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Ripples from Europe

The Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s

Christine Baumberg

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of
BA (Hons) in History and German
at the University of Otago, Dunedin,
New Zealand.

November, 1998
Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my supervisors, Associate Professor Dorothy Page of the Department of History and Dr Simon Ryan of the Department of German Language and Literature for their helpful suggestions and advice.

I am very grateful to all those who agreed to be interviewed, namely Mr Ted Friedlander, Canon Paul Oestreicher, Mr Wilfred Simenauer, Mr Norman Lust, Mr Fred Hirsh, Mrs Margot Hirsh, Mrs Martha Horn and Dr Laurie Gluckman.

Special thanks go to Ted Friedlander for allowing me access to the records of the Jewish Community which he holds. Thanks also to Michael Goldschmidt, David McDonald of the Hocken Library, the staff of the Hocken Archives and the staff of the Alexander Turnbull Library for their assistance.

Finally, thank you Mum and Dad for helping me out this year and for your interest, and thank you Patrick for always being there.
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List of Abbreviations

DJCC
Dunedin Jewish Congregation Collection 82/89, Hocken Archives, Dunedin.

Friedlander Collection
Held by Ted Friedlander, Secretary of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation, Dunedin.

JNF
Jewish National Fund.

Minutes of the DJWS Committee
Minutes of the Meetings of the Refugee Sub-Committee of the Dunedin Jewish Community, later Minutes of the Meetings of the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society Committee, Friedlander Collection.

opp.
Opposite.

Stone's
Stone's Otago and Southland Commercial, Municipal and General Directories.

WIZO
Women's International Zionist Organisation.
Introduction

In August 1931 the Dunedin Jewish Congregation celebrated the fiftieth jubilee of the opening and consecrating of its Moray Place synagogue. The jubilee symbolised a celebration of continuity within the Dunedin Jewish Congregation and the wider Dunedin Jewish Community. The following two decades, however, proved to be a time of change for the community. One of the most significant events of the period was the arrival of refugees from Nazi Europe. According to Lochore's 1951 work on European immigration to New Zealand, there were 37 refugees over the age of 16 in Dunedin in 1947, almost all of whom had Jewish associations of some sort.

I was initially interested in examining the dynamics of the relationship between the established Jewish community in Dunedin and the refugees who began to arrive from Europe in the second half of the 1930s, many of whom came to Dunedin in order to retrain at the medical and dental schools there. I quickly realised that in order to gain an understanding of this relationship I needed to develop a broader understanding of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the period before and after the arrival of the refugees. Consequently, I have chosen to examine the wider demographic and communal characteristics of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the period 1930-1950 as well the relationship between the refugee and non-refugee Jewish communities.

Several works have been written based on oral recollections of the experiences in New Zealand of refugees from Nazi Europe and their children, most notably those by Ann Beaglehole. The first of Beaglehole's two works, *A Small Price to Pay Refugees from Hitler*...
This dissertation makes use of both oral and written sources, and thus links with the works that focus on refugees from Europe in New Zealand which are primarily based on oral evidence. Oral sources were also used in works focussing on the wider history of the Jewish Community; Jaffe, for example, interviewed 30 young members of the Auckland Jewish Community, and Goldman lists 39 people who provided him with oral and visual evidence. The use of oral recollection by these authors shows an awareness of the worth of oral evidence as a source in social history. While there are several significant problems associated with its use, such as the integrity of the memory over time, the selective nature of recollection and the danger that the interviewee may try and give an 'appropriate' answer, oral evidence remains a valuable source provided that it is used and evaluated in conjunction with other sources. Moreover, as John Tosh points out, 'the very subjectivity of the speaker may be the most

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8 Jaffe, pp.iii-iv; Goldman, pp.248-249.
important thing about his or her testimony. In the limited time available to me I have tried to interview as many people with varying perspectives on the Dunedin Jewish Community as possible, interviewing a total of eight people in six interviews. Ted Friedlander, the present secretary of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation, grew up in Dunedin and has lived there for virtually his whole life, leaving only to fight in World War Two. Canon Paul Oestreicher came to Dunedin in 1939, aged 7, as a refugee from Europe. His father had been born into a Jewish family in Germany and subsequently converted to Christianity. Although not a member of the Dunedin Jewish Community himself, Canon Oestreicher's family was friendly with several Jewish refugee families and lived in Dunedin throughout the 1930s and 1940s, thus providing an outside perspective of the Jewish Community. His father was a doctor who had to retrain in Dunedin to be allowed to practise medicine in New Zealand. Wilfred Simenauer arrived with his parents from Europe in 1937, aged 8, and left Dunedin in 1947. In contrast to Canon Oestreicher's father, Wilfred Simenauer's father's early arrival in New Zealand meant that he did not have to retrain as a dentist. Dr Laurie Gluckman was a Jewish student who studied medicine in Dunedin from 1940-1944 and thus provided perspectives on both refugee and non-refugee Jewish students. Norman Lust was a valuable source of information on the community in the 1930s as he lived in Dunedin as a child from 1929 until 1936. Mrs Margot Hirsh and her son Fred Hirsh arrived in Dunedin in 1938 as refugees from Germany. They lived in Milton from 1939 until 1948, but retained contact with the community as Mrs Hirsh's husband, Mr Ernst Hirsh, was reader/teacher for the Dunedin Jewish Congregation for much of the period 1938-1950. Mrs Horn, the sister in law of Mrs Hirsh, arrived in New Zealand several years after the Hirsh family and had several Jewish students board with her during the 1930s and 1940s. Thus each interviewee brought a unique perspective to the topic of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s and provided evidence which the written sources could not.

Three main collections of written sources were used. The first was the Dunedin Jewish Congregation birth and burial registers and the minute books and account books of various organisations within the Dunedin Jewish Community held by Ted Friedlander. All contained information that would not otherwise have been available. The main problem associated with

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10 Ibid., p.216.
11 Interview conducted by Christine Baumberg and Dr Simon Ryan with Mr Ted Friedlander, Dunedin, 30 March, 1998; Interview conducted by Christine Baumberg and Dr Simon Ryan with Canon Paul Oestreicher, Dunedin, 27 April 1998; Interview conducted by Christine Baumberg with Mr Wilfred Simenauer, Wellington, 1 July 1998; Interview conducted by Christine Baumberg with Dr Laurie Gluckman, Auckland, 7 July 1998; Interview conducted by Christine Baumberg with Mr Norman Lust and Mr Fred Hirsh, Wellington, 3 July 1998; Interview conducted by Christine Baumberg with Mrs Margot Hirsh and Mrs Martha Horn, Auckland, 7 July 1998.
these sources were that they were not always complete and entries were sometimes irregular. For example, the Register of Burials Dunedin Jewish Congregation does not contain entries for all those who died in the period 1930-1950. The second source was the Dunedin Jewish Congregation Collection held by the Hocken Archives. Much of this collection dated from the nineteenth century but for my purposes the most valuable sources within the collection were an untitled folder and a folder entitled 'Refugees'. These folders primarily contained correspondence to and from Mr Gerald Benson, Chairman of the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society, as well as accounts and list of refugees. The contents of these folders were often in apparently random order and it was impossible to know whether correspondence, lists or accounts were missing. However the information they contained proved extremely useful, especially in combination with the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society Committee minutes held by Ted Friedlander. The third source was national Jewish periodicals from the period. These periodicals provided much information regarding changes in community membership and social events not reported in the minute books held by Ted Friedlander. Unfortunately, not all issues of each periodical were available in public libraries within New Zealand, and the publication dates of the various periodicals did not cover the whole period 1930-1950.

A final problem with the written sources used was that I was unable to find a comprehensive lists of community membership for the period. Despite such problems, the available written sources used in conjunction with the oral sources enabled me to construct a picture of the demographic and communal characteristics of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s and of the relationship between the established and refugee communities.

At this point it is important to define what is meant by the terms 'Jew' and 'Jewish', as the terms are often controversial and may be defined religiously, ethnically or nationally/culturally. According to traditional religious definitions, a person born of a halakhically Jewish mother or who was converted according to halakah (the body of law comprising the rules and ordinances of Jewish religious and civil practice) was a Jew, while an ethnic definition sees Jews as belonging to an ethnic unit into which they are born. In contrast a cultural/national definition views those voluntarily associating and identifying with the Jewish people's lot as Jewish. Alternatively, a Jew could be anyone considered by non-Jews to be a Jew.12

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In a New Zealand context, identification of oneself as 'Hebrew' in the New Zealand census of the period 1926-1951 was self-identification in terms of religious profession rather than ethnicity. As far as the Central European refugees to New Zealand are concerned, Ann Beaglehole notes that while almost all had a Jewish association,

their self-identification was diverse and complicated. Some were connected to Judaism only by the accident of birth, the origin of a grandparent or by marriage. Others had the identity of 'Jew' imposed on them by Hitler's edicts. Even those with a strong Jewish identity had been assimilated into the cultures of their countries of origin.\(^\text{13}\)

In order to overcome the problem of definition, this dissertation will focus on those who identified themselves as Jewish and who had contact with the institutions of the Jewish community in Dunedin during the period 1930-1950. By making self-identification the primary factor for inclusion it is hoped to include those who wished to be understood as Jewish but not impose an identity on those who did not. This is particularly important given the fact, noted by Beaglehole, that many of the Central European refugees to New Zealand did not consider themselves Jewish yet had been persecuted after the imposition of this identity.

Chapter One examines the demographic characteristics of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s. Having established this demographic framework, chapters Two to Four focus on the institutions, people and events which created a sense of communal identity. Chapter Two discusses the religious institutions of the community, Chapter Three is concerned with the Dunedin Jewish Community's secular institutions and social events and Chapter Four explores the importance of Zionism to the community. Finally, Chapter Five builds on this framework by focussing on the relationship between the established and refugee Jewish communities in Dunedin in the 1930s and 1940s. This work thus comprehensively examines the demographic and communal characteristics of the Dunedin Jewish Community during a period in which their counterparts in Nazi Europe were being persecuted and shows how the established community was affected by and responded to events in Europe in terms of its relationship to the Jewish refugees who came to Dunedin.

\(^{13}\) Beaglehole, *A Small Price to Pay*, pp.140-141.
Chapter One-The Demographic Characteristics of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s

The logical starting point of an analysis of any community is an understanding of its make up, and hence this chapter is concerned with the demographic characteristics of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s. For the purposes of this dissertation people will be considered Jewish if they identified themselves as such. Accordingly, people will be considered to be members of the Dunedin Jewish Community if they identified themselves in some way with the community, for example by subscribing to a community group, attending social occasions or donating money to a cause associated with the community. This wide definition of membership has been chosen because of the limitations of the demographic material available, particularly the fact that I was unable to find comprehensive lists of community members for the time period under consideration. The demographic information used in this study is therefore necessarily drawn from a variety of both formal and informal sources. Formal sources used include New Zealand census figures and Stone's Otago and Southland Commercial, Municipal and General Directories (Stone's), while informal sources include a list of those who ordered matzah (unleavened bread) for importation in 1945, an undated list of predominantly female members of the Dunedin Jewish Community from the 1940s, a list of synagogue subscriptions in 1951, the birth and burial registers of the congregation, and lists of subscribers for causes such as the Ladies' Hand in Hand Society.

There are several limitations involved in using such sources. Most obviously, there is no way of knowing if lists are accurate or complete, a problem compounded by the fact that often only one spouse or family member is named in a list. Moreover, there are often few clues as to the age, marital status or occupation of community members in any particular source. In order to overcome the problem of determining occupational status, names from the informal sources were cross referenced against entries in Stone's from 1930, 1940 and 1950. While the use of these directories provided useful occupational data, as well as the hitherto unknown places of residence of several members, there were again limitations, in this case that Stone's only list the head of a household, and not every entry includes the householder's occupation.

In spite of these limitations, a fairly comprehensive picture of several important demographic characteristics of the Dunedin Jewish Community can be formed. The New
Census figures from 1926, 1936, 1945 and 1951 provide national, provincial, urban and borough data pertaining to the religious professions of New Zealanders. While the affiliations given are no indication of the degree of identification with any religion, and do not take ethnic or cultural identification into consideration, they are the most comprehensive figures available; they provide a framework for indicating the comparative strength of numbers of those residents of Dunedin who identified themselves as being affiliated to Judaism compared to the national trend for the period between 1930 and 1950. The numbers of New Zealanders identifying themselves as being affiliated to the Jewish religion between 1926 and 1951 increased steadily from 2,380 to 3,661, with the most marked increase of 817 occurring between the censuses of 1936 and 1945, while the percentage of New Zealanders who identified themselves as being affiliated to Judaism fluctuated within the range of 19 percent to 22 percent, returning to 19 percent by 1951.

