancestry can be traced back at least 500 years. Even though the vast majority of the villagers were decent farm folk and many of them begged us not to leave ("This Nazi thing will blow over and then it will be like old times" was their appeal to us), we were determined to go. One German man, who now lives in Toms River and whose name I am not at liberty to mention, risked his own life by building valuables into old furniture for us, as well as for many other Jews, to be transported out of Germany. Our family reciprocated by bringing him and his family to Toms River after the War.

We were the first refugee family to settle in Toms River. Our first home was the old Eisen farm on Cedar Grove Road, which is now part of St. Joseph's Cemetery. Two years later we moved to the Maimone property on Old Freehold Road, which remained our permanent home.

Our experience on the farm was similar to that of so many other families. Work was so much more than we expected and income so much less (and no one had told us that chickens stop laying eggs and sometimes even die), but we were free and our little family, my Father, Oskar, my Mother, Friedel, my Brother, Ralph, and I, Hans, was intact.

Our first local contacts were the Eisens', the Belyers', the Estomins', the Jurists', from all of whom we bought chickens, and Mr. Chrednov, who transported them for us in his Model A pickup. A true friend and loyal advisor to us from the beginning to his untimely demise was Al Kushinsky. Our command of the English language was quite poor and it was a comfort to have someone we could trust and relate to in the handling of our legal matters. Ben Novins, Jerry Samuelson, Jack Baer, Max Horowitz and many others did much to help us feel secure and at home in our new environment.

In November 1937, my Uncle Ferdinand and his family, and my maternal Uncle Gus Mayer joined us, to be followed in June 1938 by my Aunt Mina and Grandmother Helene.

The following families from Germany joined us in Toms River thereafter: the families of Henry Richbeimer; Moritz Oppenheimer; Hugo Lowenthal; Theo Pfalzer; Ernst Guenzburger; Adolph Plaut; Julius Weil; Siegfried Mayer; Fred Rothschild; Heinrich

Friedman; Max Heuman; Louie Reiss; Julius Maier; Hugo Grumbach; Bertha Guenzburger; Malchen Richheimer; Eric May; Max May; Emil Frankenberg; Gustav Grumbach; Luitpold Landman; Hugo Frankenberg; Kurt Rosenthal; Arthur Greenbaum; Henry Greenbaum; Alfred Bettauer; Isadore Rosenthal; Herman Rosenthal; William Sondhelm; Theo Wertheimer; Harry Heit; Simon Rau; Berthold Strauss; Ludwig Goldsmidt; Max Kahn; Max Weil; Arnold Lehman; Sidney Wyman; Ludwig Kurzman; Gustav Wasserman; Paul Beitman; Herman Hiller and Gustav Lubin. If I have omitted anyone it was purely unintentional as I have relied solely on my own memory.

Like any beginning, it was not easy for these immigrant families to integrate into the local Jewish community. I remember Friday night, Shabbat, and High Holy Day services being held in the basement of the Richheimer residence on Old Freehold Road with Sifrei Torah salvaged from the Synagogue in Nussloch. Simon Rau, Moritz Oppenheimer, Adolph Plaut and others shared the "davening". The Sifrei Torah were later donated to the Toms River Jewish Community Center, Congregation B'nai Israel and Congregation Ahavat Shalom in Lakewood. The same basement also served often for gatherings and parties, but the shyness soon wore off and the new arrivals integrated with the earlier settlers. I also recall a big barbeque party on our farm given for the recent immigrants by Izzy Hirschblond, who like so many others did so much to make us feel at home.

For youngsters like my brother and I, the English language came so much easier than for our parents. We weren't in Toms River for more than two weeks when school started for us. Even though we had very little English background, after a few weeks in school we became quite "Americanized". Among my school mates were Mildred (Pyenson) Robinson; Irene Rosenberg; Philip Horowitz; Rebecca Breslau; Herman Jurist; Alton Estomin; Julius Haberman; Rubin Karol; Harry Weiss; Anna Kayer and Cora Oigenstein.

Our family, like so many others, had simchas and tragedies. In May, 1940 my youngest brother, Charles, was born. The first baby born to a refugee family (Dr. Sawyer called him "Columbus"), and just a few weeks later my Father passed away suddenly. This tragedy had a profound effect on our family. After the initial shock had subsided we took stock of our position, emotionally as well as financially. Our options were to flee to the city and try our luck there or to stick it out here on the farm. We decided on the latter course. Years of sacrifice and hard work lay ahead for all of us; but perseverance and togetherness, which only upbringing and love of family can bring, saw us through and brought us to our present position.

Hans Ehrmann

THE SOLOMON FAMILY

HOW THE SAM SOLOMON FAMILY CAME TO TOMS RIVER

And so it came to pass on one cold October night in the year of 1937, the head of the Solomon household, Sam, came to the conclusion that with God's help, he and his family were starving to death. Based on this conclusion, Sam decided there must be a better way to earn a living. So, after talking to a couple of his New York friends he decided to become a chicken farmer in Toms River.

