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**Collection 356**  
**Albert B. Kahn (1900-1983)**  
**Collection**

**By Ellen Callahan**  
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## **Biography**

Albert B. Kahn was born in Trenton on March 6, 1900, son of Samuel M. Kahn and Emma Kahn. Albert was a 1921 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and received his law degree from Harvard. In 1924 he established his law practice in Trenton and eventually formed the partnership of Kahn, Schildkraut and Levy.

Aside from his work as an attorney, Albert Kahn was active in his community. He was a member and secretary to the lay advisory board of St. Frances Medical Center, on the board of managers of the New Jersey State Prison and a member of the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission. He also served on the county commission that established Mercer County Community College (MCCC) in 1966. He joined MCCC's board that year and continued to serve until his death in 1983.

Mr. Kahn was also active in Trenton's Jewish Community. In 1930, he became secretary of the newly founded Jewish Federation of Trenton and continued to serve in a variety of offices over the years. He was a board member of the Sinai Temple Men's Club and the Jewish Community Center (JCC).

Kahn was also one of the founders of the Jewish Community Center Association (JCCA) in 1951. The JCCA was a group of JCC members who joined together to help realize the creation of a new JCC campus in Ewing to replace the aging facility in downtown Trenton. In 1954 close to 40 acres in Ewing Township were purchased as the new site and Louis I. Kahn [no relation], who went on to be one of America's most influential architects, was hired. While Kahn did design the Bath House and Day Camp Pavilions as well as plans for the main building, only the Bath House and Pavilion were built. Lack of funding and disagreement among the planners led to Louis I. Kahn's dismissal in 1959. The main building was then designed by architects Kelly and Gruzen,

and dedicated in October of 1962. Albert B. Kahn remained a leader of the Association, acting as co-signer for checks coming from its special account.<sup>1</sup>

Albert B. Kahn died in Trenton at age 83 on April 23, 1983. He was survived by his wife of 39 years, Catherine Loll Kahn, his sons, Albert Jr., Edward, William, and Joseph, and four grandchildren.

### **Scope and Contents Notes**

This collection includes material from Albert B. Kahn's law practice from 1930 to 1945 including correspondence, invoices, and receipts. Since he practiced law for almost 59 years, these 5 folders of materials must be considered a fraction of what his files would have been. The second portion of the collection are various files regarding Kahn's activities as a member of the Jewish Community Center Association (JCCA) and efforts to help build a new Jewish Community Center in Ewing. These files, which span from 1951 to 1974 include information of the Association's relationship with Louis I. Kahn, discussions of requirement for the new building, accounts of pledges for the building and various bank accounts held by the Association. Again, given the complexity of the JCC project, it is assumed that this material is only a small part of the documentation that was created.

### **Series Description:**

#### **Series 1. Law Office Correspondence, 1930-1949 [with gap]**

This series consist of incoming correspondence to Kahn from clients and other attorneys relating to litigation, real-estate transactions, estate fillings and the like. There are also a few summons and correspondence addressed to other individuals; it is assumed that these were forwarded to Kahn by clients for his follow-up. Two pieces of correspondence of interest concern the Trenton Shirt Manufacturing Co. The first dated April 1, 1944 is permission of the New Jersey State Selective Service giving Benjamin Vine a 4-month deferral from serving in the United States Army for his company to find an acceptable replacement for his mission-critical skills. Attached to this is a description from the owner (and Vine's father) Israel Vine of how Benjamin was brought up in the business and groomed to replace him. A second letter dated September 29, 1944 is from Benjamin Vine to Kahn complaining about how the War Labor Board rejected the company's request to increase the compensation of several key employees. In it, he describes the need for employees to work longer hours because so many others have entered the war effort.

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<sup>1</sup> The Center continued as a hub for activity for the next several decades, but by the 1990s, as more families moved to surrounding areas, membership and the physical conditions of the facility began to decline. Public funds were eventually raised to preserve the Bath House and in 2005, the JCC sold the property to Ewing Township and moved to West Windsor.

## **Series 2. Law Office Invoices and Receipts, undated, 1932-1945**

This series consist of invoices and receipts for goods, services, and tax payments. It appears in some cases these are payment made for clients and specific estates that Kahn was responsible for. For instance, in 1934 and 1935 there are several bills for properties on Edmund Street owned by I. C. Rednor & Company addressed care of Kahn. There are also many maintenance bills between 1936 and 1939 for a home owned by the Klinkowstein Estate.

## **Series 3. Law Office Cancelled Checks, 1939-1942 & 1964; Bank Books, 1943**

This is a small series of five cancelled checks and 1 bank book with only two entries.

## **Series 4. Law Office Miscellaneous**

This is a small series that includes: various business cards; a photostatic copy of a 1909 letter from S. E. Kaufman to Isaac Wood of Cambridge, Massachusetts regarding a rental property; a 1943 survey map of property of Fidelity Union Trust Company located on the corner of South Warren and East State Street in Trenton; a 1944 annual report of the United Building and Loan Association of Trenton; an undated description of the Mercer Pottery Company of Trenton that includes an aerial photograph of the plant; and an 8"x10" B&W photograph of the storefront of Stewart's which appears to have been a women's hat maker.