**Table 1:** New Zealanders Identifying Themselves as Affiliated to Judaism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total New Zealand Population</th>
<th>Total Number Jewish</th>
<th>Percentage Jewish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>1344496</td>
<td>2591</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>1491484</td>
<td>2653</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>1603554</td>
<td>3470</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>1939472</td>
<td>3661</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This national pattern of growth and stability contrasts markedly with trends in Dunedin. Dunedin's percentage share of the total number of New Zealanders naming Judaism as their religious affiliation fell significantly between 1926 and 1951. While in 1926 7.33 percent of those identifying themselves as Jewish lived in Dunedin, by 1951 this figure had fallen to only 3.44 percent.

**Table 2:** Dunedin's Share of the National Total of New Zealanders Identifying Themselves as Affiliated to Judaism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Dunedin</th>
<th>Total National</th>
<th>Percentage Dunedin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>2591</td>
<td>7.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>2653</td>
<td>6.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>3470</td>
<td>4.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>3661</td>
<td>3.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alongside this drop in Dunedin's percentage share of the national Jewish population, the number of Dunedin residents identifying themselves as Jewish between 1926 and 1951 fell from 190 to 126, a significant drop from its 1878 peak of 374. This pattern of population decrease is compounded by the fact that the overall percentage of Dunedin residents who identified themselves as Jewish fell from 0.22 percent to 0.13 percent during the same time span.

Table 3: Dunedin Residents Identifying Themselves as Affiliated to Judaism as a Percentage of the Total Population of Dunedin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>85095</td>
<td>0.223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>81848</td>
<td>0.211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>83191</td>
<td>0.184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>95477</td>
<td>0.132</td>
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These figures are remarkable, given the fact that from the late 1930s Dunedin became home to a number of Jewish refugees from Europe. A list entitled 'Refugees in Dunedin, June 1940' lists 94 persons, including 17 children, of whom eight adults and two children had little or no connection with the Jewish Community in Dunedin. Even allowing for the possibility that several more of those listed may have not have affiliated themselves with Judaism, it is certain that between 1930 and 1940 the Jewish Community in Dunedin did experience a large increase in the number of refugees who to some degree identified themselves as Jewish. This increase was such that in a letter dated November 1940 to the President of the Christchurch branch of the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society the Chairman of the Dunedin branch states that "[...]the Dunedin Jewish population appears to be mainly made up of refugees[...]."
There are three possible explanations for the failure of the census data to reflect this inflow of Jewish refugees to Dunedin. Firstly, census data was not collected between 1936 and 1945, and thus any temporary changes in the numbers affiliating with Judaism during this period would not have been recorded. Secondly, the number of births of the established population and the number of non-refugee Jews arriving in Dunedin was less than the number of deaths and the number of non-refugee Jews leaving Dunedin. The Register of Births Dunedin Jewish Congregation lists the births of 18 children between 1930 and 1951, 17 of whom were born after 1936; of these 11 were not the children of refugees. These births are offset by the deaths of 28 members of the Dunedin Jewish Community between 1930 and 1951. Twenty five of these deaths were of members of the established community, 17 of which occurred after 1936. Thus the number of deaths of the established Jewish Community was greater than the number of births. Moreover, non-refugee population gains of at least 13 individuals or families between 1930 and 1951, including a conversion and the arrival of a non-refugee minister and his wife, were outweighed by the 14 individuals or families who left Dunedin. This figure excludes the resignation from the Dunedin Jewish Congregation of seven members for whom it is unclear whether they left Dunedin. Hence the number of the non-refugee community who left Dunedin numerically outweighed the number who arrived, contributing to the fact that the arrival of a large number of Jewish refugees is not reflected in the census data. It should be noted that it is very probable that only the deaths, resignations and arrivals of people with some active involvement in the Dunedin Jewish Community were recorded in the national Jewish periodicals or the Minute Book of the Congregation Committee. Others who may have designated themselves as affiliated to Judaism and thus been

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4 Register of Births Dunedin Jewish Congregation; Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 26 February 1933; 17 December 1933; 20 June 1934; 22 September 1935; 15 December 1935; 1 August 1939; 20 June 1940; 26 May 1943, Minute Book of the Congregation Committee (hereafter Minutes of the Congregation Committee), held by Mr Ted Friedlander, Secretary of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation, Dunedin (hereafter Friedlander Collection); Register of Burials Dunedin Jewish Congregation, Friedlander Collection; The Jewish Times, 9, 5, 29 May 1930, pp.4-5; The Jewish Review, 1, 8, October 1935, p.11; 2, 4, June 1936, p.15; 2, 7, September 1936, p.20; 4, 1, April 1939, p.11; 4, 2, May 1939, p.17; 4, 3, June 1939, p.11; 4, 10, February 1940, p.13.

5 Population gains are recorded in: Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 26 April 1946; 27 May 1937; 14 February 1939; 2 December 1939 (the latter three entries refer to the conversion of Miss Olive Campbell); The Jewish Times, 10, 5, 21 May 1931, p.7; The Jewish Review, 1, 7, September 1935, p.17; 2, 7, September 1936, p.20; 2, 12, February 1937, p.15; 3, 4, June 1937, p.13; 3, 7, September 1937, p.13; 3, 9, November 1937, p.11; 3, 10, 20 December 1937, p.14; 3, 8, November 1938, p.15. Population losses are recorded in: Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 28 August 1932, 17 June 1934; 11 December 1934; 9 October 1938; 20 May 1945; 1 September 1946; 15 December 1946; 9 September 1948; The Jewish Times, 10, 10, 30 October 1931, pp.3-4; The Jewish Review, 1, 5, July 1935, p.17; 2, 6, August 1936, p.18; 4, 3, May 1938, p.16; 4, 3, June 1939, p.11; 4, 5, August 1939, p.16; 4, 7, October 1939, p.13.
reflected in the census data but not been actively involved in the Jewish Community may have
died, arrived in or left Dunedin too.

The third reason for the absence of signs of this inflow of Jewish refugees to Dunedin
in the census data is that many of the refugees who came to Dunedin had left by 1945. By
cross-referencing the list of 'Refugees in Dunedin, June 1940' with a list dated August 1945
and a 'LIST of Refugee Aliens in no relation to the Jewish Community in Dunedin' also dated
August 1945, and by assuming that spouses and the number of children remain constant even
when they are not listed, it can be postulated that in August 1945 only 35 of the 94 European
refugees recorded in 1940 remained in Dunedin, with 11 new arrivals. Of these 46 refugees,
ten adults and two children had little or no connection with the Jewish Community in Dunedin,
and eight of the 34 Jewish refugees were children. The overall figure of 36 adult European
refugees gleaned from the above lists is almost identical to that in the registration list of alien
refugees aged over 16 cited by R. A. Lochore of 37 adult refugees living in Dunedin in August
1945 out of a total of 1054 refugees nationwide, showing that the lists are almost entirely
accurate. The enormous difference in the number of refugees in Dunedin between 1940 and
1945 can be partly accounted for by the fact that 36 of the refugees listed in 1940 were
doctors, dentists and their families who left Dunedin upon completion of three years'
compulsory retraining at the University of Otago to take up employment elsewhere. Because
they left before the census of 1945, their contribution to the numbers of people affiliating
themselves with Judaism was not able to be recorded officially.

In considering the numerical strength of the Dunedin Jewish community it is also
important to note the significant number of people affiliating themselves with Judaism in the
wider Otago area and in Southland. The synagogue in Dunedin was one of only two
synagogues in the South Island, the other being in Christchurch, so that Jews in Otago and

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6 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 28 August 1932; 17 June 1934; 14 September 1941; 19
September 1943; 26 April 1946; 9 June 1949; 23 September 1951.
7 'Refugees in Dunedin, June 1940'; Untitled list of refugees in Dunedin, dated August 1945, untitled
folder, box 2, DJCC; 'LIST of Refugee Aliens in no Relation to the Jewish Community in Dunedin, 1
August 1945'.
8 Lochore, p. 73.
9 List of referee doctors and dentists taking professional course at the University of Otago attached to a
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Honourable Prime Minister of New Zealand, June 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC;
'Refugees in Dunedin, June 1940'; Minutes of the Congregation Committee; Untitled list of refugees in
Dunedin, dated August 1945; 'LIST of Refugee Aliens in no Relation to the Jewish Community in
Dunedin, 1 August 1945'; Minutes of the Meetings of the Refugee Sub-Committee of the Dunedin
Jewish Community, later Minutes of the Meetings of the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society Committee
(hereafter Minutes of the DJWS Commitee), Friedlander Collection.
Southland had to go to Dunedin if they wished to take part in a synagogue service or in the activities of a larger Jewish community. Table 4 indicates that between 11.3 and 19.2 percent of those in the Otago-Southland region who named Judaism as their religious profession were resident outside Dunedin. Thus while Dunedin remained the centre of Judaism in the Otago-Southland region throughout the 1930s and 1940s, a significant number of Otago-Southland residents who affiliated themselves with Judaism lived outside the Dunedin urban area and thus are unlikely to have regularly taken part in Dunedin Jewish Community activities.

**Table 4:** Otago and Southland Residents Identifying Themselves as Affiliated to Judaism Resident Outside of Dunedin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Dunedin</th>
<th>Total Otago</th>
<th>Total Southland</th>
<th>Total Otago and Southland</th>
<th>Total Otago and Southland Outside Dunedin</th>
<th>Percentage Otago and Southland Outside Dunedin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As census figures concerning religious affiliation do not indicate the degree of affiliation or even involvement in a religious institution or community, it is useful to compare the census figures concerning religious affiliation with Judaism in the Dunedin urban area and material which indicates some degree of active participation or involvement in the Dunedin Jewish Congregation and the Dunedin Jewish Community. I was unable to find comprehensive lists of community members or subscribers to the congregation for the time period 1930-1950, but the information that was available does shed light on the approximate number of families with at least one member involved in the Jewish community. This information comes from three sources, an undated list entitled 'The Dunedin Jewish Community' which was found between the pages of a WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organisation) and Hand in Hand Society Accounts Book, a list of people ordering *matzah* and meal which were to be imported from Australia for Passover in 1945 and a list of annual subscriptions of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation attached to the minutes of a Congregation Committee meeting in July 1952.10

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10 List 'The Dunedin Jewish Community', undated, WIZO and Hand in Hand Society Accounts Book, Friedlander Collection; List of names and addresses of people ordering 'motzos' (*matzah*) and meal, undated, and attached invoices dated November 1944-March 1945, loose inside Jewish Philanthropic Society Book cover, box 1, DJCC; List 'Dunedin Jewish Congregation Annual Subscriptions' attached to the Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 3 March 1952.
The list entitled 'The Dunedin Jewish Community', although undated, was almost certainly written during between late February 1940 and December 1941 as the names of both Mrs Steinhof and Mrs L. Spitzer appear. Mrs Steinhof arrived with her husband after he was engaged as the reader/teacher of the congregation in February 1940 and Mrs L. Spitzer had left Dunedin with her husband, a refugee dentist, by December 1941. The list includes 81 names, the majority of whom are female, a fact which is not surprising considering where the list was found, and indicates that at least 81 families had members with some degree of involvement in the Jewish community. In contrast, the 1944 list of names of those ordering matzah and meal for Passover 1945 contains 55 legible names, six of whom have addresses outside of the Dunedin urban area, indicating that at least 49 families in Dunedin in 1944-1945 were observant enough to want to order Passover bread. The list of annual subscriptions for 1952 has 45 names, including 3 from Invercargill. Although no material for the pre-1940 period was available, the above information suggests that just as the number of people resident in Dunedin who affiliated themselves with Judaism in the censuses of the period was steadily declining, the number of households with some active involvement in the community was also declining. There was a 17.6 decline in Dunedin residents who affiliated themselves with Judaism between the censuses of 1945 and 1952, and a 18.2 percent decline in the number of Dunedin families with at least one member who was involved in the Jewish community between the 1945 list of those ordering Passover bread and the 1952 list of annual subscriptions of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation. Hence one could argue that as the percentage decline is numerically similar, it is likely that most of those affiliating themselves with Judaism in censuses of the period had at least one member of their family who had some degree of active involvement in the Dunedin Jewish Community.

Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 26 February 1940; Minutes of the DJWS Committee, 11 November 1941, 8 December 1941.