The way he explained it to his family was so: If a man were to have 500 chickens it stands to reason he would get 500 eggs a day, multiplied by 7 days a week, he would have 3,500 eggs a week or approximately 300 dozen eggs weekly. Eggs were selling for approximately 30 cents a dozen and the profit would be almost \$90.00 a week. We would have more money than we would know what to do with, for, as he understood it, it only took a few handfuls of grain to feed them, so there was hardly any expense at all. After convincing his family that his research was based on thorough and scientific techniques he moved the family to the farm, in March of 1938; the family being Sarah, his wife, Laura, his daughter, Harry, his son and Renee, his granddaughter.

After the initial shock of becoming a farmer, Mr. Solomon settled down to farming on a small scale and proceeded to do so for a good many years, happily, if not profitably.

His granddaughter, Renee, grew up to be a fine young lady and married Murray Kaufman of Lakewood, where she and her husband and their two fine young sons still reside. His daughter, Laura still resides on (the farm - no longer) Church Road. Laura has a millinery shop in Lakewood and is very happy doing just that.

Sam and Sarah passed away a few years ago and are buried in the Toms River Community Cemetery.

His son Harry, after discharge from the Air Force in 1946, met a young lady, one Selma Kolb, while she was visiting her Aunt Ida Smith. After a short courtship, they were married, and settled in Toms River. Some begetting and begetting took place and Paula, Howard, and Barbara were added to Harry Solomon's family.

Presently Paula teaches in Valley Stream, NY. Howard has a position with the Welfare Board in Toms River and Barbara is pursuing her operatic career in NY.

Harry and Selma are now retired and residing on Corwill Terrace in Toms River.

Thirty-eight years have flown by so quickly and with it, many happy memories and a few sad ones, but when one looks back to those years one finds that in 1938, the Community was much closer together. People helped one another and respected each other, and juvenile delinquency were just words in a dictionary. Those days where; if a person just made it through the year healthy and without borrowing it was a successful year.

In those days our police force consisted of 3, and one of the primary duties was on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon, to stop the Atlantic City traffic to let people cross Main Street. There were no traffic lights then.

The stores in town were situated on Main Street. In later years some moved around to Washington Street. The First National Bank was on the corner of Water Street next to Berry's Hardware store, and the post office was a little wooden building on Main Street. All the young Jewish people went to Lakewood for their fun and frolics.

HEINZ J. GUENZBURGER FAMILY

It seems odd that by now I am an old timer in this area and would be asked to write how I found things in Ocean County at the end of the thirties, and what made me come here in the first place. I really don't feel like an old timer.

I first visited Toms River on my way to my American relatives in Chicago after my cousin Margot Pfaelzer, now Mayer, and I arrived in this country. Actually we had stopped here to visit various relatives and acquaintances of our parents, also victims of the Nazi persecution in Germany. We were to explore the possibility of our parents settling here on a chicken farm when they were able to leave Germany in a year or so. Our parents had the foresight to see that sooner or later war would break out, and they wanted their children to get out before it was too late. We had already sweated out the "Anschluss" and the crises over the Sudetenland.

As it was, I came to this country against my wishes. In my youthful enthusiasm, I wanted to go to Palestine more than anything else. However, in those days long ago, children listened to their parents, especially when the parents feared they could not earn a livelihood at their age in Palestine. Economic conditions were not rosy there in those days either.

For two years before leaving Germany, I had training at cabinet making in a trade school organized by the Jewish community of Mannheim. With my background, I was able to find work in a Chicago furniture factory. I had to do production work which I hated. When our parents joined us the following year, and could not find work, it was easy for us to decide to move back east to try to make a living on a chicken farm. My uncle did the scouting around for a suitable farm and he found a place containing 13 acres of land, some neglected chicken coops and two residences not much better. The layout seemed perfect for two families with limited means. The price tag was \$7,000. which we were able to swing with the help of one of our rich relatives.

We arrived here in the summer of 1939 and got busy making the buildings fit for human habitation. The purchase of several hundred chickens put us into the egg business. If you think the idea of having to care for hundreds of live creatures was scary, you are right. What helped the beginners was a vast amount of free advice, both good and bad, available from fellow farmers. Also in the early days, one could not afford help. We helped each other out when the task required more than one family's man and woman power. For instance, we and the Plauts always helped each other when the big round up for housing chickens came in the fall. We actually had fun doing that.

I remember we spent the first fall and winter pulling thousands of nails from second hand boards. We used the boards for building brooder houses in which we would raise our own baby chicks the following spring.

