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CELEBRATING



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Program

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Welcome
Bruce Weisman
Chairman, Centennial Committee

Greetings from R.I. Government Officials

Greetings from Israel
Consul General Yehuda Yaakov

Presentation
Andrew Lamchick
Chairman, Community Involvement Committee

Time Capsule
Adam Halpern and Jeffrey Stoloff
Centennial Committee

Greetings
Jed Brandes, Chairman
Board of Directors

Dinner

Entertainment
Tom Cotter
Finalist, America's Got Talent

Dancing
Music Express

כל הכבוד

Kol ha'Kavod
to our friends at Touro Fraternal



We are proud to celebrate with you.
Here's to the next 100 years of
Brotherhood, Harmony, Judaism,
Friendship & Benevolence.

Mitzi Berkelhammer
Chair of the Board

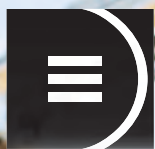


Jewish Alliance
OF GREATER RHODE ISLAND



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As Touro Fraternal Association celebrates its centennial year, we have so much for which to be grateful. One hundred years of supporting the community—near and far, Jewish and gentile—the elderly, the infirm, the hungry, the homeless. One hundred years of giving Jewish men a sense of fraternalism, community and belonging.

In 1917, Touro's founder, Jacob A. Eaton, had a good idea to help needy Jews, and ran with it. Would he have dared to dream about an organization that would stand the test of time for a full century? I prefer to think so. Our best ideas don't wither on the vine; they thrive and grow. And, so it has been with Touro. Many men have come and gone, devoting countless hours to advancing Touro's cause; growing the organization and furthering its purpose. From its genesis as a provider of coal to heat homes, and then a burial society, Touro now offers financial aid for our children to attend college, sick and mortuary benefits, and a full slate of social events. And our philanthropy has expanded to consider causes worldwide. Our association owes a great debt to all who came before us.

But, this historical retrospective is more than a nod to the past. It's more than an "atta boy!" for those who served Touro. I like to believe that, much as Jacob Eaton wanted to "do the right thing," so did all who came after him. They likely would not have cared about recognition for their efforts. We can better honor their commitment by ensuring that a new generation of brothers carries on the work for another hundred years. In some small way, then, it is my hope that this publication will help to fuel inspiration for those who follow in our footsteps.

With Harmony, Friendship, and Benevolence,

Jed R. Brandes
Chairman, Board of Directors
September 16, 2017

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IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A. D. 1917

AN ACT

TO INCORPORATE THE TOURO FRATERNAL ASSOCIATION.

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

Section 1. Jacob A. Eaton, Philip C. Joslin, Joseph Kroll, Nathan J. Nelson, Peter Marcus, Aaron I. Friedman, Benjamin I. Sass, Max Sugarman, Jerome F. Gunther, Abraham L. Jacobs and Sol. S. Bromson, their associates and successors are hereby constituted a body corporate by the name of Touro Fraternal Association for the purpose of enabling the members thereof to unite in mutual aid and promoting beneficial objects for social, literary and charitable purposes and to issue mortuary benefit certificates to its members with all the privileges and powers, and subject to all the duties and liabilities set forth in Chapter 803 of the Public Laws and of any act in amendment thereof or in addition thereto, unless otherwise provided in this charter.

Sec. 2. Said corporation may do business as a single society or by the lodge system as it may choose, and if choosing to do business by the lodge system it may do so with such number of lodges as it may deem best; it may issue certificates of mortuary benefit for five hundred dollars or more each; and may organize with such number of members as it may deem best, and this organization shall be deemed complete with the filing with the insurance commissioner of a list of its officers and members, and the statement that every one of its members has paid one month's dues in accordance with the rates provided by law. Said corporation shall not be required to file a bond with the insurance commissioner as provided in Section 12 of Chapter 803 of the Public Laws, passed at the January Session, A.D. 1912.

Sec. 3. This act shall take effect from and after its passage.

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

PROVIDENCE.

I HEREBY CERTIFY the foregoing to be a true copy of the original Act approved by His Excellency the Governor on the 17th day of April in the year 1917.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the State of Rhode Island, this 19th day of April in the year 1917.

**“Congratulations to Touro Fraternal Association
for reaching its centennial”**

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**Best Wishes to the
Touro Fraternal Association
on your
Centennial Anniversary
1918-2018**

U.S. Senator Jack Reed

Paid for by the Committee for Jack Reed



Touro's Founding Father: Jacob A. Eaton

By Bill Troberman

Jacob A. Eaton, the Founding Father and first Chairman of the Board of Touro Fraternal Association, was a Roumanian Jew by birth. Born in Baia, Roumania, in 1871, he was educated in Germany and served in the Roumanian Cavalry. He arrived in Providence in 1895 on a business errand from Brooklyn, N.Y. and liked the city so much he settled here and became a naturalized citizen in 1899.