There are actually two lists of those ordering matzah and meal. The first is typewritten with names added by hand, some of which are repeated and others of which are illegible, hence the approximation. The second is handwritten and contains only 51 names It is possible that one lists those who order passover bread and the other those who collect it; in any case I have focussed on the typewritten list as it indicates the number of people who at least considered ordering the bread.
Table 5: Comparison of Percentage Change in the Membership of the Dunedin Jewish Community From Formal and Informal Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Source</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage Difference 1945-1951/52</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand Census</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>153</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1951</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passover Bread Order</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregation Subscriptions</td>
<td>1952</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:  
Religious Profession, New Zealand Census 1945, 1951  
List of names and address of people ordering 'motzos' (matzah) and meal, undated, and attached invoices dated November 1944-March 1945.  
List 'Dunedin Jewish Congregation Annual Subscriptions' attached to the Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 3 March 1952.

While the censuses of 1926, 1936 and 1951 all feature data concerning the breakdown of age groups for both males and females within the various religious professions on a national basis, they do not provide this data at a provincial, urban or borough level. Likewise, all three censuses include national data on the gender and marital status of those affiliated with the various religions, but not at more localised levels. However, all censuses from 1926 to 1951 contain more general data on gender breakdowns at a localised level. In the census of 1926 the number of males and females affiliated to Judaism in the Dunedin urban area was exactly equal, while by the census of 1936, there were nine more females than males affiliated to Judaism, a difference of 5.2 percent. This difference drops very slightly in 1945, and by 1951 there were two more males than females. Thus over the whole of the period 1930-1950 there was no major gender predominance amongst the residents of Dunedin who identified Judaism as their religious profession. It is interesting to note that in the censuses of 1926, 1936 and 1945 Dunedin has a slightly greater percentage of females and a smaller percentage of males who identify themselves as being affiliated to Judaism than the national figure, with the most significant difference between the national situation and Dunedin's situation occurring in 1936, although in the census of 1951 the situation is reversed.
Table 6: Gender of Dunedin Residents Affiliating Themselves With Judaism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Percentage Females</th>
<th>Percentage Males</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>52.60</td>
<td>47.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>52.29</td>
<td>47.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>49.21</td>
<td>50.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 7: Comparison of the Gender of Those Affiliating Themselves With Judaism Nationally and in Dunedin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Females Nationally</th>
<th>Percentage Females Nationally</th>
<th>Percentage Females in Dunedin</th>
<th>Total Males Nationally</th>
<th>Percentage Males Nationally</th>
<th>Percentage Males in Dunedin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>1252</td>
<td>48.32</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>1339</td>
<td>51.68</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>1315</td>
<td>49.57</td>
<td>52.60</td>
<td>1338</td>
<td>49.43</td>
<td>47.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>1767</td>
<td>50.92</td>
<td>52.29</td>
<td>1703</td>
<td>49.08</td>
<td>47.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>1840</td>
<td>50.26</td>
<td>49.21</td>
<td>1821</td>
<td>49.74</td>
<td>50.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


At the time of the censuses of 1926, 1936, and 1945 the majority of those affiliated with Judaism in the Dunedin area lived in Dunedin city, with a minority of residents living in the borough of St Kilda. There were no Jewish residents of Port Chalmers, West Harbour, or Green Island, and the first recording of a Jewish resident of Mosgiel is in 1945, a year in which there were also five people with Jewish affiliations living in Milton. While Milton is not part of the Dunedin urban area, this figure is important because the five people living there were the family of Mr E. Hirsh, a refugee from Germany who worked at the Bruce Woollen Mill in Milton and who was the reader/teacher of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation for some of the period between 1938 and 1950. It should also be noted that for some unknown reason, the number of female residents of urban Dunedin with religious affiliations to Judaism does not add up to the number of females with Jewish affiliations living in the various boroughs within Dunedin for either 1926, 1936 or 1945, although the number of male residents of Dunedin does. As a result, the total number of Dunedin residents identifying Judaism as their religious profession does not equate to the number of people living within the various boroughs of Dunedin who named Judaism as their religious profession.
Table 8: Dunedin Residents Affiliated to Judaism by Borough

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Dunedin</th>
<th>Port Chalmers</th>
<th>West Harbour</th>
<th>Dunedin City</th>
<th>St Kilda</th>
<th>Green Island</th>
<th>Mosgiel</th>
<th>Milton</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


None of those whom I interviewed remembered the existence of any particular residential grouping or enclave amongst either the refugee or the established Jewish communities. In order to ascertain whether or not members of the established Dunedin Jewish Community did tend to live in any definable areas within Dunedin City and St Kilda, addresses sourced from Stone's, the list of those ordering matzah and the list 'Dunedin Jewish Community' found in the WIZO and Hand in Hand Society Accounts book were cross-referenced against each other and plotted on a map of Dunedin from 1934. The same process was undertaken for the members of the Jewish refugee community, for whom addresses were also sourced from the lists 'Refugees in Dunedin, June 1940', 'LIST of Refugee Aliens in no relation to the Jewish Community in Dunedin, 1 August 1945', the untitled list of refugees in Dunedin dated August 1945 and the Minutes of the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society Committee. (Appendices 4.1 and 4.2) It is immediately noticeable that while members of the established community lived throughout the greater Dunedin area, there was a large concentration of residences in the area between the Town Belt and George Street, especially on Royal Terrace. Other smaller concentrations can be identified in the area north of the Exchange between the Town Belt and Princes Street, centred on High Street with a more disparate grouping in the St Clair area between Cargill (now Hillside) Road and Albert Street. The Bellknowes/Roslyn and the St Kilda/Musselburgh/Tainui areas also had a number of Jewish residences scattered throughout them. It would seem that the concentrations of Jewish homes around the London Street-Royal Terrace-Frederick Street area and the High Street-Rattray Street area in the late nineteenth century Dunedin Jewish community which were identified by Maureen Kate Cooper may have remained while other less significant residential tendencies emerged. However, Cooper's reasons for these concentrations, including rabbis having fixed the maximum distance Jews could live from a synagogue at two thirds of a mile and wives wanting to live close to the butcher to buy kosher (food which is fit to be consumed
in accordance with Jewish law) meat do not seem applicable in the 1930s and 1940s. Several of the residential groupings identified are more than two thirds of a mile from the synagogue on Moray Place, and kosher meat was not available in Dunedin for most of the period. The existence of long-term family homes, the quality of housing and the availability of public transport, for example tram lines connecting St Clair to Forbury Corner and Forbury Corner to the Octagon, are far more likely reasons for the residential tendencies which can be observed among the established Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s. Distance does, however, seem to have played a role in the residential location of Jewish refugees, the majority of whom appear to have lived within walking distance of the city and/or the university. This tendency is not surprising given that many refugees had limited capital when they arrived and may well have chosen housing locations from which essential services were accessible without the use of public transport or a car. There appears to have been a slight tendency to reside in the area between Manor Place and London Street, particularly centred on Tennyson Street, and in the Queen Street-George Street area, with several more residences around Castle Street North and Clyde Street. Most other families were scattered throughout the Roslyn and Maori Hill areas. The fact that none of those whom I interviewed remembered the existence of any particular residential grouping or enclave suggests that such tendencies did not feature in the consciousness of the Dunedin Jewish Community.

In order to assess the distribution of occupation among the Dunedin Jewish Community the names appearing in the various lists, minutes and registers available including the Minutes of the Dunedin Jewish Social Club and a list of subscriptions to the Jewish Philanthropic Society were checked against Stone’s for 1930, 1940 and 1950. These years were chosen in an attempt to gain an indication of the occupational status of the majority of members of the Dunedin Jewish Community even if they were not resident in Dunedin for the entire period of time from 1930-1950. Additional sources listing occupations such as the Register of Births Dunedin Jewish Congregation were also used. While the occupational status of several refugees is recorded in Stone’s, the occupational status of others was taken from sources such as the Minutes of the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society Committee and the list 'Refugees in

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13 Cooper, p.5.
14 The availability of and desire for kosher food within the Dunedin Jewish Community is discussed in Chapter Two.
15 Minutes of the Dunedin Jewish Social Club, Friedlander Collection; Jewish Philanthropic Society Account Book, box 1, DJCC; Stone’s Otago and Southland Commercial, Municipal and General Directory and New Zealand Annual, Dunedin and Wellington (hereafter Stone’s),1930; Stone’s, 1940; Stone’s, 1950.
Table 9: Occupations of the Established Dunedin Jewish Community 1930-1950

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accountant</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and Joinery Manufacturer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothier</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confectionary Manufacturing and Retailing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draper</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fur Agent/Ladies Coat Specialist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furier</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hellenstein Brothers (Clothing Manufacturers)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hellenstein Brothers Director</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leather/Tannery/Grindery Merchant</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing Director Biscuit Manufacturer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing Director Coat Manufacturers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager of Furriers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturers Representative</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meteorologist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pawnbroker (Female)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbi</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sargoods (Warehousemen)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary Hospital and Charitable Aid Board</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solicitor</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailor</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacconist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traveller</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool and Skin Buyer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>57</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:  
*Stone's, 1930; Stone's, 1940; Stone's, 1950.*  
Register of Births Dunedin Jewish Congregation.  
Minutes of the Congregation Committee.  
*The Jewish Review, 3, 4, June 1937, p.13; 3, 8, November 1938, p.15.*

Note: The occupations of 52 members of the established Dunedin Jewish Community were able to be found; some members had more than one job during the period.
Dunedin. June 1940'. Unfortunately the nature of the sources means that the picture of the occupational distribution of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s is incomplete. For example, some handwritten names in lists are illegible, and other names such as 'Jackson' are too common in Stone's to be able to pinpoint a Jewish community member. Moreover, Stone's rarely lists the occupation of women, even where they are the head of household, and so this survey is almost exclusively concerned with the occupations of males. The occupational status of members of the established and refugee Jewish communities will be presented separately in order to examine any differences in occupational tendencies.

Members of the late nineteenth century Dunedin Jewish Community were mostly involved in trades based on retail and mercantile occupations, with the self-employed and petty proprietors making up the largest percentages of the Jewish workforce. Maureen Cooper's research in Harnetts' and Wises' Street Directories shows that trades such as footwear manufacturing, clothing retailing and manufacturing, retailing fancy goods, tobacco products or jewellery, hotel keeping, importing, pawnbroking, and the legal profession were particularly prominent among the occupations of members of the late nineteenth century Jewish community. Table 9 shows that the occupational make-up of the established Jewish community in Dunedin had significantly changed by the 1930s. Solicitors still featured prominently, but they had been joined by accountants and clerks. Fancy goods retailing, hotelkeeping, and jewellery retailing no longer featured, although the clothing industry remained an important area of occupation, so much so that 14 of the 52 members whose occupations could be established had some involvement in the clothing industry. Moreover, a further 5 members were involved in the industry through their occupations as furriers or managing directors of a furrier company. Particular mention should be made of the five members of the Halsted/Fels family who were involved in the family business Hallenstein Brothers. The range of occupations undertaken by other members of the established community in the 1930s and 1940s was diverse. Members included a confectionary manufacturer and retailer, a dentist, two ministers, a builder, a traveller and a meteorologist. It is striking that of these various occupations, none was unskilled or rurally based, and hence the occupations of the established members of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s appears to have been made up primarily of professionals, managers, white collar workers and the self-employed.

16 Cooper., p.1; Ibid., p.64; Ibid., pp.59-62.
17 The members were Mr Emil Isaac Halsted, Mr Percy Lewis Halsted, Mr Frank M. Halsted, Mr Alfred Fels and Mr Willi Fels.
Table 10: Occupations of the Refugee Dunedin Jewish Community 1930-1950

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Architect</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur Barnett Employee</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chef</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confectioner and Milkbar Proprietor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental Student</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Manager</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German Lessons (Female)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Student</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical School Employee</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mill Employee</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time Reader/Teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printer and Stationer Employee (<strong>Coulls, Sommerville &amp; Wilkie</strong>)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proprietor 'Savouries'</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repairer of Fruit Cases</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Employee (Teacher?)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Physical Culture</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Lecturer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinary Surgeon</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waipata Sanatorium</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Stone's 1930; Stone's, 1940; Stone's, 1950. Minutes of the DJWS Committee. Gerald Benson? to Harold C. Moses, 10 December 1943, untitled folder; box 2, DJCC. List of refugee doctors and dentists taking professional courses at the University of Otago, attached to a letter, refugee doctors and dentists taking professional courses at the University of Otago to the Honourable Prime Minister of New Zealand, June 1940. 'LIST of Refugee Aliens in no Relation to the Jewish Community in Dunedin, 1 August 1945'. 'Refugees in Dunedin June 1940'. Cooper, p.127.