Life was quite primitive. I remember for instance, we had hot water only Friday afternoons when we lit our little coal hot water heater. We did not spend much money for groceries. Chicken and eggs were the main ingredients of our diet. My mother grew

all our vegetables and was proud of the money she took in from the sale of the surplus. Pleasures were simple. Services were available in the Jewish Community House only on holidays. On the other hand, on Shabbat the only work we did was feeding the chickens and collecting eggs, which had to be done.

After the first year we were able to get a loan from the "Jewish Agricultural Society" to build more coops to increase the farm's capacity to a point considered necessary to support two families. The contractor we selected was Benny Wexler, who gave me a job with the carpentry crew at \$2.50 a day. From there on, I worked on the farm only in my spare time.

Everything seemed to be working out well for us in our new homeland, except that in Europe, Hitler was taking over and might eventually follow us here. It almost seemed a relief when America became involved in the struggle. It was great news for me when I received "Greetings from the President".

After my return from the war, conditions here changed rapidly. We foresaw it would become harder and harder to make a living on a chicken farm. It was decided I go out on my own doing cabinet work.

"Castle Woodcraft" celebrates its 30th anniversary in this year of the Bicentennial.

I suppose this makes me an old timer after all.

THE JULIUS WEIL FAMILY

My husband and I with our two year old son arrived in New York City on Erev Rosh Hashanah, 1938. We stayed with my husband's sister and brother-in-law for the next few weeks while my husband spent time looking for work, any kind of work. We had known in advance that he would have to make a new start. He had been in the wholesale hardware business in Germany. I had completed three semesters of medical school before marriage, but now with a small child and my husband's spirits sagging, I thought it wisest for the time being to give moral support and help to follow all the leads that might enable us to get a new start. I even went to Providence Rhode Island by bus, and naturally had to take my little boy along. Our good friends there had no trouble finding work. There were only a few refugee families there and you had your choice of a job.

We returned to New York in good spirits, but as we disembarked from the bus, I bubbling with the good news of our move, choice of jobs. My husband gave me a letter from our old friends from Heidelberg, the Ehrmanns. They had, after much traveling around, bought a chicken farm in Toms River. They were very happy and wanted us to visit them soon.

The following Sunday, we took the bus to Toms River. Our friends had a house to themselves (we had never lived in an apartment prior to coming to the United States, and never in a large city). There was fresh air and grounds for a child to play in and peace and quiet. The chickens and the chicken coops (the business part) discussion I left to my husband and the men in the Ehrmann family. I noticed my husband's changed spirits. He started figuring, could we swing a business like that financially. This was the foremost point to consider. I was all in favor, house and business were together. We could share the work. All three of us would find a job with our stroke of luck, and we did!

Then came the time of looking for a farm. It had to be in Toms River. There were a few refugee farmers living there already, more had moved there in the 20's and early 30's. They were all helpful with advice. Everybody knew of someone who wanted to sell and they knew the real value of the properties. We walked through town and were introduced to the Jewish merchants. They told us how they happened to move to Toms River. They had founded the Jewish Community Center. We had found a new home, ours to which we could bring both our parents who were still in Germany waiting for affidavits. Well, we bought a farm with the financial and practical support and advice of the Jewish Agricultural Society. By this time (early 1939) there was a real avalanche of Jewish families (German refugees, people who had reached the United States after the first World War from Eastern Europe as well as American born younger and older people who had saved up some money and wanted a healthier, better life). Many, like most of us who had fled Germany, had originally tried to get to Eretz Israel, but in our time the English, in order to appease the Arabs, gave out less and less certificates for immigration. So, we personally had taken second best and settled in the country side on a chicken farm. I suspect strongly, we would have done the same thing if we had gone to Palestine.

On our first vacation in Israel in 1959, we found many former friends from all walks of life, both business and professional people, settled, happy and contented on "farms."

I don't want to go into detail describing our adventures, or more appropriately misadventures, during the first few years on the farm.

The Jewish Community Center served our religious needs in those years. The most important functions were the lectures given by the County Agent and agricultural professors from Rutgers University, experts from the Jewish Agricultural Society and the Jewish owners of the two local feed companies. Even though you did everything by the book, the chickens did not always cooperate. They got sick when egg prices were high and during the time of high egg production when prices were low.

During and right after the second World War, there was a new influx of Jewish farmers. I remember very well a few single men who worked on farms when we arrived for "room and board and \$30.00" in cash. Some went back to New York when the war economy made jobs available. We ourselves had one man boarding with us. He did the real heavy work on different farms one day a week (for six different farms). After having saved enough for a down payment, he bought a farm in Vineland, New Jersey, got married and is now happily retired there.

My own parents arrived in September, 1940. With the help of our loyal "Egg Dealers", we submitted affidavits to the American Consul in Stuttgart, Germany. They received their visas in June of 1940. That same week the last European port, Genoa, Italy closed to United States shipping.

