



The Jewish Community Around North Broad Street (PA) (Images of America)

Allen Meyers

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The cradle of Jewish life in Philadelphia began with the establishment of the first synagogue, Mikveh Israel, in 1740. With the influx of many German Jews in the 1840s, the community expanded above Spring Garden Street into the Northern Liberties neighborhood. Urban settlement of Philadelphia's Jewish population during the last quarter of the nineteenth century shifted to North Broad Street when the economy improved for the city's residents after the Civil War. North Broad Street soon boasted two elegantly designed synagogues and the newly relocated Jewish Hospital from West Philadelphia.

The Jewish Community around North Broad Street weaves the tale of the Jewish community in this part of Philadelphia through a collection of rare and stunning images. The construction of the North Broad Street subway in the 1920s and the row house Jewish community known as Logan are parts of this story. The development of business districts led to a more cohesive north and northwest Jewish community that allowed for satellite Jewish enclaves to flourish, complete with their own synagogues, bakeries, kosher meat markets, and hundreds of other shops that served the general population. In the 1950s, new neighborhoods, such as Mount Airy and West Oak Lane, alleviated an acute housing shortage at a time when 110,000 Jews lived in north-central and northwest Philadelphia.

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