Note: The occupations of 48 members of the Dunedin Jewish Refugee Community were able to be found; some members had more than one occupation during the period.
The occupations of refugees who were connected with the Jewish community were very different from those of the established community. Only two refugees were involved in the clothing industry, as mill employees, and none were identified as being involved in the fur industry. Instead, there was a very high degree of involvement in medicine and associated occupations. This is to be expected as many refugees came to Dunedin to attend or work at the medical school, the only such facility in the country. In contrast to the members of the established community, several refugees appear to have worked in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs and it is noticeable that only two of the refugees were proprietors of small businesses. One such business was the delicatessen 'Savouries'. Its proprietor Dr Hans Tritsch, a former judge of the Austrian Supreme Court, was unable to gain permission to enter law school until shortly before his death in March 1942. Interestingly, the occupations shown in Table 10 appear to differ from the occupations of refugees in other New Zealand centres. Lochore records that in 1945 123 refugees were proprietors of their own businesses. By 1945 there does not appear to have been a single refugee business left in Dunedin; a downturn in business experienced after the start of World War Two had forced the closure of Dr Tritsch's shop, and from 1945 onwards Mr O. Newman's milkbar and confectionary business is no longer listed in Stone's. Moreover, Ann Beaglehole's discussion of work that male refugees undertook seems to indicate that in other centres, at least initially, a greater proportion worked in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs than was the case in Dunedin.

To summarise, the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s was a community which was numerically in decline. Dunedin's proportion of New Zealanders who identified Judaism as their religious profession in the New Zealand census dropped from 7.33 to 3.44 percent between 1926 and 1951 and despite an influx of refugees in the late 1930s and early 1940s, the overall number of residents identifying themselves as Jewish in the censuses of the period fell from 190 to 126. A significant number of Otago-Southland residents who identified with Judaism lived outside the Dunedin urban area. Just as the number of Dunedin residents who identified themselves with Judaism was declining, so was the number of households who had at least one member with some degree of active involvement in Judaism.

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18 The situation of refugees doctors and dentists is discussed in Chapter Five.
19 Stone's, 1940; Gerald Benson, to Harold C. Moses, 10 December, 1943, untitled folder, box 2, DJCC; Register of Burials Dunedin Jewish Congregation.
20 Lochore, p.78.
21 Gerald Benson, to Harold C. Moses, 10 December 1943, untitled folder box 2, DJCC; Stone's, 1944; Stone's, 1945;
22 Beaglehole, A Small Price to Pay, pp.70-73.
There was no major predominance of one gender over another among Dunedin residents identifying Judaism as their religious profession during the period.

Almost all members of the Dunedin Jewish community lived in the boroughs of Dunedin City and St Kilda and although interviewees did not recall any particular residential grouping within the Jewish community, several residential tendencies are observable amongst both the established and refugee communities. As was the case in the nineteenth century Dunedin Jewish Community, the clothing industry was of special occupational significance for members of the established Jewish community, none of whom worked in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs. Their occupational pattern was very different from that of members of the refugee community, many of whom studied or worked at the medical school. The occupational make-up of the Dunedin Jewish refugee community also appears to have differed from their counterparts in other centres.

This chapter has provided a demographic framework for understanding the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s. Subsequent chapters will consider the institutions, events and people which created a sense of community among Jews in Dunedin during the period 1930-1950.
Chapter Two: Religious Institutions and Religious Adherence

The first institutions, events and people which created a sense of identity among the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s to be considered are those of a religious nature. Evidence such as the 1952 congregation subscription list and the Minutes of the Congregation Committee, which were used in Chapter One to identify the demographic parameters of the community, suggest that the common religion of those Dunedin residents who identified themselves as being Jewish in the section on religious profession in New Zealand censuses led to the existence of religious institutions which provided organisational and social frameworks for the Jewish community. Hence this chapter is concerned with the religious frameworks which existed within the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s. As well as considering the religious institutions of the community, this chapter will also consider the degree of adherence to two important religious elements within Judaism, namely observance of the Sabbath and Jewish dietary laws. As some members of the Dunedin Jewish Community may have regarded being Jewish as an ethnic or national rather than a religious affiliation and not all community institutions and events centred around religion, non-religious institutional and social frameworks will be considered in Chapter Three.

There are four religious institutions which provide a picture of the religious framework of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s, namely the synagogue, the religious leadership, the religious schools for children and the lay leadership of the congregation. The synagogue, or shul, is the most obvious starting point for an examination of the Dunedin Jewish Community's religious framework. In the 1930s and 1940s the Dunedin synagogue was located on Morey place, opposite View Street; services had been held at this location since 1881. In areas of very strict adherence to Judaism services were traditionally held at the synagogue morning, noon and night, but in his book The History of the Jews in New Zealand Lazarus Morris Goldman, himself a rabbi from Melbourne, records the virtual abandonment by 1958 of this practice in New Zealand. He adds that while Judaism is not a religion where worship should take place on the Sabbath and on Festivals only, in some New Zealand synagogues even a service for the inauguration of the Sabbath on Friday evenings had

Figure 1: Dunedin Synagogue, Moray Place opposite View Street.
Source: Hocken Archives.

Figure 2: Dunedin Synagogue, Moray Place opposite View Street.
Source: Hocken Archives.
been abandoned. The frequency of Jewish religious services in Dunedin appears to follow this pattern to some extent. While Goldman asserts that Rabbi Alexander Astor (rabbi from 1926 to 1931) restored Friday evening services in Dunedin, by 1930 Stone's records only one service a week, on Saturday morning at 10 am, a practice which Stone's records as continuing until at least December 1941. However Wilfred Simenauer, who lived in Dunedin between 1937 and 1947, recalls his father attending synagogue on both Friday nights and Saturday mornings, and hence it is probable that both the Rev. Karwan (rabbi from September 1936 to October 1938) and Mr Steinhof (reader/teacher from February 1940 to May 1944) did lead some services on Friday nights. The fact that these services were not listed in Stone's suggests that they may not have occurred regularly. In 1939 and from late 1946 until August 1948 the reader/teacher of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation, Mr Ernst Hirsh, lived in Milton. It would probably not have been possible for Mr Hirsh to arrive in Dunedin in time to conduct a Friday evening service even had there been a demand for this. Hence it is not surprising that the Congregation Committee minute book only records services being held on Saturdays at 11 am after September 1946 and at 10.45 am from March 1947. These changes in time were presumably made to allow Mr Hirsh sufficient time to arrive from and return to Milton. Once Mr Hirsh moved back to Dunedin in the latter part of 1948 services would once again have been able to be held earlier, but although he was now available for extra services there is no indication that the frequency or time of services changed between late 1948 and 1950.

There are two possible reasons for the fact that the Dunedin Jewish Congregation in the 1930s and 1940s does not appear to have held services on Friday evenings regularly. Firstly, as was shown in Chapter One, the Dunedin Jewish Community experienced a marked overall decline in numbers during the period and thus the overall pool of those who would possibly have wanted to attended shul more than one a week would also have been declining. Secondly, Wilfred Simenauer recalls that there was often some trouble in obtaining a minyan (a group of ten male Jews aged 13 or older constituting the minimum number for communal worship) on a Friday night. The lack of a minyan appears to have occurred even at the regular Saturday

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2 Goldman, p.187.
3 Ibid; Stone's contains an ecclesiastical directory corrected to December of the previous year in all editions between 1930 and 1942, and throughout this period only one service a week is recorded, at 10 am on a Saturday morning; Stone's, 1930, p.855; Stone's, 1931, p.862; Stone's, 1932, p.864; Stone's, 1933, p.870; Stone's, p.890; Stone's, 1935, p.915; Stone's, 1936, p.936; Stone's, 1937, p.942; Stone's, 1938, p.952; Stone's, 1939, p.963; Stone's, 1940, p.976; Stone's, 1941, p.980; Stone's, 1942, p.977.
4 Interview with Mr Wilfred Simenauer.
5 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 1 September 1946; 12 March 1947; 1 August 1939; 1 September 1946; 23 June 1948; 9 September 1948.
6 Ibid., 23 June 1948; 9 September 1948.
morning services. Norman Lust, who lived in Dunedin between 1929 and 1936, recalls being sent from the synagogue to the businesses owned by Jews around the Octagon on a Saturday morning in an attempt to locate enough men for a *minyan*. Evidence that this problem occurred through to the end of the 1940s is provided by Fred Hirsh's memory that on most occasions after his family moved back to Dunedin there was no *minyan* at synagogue services. Although on the surface the absence or presence of a *minyan* only indicates the number of adult males attending services, when one remembers that throughout the period 1926-1951 there was an approximately equal number of males and females resident in Dunedin who named Judaism as their religious profession in the national census, it also attests to an overall low level of adult attendance at services.

During the course of the period attendance at Holy Days and Festivals also fell. In July 1929, for example, the national Jewish periodical *The Jewish Times* recorded that there had been exceptional attendance at the Dunedin synagogue on the second day of *Shevauth* and in October 1939 *The Jewish Review* recorded large attendance at High Festivals. Towards the end of the period, however, there was even trouble in obtaining a *minyan* for Holy Days and Festivals; in September 1949 for example, after there was no *minyan* on the first day of the 'Feast of Weeks' the Congregation Committee instructed the reader to contact members prior to festival services to ensure that a *minyan* would attend.

The second religious institution which must be discussed to build up a picture of the religious framework of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s is religious leadership. In 1931, his sixth year of employment as the rabbi of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation, the Reverend Alexander Astor left to minister to the much larger Jewish population of Auckland. Given the declining size of the Dunedin Jewish population and the consequent strain upon congregation finances as the number of potential subscribers decreased, it is not surprising that following the Reverend Astor's departure there began a period of uncertainty and change regarding the religious leadership of the community, which was to last until 1948.

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7 Interview with Mr Wilfred Simenauer; Goldman, p.188.
8 Interview with Mr Norman Lust and Mr Fred Hirsh.
9 *The Jewish Times*, 8, 7, July 1929, p.3; *The Jewish Review*, 4, 7, October 1939, p.13; I have been unable to find a translation for *Shevauth*.
10 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 9 June 1949.
11 Goldman says that Astor left Dunedin in 1930, but an issue of *The Jewish Times* from October 1931 talks of the impending departure of Rev. Mr Astor who arrived six years ago; Goldman, p.185; *The Jewish Times*, 10, 10, 30 October 1931, pp.3-4.
Figure 3: Rev. Alexander Astor. The Rev. Astor was rabbi of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation from 1926-1931.
Source: The Jewish Times, 3, 6, August 1937, p.5.

Figure 4: Rev. Hyam Karwan. The Rev. Karwan was rabbi of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation from 1936-1938.
Source: The Jewish Review, 2, 2, April 1936, p.11.
Immediately following Astor’s departure, the lack of formal religious leadership does not appear to have been an issue of great concern to the congregation. A Congregation Committee meeting in April 1932 decided to continue to conduct services with the help of Mr L. Lazarus and Mr L. Cohen as lay readers and opted to use congregation funds for synagogue repair rather than appointing a reader/teacher. The issue arose again in December 1933, but despite deciding in March 1934 to offer the job of reader/teacher to Mr S. Kantor of Wellington, the Congregation Committee decided two months later that they could not afford the appointment. A special general meeting of the congregation, including all adult members of Jewish families and Jewish non-members, was subsequently called in July 1934 to consider the future of services and religious leadership in the synagogue and the general financial position of the congregation. There is no record of the views expressed in this meeting, but it is clear that there must have been a strong desire on the part of the wider congregation to engage a minister, because in February 1935 a cable was sent to London offering employment to a Mr M. Engleman. After a candidate whom the congregation’s London agents had substituted for Mr Engleman had withdrawn and the possibility of engaging a reader/teacher from Australia had been considered, Mr Hyam Karwan offered his services in December. He was duly appointed and arrived as the Reverend Karwan in September 1936. By mid-September 1938 the issue of the feasibility of employing a minister had again emerged but in early October, before a special congregation meeting could be held to discuss whether the congregation should and could continue to retain a minister, the Rev Karwan resigned. The congregation did not remain without religious leadership for long, however; by December 1938 it had been discovered that a refugee from Germany, Mr Ernst Hirsh, was able to conduct services and teach the children. Mr Hirsh, who was working at the Bruce Woollen Mill in Milton, had arrived with his family from the German town of Mönchen Gladbach. In Mönchen Gladbach he had helped out at the local synagogue as a reader or assistant rabbi, though he had never undertaken the university study or sat the exams to qualify him as a rabbi. He was officially appointed as a part-time temporary reader and teacher from 17 November 1938 at a salary of £2 per week, £6 per week less than the salary that had been paid to the Rev Karwan, who had been a full-time rabbi, and his employment was for an initial 6 month period and then on a month to month basis. Hence the Dunedin Congregation seemed to have found a flexible

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12 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 5 April 1932.
13 Ibid., 17 December 1933; 13 March 1934; 17 June 1934.
15 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 18 September 1938; 9 October 1938.
16 Interview with Mr Fred Hirsh; E-mail Fred Hirsh to Christine Baumberg, 19 September 1998.
Figure 5: Mr Caesar Steinhof and family, Dunedin 1943. Mr Steinhof was reader/teacher of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation from 1940-1944.
Source: Dr Simon Ryan, Department of German, University of Otago.