Alarmed at the abuses of national fraternal organizations by the long delays in payments of death benefits to those in need, Eaton obtained a charter for Touro Fraternal Association from the R.I. General Assembly on April 17, 1917. Members of the Star of Rhode Island Lodge, Order Brith Abraham, formed the nucleus of the new organization.

Eaton selected "Touro" to honor one of the oldest and most respected Jewish families in Rhode Island history, the same family which helped to establish America's first synagogue in Newport.

Known to his friends as Jake, Eaton served as the first Touro Chairman of the Board of Directors from 1918 to 1921. He saw the needs of the Jewish immigrants coming to Rhode Island and decided to help families get more integrated into society.

According to a biography, "Eaton was a man of strong integrity and vast generosity, often fulfilling the Torah's commandments to feed the hungry and clothe the naked."

In the first year of Touro's existence, a severe influenza epidemic hit the Northeast. The large number of deaths to its members obliged Touro to resort to borrowing funds to pay the death benefits. However,

its credit was so good that the emergency was met and ever since, Touro's funds have steadily increased.

Eaton settled in the old Third Ward in the North End of Providence and began his political career as a member of the ward's Republican Committee. Shortly thereafter, he became its chairman.

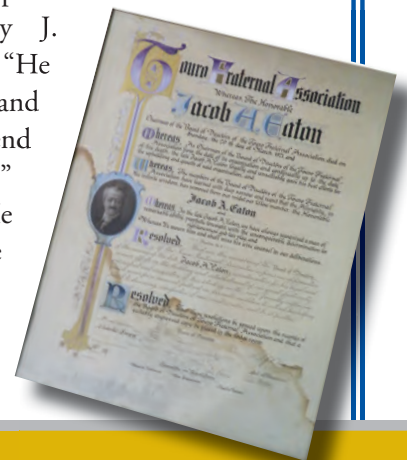
In 1907, he was elected as the first Jewish member of the state's legislature by representing Providence's Seventh District. As a member of the House of Representatives, he was the clerk of the Committee on Fisheries. He lost a close election in 1909, but in 1911 he was again elected and held the Representative seat until his death in 1921.

A smoker who said he would fall asleep with a cigarette between his fingers and would awaken as it burned his skin, Eaton was stricken on March 19, 1921 and died the next day at his home on Orms Street in Providence at the age of 49.

The *Providence Journal* reported that his 1921 funeral was the biggest for a public man in Rhode Island since 1910. Mounted police led the way, as the Governor, Congressmen, General Assembly members and the regular people participated.

Said Governor Emery J. San Souci at his funeral, "He was of broad mind, liberal and charitable in his views, a friend of the poor and unfortunate."

His tombstone says "He lived for his Fellow Men. He died in their Service."



TOURO TIMELINE

1917—

■ April 17, 1917:

An act to incorporate the Touro Fraternal Association is passed by the Rhode Island General Assembly.

*Congratulations
Touro on your 100th Anniversary*



Temple Beth-El



**Congratulations
Touro Fraternal Association
on its 100th Anniversary**

*Speaker Nicholas A. Mattiello
and the
R.I. House of Representatives*



Arthur Poulten: Board Chairman for 12 Years, Oversees Great Changes

By Larry Berman

Arthur Poulten, in his 12 years as chairman of the Board of Directors, oversaw a period of dynamic change and growth for Touro Fraternal Association.

He was elected chairman in 1989 at a time when Touro was acquiring its new – and present – home on Rolfe Street in Cranston, and he remained the chair until 2001.

Poulten worked closely with Bob Miller, who chaired the Building Committee, in spearheading the effort to obtain the former U.S. Post Office, which built a new site next door. Touro closed the deal for approximately \$300,000, and then invested an additional \$150,000 in renovations, according to Poulten.

“Finding a permanent home changed everything for us,” said Poulten. “We were very much a vagabond organization, but now we had a home. This allowed us to become much more of a professional organization. Without a true home,

we were more of a social organization. Now we were able to host events like having monthly speakers and we focused

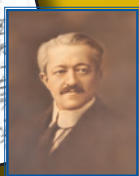
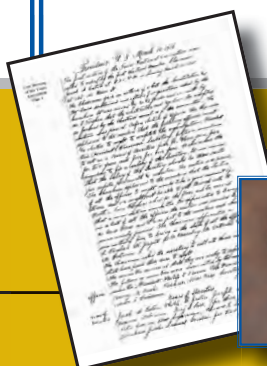
on being much more community-minded and charitable. This gave us a new focus.”

Poulten said he was most proud of the fact that Touro’s funds swelled by four times the amount during his 12 years as chair. Other accomplishments he cited during his tenure were doubling the mortuary benefits and tripling the sick benefits for members, while also doubling the amount of money devoted to interest-free student loans and scholarships for the children of members. Touro even debuted on the Internet near the end of his tenure.

“I am not taking the credit, but I am proud that I was able to get people to work together and we had many outstanding achievements,” he humbly stated. “We had a great nucleus of guys who put in a lot of time and effort. I was able to get many members active and get stuff done, for which we received a lot of recognition in the community.”

