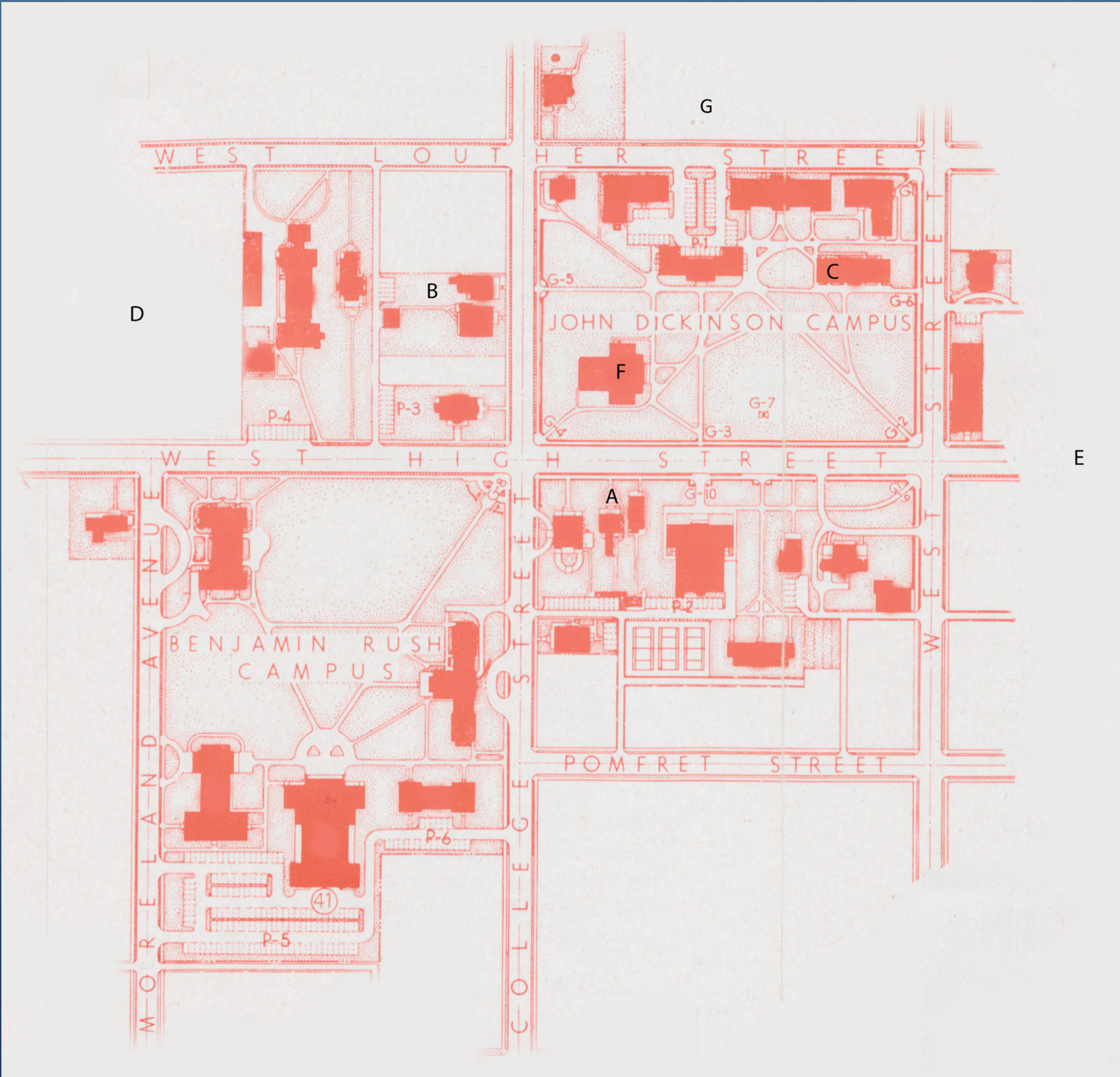


MAP OF JEWISH LIFE AT DICKINSON



A. The Asbell Center is one of several former homes of the Phi Epsilon Pi Fraternity.

B. Former Phi Epsilon Pi house where the Hub stands today.

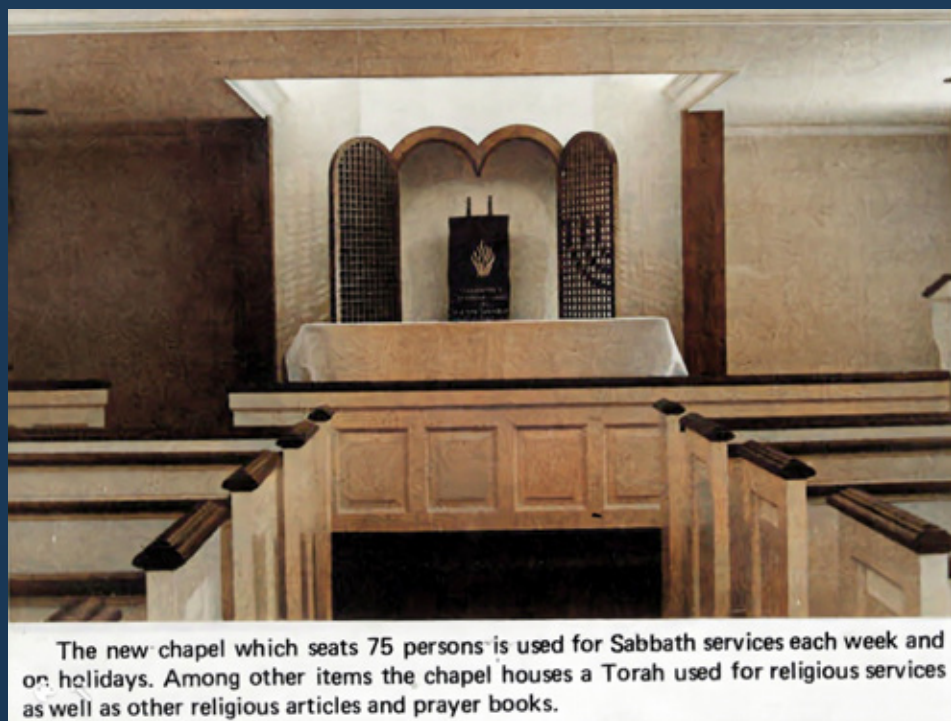
C. The easternmost section of East College once housed the Phi Epsilon Pi Brothers.

D. The Fraternity Quadrangle housed Phi Epsilon Pi in what is now Conway Hall.

E. Hyman Goldstein established his Law Office in Carlisle, Serving the community from 1920 to the 1980s.

F. Bosler Hall housed chapel services, it was also the venue for several talks given by Jewish Dickinsonians to explain their religious customs to their classmates in the 1930s.

G. In the 1990s and 2000s, the Hillel House on West Louthier Street served as a meeting space and a dorm for a handful of students.



An interior shot of the Bosler Hall chapel, containing an Ark and a Torah scroll.



A group of Phi Epsilon Pi brothers seated outside of Conway Hall on the grass and on the roof of the entryway. Students hold the Phi Epsilon Pi flag.



A photo of students socializing on the porch of the Phi Epsilon Pi fraternity house.

Special Thanks to Jim Gerencser and Malinda Triller-Doran and the Dickinson College Archives.

If you have any information you wish to contribute to the growing body of knowledge about the early Jewish Experience at Dickinson please email archives@dickinson.edu.

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Dickinson College Jewish Life: THE EARLY YEARS



Samuel Deinard

EARLY JEWISH STUDENTS OF NOTE:

We will never know who the first Jewish students on campus were definitively, because that kind of information was not recorded for much of the college's history. The best candidate at this time is **Samuel Deinard** (1872-1921). Samuel was an immigrant from the Russian Empire and attended Dickinson for one year before transferring to DePauw University. He went on to obtain both a masters and a Doctorate and settled in Minnesota where he was hired as the Rabbi for Temple Israel in Minneapolis. Deinard worked at Temple Israel until his death in 1921.