Figure 6: Mr Ernst Hirsh, 1968. Mr Hirsh was reader/teacher of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation from 1938-1940 and 1946-1978.
Source: Michael Goldschmidt.
arrangement whereby they had religious leadership from within the community which they could afford, albeit with the difficulty that as Mr Hirsh was living in Milton he was not always able to be present at the commencement of services.  

The flexibility of this arrangement allowed the congregation committee to follow the advice of the Rev. Astor and appoint Mr Caesar Steinhof, a qualified teacher who was also a refugee from Germany, at a salary of £6 per week and subsequently to terminate Mr Hirsh's employment in February 1940. Mr Steinhof was a very orthodox Jew from Hamburg, a descendant of the Sofer (Schreiber) rabbinical family. It is unclear what religious qualifications Mr Steinhof possessed. In The History of the Jews in New Zealand Goldman, who lists the minutes of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation as one of his sources, gives Steinhof the title of Reverend and calls him a qualified minister, but in 14 September 1941 the Congregation Committee decided to inform Mr Steinhof that the congregation was not prepared to acknowledge him as a Reverend but only as a reader and teacher. If Mr Steinhof was indeed a qualified rabbi, one reason the Congregation Committee was not prepared to acknowledge him as such may have been that they would have had to increase his salary had they done so.

Nevertheless, members of the congregation clearly hoped that Mr Steinhof's appointment would provide a long-term solution to the issue of religious leadership for the congregation. This is indicated by Mr Samuel Saltzman's donation in March 1940 of £1200 ['t]o enable the congregation to purchase a residence for the minister'. One a personal level there is some evidence that Mr Steinhof may have had a good relationship with members of the congregation. His wife Hanna Urmann has written that '[... ] it was not only the black collar, but my husband was, in the finest sense, revered by everyone[... ]'. However, the religious relationship appears to have been somewhat strained. Aside from tension over whether Mr Steinhof should be recognised as a minister, other indications of tension in this relationship are his refusal on religious grounds to attend a cremation when requested to do so and the Congregation Committee's decision to decline him assistance to qualify for "Shekta" (shehita,

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17 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 13 December 1938, 14 February 1939; 29 December 1935; 14 February 1939; 1 August 1939; 10 September 1939.
18 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 17 January 1940; 26 February 1940.
19 Dr Simon Ryan, draft paper for the Wolfskehl-Symposium, 31 August- 3 September 1995, University of Auckland.
20 Goldman, p.185; Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 14 September 1941.
21 Record of Gifts, box 2, DJCC.
22 Hanna Urmann to Professor Voigt, 10 March 1997, held by Dr Simon Ryan, Department of German Language and Literature, University of Otago.
the ritual slaughter of animals). At the end of January 1944 Mr Steinhof was given a leave of absence to visit Australia, from where he resigned in May of that year, having been appointed Headmaster and Assistant to the Director of Education at a Jewish school in Sydney. The Dunedin Jewish Congregation thus found itself in the position of being without religious leadership yet again. It resumed using temporary lay readers, primarily a Mr Friedlander, to conduct synagogue services until September 1946, when Mr Hirsh was again asked to conduct services and take the Sabbath School.

Even at the time of Mr Hirsh's reappointment the issue of religious leadership remained unresolved in the minds of the Congregation Committee and several others whom they invited to consider the problem. For example, a delegation was appointed to approach the University of Otago to suggest the appointment of a teacher of Hebrew who could also act as a minister to the Dunedin Jewish Congregation. A general meeting of the congregation was also called in December 1946 to discuss applications for the positions of minister or reader/teacher and their associated problems. In response to the difficulties of finance and the dwindling Jewish population in Dunedin, Mr Samuel Saltzman reminded the congregation that he had previously donated £1200 for a house for a minister; if this capital was drawn on and subscriptions increased, it would be possible to finance a minister for a few years. He believed that the employment of a minister would keep the congregation together and possibly attract other Jews to Dunedin. The meeting resolved to investigate the possibility of employing Reverend Mendel Lekowitz from Shanghai and in March 1947 congregation members were surveyed as to how much they would be willing to increase their subscriptions to employ a minister. The response to this survey was disappointing, with the potential increase totalling only £71/5/- annually. In July 1947 the Congregation Committee resolved to offer the Rev. Lekowitz the position of minister, provided that suitable accommodation could be found. However, this decision was reversed in August due to the cost and uncertainty of travel from Shanghai, difficulties regarding long term accommodation and the future state of the congregation's finances. It was decided instead to work with Mr Hirsh to try and improve the current

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23 Minutes of the Congregation Committee 30 June 1940; 14 September 1941.
24 Hanna Urmann to Professor Voigt, 10 March 1997; Caesar Steinhof to Karl Wolfskehl, 30 June 1944, in Karl Wolfskehl's Briefwechsel aus Neuseeland 1938-1948, Cornelia Blasberg, hrg., Band. 1, Darmstadt, 1988, p.344.
25 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 30 January 1944; 21 February 1944.
26 Ibid., 21 May 1944; 8 October 1945; 5 December 1945; Throughout this period Mr L. Saltzman and Mr E. Hirsh assisted at festival and occasionally other services; Ibid., 10 September 1944; 2 September 1945; 8 October 1945; 1 September 1946.
27 Ibid., 1 September 1946; 11 December 1946; 15 December 1946.
arrangements. Finance had proved to be the stumbling block for the appointment of a minister once again. The situation improved when Mr Hirsh accepted a job in Dunedin at the London Mantle Company, managed by the Secretary of the Congregation, Mr Frank Salinger, in June 1948. His move to Dunedin, accompanied by a salary from the congregation of £3/10/- per week, enabled him to start the Sabbath service earlier, devote more time to teaching and be available for additional services.

Mr Hirsh remained the reader and teacher of the congregation until his death in 1973 and undoubtedly provided a measure of stability amidst a declining population. The uncertainty and change in the religious leadership of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s which preceded his move to Dunedin in 1948 indicates that while the Dunedin Jewish Congregation would have liked a full rabbi as the spiritual head of their community, and did have this leadership during some parts of the period, declining community numbers meant they were unable and perhaps unwilling to meet the financial cost of this leadership. This is rather ironic given that the presence of a fully qualified rabbi in Dunedin may well have provided an incentive for Jews to both stay in and be attracted to Dunedin, as Samuel Saltzman suggested. Yet the frequent attempts to obtain a dedicated reader/teacher for the congregation reflect that throughout the period there was a real desire for a religious leader who was able to devote substantial time to the religious needs of the community, although tension between Steinhof and the congregation suggests that the community did not want a religious leader who was too orthodox. Mr Hirsh's move back to Dunedin provided a compromise solution: an affordable lay reader/teacher who was able to devote substantial portions of his time to the needs of the congregation, thus providing stability to the shifting framework of religious leadership in the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s.

The declining Jewish population of Dunedin and the changing religious leadership of the Dunedin Jewish Community also impacted upon the religious education of the children of the Dunedin Jewish Community. Once again the nature of the sources make a definitive picture of the religious teaching of the younger Jewish population of Dunedin impossible, but it is possible to gain an impression of the framework of Jewish religious education in the 1930s and 1940s using national Jewish periodicals, the Minutes of the Congregation Committee and oral interviews.

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29 Ibid., 17 July 1947; 1 August 1947; 18 August 1947; 1 August 1947.
30 Interview with Mr Fred Hirsh; Interview with Mrs Margot Hirsh; Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 31 May 1948; 23 June 1948 9 September 1948.
31 Cooper, p.125.
The national Jewish periodicals *The Jewish Times* and *The Jewish Review* both included occasional reports on the attendance and teaching of a Dunedin Hebrew School. In November 1930 twenty children were enrolled in the Hebrew School, taught by the Rev. Astor, Mr David Langley and Miss Elsa Jacobs. Classes were held twice per week, on the Sabbath (Saturday) and on Sunday. Following the Rev. Astor's departure at the end of 1930, Mr P. Braham and Mr H. Boock volunteered to help with the school. Between the end of *The Jewish Times* in January 1932 and the start of *The Jewish Review* in March 1935 no mention is made in the Minutes of the Congregation Committee of arrangements for a Hebrew School, but in the reports of the Hebrew School given at the annual Simhat Torah (Holy Day on which the annual completion of the reading of the Torah is celebrated) party and distribution of Hebrew School prizes in November 1935 and November 1936, the honorary teachers of the school are named as Mr A. Grass and Mr L. A. Manning. Both Ted Friedlander and Norman Lust remember approximately 20 pupils of varying ages at the Hebrew School around this time.

In September 1936 the Rev. Karwan took over the teaching at the Hebrew School, until his departure in late 1938. Despite this loss of rabbinical leadership the Hebrew School appears to have continued into 1939. The Minutes of the Congregation Committee mention a Sabbath School in November 1938, in the context of Mr Hirsh teaching Sabbath School and taking Sabbath services with Mr L. Manning acting as assistant teacher, and *The Jewish Review* of November 1939 records a Simhat Torah party and Hebrew School prizegiving, with a Miss Savai as a member of the teaching staff of the school. It is not clear, however, whether Hebrew classes were taught on Sundays as well as on the Sabbath. After Mr Steinhof became reader/teacher in February 1940 and until his resignation in May 1943, religious education continued under his tutelage. Mr Steinhof had the help of Miss Gertie Friedlander until the Congregation Committee decided in May 1943 that this was no longer affordable, although a few months later she offered her services at the Saturday morning classes. The fact that she was asked to conduct both the 'Hebrew and Sabbath schools' following Steinhof's departure indicates that religious education classes were being held twice per week at this time.

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32 *The Jewish Times*, 9, 11, 27 November 1930, p.5; 10,10, 30 October 1931, p.3.
33 *The Jewish Review*, 1, 9, November 1935, p.18; 2, 9, November 1936, p.17; Interview Mr Ted Friedlander; Interview with Mr Norman Lust.
34 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 13 December 1938; Mr A Grass jnr. was also asked to be an assistant teacher but declined; Ibid., 1 August 1939; *The Jewish Review*, 4, 8, November (1939), p.13; It is likely that 'Miss Savai' was actually Miss Garai, a refugee from Europe who is named in the list 'Refugees in Dunedin, June 1940' and who appears to have worked at the Archerfield School in Lees Street; 'Refugees in Dunedin, June 1940'.
35 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 26 May 1943; 19 September 1943.
and that classes on the Sabbath and on Sunday were viewed as separate entities. In December 1945 she resigned as the teacher of the Hebrew School, and Mr S. Goodman carried on temporarily, with Mr Friedlander's daughter agreeing to take over the Sabbath School in July 1946. After Mr Hirsh's reappointment as reader/teacher in late 1946, a Sabbath School was held, on Saturday afternoons at first and later immediately following the Sabbath service. As Mr Hirsh was living in Milton it would have been impractical for him to teach at a Sunday morning Hebrew School and it does not appear that anybody else took over this function. The Minutes of the Congregation Committee show that both Mr Hirsh and the Congregation Committee were of the opinion that the time which Mr Hirsh was available to spend teaching on the Sabbath was inadequate, and one of the factors in Mr Hirsh's decision to move back to Dunedin appears to have been to enable him to be available for more teaching hours. It is clear that once Mr Hirsh was living in Dunedin, from August 1948, the Sunday Hebrew School was re-established, being held at the Hirsh home on Sunday mornings. Yet the numbers attending were declining; Fred Hirsh remembers that after the family returned to Dunedin the Hebrew School numbers eventually fell to a point where "[...] there was a Hebrew School of one pupil-just whoever it was who was doing Bar mitzvah at the time". (Bar mitzvah is the attainment and occasion of the assumption of the status of religious maturity by males aged 13). This recollection is not surprising given the falling Jewish population of Dunedin, but it is noteworthy that despite this decline in numbers this opportunity for religious instruction was still provided.