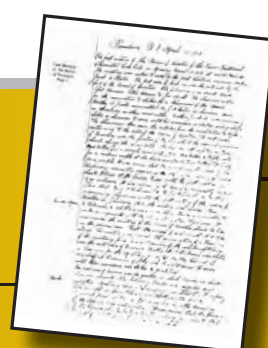
As he looks back fondly at his 55 years as a member, he recalls that he served as president

continued on page 14 - Poulten



■ March 10, 1918:

Touro Fraternal organized by Jacob A. Eaton at a Sunday meeting at 128 North Main St., Providence, at 8:25 p.m. Philip V. Marcus was chosen the first president.



■ March 11, 1918:

First meeting of the board of directors.



Poulten - continued from page 13

of the association for the 50th anniversary commemoration and was the chairman of the board for the 75th anniversary. Unfortunately, he is unable to attend the 100th gala, but is sending in a special letter.

"In 1967 we had a great dinner-dance at the old Colony Motor Hotel with about 350 people attending. I remember Governor John Chafee shook every hand in the room," Poulten said. "The 75th was at the same place we're holding the centennial, but it was called the Holiday Inn at the Crossings then. Governor Bruce Sundlun spoke and we had nearly 300 people who had a great time."

Another major change that occurred under Poulten's watch as the board chairman took place in 1990 when Touro created two separate lodges, Harmony and Friendship.

"We ran into a little trouble with the IRS," he said with a laugh. "This was a creative way to meet our tax obligations. We worked on this for about a year. The board had to make some important decisions, and we created new bylaws. It took a lot of work, particularly by Andy Sholes who represented us."

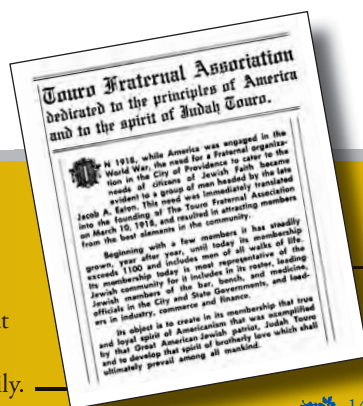
Poulten said some of his greatest memories as a Touro brother revolved around board meetings, both those he chaired and many he participated in as a board member.

"We had some heated meetings with shouting matches at times. But by the end of meetings, the guys were always joking and there were no hard feelings," he recalled fondly. "What happens at board meeting stays at board meetings!"

During his tenure as chairman, the board increased in size from 15 to 18 members.

"With the growth of the organization, we needed more board members to handle the many new responsibilities," he

continued on page 15 - Poulten



■ **June 9, 1918:** First social event held at "Lincoln Reservation," now known as Lincoln Woods, for members and family.

■ **April 19, 1922:** Committee gets Board of Directors approval that word "protection" be substituted instead of word "harmony," so it now will be "friendship, protection and benevolence." Touro membership voted to turn down the change.

Poulten - continued from page 14

stated. "I'm especially proud of our focus on community giving. As just one example, when I was chairman, we provided badly needed automatic defibrillators to many fire departments throughout the state."

Community involvement was one of many advancements made under his leadership. Poulten chuckles when he related the "old time" stories about Touro as a social organization back in the 1960s.

"We had a lot of what we called 'smokers' and stag parties," recalled Poulten, who became a member in May 1962. "We had pool tables and regular poker nights. Once a year we would have a Monte Carlo Night with roulette wheels, craps and other casino games. We were able to get a license for those things back then. In the '60s, anything that had to do with gambling was a big draw. We called it funny money!"

He said the former home at the corner of Niagara and Congress streets in Providence was a "white elephant – a tremendous mistake. We would have a hard time getting people to come to meetings there because it was in a bad neighborhood. Then we rented space on Reservoir Avenue in Providence and we only had two rooms – one was an office and the other had two poker tables. Getting the building on Rolfe Street was the best thing we could have done."

"It required a tremendous amount of work when we first took it over on Rolfe Street and Nate Lury supervised everything," he added. "The building was under his jurisdiction from the time it opened."

Moving into the new home was one of many achievements from 1989 to 2001 for Touro Fraternal Association. It was a time of incredible



change under the steady leadership of Board Chairman Arthur Poulten.

Now 82 years old, he moved with his wife Beverly in 2011 to Burlington, Mass. to live near their son David, daughter-in-law Winnie and granddaughter Sabrina. Until then, he had lived his entire life in Providence and Cranston, and he retired after a long career

in advertising, marketing and public relations.

"Arthur Poulten was the consummate organizational professional who contributed so much to Touro's success," said Bob Miller, who served as the board vice chairman throughout most of Arthur's tenure as chairman. "He understood the necessities of a men's fraternal association and what it took to make it function. Quite simply, he knew how to get things done."



■ **October 11, 1922:**
100th regular meeting.

■ **December 14, 1927:**
10th anniversary banquet held.