Hitler had entered a nonaggression pact with Stalin and by paying in those days horrendous sums, they in German Marks, we in U.S. dollars (borrowed from relatives in our case), the German Intourist and the Russian government shipped them from Berlin to Moscow via Siberia Express to Vladivostok, then to Japan and Seattle. There were groups in all the major cities and ports that helped people along. (Many stayed in Shanghai). But, thousands were saved this way.

This part of my story in a certain respect has nothing to do with the Jewish farmers in Toms River. However, my Father having been in the grain and feed business in Germany, put on an old pair of overalls the day after his arrival, (they arrived in Pennsylvania Station, New York City with what they had worn on their backs for the previous four weeks). Their hand luggage was stolen on the way and the big pieces they had shipped from home were never found either.

As I stated above, my Father helped on our farm. Not finding enough to do, he got day jobs (he was 59 years old when he arrived here) and after two years, my parents were able financially to buy the farm adjoining ours. We then worked the 25 acres, with a total of 7,000 chickens together until progress got in the way. The Board of Education needed our land for a new school. It was a shock!! At this point we even called them "The Gestapo," but who can fight "City Hall?" We call ourselves proudly, "retired chicken farmers" now.

Irma Weil; (Mrs. Julius Weil)

THE HISTORY OF THE WEINSTOCK FAMILY IN TOMS RIVER

I was born in Sirkova, a small Bessarabian village in Romania in the 1890's. The village had a Jewish population of about twenty families who earned their livelihood raising tobacco on land rented from the peasants. As a boy I worked in the tobacco fields during the summers and attended school in the winters. In 1914 I was conscripted into the Russian army, and shortly after had the opportunity to emigrate to Canada & Manitoba Province, where some members of my family had already settled.

After improving my English, I entered the University of Manitoba and finished two years at the College of Agriculture in Winnipeg. Farming has always been an attractive vocation too as I enjoyed being close to nature and had a dream of working for my family and myself on my own farm.

In 1925 my wife, Pearl and I were married and came to the United States. We lived in New York City where Billey, our daughter, and Yosi, our son, were born. As the economic crisis deepened it became difficult to retain work. Our family lived through many hardships as those were extremely difficult times for all people. After a prolonged period of unemployment, we took the advice and help of our friends to relocate in New Jersey. I became a vegetable man bringing fruit and vegetables in an old truck to the farmers around Lakewood, Toms River and Farmingdale. In 1938 on my wife's initiative, we rented an old chicken farm near Maxim Station in Farmingdale to discover if the farming life was feasible for our family. The first spring Pearl ordered 300 baby chicks and took care of them while I continued the vegetable route and helped as much as I could at night. Our first chicks grew and, became layers and on the basis of our success we began to look for a farm to purchase for ourselves.

In 1939, with the assistance of our Toms River friends Belyev, Dardick, Morris Latterman and the Brafmans, a 32 acre property was found on White Oak Bottom Road, and each of these friends lent us a sum of money to meet the down payment required. We refurbished an old chicken coop on the property, moved ourselves and our stock, and became members of the Community of Jewish Farmers. In those days a newcomer was warmly welcomed into the community. There was no limit to the friendliness and assistance that was extended to help us become established. One man came to teach us how to vaccinate, another to cull, a third assisted in putting together the poultry equipment. Many an evening was spent discussing the layout of the brooder houses and the field rotation, the placement and design of the new chicken coops, and the best way to furnish them. Chudnov came bringing bulbs and flowers and to inspect the chickens and advise, and planted nut trees and red poppies in our yard which are still bearing. In the first year the Jewish Agricultural Society gave us a substantial loan which we used to erect the first new buildings.

We eagerly joined in the activities of the Jewish Center on Old Freehold Road, which was the center of cultural and social life for both the farmers and the Jewish townspeople from Toms River. The children were enrolled in a Yiddish school and attended classes in Yiddish Saturday and Sunday mornings. A teacher commuted from

New York City and with the children planned and put on plays and activities during the Jewish holidays which the entire community attended and enjoyed. There were no baby sitters at that time, and whole families participated in the social activities. All the children were known individually and their progress noted. The Yiddish plays and speakers that came to the center, as Jewish organizations of all kinds multiplied, were a welcome relief to the nights spent in the egg cellar cleaning by hand with a little sandpaper buffer, 20 pails of eggs each and then weighing, sorting and packing them in cases to be shipped.

When we first entered the chicken business, farmers used to market their eggs through a middle-man, the egg dealer, and would purchase feed and supplies from private companies. Many egg dealers made a living buying eggs from the farmers and transporting them to the New York City market. Many were the stories of farmers who were underpaid, of eggs prepared and not collected by the egg dealer, or worse still, picked up and not promptly paid for. The first cooperative for farmers, the FEPCO, had been founded and we immediately joined. A few years later the White Oak Cooperative was founded to supply the farmer with equipment and supplies. A credit union provided welcome relief as local bankers often refused to extend credit to the small farmers. Our first loan went to buy our first car, a 1938 Chevy, which was about 4 years old and which we used for about 10 years. Our son took it with him to college. A cooperative was also founded to convert manure into fertilizer, but went bankrupt in the first year, so that all the investors lost their \$100. It had seemed like a good idea as the one thing all the farmers had was plenty of manure.