The above description shows that religious education for children was an important part of the religious framework of the Dunedin Jewish Community. Despite a declining population, the associated financial pressure and changing religious leadership the existence of an institution or institutions for the religious education of children seems to have been of real importance to the Dunedin Jewish Congregation and efforts were made to ensure some form of religious education existed throughout the 1930s and 1940s, whether in the form of a Sunday Hebrew School, classes on the Sabbath or both and whether taken by a rabbi, reader/teacher or a lay member of the congregation.

36 Ibid., 21 May 1944.
37 Ibid., 5 December 1945; 26 June 1946; 15 July 1946.
38 Ibid., 1 September 1946; 12 March 1947.
39 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 15 December 1947; 31 May 1948; 23 June 1948.
40 Interview with Mrs Margot Hirsh; Interview with Mr Fred Hirsh.
The final religious institution which needs to be discussed is that which provided lay leadership for the congregation, namely the Congregation Committee. Committee members appear to have been elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation and the number of members on the Congregation Committee at any one time ranged between eight and twelve. A total of 24 members of the congregation served on the committee in the period 1930-1950. Of these 24, only one member, Dr Simenauer, was a refugee. Meetings do not appear to have been held a set number of times per year; instead, the frequency of meetings seems to have depended on the existence of issues requiring discussion. In 1933, for example, the minute book records only three meetings, while in 1947 nine meetings were held. Within the period 1930-1950, the position of President of the Congregation Committee and thus of the congregation was held by only four men, namely Mr D. E. Theomin, Mr D. Phillips, Mr J. Jacobs, and Mr H. L. Boock. The role of secretary was filled by Mr F. S. Salinger, Mr J. B. Moss and Mr S. Goodman, while Mr J. Jacobs, Mr E. Halsted, Mr L. Cohen and Mr S. Saltzman acted as treasurer. The committee appears to have had considerable power over the direction of the congregation, as can be seen in its decision in April 1932 to use congregation funds to repair the synagogue rather than appoint a reader/teacher, although it did occasionally call meetings of the congregation to consult members on their views regarding such issues.\(^{41}\) The Congregation Committee's most important function was its provision of a measure of stable leadership for the congregation during a period in which the religious leadership was changing and often uncertain, even if the committee itself sometimes appears to have contributed to this change and uncertainty.

Having examined the four institutions which contributed towards the religious framework of the Dunedin Jewish Community, it is appropriate to consider two further aspects of Judaism, namely the observance of the Sabbath and adherence to Jewish dietary laws. While they cannot be considered part of the institutional framework of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the same way as synagogue attendance, the importance of religious leadership, the availability of religious education for children or the Congregation Committee, these observances provide an important indicator of the role played by religion within the community. Morris Goldman states that the Rev. Karwan was unhappy during his time in

\(^{41}\) Minutes of the Congregation Committee; Members of the Congregation Committee in the period 1930-1950 were Mr G. Benson, Mr H. L. Boock, Mr L. Cohen, Mr A. de Beer, Mr J. Finkelstein, Mr E. Friedlander, Mr I. Goodman, Mr S. Goodman, Mr E. Halsted, Mr F. Halsted, Mr P. L. Halsted, Mr J. Jacobs, Mr L. Lazarus, Mr M. Manning, Mr J. B. Moss, Mr M. Myers, Mr D. Phillips, Dr Rapheal, Mr J. Romison, Dr Simenauer, Mr F. Salinger, Mr S. Saltzman, Mr S. Solomon and Mr D.E. Theomin.
Dunedin and as a very orthodox Jew he was unable to accustom himself to "[...]concessions made to environment in regard to Jewish life in the colonies." This intriguing statement may refer to the frequency or low attendance of services, but it may also refer to the degree of observance of the Sabbath and the willingness to observe kashrut (the body of regulations governing Jewish diet) by eating only kosher food. Norman Lust's recollection of being sent around the Jewish shopkeepers on the Octagon on a Saturday morning is an indication that the economic realities of life in Dunedin may not have made it possible for some members of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation to observe the Sabbath. Likewise, living in a community where the overwhelming majority of the members recognised Sunday as the Sabbath and where sport and other social activities took place on a Saturday must have made it tempting to break such an observance. For example, Fred Hirsh did not remember people who lived in Dunedin in the 1940s being observant enough to make a point of walking to the synagogue.

As far as eating kosher food was concerned, the Rev. Karwan's arrival in September 1936 marked the presence of the first shohet (qualified ritual slaughterer of animals and poultry) in Dunedin since the departure of the Rev. Astor in 1931. Goldman's comment suggests that the availability of kosher meat may not have been taken advantage of by as many families as their minister may have hoped, despite the Congregation Committee organising a supply of kosher meat and fish. Goldman is correct in stating that the Rev. Karwan's departure meant the end of kosher meat for Dunedin, but the fact that the congregation committee turned down Mr Steinhof's application to qualify for 'Schekta' (shehita) in September 1941 shows that at the very least there was little support among the lay heads of the community, if not the community as a whole, for the strict observance of dietary laws. This casts doubt upon Goldman's statement that the difficulty of obtaining a qualified shohet during war led to the abandonment of kosher meat. He may be partly correct to list the decline in the Jewish population of Dunedin as a reason for this abandonment, but a more important reason may have been that there was little desire among the Dunedin Jewish population for the degree of dietary observance that kosher meat involved. Maureen Kate Cooper interviewed an anonymous member of the Dunedin Jewish Community who lived in Dunedin in the 1930s and whose family ate kosher food and observed dietary laws. However, of the people I interviewed, Ted Friedlander was the only one who lived in a kosher home in Dunedin and he

42 Goldman, p.185.
43 Interview with Mr Fred Hirsh.
44 The Jewish Review, 2, 7, September 1936, p.20; Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 1 April 1936.
45 Goldman, p.185; Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 14 September 1941.
46 Cooper, p.25.
did not think that this was very common. Dr Laurie Gluckman also remarked on the impossibility of observing the Jewish dietary laws in Dunedin in the 1940s and although Wilfred Simenauer's parents became more observant when they came to New Zealand from Germany, he remarked that they made no effort to eat kosher food.\textsuperscript{47}

It should be noted, however, that at least in the first half of the 1940s the community went to some effort to obtain supplies of Passover bread and meal. The Minutes of the Congregation Committee show that arrangements were made towards the end of 1939, 1941 and 1944 for the ordering of matzah and meal for the following year's Passover.\textsuperscript{48} It is likely that this process may also have taken place in other years during the 1930s and 1940s and not been recorded.

The ordering of matzah and meal took considerable time and effort, as supplies had to be obtained from overseas. In 1939 the matzah and meal were ordered from England, and although by 1944 they could be ordered from Melbourne, the six invoices accompanying the list of community members who wanted orders placed on their behalf indicates that the process was very involved.\textsuperscript{49} The fact that community members were prepared to go to this degree of effort to ensure the availability of matzah and meal shows that even if religious practices such as eating kosher food were not adhered to, community members nevertheless felt it was important to have the requisite supplies for Holy Days and Festivals such as the Passover. Moreover, the fact that in 1944-1945 members of at least 49 Dunedin families requested that matzah and/or meal be ordered on their behalf shows that this belief was widespread.\textsuperscript{50}

Finally, the Dunedin Jewish Community of the 1930s and 1940s was a community which was reasonably tolerant towards differing beliefs within Judaism and towards members marrying adherents of other religions. A clear example of this is that each entry for the Dunedin Jewish Congregation in the ecclesiastical section of Stone's states 'All sects admitted'.\textsuperscript{51} Furthermore, the Congregation Committee supported Miss Olive Campbell's

\textsuperscript{47} Interview with Mr Ted Friedlander; Interview with Dr Laurie Gluckman; Interview with Mr Wilfred Simenauer.
\textsuperscript{48} Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 3 December 1939; 14 September 1941; 10 September 1944. Ibid., 3 December 1939; List of names and addresses of those ordering 'motzos' (Matzah) and meal, undated, and attached invoices dated November 1944-March 1945; Invoices attached are: Original Licence to Import Goods 8 November 1944; Invoice Sniders Motzo Manufacturers 19 February 1945; Gain Forwarding Co. Ltd., 7 March 1945; Gain Forwarding Co. Ltd., 14 March 1945; Imports Entry-Home Consumption and Customs Entry, 14 March 1945; Bank of New Zealand debit form, undated. Ibid.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{50} Stone's, 1930, p.855; Stone's, 1931, p.862; Stone's, 1932, p.864; Stone's, 1933, p.870; Stone's, 1934, p.890; Stone's, 1935, p.915; Stone's, 1936, p.936; Stone's, 1937, p.942; Stone's, 1938, p.952; Stone's, 1939, p.963; Stone's, 1940, p.976; Stone's, 1941, p.980; Stone's, 1942, p.977.
application to the Great Synagogue in Sydney to be admitted to the Jewish faith when she wished to marry Mr L. Manning and subsequently granted an application to have the marriage solemnised in the synagogue.\textsuperscript{52} It should be noted, however, that there was not a complete acceptance of those who married out, especially those whose spouses had not converted. This is not surprising considering that marriage between a Jew and a non-Jew has historically been condemned by Jewish communities worldwide and is forbidden by Jewish law.\textsuperscript{53} In May 1940 in a letter to Mr John Jacobs and Mr Samuel Saltzman, both members of the committee of the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society, the chairman of the society Mr Gerald Benson expressed his disappointment at the decision of the committee to decline assistance to a refugee doctor on the grounds that he had a non-Jewish wife. He believed that members of the society would be horrified and that generous donors would withdraw their support.\textsuperscript{54} At the next committee meeting it was decided that assistance should not be withheld solely because the applicant had a non-Jewish spouse, and Mr John Jacobs resigned from the committee as he felt that as the President of the Congregation he could not support this principle.\textsuperscript{55} Nevertheless, the Dunedin Jewish Community can still be said to have been a reasonably liberal one because there appears to have been tolerance among the Dunedin Jewish Congregation towards differing beliefs within Judaism and some members of the community exhibited tolerance towards those who married out.

The synagogue, religious leadership, religious schools for children and the lay leadership of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation were all institutions which contributed towards the religious framework of the Dunedin Jewish Community. Synagogue attendance during the period 1930-1950 was low and until 1948, when Mr Hirsh moved to Dunedin, the congregation's religious leadership was characterised by uncertainty and change. This meant that religious education for children was provided by a number of different members of the community during the period 1930-1950. It was the Congregation Committee that provided a measure of stable leadership during this period of uncertainty and change.

Religion was a common bond between the members of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation, but it was not an overly important force in their lives. Judaism did not play such a significant role in the lives of congregation members that they strictly obeyed religious laws

\textsuperscript{52} Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 27 May 1937; 14 February, 1939; 3 December 1939.
\textsuperscript{54} Gerald Benson to John Jacobs and Samuel Saltzman, 15 May 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
\textsuperscript{55} Minutes of the DJWS Committee, 22 May 1940.
concerning Sabbath and dietary observance. When placed in context of a desire for religious leadership, but the inability or unwillingness to pay for it, together with low attendance at *shul*, it may be argued that religion did not play as important a role in the lives of members of the Dunedin Jewish Community as might otherwise have been imagined in a period spanning a depression and a world war. Yet by ensuring the continuation of the availability of religious education for children, the congregation was ensuring that this common bond remained and laid the foundations for its children to make an informed choice about their degree of religious observance in the future. Finally, the Dunedin Jewish Congregation can be characterised as a fairly liberal one, because there appears to have been tolerance towards differing beliefs within Judaism and some tolerance towards those who married out of the faith.
Chapter Three: Secular Institutions and Social Events

In considering the institutions, events and people which created a sense of community among Jews in Dunedin in the 1930s and 40s it is important to examine those which extended beyond religious observance. There are two reasons for this; firstly, despite the common religious bond between members of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation religious observance does not appear to have been an overly important force in their lives, and thus one needs to examine other manifestations of this bond. Secondly, low attendance at synagogue services indicates that there may have been a number of members of the Dunedin Jewish Community who did not take part in communal religious observance. This could reflect either secularisation or a concept of being Jewish as an ethnic or national rather than a religious affiliation. These members may, however, have participated in communal activities which did not have a primarily religious focus.