- **Louis Tuvín** (Class of 1910) Donated \$500,000 to the construction of the Anita Tuvín Schlechter Auditorium, which was completed in 1971 and named after Tuvín's daughter.
- **Hyman Goldstein** (Class of 1915) Member of the Dickinson Sports Hall of Fame for his time on the football team, he also launched a 60-year law practice in Carlisle beginning in 1920.
- **Benjamin R. Epstein** (Class of 1933) National Director of the Anti-Defamation League 1948-1978, vice president of the ADL 1978-1983, Marched with MLK in Selma
- **Milton Asbell** (Class of 1937 Did not graduate) Dentist, and dental education advocate, namesake of the Asbell Center.
- **Estelle Bernard Solomon '49**—One of the first Jewish women leaders on campus, revitalized the Dickinson College Religious Association.

Early Jewish Staff Members:

- **Dr. Friedrich Sandels** – Joined Dickinson in 1946 to teach German and Classics as the first openly Jewish Professor.
- **Dr. Arthur Prinz** – Joined 1948, Professor of Economics
- **Joseph Schiffman**, hired in 1958, Professor of English and American Studies

Early Organizations and Religious Life

The early history of Jewish life at Dickinson is intertwined with campus Fraternity life. By the end of the 1930s around five percent of the Dickinson student body self-identified as Jewish. The 1920s and 30s saw Jewish Fraternities like Sigma Alpha Mu (1919-1921), The Epsilon Chapter of Sigma Tau Epsilon (1926-1933), and the Iota Chapter of Phi Epsilon Phi which began in 1914.

Starting on February 23, 1954, Jewish students began hosting Friday night services on occasion in Durbin Oratory.

The first official religious Jewish group to gain campus recognition was the Jewish Affairs Council, which was founded in 1958.

The archival data on Jewish women on campus is sadly lacking, as there were no organizations created for them. However, we know that Jewish women were a part of Jewish life on campus at least as early as the 1940s.



Faculty involved in the Dickinson Religious Association, representing Protestant, Catholic and Jewish Students, 1936.



Dickinson 1915 football team, Goldstein seated center.



Class of 1910 50th Anniversary. Louis Tuvín is seated in the second row, far right.



Estelle Bernard Solomon in her role as managing editor of the *Dickinsonian*.

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JEWISH LIFE: 1960S-2000S

TORAH

Dickinson received its first Torah in 1968. The idea began in 1967 when Gabriel Berk, father of Dickinson student Stephen Berk, wrote to Chaplin Paul Kaylor and suggested that he might aid in buying a Torah for the College. This marks an important first for Dickinson’s Jewish community, which in 2023, has two Torahs.

JEWISH LIFE FIRSTS

The late 1960s were a time of a strengthened Jewish religious presence at Dickinson. The Jewish organization on campus prior to 1967 was named the Jewish Affairs Council. This group worked as a part of the Religious Affairs Council, an interreligious organization on campus, and helped to organize speakers and worship for Jews on campus. In 1967, the group changed their name to the Hillel Council, which though not officially associated with the National Hillel Organization, shows a step toward the Hillel chapter that we have on campus today. Some other notable firsts from this period include:

1967 First High Holiday and Regular Friday Night Shabbat Services

1968 First Passover seder held at the HUB. Over 100 people attended, including students and members of the local Jewish community.

1969 First Saturday Morning Shabbat Services.

1975 Judaic Studies department established

1975 Official B’nai Brith recognition for Hillel.

THE WILLIAM HABER AWARD ('84)

In 1984, the Dickinson Hillel Club received the William Haber Award for Programs of Quality for the Jewish Community. A current student, Steven Leventhal, organized a program in which Dickinson would award honorary degrees to refuseniks, Jews living in the Soviet Unions who were not able to leave due to closing borders. Dickinson Hillel was one of the only small colleges to receive the award, which came with a cash prize for the chapter to use for programming.