Poultry farming became profitable around 1940 and many new families came into our community. There were teachers blacklisted in the City for their politics, refugees from the Holocaust in Europe, and middle aged couples from the sweatshops of the City who came to seek a better life in a rural setting. World War II brought a marked expansion of the Jewish farmer's community and all of us heartily supported the war effort. Many young people were drafted or enlisted in the armed services. Those too old or too young to join bought bonds, gave blood, collected scrap metal, entertained the service men, and took four hour watches sitting high on a tower on Borneman's farm to chart and identify planes as part of the coastal defense early warning system. Gasoline was rationed and so was food; cars broke down and couldn't be repaired; and the chickens one year couldn't be given the proper feed and were a failure as layers. In the Community Center, a farmer's union was organized and Mrs. Harry Leber taught us the union songs and folk dancing at the socials.

The social life in the community center was very rich and satisfying. Elections for officers were held annually and were an important event and hotly prepared with electioneering up to the last minute. Baer, Pincus, and Ben Novins were officers in the early years. Land was purchased for a cemetery and Mrs. Latterman was the first to be interred; she soon had company. The women founded Emma Lazarus Club; the teenagers formed the Jolly Jewish Juniors which sponsored roller skating parties on the tennis courts in the back. Zionist organizations became active and later a group of people formed a cultural club, too. Funds were collected for many causes and the farmers gave generously. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1947 was joyously celebrated and money was raised for Israel. Bonds were sold and a few families went to settle in Israel as chicken farmers. Each year a memorial service was held to

commemorate the Warsaw Ghetto uprising and their last will and testament honored: that the generations to come would remember and not forget or forgive the Nazis.

After the war was over, most of our young people returned to their homes; a few had lost their lives, others came back, settled down, married and founded their own farms. Most of the children from the community graduated Toms River High School and went on to colleges to graduate in many different fields of specialty, and settle in many far away places. After the war, an economic recession set in, and it became more and more difficult to earn a living. The feed companies developed giant combines in the South, opened chicken factories and because they could use feed at cost, competed unmercifully with the small farmers. Some of our farmers lost their farms; others gave up in disgust and sold and returned to the city. Older farmers retired to Florida and little by little, the Jewish farmers of Toms River have become a moment in history.

Having retired some years ago, I am now in my 80's living in Buffalo with my wife, and near my daughter and her family. We still feel close to the life and social activities of the Toms River Jewish Community and hope they will continue, as I do here, to join the efforts for world peace, for the security of the State of Israel, in friendship with her neighbors, and for the continuity of Jewish People everywhere with their progressive traditions and culture.

Jack Weinstock
321 North Drive
Buffalo, N Y 14216

HYMAN SUCHMAN FAMILY

As many Jews, we hoped for a piece of land to farm. In Toms River, we found friends who had been farming and so we settled there. We joined the Community of Jewish Farmers in 1940. At that time the Community was the only place that young farm people could come together. The Community ran dances for them and other affairs. The ladies auxiliary was active in building the center and sustaining a Yiddish shul. My father was in the executive for a number of years. Many farm organizations used the Community as a meeting place. In all, we found an active Jewish life, a helping hand in many ways both as farmers and as people.

LEICHTLING FAMILY THE STORY OF BEN & KITTY LEICHTLING

It was a pleasant surprise to receive a letter from the Council of Jewish Organizations who are sponsoring a Jewish History Week.

After being away from Toms River for ten years, it is difficult to recall the many events that rotated around the community. I Wish I had kept a log of the events and the growth of all the organizations that met in the community.

However, I am aware that many years before we came to the area such families as the Krushinskys', Novins', Wexlers, Newtons', Dardicks', Baers', Kassenoffs,' Rosenkrantz's', Belyers', Breslaws' and Pincus' were already giving their support to the community.

When Ben and I decided to sell our retail business in Brooklyn, NY, Ben had spent a weekend with the Polishuks on their farm on Old Freehold Road and was so enthused with living in the country not too far away from New York. We wanted a quieter life than the hassle of city life. This was the latter part of 1941. We were also encouraged to make the move by our friends, Hannah and Lou Wallach. We purchased the old Reutter farm on Todd Road and our nearest neighbors, the M. Meyers, the Weiss family and the Shenkins', made us feel at home as soon as we got settled. It was hard work in those days to build up a capacity of chickens. After three and a half years on Todd Road, we bought Julius Zwickel's farm on Bay Avenue.

It is gratifying to see that the Religious Group is still existing and Ben and I were always part of this group. Also it is still under the leadership of Jack Fleischman, with the help of Mrs. Norma Zwickel, and a good many of the old-timers.