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Bob Miller: 40 Years of Leadership

By Larry Berman

Nearly 40 years ago, Ben Rabinowitz offered a suggestion that changed Bob Miller's life forever. Ben encouraged Bob to get involved in Rhode Island's Jewish community by joining Touro Fraternal Association.

Just 22 years old and fresh out of Simmons School of Mortuary in Syracuse, NY, where he earned a degree in mortuary science, Bob had just moved here to work at Max Sugarman Funeral Home in Providence. Ben was the director of Lincoln Park Cemetery and urged Bob to take a look at all that Touro had to offer. He was initiated in 1978 at the former Eileen Darling's Restaurant in Seekonk.



The rest, as they say, is history. And Bob Miller's name is etched as an influential leader in enabling Touro to now celebrate its 100th anniversary.

"I've sat in every chair and done every job," said Miller, who was the Chairman of the Board of Directors for 12 years. "My family will tell you that I've given up a lot for Touro over these many years. But I would do it all over again. It has been a great ride."

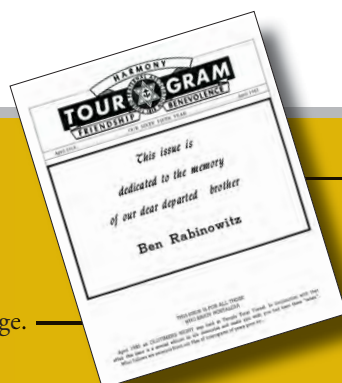
From 2001 to 2013, he chaired 144 consecutive board meetings, never missing one.

"That's a record that no one will ever smash," he said with a satisfactory grin. "As I look back at being chairman, I never asked anyone to do anything I wasn't able to do myself. There were things that needed to get done and I made sure they did."

He's proud that he was able to challenge others, ask questions, and even ruffle some feathers.

"It's lonely at the top. Someone has to make decisions, and I had no problem doing that," said Miller. "I never took an action for Touro before the board was made aware of it, discussed it, and approved it. At the end of the day, we were united as brothers and by the principles of harmony, friendship and benevolence."

continued on page 18 - Miller



- **March 18, 1931:**
Adopted a constitutional amendment to allow associate membership over 45 years of age.

- **February 11, 1940:**
Board of Directors votes to have a newsletter published to be called "Tour-O-Gram."



Miller - continued from page 17



As chairman, he oversaw an investment portfolio that grew two-and-a-half times the amount from when he succeeded Arthur Poulten as chairman until he decided it was time to step aside four years ago. Looking back, there were some great challenges along the way.

“We survived a major downturn in the market very comfortably,” he said proudly. “In 2008, we took a significant hit in income as a result of dividend losses, but we were able to implement strategies to sustain ourselves. I was fortunate that Milton Bronstein was chair of the Investment Committee, and he and the committee members did a great job getting us through tough times.”

Keeping Touro financially strong was one of Bob Miller’s many achievements. He cites several others:

- The registration of a trademark for Touro and its logos to protect our name in the age of Facebook and other emerging social media.
- Contributions made to Operation Moses, which supplied the troops overseas with kosher meals, and support for many other charitable causes such as Miriam Hospital, Hasbro Children’s Hospital and the Jewish War Veterans, as well as providing Friday night Shabbat services at the former Jewish Home for the Aged.
- The expansion of the student financial aid program.
- Increasing the available plots at Lincoln Park Cemetery.
- The maintenance and expansion of Touro’s home, including upgrading technology in the office.

Our Rolfe Street permanent home is one of Miller’s greatest sources of pride. As Chairman of the New Home Committee, he was instrumental in the negotiations and purchase of the former post office in 1989.

“We closed the deal at a meeting we held at the old Post Road Inn in North Kingstown because we didn’t really have any space to hold meetings,” he recalled. “At the time, we rented a small office on Reservoir Avenue that only had room for a couple of desks, a conference table and a couple of card tables. All the social events were held at outside places like Vasa Hall, Archie’s Tavern, American Legion halls. Our board meetings were at restaurants all around the area.”



Continued on page 19 - Miller

- **March 24, 1943:**
25th Anniversary dinner at Weinstein’s Restaurant on Lake Pearl in nearby Wrentham, Mass.
This also was the 360th regular meeting.



- **May 6, 1946:**
Touro files claim for income tax exemption. On July 7, 1946, the U.S. Treasury Dept. sent a letter notifying Touro it is revoking its decision of August 19, 1935, to exempt Touro from federal income tax, saying the organization had to pay taxes. This was finally settled for good 44 years later in favor of Touro on March 28, 1990.

Miller - continued from page 18



Securing the new home was one of many tasks that Miller successfully fulfilled. His first title was Faithful Guide, and he served on a number of committees before ascending to President of the association from 1982 to 1985. Back then, there was only one lodge instead of the present two. He also served as the vice chairman of the Board of Directors from 1990 to 2001, when he moved to the top spot. After 23 years as either vice chairman or chairman, he still remains a voting board member.

But all the accomplishments aside – the new home, the financially sound investments, the enhanced charitable giving – his real pride and joy was cooking meals for his Touro brothers.