Hillel Council Board 1969



Asbell Center Torahs



Passover Seder at Dickinson College, Dickinson College. Two men wearing kippot seated at a Passover seder table from approximately the early 1970s.



Building a campus Sukkah, early 1970s.



Shabbat Services at Dickinson College, Dickinson College Archives

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PHI EPSILON PI

One of the most enduring features of Jewish Life on campus before the establishment of the Asbell Center was the Iota chapter of Phi Epsilon Pi Fraternity. Founded in 1914, the fraternity began as a joint organization between Dickinson College and the Law School, as there were not enough male Jewish students on campus to meet the affiliation requirements. By 1931, the fraternity was added to the Dickinson College Senate. The next year it took over the section of East College just vacated by Kappa Sigma.

In 1946 the fraternity bought the former Alpha Chi Rho house, now the Asbell Center for Jewish Life, with members living there until 1963. The chapter then moved to the Fraternity Quadrangle in 1964. During its heyday, in addition to promoting Jewish Life on campus, the fraternity was very active in fighting alcohol abuse on campus, which served as its main philanthropy cause. In 1970 the national fraternity merged into Zeta Beta Tau, one of two national Jewish fraternities. However, membership in “Phi Ep,” as it is affectionately known, was still a point of pride for brothers, and alumni listed it on their affiliation records until the fraternity lost official recognition status. In 1999, with waning membership, the fraternity ceased recruitment of new members.



The Founding Members of Phi Epsilon Pi from 1916



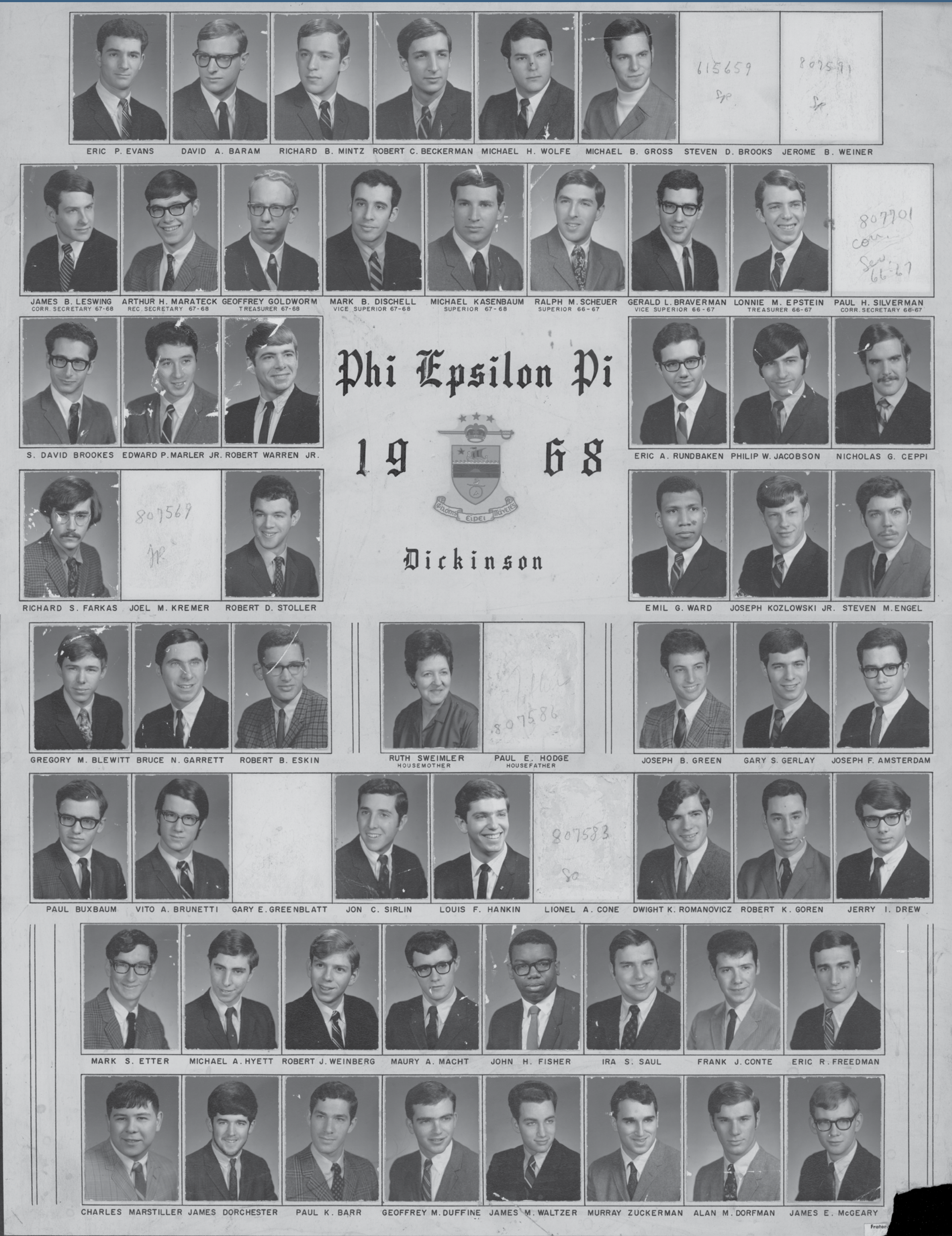
The members of Phi Epsilon Pi from 1936.