I also wish to mention that a credit union was organized, especially helpful to the farmers in the area, under the capable leadership of Mr. Belyer, Jack Goldstein, Irwin Kramer, M. Rosenkrantz, Hannah Sherry and many more. Ben also served for several years as a president of this credit union.

My recollection of the Ladies' Auxiliary in the 40's and 50's was the great job some of the members were doing. Among the very many were Ida Dardich, Hilda Baer, Hannah Wallach, Lillian Krushinsky, Pearl Zeitz, Ethel Novins, Evelyn Weiss, Sophie Meyers, Lillian Whyman, Josephine Feldman, Greta Friedman, Ida Cherry, Frances Kramer, Ann Hecker, Ann Cohen, Helen Oliver, Jean Kassenoff. Most of the women served as presidents, some as other officers, but all were hard workers for the Auxiliary. I, too, held offices and was president for several years.

I recall an outstanding event; a bazaar sponsored by the various Jewish organizations, namely, The Pioneer Women, Hadassah, Emma Lazarus Club, Ladies' Auxiliary and the Community Center. This affair was a huge success, both financially and socially. In those days everyone was like one big family and all the social life rotated around the Community Center.

Very interesting book reviews were given by Mr. Aaron Pincus, who also served as

Recording Secretary for a great many years, and his reports were always rendered in Yiddish. The Jewish National Fund and the U.J.A. appeal evenings were held yearly in the Community Center under the capable leadership of Mr. and Mrs. N. Breslau, assisted by Bob Novins, Jack Fleischman, Jack Baer, Irving Kantor, and many other fine members of the Community. A large number of Community members who worked on these projects were honored with presentations of plaques and Golden Book Certificates. Many fine artists and concerts were arranged for these evenings. We too, were presented with a J.N.F. Golden Book Certificate by the Community and we prize it most highly.

Another wonderful organization was created and should not go unnoticed; the Leonard Baer Day Camp and Pool. This was made possible by Hannah Sherry, Mildred Robinson, Bea Epstein, Rose Fleischman, Lillian Whyman, Mesdames Pushkin, Bobroff, and many others who helped with the Camp every summer.

The Ehrmann family have always been community minded and we take this opportunity to congratulate Hans Ehrmann, the newly installed President, and his officers and wish them a very successful term. I wish to comment on the fine bulletins now being sent by the Community Center. We find them very interesting and informative on the events taking place.

When we visited Toms River four years ago we noted a change in the Pleasant Plains and surrounding area with the growth of schools, residential neighborhoods, etc. Progress must go on, but there is a certain nostalgia for the loss of "country" to a larger city. The friendships that existed in the old days among the farmers and professional people one can only have in a small community. We made many friends with whom we still keep in touch since we left the area.

We trust that the new families who have moved to the Toms River area and have become members of the Community Center will help to carry on the good work.

If I have left out a good many names of the old timers, it was not done intentionally.

In closing, I wish to say, were I closer to you all today, I would, if possible, still try to help in any way. Hopefully, we look forward to visiting our many friends and neighbors in the near future.

Sincere greetings to all.

Kitty and Benjamin Leichtling

STEINBERG FAMILY

We came to the Lakewood - Toms River Area to become poultry farmers in 1941. The economic conditions in New York at that time were such that many people were forced to look for new means of earning a livelihood. We chose to try our hand at farming.

Life on the farm was hard. It meant working seven days a week from early morning until late at night. We had to pump water for the chickens and for the house by hand. We had to use coal and wood for heating and cooking.

Those were times of hard work. But the hard work was satisfying because we came to the farm with dreams of building a better life for ourselves without worries for the future.

The beauty of our natural surroundings and landscape gave us strength and courage to continue with the hard work. Our very friendly neighbors helped us with work and advice.

A great deal of help came from the credit union and the buying and selling cooperatives that were started by poultrymen who had established themselves in the 1920's and 1930's.

The Toms River Jewish Farmers Community Center, as it was known then, became the home of the Jewish farmers. It filled the religious, cultural and social needs of the Jewish Farmers. They brought their joys and sorrows to the Center and shared them with their friends and neighbor.

In the late 1950's and early 1960's, the poultry industry, as we knew it would, began to go downhill. The small farmers were squeezed out by the manipulations of the big cooperatives. From then on, low prices for eggs and high prices for feed became the rule instead of the exemption. Many small farmers lost their farms. The only way to hold on was by the wife and children operating the farm and the husband going out to work off the farm to augment their income.

Before we left Toms River, many of the green fields and woods were turned into housing developments where city folks settled and turned Toms River into a big city. We prefer to remember Toms River as it was years ago, instead of as it is today.

We want to wish the present leadership of the Toms River Jewish Community Center, success in their efforts to keep the organization alive and build a healthy Jewish life in the area.