Hal B. Levine calls his comparison of the contemporary ethnic identities of New Zealand Jews, Maori and urban Papua New Guineans Constructing Collective Identity. By examining the institutional and social frameworks which extend beyond those determined by the existence of a common religion, we will be able to draw conclusions as to the extent to which these frameworks helped to construct a collective identity which extended beyond religious similarity for the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s.

A useful starting point for the examination of the impact of the non-religious institutional and social framework on the community's collective identity can be found in the editorial of The Jewish Times from 24 August 1928:

DUNEDIN SHOWS THE WAY.

Although not very often in the public eye, the most Southern Jewish Community in the world, that of Dunedin, is in a very sound condition. Although the number of Jewish families in Dunedin does not exceed fifty, Jewish communal life flourishes to a greater extent than in many larger Jewish communities. This is largely due to the untiring efforts and likeable personality of the Dunedin Minister, Rev. Alexander Astor, but the fact must not be overlooked that Dunedin Jewry has clung to its Judaism and preserved a fine Jewish spirit through many years of spiritual isolation, during which period the services of a minister were not available.

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A striking indication of the spirit that prevails amongst our co-religionists in Dunedin may be found in the list of donations to the Ukraine Relief Fund published elsewhere in this issue.²

This editorial suggests that immediately prior to the 1930s the Dunedin Jewish Community's philanthropic and social frameworks were very strong. Although written to rebuke other New Zealand Jewish communities for a failure to make substantial donations to a Ukraine Relief Fund, the editorial indicates the importance of the Rev. Astor's influence on a strong communal life resulting in a sense of community among Jews in Dunedin. Thus when considering non-religious institutions and events which helped create a sense of collective identity among the Dunedin Jewish population it may be possible that the presence or absence of leadership, religious or otherwise, may impact on the degree of collective identity created.

It is important to note that one of the major sources for this chapter is the references to Dunedin contained in the national Jewish periodicals of the time. There are several problems associated with this source. Firstly, there are a several sections of the period 1930 to 1950 for which no national Jewish periodical existed. The last issue of the Jewish Times appeared in January 1942 while The Jewish Review did not commence until March 1935 and after its demise in mid 1940 the New Zealand Jewish Chronicle did not begin until September 1944. Secondly, I was unable to access all issues of these periodicals and some issues are not held in public libraries in New Zealand at all. Thirdly, it is not possible to know whether the absence of a reference to Dunedin means that no event occurred or that an event took place without a report being submitted to the periodical. However, considering that Dunedin community members would have wanted show the strength of the community to other Jewish Communities in New Zealand, it is most likely that the absence of a report about an event indicates that no event took place. Despite these problems the national Jewish periodicals are a valuable source, providing a wealth of information which otherwise would not have been known.

Births, deaths and marriages are important events in any community because they provide an opportunity for interaction between members of that community in celebration or in grief as well as a cause for reflection on the community's future strength. The 14 Bar mitzvah which are known to have taken place within the Dunedin Jewish Community between the 1930 and 1950 would have been a similar cause for celebration and reflection, albeit with a religious

² The Jewish Times, 7, 8, 24 August, 1928, p.1.
focus. For example, after Max Saltzman and Philip Friedlander became Bar mitzvah in June 1935, their parents were 'at home to visitors' on the day of and the day following the service, and after Peter Halsted's Bar mitzvah in February 1950, his parents held a reception for the congregation in the synagogue clubrooms.

Between 1930 and 1951 18 births and 28 deaths are known to have occurred amongst the Dunedin Jewish Community, which may have created a feeling of an identity which was being eroded. Nevertheless the New Zealand Jewish Review and Communal Directory published in 1931 includes the 'Dunedin Chevra Kadisha' (Chevra Kadishah, Burial Society) amongst its list of Dunedin Communal Institutions. The object of this institution was '[t]o perform the last rites to the dead and comfort the mournes' (sic), thus reinforcing Jewish communal feeling in the face of the loss of a member of the Jewish community. Weddings would also have strengthened feelings of community among Dunedin Jews in the 1930s and 1940s, particularly when they took place between members of the community. This occurred in at least 3 out of the 11 marriages known to have involved at least one member of the Dunedin Jewish Community between 1930 and 1950. However marriages were also a cause of loss of community members, particularly female members. Between November 1929 and 1950, a minimum of four women of the community married men from outside the Dunedin Jewish Community and it is highly probable, given the prevailing social norms, that following their marriages they left Dunedin to live in their husband's place of residence.

References to the three marriages where both parties were members of the Dunedin Jewish Community: Minutes of the Congregation Committee 27 May 1937; 13 December 1938; 13 December 1938; The Jewish Review, 2, 11, January 1937, p.19; 3, 11, February 1939, p.1; The marriages of two refugees and of a male member of the community to a convert have been excluded from this figure. See Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 26 May 1943; 27 May 1937; 3 December 1939.

References to all the marriages known to have taken place where at least one party was a member of the Dunedin Jewish Community: Minutes of the Congregation Committee 13 March 1934; 27 May 1937; 13 December 1938; 13 December 1938; 26 May 1943; The Jewish Review, 1, 4, June 1935, p.13; 2, 11, January 1937, p.19; 3, 11, February 1939, p.15; The Jewish Times, 8, 11, 21 November 1929; 10, 1, 30 January 1931, pp.3-4; 10, 4, 24 April 1931, p.7; 11, 1, 28 January 1932, p.3; New Zealand Jewish Bulletin, 8,3, July-August 1948, p.4.

Minutes of the Congregation Committee 13 March 1934; The Jewish Times, 8, 11, 21 November 1929; 10, 1, 30 January 1931, pp.3-4; 10, 4, 24 April 1931, p.7.
during this time a minimum of three men married women outside the community, only one of whom has definitely been identified as having brought his bride to Dunedin. This high level of marriage to people from outside the immediate community is not surprising given the fact that the size of the Dunedin Jewish Community was declining; as the number of people in Dunedin who named Judaism as their religious affiliation ranging fell from 190 in 1926 to 125 in 1951 there would have been few choices of marriage partner in Dunedin for a person of who did not want to marry non-Jewish spouses. When estimating the number of children attending Hebrew school with him as approximately 20, Norman Lust made the comment that ' [...] to find a partner is not the easiest out of 20 when half of them are men-there is a certain familiarity with people you grow up with. 

*Bar mitzvah*, births, deaths and marriages were intermittent events in the calendar of the Dunedin Jewish community in the 1930s and 1940s and did not provide regular cause for members of the community to come together. This function was fulfilled by the Dunedin Jewish Social Club, founded in 1924. Throughout 1930 and 1931 *The Jewish Times* lists a number of social activities organised by the club, including an annual picnic at Evansdale Glen, lectures, play readings, a 'Dutch Parliament', an 'At Home' hosted by Mrs Astor for junior members with music, community singing and dancing, a communal reception for a visiting concert pianist, a progressive bridge evening and several cabaret evenings with orchestras, as well as afternoon tea in the *sukkah* (decorated booth erected during the festival of *Sukkot* symbolising God's protection of the Israelites during their 40 years of wandering in the desert) and the annual *Simhat Torah* parties held in conjunction with the Hebrew School prizegiving. These events seem to have been well patronised by community members. The annual picnic in 1930 is reported to have had 'larger than usual attendance' (in 1929 a 'large number of members' took part), a Dutch Parliament held in June 1930 was 'very successful', a play reading in June 1930 with supper and dancing afterwards had 'very large attendance' and attendance at

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8 *The Jewish Times*, 11, 1, 28 January 1932, p.3; *The Jewish Review*, 1, 4, June 1935, p.13; Minutes of the Congregation Committee; Mr Frank Halsted is listed in the Minutes of the Congregation Committee as a member of the Congregation Committee from 1933 to the end of the period; *New Zealand Judean Bulletin*, 8, 3, July-August 1948, p.4; Mr Phillip Friedlander's parents had moved to Auckland shortly before their son's engagement; I am unsure where he was residing.

9 Interview with Norman Lust.

10 Goldman, p.203.

11 *The Jewish Times*, 9, 3, 24 March 1930, p.5; 10, 3, 23 March 1931 p.10 (the 1931 picnic was cancelled and funds given to earthquake relief in Napier instead); 9, 5, 29 May 1930, pp.3-4; 10, 5, 21 May 1931; 9, 6, 26 June 1930, p.3; 9, 7, 23 July 1930, p.6; 10, 7, 30 July 1931, p.2; 9, 7, 23 July 1930, p.6; Ibid; 10, 7, 30 July 1931, p.2; 9, 9, 25 September 1930, p.2; 9, 8, 27 August 1930, p.9, 9, 10, 30 October 1930, p.8; 10, 7, 30 July 1931, p.2; 9, 10, 30 October 1930, p.10; 9, 11, 27 November 1930 pp.4-5; 10, 10, 30 October 1931, pp.3-4.
Figure 7: Otago Team to the First New Zealand Jewish Quadrangular Tournament, Wellington, 1934.
Back Row: unknown, Hal Jacobs, Leo Manning, C. Lust, unknown (Lust?), unknown, unknown, unknown.
Front Row: Jack Friedlander, Jacobs, Mitchell Lazarus, Bernie Falck.
Sources: Photo: Dunedin Synagogue
Names: Ted Friedlander
two out of three of the cabaret evenings was 'exceptional'.

This is not surprising given the high number of members; in 1930 the club's annual report lists a membership of 63, increasing to 70 by 1931, a figure which represents 36.8 percent of the overall number of Dunedin residents who identified themselves as Jewish in the New Zealand census of 1926 and 40.5 percent of those who identified themselves as Jewish in the census of 1936.

By the mid 1930s interest in the activities of the Social Club had waned, despite a continuing abundance of social activities. The Minutes of the Social Club from 1934 and early 1935 include mention of annual picnics in February 1934 and 1935, two social and dances, a play evening and three bridge evenings. Otago also sent participants to a quadrangular sports tournament with Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch in Wellington at New Years 1934-1935.

At the Annual Meeting of the club in April 1935 the president, Mr D. Phillips, 'deplored the lack of interest of members in the activities of the Club and hoped that the younger members would give more assistance in the future. The Club was a very useful adjunct to and performed an important social service for the community.' Likewise, Mr L. A. Manning commented on the 'very apparent lack of interest' and suggested that the absence of religious leadership 'was obviously reacting to the detriment of the social life of the community' (sic).

In response to this lack of interest the committee decided to reduce the number of 'entertainments' outside of regular events such as the annual Simhat Torah party and Hebrew School prizegiving, the decoration and provision for the sukkah and the annual picnic, with the only additional 'entertainments' being play-readings performed by the club's younger members. Although these play readings 'proved the most popular form of entertainment we have yet had', by 1936 the membership had dropped to 60.

Contrary to what Mr L. A. Manning might have expected, the presence of religious leadership in the person of the Rev. Karwan from September 1936 does not appear to have stimulated the communal social life of the Dunedin Jewish Community. After expressing concern at the 'decreasing membership and the lack of support' the Annual General Meeting of 1937 decided that the club would stay in existence but would only be used for purposes such

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12 Ibid., 9, 3, 24 March 1930, p.5; 8, 3, 21 March 1929, p.4; 9, 7, 23 July 1930, p.6, 9, 6, 26 June 1930, p.3; 9, 8, 27 August 1930, p.9; 9, 10, 30 October 1930, p.8.
15 The Jewish Review, 1, 3, 1 May 1935, p.17.
16 Ibid., 2, 2, April 1936, p.12. In 1936 a 'very successful' Purim (name given to any annual celebration instituted by a Jewish community to commemorate a deliverance from danger) party replaced the annual picnic due to bad weather.
17 Ibid.
as entertaining visitors or holding a children's party. Consequently, between the Rev. Karwan's arrival and his resignation in October 1938, the only social events organised by the Social Club listed in *The Jewish Review* or in the club's minutes were bridge parties given by and for Mrs Lust, a farewell for Mr and Mrs Lust who were leaving Dunedin (Mr Lust was the chairman of the Social Club) and regular events such as the annual *Simhat Torah* party. It seems likely that the personality of the community's religious leader appears to have been a major contributing factor to the success of the Dunedin Jewish Social Club; the Rev. Astor appears to have exercised strong communal leadership but this was not the case with the Rev. Karwan.