“I was the grill-master, especially in the early years,” said Miller. “We brought in half of a 55-gallon drum for a grill that we still use today.”

Even with all his other official duties, Miller enjoyed cooking hamburgers and hot dogs as a fall meeting tradition, and he began the wildly popular steak fry that members enjoy every June.

In between, he would cook meatloaf dinners and American chop suey at regular monthly meetings.

“Nate Lury and I handled much of the cooking duties for many, many years,” he pointed out. “Nate took care of our whole building, and with him in charge, the kitchen was always in great shape.”

Raised in Hazleton, PA. by parents who kept a kosher home, Miller understood the importance of maintaining a kosher kitchen at Touro hall. His passion for cooking extends to his home in Warwick, where he regularly cooks on a fire-pit in his backyard and utilizes two smokers for his meats.

Miller’s other hobbies include taking long rides on his Harley Davidson motorcycle or tooling around in his 2009 Z06 Corvette, which he brings to car shows.

He somehow has also found time to be a member of the Redwood Masonic Lodge. Like Touro, he is fast approaching his 40th year as a Mason.

Miller left the mortuary business behind in 1984 for the world of finance. For the next 16 years he worked for the National Federation of Independent Business, including serving as a regional manager. He was also a franchise owner for Entrepreneur Source. Since 2007, he

has been executive vice president for CMIT Solutions, a managed service provider for the computer industry, based in Cranston.

Now that he no longer chairs the Touro board, which kept him at meetings and social functions two or three nights of nearly every week, Miller has more time to

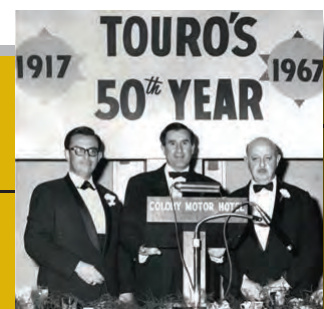
continued on page 20 - Miller



SOCIAL CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER
 Oct. 10 – Past Presidents’ Nite and Old Time Vaudeville Show.
 Oct. 24 – Initiation.
 Nov. 14 – First Nomination of Officers and voting on Amendment to the Constitution.
 Nov. 25 – Touro Dinner Dance at the Narragansett Hotel Ballroom.
 Nov. 28 – Second and Final Nomination of Officers.

November 16, 1958:
 40th anniversary dinner held at Narragansett Hotel Ballroom. Price \$15 per couple for Touro members only.

October 28, 1967:
 50th anniversary bash at the Colony Motor Hotel.





Miller - continued from page 19

spend with his wife Debra, his daughter Marissa, a school teacher in Warwick, and visiting his son Marc, a Touro member who lives in San Francisco and works for OTTO Freight, a division of Uber, as a senior credit manager.

“My kids were raised with Touro,” Miller said with fondness. “I’m lucky they understood how much Touro means to me.”

And what does the Centennial mean to Bob Miller?

“It’s monumental,” he said. “I’m so proud Touro has continued to sustain itself for 100 years.”

And Bob Miller has played a significant part of expanding Touro’s legacy for the past 40 years.

His successor, Jed Brandes, appreciates all that Bob offers to Touro.

“Amongst Bob’s outstanding attributes is a razor sharp clarity of thought. Combined with decades of Touro experience, this made Bob

a very steady hand at the wheel of Touro,” said Brandes. “As Chairman, he was always prepared and always knew the correct course of action. Touro was always in his heart, and he stood ready to act in the best interests of the association and its membership. It is little wonder that Touro thrived under his stewardship.

“If there were a Mount Rushmore of Touro leaders,” Brandes concluded, “Bob’s image would surely be enshrined there.”



July 14, 1971:

Board of directors approves amendments to constitution to change minimum age for membership down to 18 and regular meetings now will be once a month except in July and August. Previously, Touro members met twice a month.

■ **September 10, 1989:** Special Sunday meeting is held to dedicate our new home on Rolfe Street, Cranston.



Touro Fraternal Association®



Directors & Officers 2017-2018

First Row: Peter Silverman, treasurer, Friendship Lodge; David Mossberg, treasurer, Harmony Lodge; Richard Levenson, president, Harmony Lodge; Michael Smith, director; Steven Waldman, director/Association treasurer; Stuart Solup, secretary, Harmony Lodge; Barry Schiff, director/Association chaplain.

Second Row: Andrew Liss, director; Steven Hopfenberg, vice president, Harmony Lodge; Alan Lury, vice chairman, Board of Directors; Jed Brandes, chairman, Board of Directors; Robert Miller, chairman emeritus, Board of Directors; Andrew Lamchick, director.

Third Row: David Altman, secretary, Friendship Lodge; Ried Redlich, director/faithful guide; Barry Ackerman, Stevan Labush, directors; Jeffrey Stoloff, vice president, Friendship Lodge; Jeffrey Davis, Bruce Weisman, Michael Levin, Norman Dinerman, directors.