Nathan and Fannie Steinberg

BOBROFF FAMILY (HIGHLIGHTS IN LIFE OF MORRIS & SHIRLEY BOBROFF)

In the age old tradition of the wandering Jew, we followed our parents to Jersey - New (TR - 44). We found friends, fame and fortune and fun galore and have no reason to rove anymore.

MORRIS BOBROFF

Certified Public Accountant

Controller & Secretary, Lawn Doctor, Inc.

BBS - College of the City of New York

Past President, Monmouth-Ocean County Chapter, NJ Society of Certified Public Accountants

Member - Monmouth County Character Committee, State Board of Certified Public Accountants

Past - Financial Secretary-Toms River Jewish Community Center

Past - District Governor, Lions International, District 16-B

Past - Chairman, NJ State Council of District Governors, Lions International

Past - Treasurer, Toms River Businessmen's Assn.

US Army - Finance Department 1942-1946

Married - Wife: Shirley; Sons: Jerome and Harris

SHIRLEY BOBROFF

Partner - Telephone Answering Service of Toms River and Lakewood, 17 Years

Member - Ladies Auxiliary T R Jewish Community Center

Corresponding Secretary - Soroptimist Club of T R and Past Program Chairman Soroptimist Club of TR.

General Assistant to Morris Bobroff, CPA for 34 Years (so far)

For FUN - We Travel - Play Golf - Square Dance

Special Remembrance to my friend (and former partner) Lillian Whyman - who is like a sister to me.

S. B.

THE MAKETANSKY FAMILY

A short story of the Maketansky & Whynmans Exodus from New York City to Toms River

It all started in March of 1946. My brother-in-law Irv Whynman took me for a drive to visit his mother, Anne Demain, who had a farm with her husband Joe on Route 9 next door to the Estomins Midway Farm. I could probably write a book about how the Maketanskys and Estomins were neighbors in the Bronx. All I can say is that we lived on the same landing and it was like one big apartment. We were with the Estomins and they were with us. It was great.

After our visit to Toms River it only took a very short conference with Irv to decide to look around for our own farm. It only took two visits until we found the Polsky place on Old Freehold Road.

Our families came out for a look and we moved in May 1946. Not only were we greenhorns to the country, but also to the whole aspect of chicken farming. Needless to say, we had to succeed because every dime we owned was now in the chicken farm.

It came as one heck of a shock to learn that the entire stock of chickens we had bought was infected with Newcastle disease. In order to compensate for the loss of income, Lil, Irv, Annie and Hymie decided to take in boarders for the summer. Annie was a great cook and we had no trouble finding people.

I must mention one story about my mother Annie. As I said, she was an excellent cook. She could prepare chicken and eggs a different way for every day of the year. Well, one Friday night we sat down to supper and our first course was Gefilte Fish. Not only was it a great change from chicken and eggs, it was delicious. We all loved it! Only later did we find out from Lil and Mom that our "gefilte fish" was made from ground-up chicken, not fish.

Getting back to farm life, learning comes fast when your whole existence depends on it. We were extremely fortunate that our families had, and still have, an abundance of love for each other. We all worked hard, long hours meant nothing. The women and boys were right in the coops with the men. The egg room was located in the basement, and of course nothing was automatic in those days.

When you're young like my brother Mel, and I were, life is a beautiful thing. We hardly had a care in the world. As for the struggle of feed bills, mortgage payments and the like, they were the problems of the older folks. The family loans and the chattel mortgages were their worries. The challenge was constant, the struggle was difficult and the time it took to overcome the perils of foreclosure was long. Now, as I look back, it was a rough time. Time has a way of returning your just rewards for the efforts put forth and happily I can say that today, not one of us regrets the purchase of the farm.

I remember the weddings and the anniversaries, the Bar Mitzvahs, the births, the Passover Seders, the graduations and the visits to "the country" by our relatives from New York. I remember the vaccination crews and the courses on poultry farming given in Freehold to veterans. I also remember the wonderful friends we had.

Speaking of vaccination crews, we would work all hours, giving the stock the required inoculations and then have a great meal, compliments of whomsoever's farm we were working on. Many a night we also went skinny-dipping in Toms River back by the Swinging Bridge just to drown the mites we picked up in the coops.

I recall Irving driving to New York once a week with a car full of eggs to sell, not to mention chickens that Mom and Lil would dress and wrap. In the summer, Irv also had a route in Belmar. I remember my father making us pull weeds from in front of the coops to make them look nice where the water fountain would drain out in that area. We pleaded with him not to bother since they would only grow back. Of course there was no convincing him, so my brother Mel and I pulled weeds. We used to call him "The Whip". He cracked his orders out loud and clear.

I remember a classic story about my father, one we never let him live down. He was a perfectionist. Everything had to be just right. Well, he started building a new dog house in the feed room one time and constructed the most well designed and sturdy dog house I had ever seen. Upon completion we were all invited to inspect his work. Believe me when I say it was a beautiful dog house. It only had one flaw. It was so big we couldn't get it out of the double doors of the feed room.