## **Series 5. Jewish Community Center Association, New Building – Louis I. Kahn File, 1951, 1955-1965**

This series contains copies of correspondence, meeting notices, minutes, and subcommittee reports and agreements regarding the Jewish Community Center Association's dealings with the Architect Louis I. Kahn in the planning the new Jewish Community Center (JCC) in Ewing. Included is a copy of what appears to be the Association's second organizational meeting of July 23, 1951 where they adopted their constitution and by-laws (not included in file) and elected officers. It also includes the May 1955 agreement with Louis I. Kahn for work on the Association's project. While Series 6 (see below) also concerns the building, and includes similar material, there is little overlap between the two files.

## **Series 6. Jewish Community Center Association, New Building File, 1955-1965**

This series contains correspondence, meeting notices, minutes, and subcommittee reports regarding the Jewish Community Associations activities in planning the Jewish Community Centers new building in Ewing. Unlike Series 5 above, these are all original documents, not copies. Included are minutes of the Association, its subcommittees, and joint meetings with the Jewish Federation. As stated above, there is little overlap between Series 5 and Series 6.

**Series 7. Jewish Community Centers Associations, New Building, Pledge Accounts, 1957-1968.**

This series consist of accounts of pledges made by individuals, organizations, and businesses in support of the building of the new JCC. The most comprehensive is a ledger (now disbound and foldered) covering 1957 to 1962. This ledger was kept in reverse chronological order. The second file in the series covers 1961 to 1968. Finally, there are miscellaneous materials dating from 1950 to 1964 which include some pledge lists, pledge cards and some correspondence regarding pledges.

**Series 8. Jewish Community Centers Associations, New Building, Invoices, 1963-1974**

This small series consists of invoices for the building including engineering, landscaping, and engraved signs.

**Series 9. Jewish Community Center Association, Banking Records**

This series consist of banking statements and related material for accounts held by the Trenton Jewish Community Association. Included are several bank books for general accounts held by the Association between 1958 and 1962 as well as statements for another general account (650-339-1) held at the 1<sup>st</sup> Trenton National Bank between 1961 and 1976. A “Special Account” (210-250-0) was also held at the 1<sup>st</sup> Trenton National Bank (which became the New Jersey National Bank) and was used to deposit pledge money. A third account (70-8396) was the Building Fund Account, which was used to pay contractors, consultants and repay the Jewish Federation of Trenton for loans given to the fund. This was held at the Broad Street National Bank.

**Container List**

Law Office Files

1. Law Office Correspondence, 1930, 1932-1933, 1935-1940
2. Law Office Correspondence, 1941-1946, 1949
3. Law Office Invoice and Receipts, 1932-1945
4. Law Office Cancelled Checks, 1939-1942 and Bank Book, 1943
5. Law Office Miscellaneous, no dates and 2909, 1943 & 1944

Jewish Community Center Association Files

6. New Center Building File - Louis I. Kahn, 1951-1960
7. New Center Building File, 1955-1965
8. New Center Building - Pledge Account, 1957-1962
9. New Center Building - Pledge Account, 1961-1968
10. New Center Building - Pledge Miscellaneous, no dates and 1950-1964
11. New Center Building - Invoices, 1963-1979

### Jewish Community Center Association Files (cont'd)

12. General Accounts – Savings Account Books: Stacy Savings Account #1893, 1958-1961; Stacy Savings Account #2817, 1961-1962; United States Savings and Loan Association of Trenton Account 22907, 1960-1961
13. General Account: check register, 1961-1964, 1976; Bank Statement, 9/17/1965;
14. Special Account: Banking Statements, 1965-1973
15. Special Account: Pledge Receipts and Corresponding Deposits, no date, 1965-1970
16. Special Account: Cancelled Checks, 1965-1971; Check Register, 1963-1964, 1966; and written account, 1962-1963; signatory authorization of Leon. M. Robinson, Albert B. Kahn and Robert Watkins, no date
17. Building Fund Account: Bank Statements, 1965-1974
18. Building Fund Account: Cancelled Checks, 1964-1974 and miscellaneous bank receipts, 1964-1972

### **Provenance**

Accession 2017.25; gift of Albert B. Kahn, III, grandson of Albert B. Kahn.

### **Processing Note**

The following items from accession 2017.25 have been cataloged as follows: school related ephemera has been added to the Junior 3 Collection; the Har Sinai Temple 1957 Centennial Commemorative Plate has been added to the Museum Collection.

### **Bibliography**

- “Albert B. Kahn is Dead at 83; Partner in Trenton Law Firm.” New York Times, 27 April 1983.
- Crabtree, Martin J. “Albert Kahn.” Communication to Ellen Callahan, 10 December 2020.
- Lavine, Beth H. “Trenton Mourned Kahn, Levine, Judge Goldman,” American Jewish Life, 16 December 1983
- Solomon, Susan G. Louis I. Kahn’s Trenton Jewish Community Center. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000.

### **Related Collections at Trenton Free Public Library**

Jewish Historical Society of Trenton Administrative Records and Historical Collections, (ca. 1880-2006)