Not Shown: Arthur Poulten, chairman emeritus, Board of Directors; Andrew Gilstein, Nathan Lury, Steven White, directors; Max Guarino, president, Friendship Lodge; Mitchell Cohen, Association inside guard; David Weisman, inside guard, Harmony Lodge; Jeffrey Harpel, inside guard, Friendship Lodge; Bruce Wasser, Association secretary.



■ April 2, 1990:

Board of Directors hold special meeting to set up lodges. Harmony will be 029 zip code except 20; Friendship will be 028 and 02920 and out of state zip codes. As membership expanded, this rule allowed leeway to keep numbers in the lodges fairly even.

■ February 13, 1991:

Board of Directors approves playing of National Anthem and Hatikvah before each meeting.




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2018



Jed Brandes: Leading Touro into a Second Century

By Larry Berman

In May 2000, Jed Brandes was strolling around an Israel Independence Day block party outside the Jewish Community Center. He happened upon the Touro Fraternal Association booth manned by Arthur Poulten, the Chairman of the Board of Directors at the time.

"I live in Cranston only about a half-mile from Touro's home, and I would see the building when I was at the Post Office or at Durfee's Hardware, but I never knew a thing about the organization," recalled Brandes. "I assumed

that with 'Touro' in the name, it had something to do with Jews. Arthur was an effective salesman and he got me interested."

Not only did Brandes soon join Touro, but 13 years later he was elected as the Chairman of the Board, only the 13th man to hold that title.

"I've benefitted from Touro beyond my wildest imagination," he said. "My life has been totally transformed. I have lived harmony, friendship and benevolence."

It didn't start out that way when he first joined. He was initiated with Barry Schiff, a neighbor, but didn't really know any of the other brothers.

He described himself as an "absentee member" in the first few years before he received a call from Steve Dinerman. Friendship Lodge was looking for a treasurer, and given his background in the financial service industry, Jed was recommended.

"I'm not going to say 'no' when someone asks," he remembered.

So launched the Touro career of Jed Brandes, who served two years as treasurer, two years as vice president and another two years as president, all of Friendship Lodge. In 2007, he ran and was elected to the Board of Directors.

Through his involvement in leadership positions, attending social functions, and playing in Touro's golf league, he made dozens of new friends and became immersed in Touro affairs. Bob Miller, who succeeded Poulten as Chairman of the Board, identified Brandes as someone with potential to handle leadership responsibilities.

"I am truly grateful to Bob for putting me on various committees and giving me the opportunity to learn so much from him," said Brandes. "In addition to serving on the regularly functioning

continued on page 24- Brandes



■ September 12, 1992:

The 75th anniversary dinner is held at Holiday Inn at the Crossings, site of this 100th fete. A total of 278 attended.



■ October 15, 1994:

Touro agrees to fund a \$25,000 endowment for books, videos and other supplies for the library at Hasbro Children's Hospital.



Brandes - continued from page 23

committees, he had me chairing the nominations and election committees. When Touro needed to re-evaluate its investment management and the kitchen functions, he created an executive committee and asked me to serve.”

In 2012, Miller gave a year’s advance notice that he was ready to turn over the chairmen’s gavel. Brandes was one of five candidates who expressed interest, and all had the opportunity to run a board meeting and display their leadership capabilities.

In true Jed Brandes fashion, he took this challenge very seriously.

“I actively campaigned,” he stated. “I met with every single board member and asked them about their interests, their concerns, and how we could work together to benefit Touro.”

Now in his fifth year as Board Chairman, he is not concerned with serving the 10 years necessary to gain lifetime board voting rights, which both Poulten and Miller attained as 12-year chairmen.

“I am in awe of what both Art and Bob accomplished,” said Brandes humbly. “But, it is up to the board to determine who is best fit to lead the association. I am happy to serve for as long as they

think I’m the right man for the job. I just want to do what is right for the association.”

One of the most time-consuming responsibilities has been serving as chairman leading up to the Centennial celebration. It has meant attending committee meetings three or four times most weeks at the hall.

“The centennial has taken up a huge amount of energy and attention,” he stated. “I view this as a landmark undertaking for Touro.”

In preparation for a year’s worth of activities, Brandes knew Touro’s home was looking dated and worked closely with Nate Lury, the decades-long former House Chairman, and Steve White, the current chairman, to oversee extensive renovations to the hall, lobby, and roof.

continued on page 25 - Brandes



■ **December 25, 1995:**
Start of a new annual family event on this date for members: dinner at a Chinese restaurant and tickets to a movie.

■ **February 14, 1996:** Board of directors votes to annually allocate \$3,000 to underwrite the cost of a high school student to participate in the March of Living, a two-week educational experience in Israel and Poland. The first recipient is Tali Minkin of Providence.



Brandes - continued from page 24

"I want our home to be a source of pride for the next few decades," he said. "It has taken a few years, and we're not finished yet. But I'm thrilled with how beautiful it now looks."

