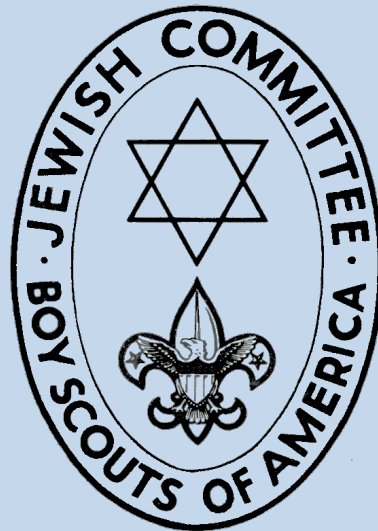


# **The Development of the Jewish Committee on Scouting in New York City**



# Development of the National Jewish Committee on Scouting

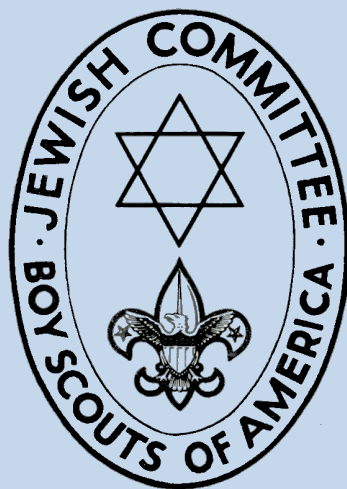
- **January, 1925** - Harry L. Glucksman of the Jewish Welfare Board played a vital role in the organization of the committee, recruiting Dr. Cyrus Adler of Dropsie College in Philadelphia to help.
- **November, 1926** - The National Jewish Committee on Scouting was organized with Dr. Adler elected its first Chairman.



*Harry L. Glucksman*



*Dr. Cyrus Adler*



# Involvement by Jewish Boys in the Boy Scouts of America

- Scouting was very popular nationwide with Jewish boys. According to the 1943 B.S.A. Annual Report, there were 60,000 Jews in Scouting, 3.75% of the total, with 834 Troops chartered by Jewish Institutions.
- One possible reason for this was that Jewish parents of foreign descent saw the B.S.A. as a way to “*Americanize*” their sons and integrate them into American society.



# Opportunity for Jewish Boys in New York City

- About 50% of the Jews in the United States at the time lived in or near New York City.
- A considerable number of N.Y.C. Scouts were Jewish, driving high attendance by Jewish Scouts at the Ten Mile River Scout Camps, operated by the Boy Scout Foundation of Greater New York.
- In order to satisfy the demand for kosher food, kosher kitchens were established at the Brooklyn Camps (1928) and the Bronx Camps (1929) as soon as they opened at T.M.R.

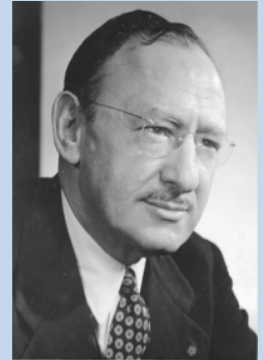


*A Jewish Scout at T.M.R.*



# Frank L. Weil and the Jewish Committee on Scouting

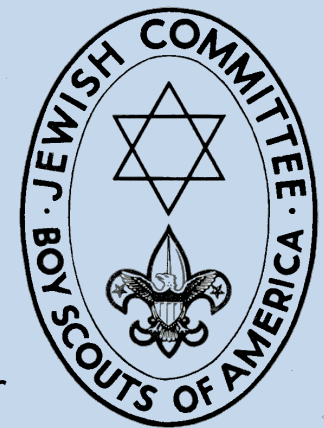
- Frank L. Weil joined the Boys Scouts as a young adult in 1913, as Assistant Scoutmaster of the first Jewish Troop to be formed, at the 92nd St. YMHA in New York City.
- **April 1935** - Mr. Weil was confirmed to membership on the B.S.A. National Committee on Relationships. He decided to focus his efforts on promoting Scouting among Jewish boys in New York City.
- **By June 1935** - Mr. Weil was working with citywide agencies to appoint special Boy Scout committees during the summer or early fall.



*Frank L. Weil*

# Organization Meeting

- **October 24, 1935** - Mr. Weil organized and chaired at his office a meeting of the Metropolitan Conference of Jewish Organizations on Boy Scout Activities.
- Representatives attended from the National Council, B.S.A., Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens Councils, and from local Jewish organizations.
- Mr. Weil stated that in his opinion there were two problems:
  - The extension of the Boy Scout organization in Jewish organizations.
  - To increase sponsorship by Jewish organizations of further Boy Scout activities.
- Mr. Weil proposed that each Jewish organization represented at the conference organize its own Boy Scout Committee, which would contact their local Borough Commissioners and Boy Scout Executives, and cooperate for the purpose of making the Boy Scout program more effective over a wider area.