These are only a few of the memories we have accumulated since our family moved to Toms River. Through everything, though, the hard times and especially the good times, none of us would have done anything different if we had it to do over again. No one can replace the precious times and memories we've had and we are happy we still live in Toms River.

Bernie Maketansky

THE PODOLSKY FAMILY

The Podolsky family, Sam, Ida, their children Regina and Bernie, arrived in Toms River from NYC in March 1944, with the last snow of the season. The third and oldest child Odif, was already married and living elsewhere.

Being co-operative in spirit and idealistic, they were active in all the farm co-operatives of that period; FEPCO, White Oak and FLF. It was quite common and economically necessary for one or more family members to seek work off the farm. Such was Sam's situation. He commuted to NYC and Lakewood, working at his former trade of clothing presser.

The Podolsky family participated, as Ida does today, in the Community and cultural life of the Community. Ida, an original organizer of the Jewish Farmers' Chorus, is still active and a devoted member.

Regina married Jack Pyenson, a member of an early farm family. She has three sons, one of whom is married. Bernie attended Toms River high school, is married and has 4 children. Today, Odif, Regina and Bernie visit their mother Ida, who still resides in the original farm home on Cedar Grove Road.

THE LACHER FAMILY

In terms of time, twenty-five years is but a mere speck, but in terms of one's life, twenty-five years is a great big chunk. My husband and I have just completed twenty-five years as poultry farmers here in New Jersey, and I could write reams about that experience.

To start, I for one never knew there was such a thing as a poultry farm. As a matter of fact, farms in general had about no meaning for me. But when I visited this area for the first time I said to myself, "How quiet and peaceful, how charming!" Ah, me.

What made us come here and live this life? My husband's nightmares were the result of his experiences in Poland during the holocaust. He was the sole survivor of a good and large family, and coping with his memories was horrendous. Many, many people said, "He should be outdoors where the fresh air will do wonders for him. He'll sleep well; his dreams will disappear". This line of reasoning I can now refute, but at that time I was willing to try.

When we arrived here at the northern end of Dover Township, there was just a house on our land, and we started from scratch. We learned the hard way about hatcheries, feed companies, lawyers; we had no telephone for three months and were happy to get an eight party line; no car for a year and a half; no nothing but work on top of unaccustomed physical work. And I for one met what to me was a different kind of Jew, Jews who were not interested in the religious aspect of Judaism, but who called themselves "Yiddishists." They were a bright, interesting group, very articulate in a language they handled well, and in fact, I learned to speak Yiddish out here. At that time, there was no rift between the Toms River Community Of Jewish Farmers and the Shul. There was, in fact, just the Community. We had wonderful neighbors, the Lians, the Dubrows and the Finkelsteins. It was the first time in my life that I had lived among Jews, where all my neighbors were Jewish; the Winters, the Suchmans, Garsons, Relters, Newfields, Meyers, Schwartzes, Goldschmidts and Cutlers. Almost without exception they were helpful and generous. It was surprisingly a very comfortable feeling and thinking about them I miss those who are gone, sorely.

I remember men who were nothing short of brilliant, who, with the proper training could have been earth shakers; men like Henry Pyenson. I remember Irving Kantor, who was so effective as an organizer. And I met farmers who raised magnificent families despite the fact that they lived in the hinterlands, without the so-called advantages. I think of one family in particular not too far from us, who raised three wonderful sons, all of them professional men and good family men. Those boys used to help vaccinate chickens for us and for others, and obviously it didn't hurt them a bit.

The story of the hired help situation I'm saving for a book. It should make me a million, but as a friend of mine said, "Wait 'til you have more perspective, Beck, and then it should be a riot." I think of writing such a book, and wonder if anyone would believe the stories I have to tell. I think of the wife of an extremely successful cabinet maker not far from here who, upon hearing that I lived and worked on a farm, pointed a finger at me and said, "You, you a farmer!" That was a real jarring of the ego, and I wondered if I should have bad horns. I remember working in a law office In Lakewood (to augment

family income, of course) and seeing, at the beginning, the purchase of farms by the hundreds, and then, sadly, the crash, when families walked off and left their property to the feed companies, and sometimes to others who should have done better.

And I remember happier times, the birth of my daughters, the Leonard Max Baer Day Camp - then terribly good - where my girls learned to be top swimmers, and I feel their love of this area. Whenever I plan a visit to my family I say, "I'm going home." But to them this is home. Not only do they love it here, but strangely enough their friends who come to visit love it too. They too must find it quiet, peaceful, even charming.

Would we do this again? Given the knowledge that we have today, I doubt it. I am sure there are other ways of overcoming the problems we had. But the whole experience has not been without its advantages. The dreams have quieted, our family is almost grown, and we have done our job well - I hope.

Mrs. Jules Lacher