Brandes, 58, still finds the time to devote countless hours to Touro in addition to traveling to Worcester every day to work for The Feingold Companies, a small financial services firm. He handles everything from wealth management to insurance planning and 401(k) administration.

That is a big departure from his first job after graduating from the University of Pennsylvania. He pursued a career in filmmaking in his native New York City, where he worked on commercials, documentaries, and feature films. But he suffered nerve damage in his hand which required surgery, and decided that the 100-hour work weeks were overbearing. After working in sales for his dad for a few years, he followed his girlfriend, Carolyn, to Rhode Island.

continued on page 28- Brandes



May 27, 1998:

Touro marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel by purchasing \$50,000 of Israel Bonds.

May 24, 1999: First annual Touro Golf Tournament at the Kirkbrae Country Club. It rained after some members and guests only completed as many as seven holes and a rain date was set for Oct. 18 that year. That date was a complete washout.





Touro Guest Speake



rs through the Years

Brandes - continued from page 25

He grew up 10 blocks from Carolyn in Queens and knew her brother growing up. When they met in 1990, she was a Brown University graduate and owned a condo in North Providence, while Brandes was renting an apartment in Manhattan.

"We were dating via Amtrak and my plan was to woo her and move back to New York," he recalled. "But it was a tough market and we couldn't sell her condo. Like Joseph, I was a sojourner in a strange land. And one day, they will have to carry my bones back to New York. But for now, Rhode Island is my home."

He saw an ad in the Providence Journal for a sales position at John Hancock, and so began his career in financial services before moving to The Feingold Companies.

He and Carolyn have raised two sons, Daniel, a senior at Williams College, and Joshua, a freshman at Lehigh University. Both, he pointed out proudly, are Touro members.

"I love Touro and I just want to give back," said Brandes reflectively. "It is an honor to be the chair during the Centennial year, and I want to make sure that Touro thrives for another 100 years."



■ **November 2, 1999:**

Touro donates its first three AEDs (Automatic External Defibrillator) to fire departments in Cranston, Warwick and Providence.



■ **July 17, 2000:**

First full Touro Golf Tournament. After two rainouts previous year, tournament launches with more than 100 golfers at Kirkbrae Country Club and raises almost \$5,000 (including \$1,000 from chairman of board Art Poulten's discretionary fund) to Rhode Island Breast Cancer Coalition.

The Quest for a Permanent Touro Hall

By Bill Troberman



The first Touro meeting was held at 128 North Main St., Providence, which is now a yoga studio

The road from Touro Hall at **128 North Main Street** in Providence 100 years ago, to 45 Rolfe Street in Cranston, where we are today, was long and well worth the ride.

Touro Fraternal Association, organized on March 10, 1918, at North Main Street, went through several sites before reaching our present building, the former Rolfe Street Post Office, which built a new facility next door.

A century ago, Touro was convened by Jacob A. Eaton, with Philip V. Marcus elected as the first president. The Board of Directors immediately began the search for a home. In those early days, with personal ownership of automobiles not as ubiquitous as today, the location was important. With streetcars the main mode of transportation, a downtown site was readily accessible for just about everyone.

Touro moved a year-and-a-half later, right nearby to **24 North Main Street**. Touro obtained a three-year

lease at \$600 per year, though it needed to purchase furniture for another \$600. In addition, Touro paid 50 cents per hour for heat after 6 p.m. Touro sub-leased the hall to other groups, which brought in an income of \$145 per month.



Now owned by RISD, Touro used to meet at 24 North Main Street, Providence

However, Touro's board of directors were not happy with renting – and sharing — its headquarters. At its May 1923 meeting, the board appointed a committee to look into buying its first building. For nearly the next two years, the talk at every meeting was about buying a building, including one on Custom House Street that was turned down.

In January 1925, after an inability to find a suitable hall, the members voted to form a corporation and issue bonds to raise the needed funds to purchase a building. In 1926, five shares of stock were sold for \$100 and

continued on page 30 - Hall



■ March 18, 2001:

Constitution and by-law amendments approved to increase the age limit for regular members from 45 to 52. Age limit hike was approved because board felt people are staying healthier and living longer.

■ February 1, 2003

Touro launches its website:
www.tourofraternal.org.



Touro's hall on Mathewson Street is now a parking lot

Hall - continued from page 29

members were urged to obtain subscriptions for the building fund. However, it never worked out and Touro owning its own site would not come to fruition for many more years.

Touro continued to rent, first at **63 Washington Street**, which present-day members may recall as Winkler's Steak House before it was torn down for the Biltmore Parking Garage. Then in 1933, it was on to **88 Mathewson Street** for a hall on the second floor, which was leased for \$1,300 per year.

The war years kept Touro Hall there, but members still wanted their own building and even looked into

buying the old Temple Beth-El building on Broad Street, but decided it wasn't a good fit.

In January 1963, Touro put down a \$500 deposit on the Swedish Workmen's Hall at 55 Chestnut St., but found it needed a new elevator at a cost of \$10,000 to \$15,000.