A group of students share an award with College President Howard L. Rubendall. This image is the cover of the Phi Epsilon Pi Quarterly magazine.



Members of Phi Epsilon Pi pose with long time fraternity steward, Paul “Pappy” Hodge



A Yearbook photo of the Phi Epsilon Pi membership of 1968

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JUDAIC STUDIES AND JEWISH LIFE

JUDAIC STUDIES AND JEWISH LIFE

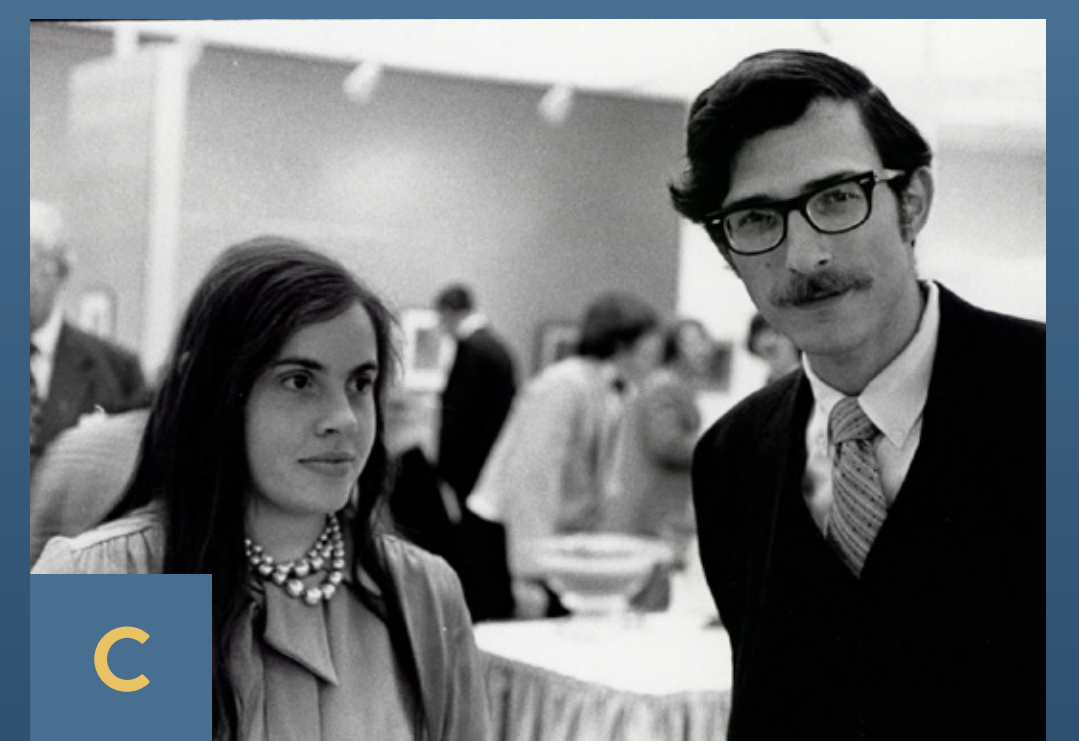
The Judaic Studies Department at Dickinson College was founded in 1975. This department was one of the first of its kind at a small liberal arts college, and has proved an invaluable resource in supporting and enriching Jewish Life on campus. And, uniquely to Dickinson's campus. Two married couples have, through their work both with Jewish Life and in Judaic Studies, left their marks on Dickinson's campus.

