



SYNAGOGUE in Woodbury observes fifth year.

### 5th Anniversary

## Beth Israel Synagogue Looks At Jewish History in Woodbury

Mrs. Elwood Cohen has announced that a combined fifth anniversary and installation dinner-dance will be held at the Beth Israel Synagogue at High and Warner Sts. in Woodbury on Nov. 18 at 6:30 p.m.

The present synagogue was dedicated five years ago and the members will celebrate its fifth anniversary. Past presidents of the synagogue and of the Sisterhood will be honored also.

The new officers will be installed by an official of the United Synagogues of America. Dr. Elwood Cohen heads the incoming slate as president, with the following staff: David Rosen, vice-president; Irving Sochol, secretary; Ben Solof, treasurer and Philip Lifland, financial secretary.

Committee heads for the coming year will be: Abraham Greenspan, religious; David Rosen, financial; Sidney Granite, legal; Robert Snyder, ways and means; Dr. Harris Colton, school; Harry Kamins, membership; Frank Cutler, youth; Martin Brody, building and Philip Lifland, memorials.

Mrs. Cohen has been assisted by her cochairman, Mrs. Howard Levin and Mrs. Harry Kamins who is in charge of decorations. Anyone interested in attending the dance is requested to contact Mrs. Cohen at 478-2919.

#### History Dates to Bibo Family

The first Jewish family known to settle in the city of Woodbury was the Jacob A. Bibo family in 1867. In 1890, Mr. Bibo purchased the Holstein property on Broad St., near Delaware St., where he opened a cigar store called "Jake's Jumbo Cigars." He also formed and supported a baseball club that year. Then in 1902, the Woodbury Trust Co. was organized with Jacob Bibo as one of its directors.

In 1904, the Harry Polsky family, the second Jewish family, opened a men's and women's wearing apparel store located

on Broad and German Sts. which is now known as Barber Ave. One of the sons is now operating the same store.

The Hermans were next to settle in Woodbury in 1906. In turn they were followed by the Cohen family who opened a "Tea House" near Broad and Delaware Sts., whose progeny still reside in the area. The Schwartz family arrived in 1908, and this family is still in town. From 1915 to 1930 approximately 30 families joined the community.

The first formal religious training given to the Jewish children was in 1910 by an itinerant teacher, Mr. Schockett. He taught the children for an hour, one day a week in their own homes.

In 1922, fourteen families met to discuss the formation of a synagogue. After several meetings, the Woodbury Hebrew Congregation was formed. The first services for the High Holidays were held at the Old Red Men's Hall on Barber Ave. The second year, the High Holidays were held at the old Academy School which at that time was vacant.

A permanent hall was rented at Broad and Aberdeen Sts., above the old Capital Beef Co. for a synagogue in 1927. Prior to this time weekly religious services were held in private homes of the members of the congregation. Among the homes were those of Mr. Benjamin Snyder and Mr. Louis Becker, both on Broad St. The old Snyder home still stands and it housed most of the prayer meetings until the acquisition of the aforementioned hall.

In 1925, the wives of the members of the congregation formed the Sisterhood. Saturday morning services were started in 1927. The first teacher was Miss Fanny Schwartz who still resides here.

#### First Torah

In 1928, the congregation purchased its first Torah, the Holy

Scrolls, which are housed in the Ark. A state police escort, from the Delaware River Bridge to the Woodbury Courthouse, was provided to honor the possession of a permanent Torah. A parade with a band was then formed with the members of the congregation carrying the Torah to its new home.

With a membership of only 22 families, land for a permanent synagogue was purchased in 1937 at West Centre and Harrison Sts. The ground breaking ceremonies took place on Sept. 29, 1938, with Rabbi Lipis of the Beth El Synagogue in Camden officiating. The dedication for the new building, "Beth Israel," took place on May 28, 1939. Again Rabbi Lipis officiated along with various speakers.

The door was unlocked by Harry Gitomer and the Torah was carried in by Harry Polsky and Harry Bleznak. After this Morris Elkins turned on the everlasting "Eternal Light."

Land for the present Synagogue was purchased in 1954.

On December 17, 1956, ceremonies for the "Burning of the Mortgage" of the land was held in the synagogue. Mrs. Esther Herman had the honor of burning it.

The present synagogue located at High and Warner Sts. was dedicated in 1962 with local and state dignitaries and religious leaders of other faiths taking part.