# A Jewish Committee on Scouting for New York City

- Mr. Weil organized a citywide Jewish Committee on Scouting, coordinated with the B.S.A. National Council.
- **By May 1938** - Local Jewish Committees were organized in the five N.Y.C. Boroughs. Mr. Weil served as Chairman of the citywide Committee until the summer of 1942, when Judge Jonah J. Goldstein replaced him.
- Frank L. Weil was promoted to head the National Jewish Committee on Scouting, replacing Dr. Cyrus Adler.
- According to Frank L. Weil, for the period circa 1934-1938, the National Jewish Committee on Scouting was inactive. The New York City Committee was the only active Jewish Committee on Scouting.

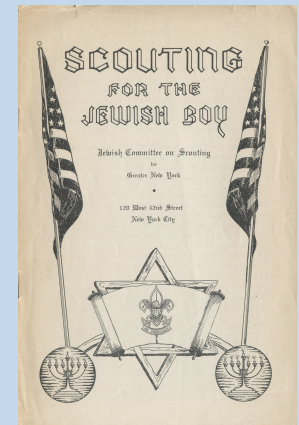


*Judge Jonah J. Goldstein*

# N.Y.C. Jewish Committee on Scouting

The Committee produced the brochure – “*Scouting for the Jewish Boy*,” which was distributed to New York City Jewish Institutions through District representatives. The brochure includes photos of Jewish Scouts taken in N.Y.C. and T.M.R. and described the aims of the citywide committee:

- Bring about active participation by Jewish Youth and Jewish Leaders in the Boy Scouts of America.
- Encourage Jewish boys to become Boy Scouts.
- Promote the formation and administration of Boy Scout Troops in Jewish Institutions.
- Stimulate community interest in the program of the Boy Scouts of America.
- Encourage the correlation of Scout work with the work of parent institutions.
- Advise, with the Boy Scout Foundation of Greater New York, in matters of policy affecting the spiritual welfare, the religious and cultural program of Jewish boys and leaders engaged in Scouting.



# N.Y.C. Jewish Committee on Scouting

- The committee furnished about half of the funds required to pay for the T.M.R. Camp Rabbis (excluding the Camp Man (Queens) Rabbi). The United Synagogue of America provided most or all of the remaining necessary funds.
- It was involved with supervising the operation of the kosher kitchens and the work of the Camp Rabbis at T.M.R.



*Jewish Services at Camp Manhattan, T.M.R.*

# Professional Staff

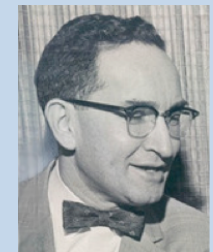
- **January 1937** - Herman Alofsin, a Brooklyn Council Field Executive, was hired for six months on a part-time trial basis for the extension of Scouting activities by Jewish youth organizations. Paul Warburg and John Schiff paid his salary. By May 1937, Mr. Alofsin was hired on a full-time basis and acted as the secretary to the citywide Jewish Committee on Scouting.
- **January 9, 1941** - The citywide Jewish Committee asked the National Council, B.S.A. to hire a full-time professional Executive to operate on a national level for the purpose of assisting the Committee do its work. The Executive would have clerical assistance and spend half of his time working in New York City.
- **February 26, 1941** - Dr. Ray O. Wyland, B.S.A. National Director of Education and Relationships, proposed that a Jewish member of the National Staff service both the Jewish Committee and other organizations, such as the American Legion, Patent-Teacher Association and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, among others. Edward Schifreen, at the time a Field Executive in the Bronx, was hired to the position by July 1941.
- **1943** - Harry Lasker assumed the position of B.S.A. National Director of Jewish Relationships, reporting to Dr. Ray O. Wyland, a position that he held for 37 years.



*Herman Alofsin*



*Edward Schifreen*



*Harry Lasker*



# The Borough Jewish Committees

- The five Borough Jewish Committees were first organized in 1938 and had representatives in the Districts.
- The Borough Committees:
  - Sent questionnaires to local synagogues and other Jewish Institutions, asking if they had the physical facilities required for a Troop and Pack.
  - Encouraged the Institutions to sponsor Troops and Packs, assisted existing Troops, and generally encouraged Jewish boys to join the Boy Scouts.
  - Sent questionnaires to Troops to determine which had Jewish Scouts and were sponsored by Jewish Institutions.
  - Organized services for borough Jewish Scouts during Boy Scout Week each February, at Camp-O-Rees and sent representatives to the citywide Jewish Committee on Scouting.

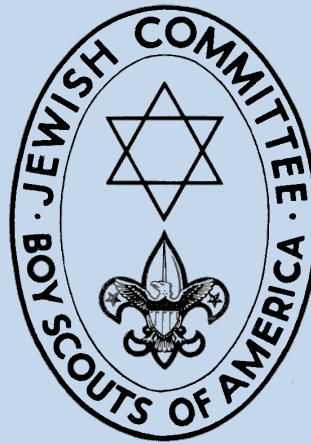


*From: The Jewish Holidays – A  
Program Guide for Boy Scout  
Troops*



*From: Scouting for the Jewish Boy*

# **The Development of the Jewish Committee on Scouting in New York City**



David M. Malatzky  
[dmalatzky@aol.com](mailto:dmalatzky@aol.com)