NED AND MARY ROSENBAUM

Dr Stanley Ned Rosenbaum was hired to the Dickinson Faculty in 1970 to serve in Classics and Religion. In 1975, the college established the Judaic Studies Department, with Ned as its first chair. Ned and his wife Mary were deeply connected to Jewish Life in Carlisle both on campus and off. Mary was involved in nurturing Hillel, which received B'nai Brith recognition in 1975. And the two were also instrumental in founding the local Carlisle congregation, Beth Tikvah. The Rosenbaums were also nationally known for their scholarship and advocacy on acceptance of interfaith couples within Jewish society. Ned claimed that Mary, who was a lifelong practicing Catholic, helped to invigorate his Jewish identity. Together, they wrote the book "Celebrating our Differences: Living Two Faiths in One Marriage."

ANDREA LIEBER AND TED MERWIN

Professor Andrea Lieber was hired to the Dickinson Faculty in 1999. She and her husband, Ted Merwin, were instrumental in the establishment of the Asbell Center. Ted served as the inaugural Director of the Asbell Center from 2003 until 2017. He also lectured in Judaic Studies. During Ted's tenure as Asbell Center Director, several programs such as Alternative Spring Breaks and the Multicultural Seder set a tone that Jewish Life on campus was for students of all backgrounds.



- A. Prof Ned Rosenbaum teaches a circle of students on the Quad Lawn
- B. Professor Andrea Lieber and Ted Merwin lead an interfaith seder in the Asbell Center
- C. Ned and Mary Rosenbaum
- D. Ted Merwin poses with Central PA Hillel Directors on the Asbell Center stairs
- E. Asbell Center students pose with Ted Merwin and Andrea Lieber

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THE ASBELL CENTER: A Home for Jewish Life on Campus



HISTORY OF THE ASBELL CENTER BUILDING

Pre-1943 The private residence of Dean Montgomery Sellers

1943-44 Dormitory for men

1946 Purchased by Phi Epsilon Pi

1952-59 Dean's residence

1960s-2003 Various fraternities and student groups including Phi Epsilon Pi and the Congress of African Students

2003 Dedicated as the Milton B Asbell Center in 2003



Gary Rosenthal working with Dickinson students on the Torah Ark



Dedication of the Milton B. Asbell Center for Jewish Life

On Sunday, April 27, 2003, the Milton B. Asbell Center for Jewish Life was established in the heart of the Dickinson Campus with the generous donation of Dickinson trustee and alum, Yale Asbell '78.

Milton B. Asbell '37, for whom the center was dedicated, was given an honorary bachelor's degree. The Milton B. Asbell Center for Jewish Life has since served the Dickinson community in a multitude of ways, hosting lectures, programs, and activities from scholars, leaders, and artists of both local and national importance.