Finally, Touro purchased the Jewish War Veterans Post 23 Building, on the corner of **Congress Avenue** and **Niagara Street** in Providence, later in 1963. This was Touro's first home purchase, only five years shy of its 50th anniversary. Touro bought it for \$17,500, but there was a reason for the low price. The building needed a lot



Touro leased space at the Nortek Building, 815 Reservoir Avenue, Cranston

of work and renovations were estimated to cost \$35,000 to \$50,000.

The late Judah Rosen remembered, "It was like given to us. It was a condemned school house, that's what it was. We would pour money into it and clean the place up and I remember there were times we would go down and paint the hall. It outlived its usefulness."

The neighborhood, too, was becoming a problem. So, it was time to move on.

An offer to buy the real estate by the Providence Fire Union Local 799 fell through in March 1974. But in December 1974, Touro approved the sale of the site for \$60,000 to the International Longshoremens's Local 1329.

Touro immediately returned to leasing space, this time in the Nortek Building at **815 Reservoir Avenue**

continued on page 31- Hall



Touro's home from 1963 to 1974 was at the corner of Congress Avenue and Niagara Street in Providence



- **May 19, 2004:**
New badge board for members is put into use at a meeting for the first time.



- **September 21, 2005:**
Nate Lury, the House Committee chairman for decades, is celebrated at a "Man of the House" Roast.

Hall - continued from page 30

in Cranston for \$450 a month. Our organization remained there until 1981, when Nortek informed the board that it would not renew the lease. Touro moved to



Touro met from 1981 to 1989 at 960 Reservoir Avenue, Cranston

a nearby space in the Voccola Building at **960 Reservoir Avenue** in Cranston, leasing it for \$382 per month.

The search then intensified to purchase a permanent home in 1982 and a New Headquarters Committee was formed. The committee visited several sites over the next five years but nothing was either suitable or centrally located for the majority of members, which was why the former East Greenwich Fraternal Order of Police Hall was rejected.

Finally, Touro learned in early 1988 that the former Post Office Building on **Rolfe Street** was on the market. Bob Miller, who chaired the New Headquarters Committee, closed the deal on behalf of Touro for \$305,000. Touro then invested \$115,000 for renovations and \$15,000 for kitchen equipment.

At long last, Touro had a permanent home. It was dedicated in October 1989, and it has been our home ever since.

As we begin the Centennial celebration, the Touro Board of Directors realized that the home needed sprucing up. In the last two years, the roof was repaired,



Jack Reed, then a State Senator, speaks at the 1989 dedication of Touro's Rolfe Street home

the hall has been painted and the carpeting, ceiling and lighting have been replaced, while new furniture and window treatments have been purchased for the lobby. Additional renovations are ongoing.

"We want our home to be a source of pride for many decades into the future," said Board Chairman Jed Brandes. "This is our home."

"Our building continues to be the hub we envisioned," Bob Miller reflected. "We have maintained a focal point for monthly meetings, committee meetings, special events and a hall available for family functions for our members. It really is the place for us to call home."



■ **February 13, 2008:**

Community Involvement Committee begins giving AEDs to all local synagogues and temples, bringing the total given locally thus far to 33.



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*Touro Fraternal Association would like to acknowledge
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Andrew Lamchick, *past chairman*
Barry Shaw, *past chairman*

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Adam Halpern	Jeffrey Stoloff
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- **May 21, 2008:**
Members dedicate offices on second floor of our building as "The Gerald D. Hodosh Memorial Administrative Office" in honor of Gerry's 43 years of dedicated service as association treasurer.



SEVENTY-FIFTH



May 20, 2009:
Touro forms golf league and the first day of play is held at Laurel Lane Country Club.



September 15, 2010:
Judah Rosen, Touro's chaplain since 1978, is saluted at a roast in his honor.



ANNIVERSARY



September 19, 2012: Touro pays tribute to Milton Bronstein, former long-time chairman of the Investment Committee, while celebrating his 95th birthday.



September 16, 2017: Touro celebrates its 100th year with a Centennial Gala at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Warwick.





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Our Very Best Wishes
Harriet and Alan Halsband

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Congratulations on Touro's Centennial & Happy New Year
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(1927-1940)



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(1941, 1946-1947)



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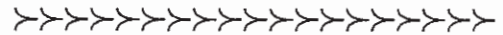
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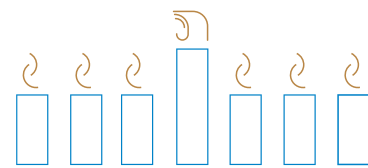
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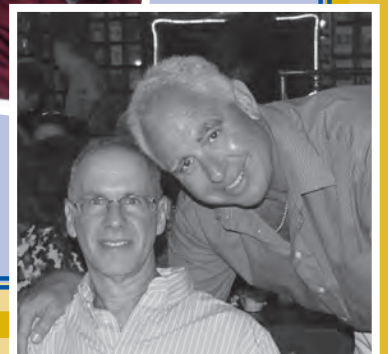


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