The Asbell Center Sanctuary

Contained within the new Asbell Center was the Sanctuary, the first space on campus dedicated to Jewish religious services and ceremonies. The sanctuary also included a new Torah ark, and stained glass windows. Dickinson College became one of the first educational institutions to commission a Torah Ark from Gary Rosenthal, a nationally renowned glass-works artist.

In early pre-planning correspondence with Ted Merwin, Gary Rosenthal suggested that Dickinson students take part in the construction of the Ark as a way to bring together the Dickinson and Hillel communities. The students decided to engrave inscription for the ten commandments in a piece of Pennsylvanian limestone, a stone emblematic on Campus, imbuing the Ark with greater significance.

Susan Leviton, a Harrisburg based multi-media artist, was also commissioned to fashion a new parochet for the Torah Scrolls. Dickinson's faculty Emeritus Dennis Akin designed the Sanctuary's stained glass windows.



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Jewish Life on Campus: THE ASBELL CENTER YEARS



Hillel student leadership from 2005 standing on the stairs in the Asbell Center front hall. Andrea Lieber and Tedd Merwin stand at the back of the stairs.

With the establishment of the Asbell Center in 2003, Jewish students have a dedicated space to celebrate holidays, plan programs, and spend quality time with other Jewish Students. Through the Asbell Center, Jewish Life has partnered with many other areas of campus, including the farm, Global Education, and other offices in the Office of Equity and Inclusion.

In 2011, the Asbell Center was awarded the Philip H. and Suzy Rudd Cohen campus of excellence award by Hillel International. In 2017, after fourteen years as the Director of the Asbell Center, Ted Merwin stepped down. In 2019, Dickinson hired Rabbi Marley Weiner, who is the Asbell Center's first full time director and the first rabbi to be employed as a full-time member of the staff.

Campus Clubs

- **Cooking Club** Founded in 2002, the Cooking Club (also known as the Asbell, Kosher, or Jewish Cooking Club) was founded as a way for students to learn about Jewish food. The club currently cooks one Shabbat dinner per semester in addition to its weekly meetings.
- **Achim** Founded in 2010 following a long hiatus of Jewish men's programming and gathering. This group served as a men's social group sponsoring charity events and outings.
- **Nazun: Challah for Hunger** The Dickinson chapter of Challah for Hunger was started in 2014 and recognized by the National Challah for Hunger program in 2015. This nation-wide organization uses challah sales to raise donations for local hunger charities. Our campus chapter partners with Project SHARE, the local food pantry.
- **Rosh Chodesh** Founded in 2016, this group supported Jewish women in exploring issues related to Jewish Feminism including sponsoring Women's Seders and doing Jewish learning for women, by women.
- **Israel Advocacy** Israel Advocacy has taken many forms on campus. The Israel Advocacy Group has been known as Students Supporting Israel, Dickinsonians for Israel, and the Dickinson Jewish Relations Council.



Kosher Dining

In 2010, Dickinson College opened its first Kosher Station at the Dining Hall. The KOVE, which stands for Kosher and Vegan, is available to students of all backgrounds. Originally under Star-K Supervision, the KOVE is now overseen by Asbell Center Director and Campus Rabbi Marley Weiner.



KOVE mashgichot Rikki Gold and Lousie Powers, 2012

Jewish Life Today

Jewish life at Dickinson is constantly growing and changing. The Judaic studies department continues to offer fascinating classes and is chaired by Professor Andrea Leiber. Hillel and Asbell host student-led services every Friday. The two organizations also provide High Holiday services, seders and other Holiday programming. Student organizations such as Hillel and Nazun also host weekly events such as bagel brunches, movie nights, challah baking.



Challah for Hunger students smile at the camera in the Dairy kitchen. 2016



A group of four Achim members stand with paintball guns and helmets. 2010.



Rabbi Marley Weiner with Ned Rosenbaum Memorial Lecture speaker Rabbi Sandra Lawson



A group of students holding a Students Supporting Israel banner next to a display about Jerusalem. 2017



A group of students lead a song in the HUB at the Multicultural Seder. 2011

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