The Dunedin Jewish Social Club underwent a small revival in 1939 following a decision at a congregation general meeting in March to reorganise the Social Club. This proposal was given impetus by a letter to the editor which appeared in *The Jewish Review* in June, complaining that since the decision to call a meeting of the executive to attempt to revive former social activities '[s]o far months have lapsed and the committee is still in its lethargy. [...] It is time that something should have eventuated and the social activities of the Club brought back to its former standard.' Given such obvious strength of feeling amongst some members of the community and its expression in a periodical read throughout the Jewish communities of New Zealand, together with the arrival of a number of refugee families in Dunedin, it is not surprising that when a meeting was held to consider the reformation of the Social Club in August of the same year, 'the attendance was one of the largest seen in the club rooms in recent years'. Not only was a new executive elected, it was also decided to form a Junior Club which had its first 'evening's entertainment' on 10 September and which decorated the *sukkah* of 1939.

The Social Club continued to organise the annual *Simhat Torah* party and Hebrew School prizegiving, as it had done throughout the 1930s, but with the exception of a series of lectures given by Mr Steinhof commencing in June 1940, the issues of *The Jewish Review* which are available until June 1940 do not mention any other events it organised. However the Junior Club appears to have met several times in the months following its formation, holding a card evening, an 'Apple derby' with table tennis and supper and a social gathering

19 Ibid., 2, 7, September 1936, p.21; 2, 9, November 1936, p.17; 3, 1, March 1937, p.10; 3, 8, October 1937, p.12; 4, 2, April 1938, p.13; Minutes of the Jewish Social Club, 24 September 1936; 8 February 1937; 6 October, 1938; Once again, a Purim party replaced the annual picnic due to the weather.
20 Ibid., 3, 12, March 1939, p.15.
21 Ibid., 4, 3, June 1939, p.11.
23 Ibid., 3, 8, November 1938, p.15; 4, 8, November 1939, p.13; June 1940, p.11.
where Mr and Mrs Steinhof were the guests of honour. Although there was no national Jewish periodical between the demise of The Jewish Review and the start of the New Zealand Jewish Chronicle in September 1944 which would have chronicled the fate of the Dunedin Jewish Social Club in the first half of the 1940s and the role played in by Mr and Mrs Steinhof in it, the presence of the Steinhofs at these club events indicates that they may have taken on a role of facilitators of social occasions, similar to that played by the Astors in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

In contrast to Norman Lust, who remembers going on the train to picnics held at the racetrack in the 1930s along with most of the community who could get there, Fred Hirsh does not remember picnics or any other Social Club events. This suggests that by August 1948, when the Hirsh family moved from Milton to Dunedin, the Dunedin Jewish Social Club had ceased to exist. Some of the functions of the club appear to have been taken over by a 'Ladies' Committee' which in 1949 erected a sukkah and arranged a Simhat Torah social evening which had 'gratifying' attendance. These events were the first of the type which had formerly been organised by the Dunedin Jewish Social Club to be recorded in the available issues of the New Zealand Jewish Chronicle, which had been published since September 1944. This lack could be attributed either to the possibility that there were little or no social activities of this sort until 1949, or to the possibility that nobody in Dunedin reported such events to the New Zealand Jewish Chronicle. It is very unlikely that the activities of the Dunedin Jewish Social Club stopped completely between 1940 and 1949, considering both the number of refugee doctors and their families in Dunedin and the participation of the Steinhofs in the activities of the Social Club in the early 1940s. However, given the uncertain status of religious leadership in the community from Mr Steinhof's resignation in May 1943 until Mr Hirsh moved to Dunedin in August 1948 and the influence that strong religious leadership seemed to have over the communal life of the community, as illustrated by the Rev. Astor, there may well have been a lack of communal social activities from approximately mid 1943 until 1949.

Thus while the contribution of the Dunedin Jewish Social Club to the collective identity of the Dunedin Jewish Community was very strong in the early 1930s under the influence of the Rev. Astor, the importance of this contribution had waned by the mid 1930s. The Social Club subsequently underwent a small revival in the late 1930s and there is some evidence that

24 Ibid., November 1939, p.13; April 1940, p. 13; 5, 4, June 1940, p.11.
25 Interview with Mr Norman Lust and Mr Fred Hirsh; Picnics took place during Mr Lust's time in Dunedin at Evansdale Glen (1930) and Wingatui Racetrack (1937); The Jewish Times, 9, 3, 24 March 1930, p.5; The Jewish Review, 3, 1, March 1937, p.10.
26 New Zealand Jewish Chronicle, 6, 7, October-November 1949, p.16.
the Steinhofs may have played a similar role in the club to the Astors. The recording of community social events in the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle* after the Hirsh family came to Dunedin supports the theory that the strength of religious leadership was important to the strength of communal activity.

The holding of a communal *seder* (ceremony which takes place on the first night of the Passover, usually in the home, and includes a festival meal) at the Passover, a function which also came under the auspices of the Dunedin Jewish Social Club, supports the hypothesis that communal activity and thus communal feeling were influenced by the presence of strong religious leadership. At the first *seder*, instigated by Mrs Astor in 1929, approximately 30 adults and children were present; by 1930 the number of participants had grown to 38, expanding to 46 in 1931. All three *seder* were presided over by the Rev. Astor. The next recording of a communal *seder* in the available national Jewish periodicals was in April 1939, with the *seder* conducted by Mr Hirsh and attended by a 'large crowd'. At some stage after 1939 the practice of holding such communal *seder* stopped, although the fact that Dr Laurie Gluckman, a medical student in Dunedin from 1940, recalled that all students were welcome at the annual Passover meal indicates that they must have kept going for a few years after 1939, presumably until the departure of the Steinhofs in 1944. The services were revived to a limited extent in 1947 and 1948 when the group Dunedin Zionist Youth held small *sedarim* and then revived fully with a communal *seder* with 50 guests (including children) in 1949.

The communal *seder* was an institution within the Dunedin Jewish Community which contributed strongly to communal feeling. Fred Hirsh recalls that '[...] we always used to have a huge communal *seder* at the synagogue - it was held downstairs and just about everyone would come to that-it was very warm like a large extended family - and you'd get to meet everybody there.' According to Mrs Hirsh, the communal *seder* proved so popular that people with little or no contact with the community throughout the rest of the year would turn up. 'We were about 50 for a *seder* night and one *seder* night we were about 70 people not catered for [...] there were Jewish people connected with the university but otherwise had no connection with the community and I said to my husband - we two were the main organisers of

28. Ibid., 8, 5, 20 May 1929, pp.3-4; 9, 5, 29 May 1930, p.3; 10, 4, 24 April 1931, p.6.
29. *The Jewish Review*, 4, 1, April 1939, p.11.
30. Interview with Dr Laurie Gluckman.
32. Interview with Mr Fred Hirsh.
either it's restricted to members of the community or we don't have it any more. I'm not catering for people we don't see the year round and they come in for a feast.\textsuperscript{33} In contrast, Norman Lust does not remember going to a communal \textit{seder} while in Dunedin between 1929 and 1936 as his family held its own.\textsuperscript{34} When considered in conjunction with the large drop in the Dunedin Jewish population between the census of 1936 and that of 1945 and the fact that the first communal \textit{seder} was established for those who were strangers and did not have friends to celebrate the \textit{seder} with, this recollection suggests that between the 1930 and 1950 the communal \textit{seder} acquired the function of bringing the whole Dunedin Jewish Community together, thus contributing to the community's collective identity.\textsuperscript{35}

It was not just social events and institutions which provided a means for the reflection and strengthening of communal feeling amongst the Dunedin Jewish Community. The philanthropic organisations 'Dunedin Philanthropic Society' and 'Dunedin Jewish Ladies' Hand in Hand Society' also fulfilled this function. The list of Dunedin communal institutions in the 1931 \textit{New Zealand Jewish Review and Communal Directory} gives the object of the Philanthropic Society as '[t]o grant relief to, or assist by means of loans, the poor and the needy' while the goal of the Hand in Hand Society was '[t]o visit the sick and help indigent women'.\textsuperscript{36} Aid was directed towards members of the local Jewish community and thus would have strengthened communal feeling by giving those involved the feeling that they were helping their community. Almost all subscribers to the Philanthropic Society, also known as the Jewish Philanthropic Society of Otago, were male, whereas all subscribers to the Ladies' Hand in Hand Society were female. Correspondingly, the majority of Philanthropic Society subscriptions were set higher at 13/- than the Hand in Hand subscription rate of 5/-.\textsuperscript{37}

Although subscription lists are available for the Philanthropic Society only from 1930 to 1941 and for the Hand in Hand Society from 1937 to 1946, they indicate the degree of involvement in these groups by community members. Between 1930 and 1941, an average of 21.2 people in the Dunedin Jewish Community subscribed to the Philanthropic Society, peaking at 29 in 1932 and with a low of 14 in 1941.\textsuperscript{38} In comparison, an average of 15.2 members of the Dunedin Jewish Community donated money to the Hand in Hand Society in

\textsuperscript{33} Interview with Mrs Margot Hirsh.
\textsuperscript{34} Interview with Mr Norman Lust.
\textsuperscript{35} \textit{The Jewish Times}, 8, 5, 20 May 1929, p.3.
\textsuperscript{36} \textit{New Zealand Jewish Review and Communal Directory}, p.69.
\textsuperscript{37} Jewish Philanthropic Society of Otago Account Book box 1, DJCC; Cash Receipt Book, Hand in Hand Society, Friedlander Collection; WIZO and Hand in Hand Society Account Book, Friedlander Collection.
\textsuperscript{38} Jewish Philanthropic Society of Otago Account Book.
the years 1937-1946, with the highest number of subscriptions, 24, being paid in 1942 and the lowest of 9 in 1937.39

| Table 11: Number of Subscriptions to the 'Jewish Philanthropic Society of Otago' |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Year              | 1930             | 1931             | 1932             | 1933             | 1934             | 1935             | 1936             | 1937             | 1938             |
| Number of         | 26               | 22               | 29               | 25               | 22               | 22               | 19               | 16               | 15               | 16               |
| Subscriptions     |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |

Source: Jewish Philanthropic Society of Otago Account Book, box 1, DJCC.

| Year              | 1937             | 1938             | 1940             | 1941             | 1942             | 1943             | 1944             | 1945             | 1946             |
| Number of         | 9                | 13               | 10               | 9                | 10               | 24               | 21               | 26               | 15               |
| Subscriptions     |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |

Sources: Cash Receipt Book, Hand in Hand Society, Friedlander Collection; WIZO and Hand in Hand Society Account Book, Friedlander Collection.

Hand in Hand Society subscription numbers differ slightly from the number of members recorded in the reports of the society from the years 1943-1944 and 1944-45. The 1943-1944 report states that the society had a membership of 31 'practically every lady in the congregation' after a membership drive, an increase of 14 from the previous year with the 1944-45 report recording a membership of 30.40 While the number of contributions to the philanthropic societies was generally low in comparison to the total number of male and female Dunedin residents identifying themselves as affiliated to Judaism in the census, when it is remembered that census figures included children as well, the number of contributions to the Philanthropic Society between 1930 and 1935 appears substantial, as do the contributions to the Hand in Hand Society in 1943-1945.

The income and expenditure for the Philanthropic Society from 1930 to 1950 and reports of the Hand in Hand Society covering the years 1930-1933 and 1939-1948 provide insight into the quantity of aid these societies donated. There seems to have been a lack of sick or indigent Jewish women in Dunedin who it was felt would benefit from the society's funds. At the Hand in Hand Society's Annual General Meeting in April 1930 the society voted to give £5 each to the Maternal Welfare Fund and the Cancer Campaign, and a report dated April 39

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39 Cash Receipt Book, Hand in Hand Society; WIZO and Hand in Hand Society Account Book.
Table 13: Recipients of Aid from the 'Jewish Philanthropic Society of Otago'

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>1929-30</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich (8), £19/10/-</td>
<td>£19/10/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-32</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich (5), £21/-/- S. Luski (2), £7/11/11 S. Schwartz (1), £5/19/-</td>
<td>£34/10/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932-33</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich (4), £18/-/- S. Schwartz (1), £10/5/7</td>
<td>£28/5/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933-34</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich (6), £21/-/- S. Schwartz (1), £8/-/- Kartun Family (1), £10/-/- M. Brands (1), £10/7/2 B. L. Sigall (1), £5/-/-</td>
<td>£54/7/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934-35</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich (6), £18/-/- Mr Lazarus (1), £100/-/-</td>
<td>£118/-/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935-36</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich (7), £21/-/- Weinberg (1), 1/10/-</td>
<td>£22/10/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936-37</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich (5), £18/-/- Myers (1), £3/-/-</td>
<td>£21/-/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937-38</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich (6), £19/10/-</td>
<td>£19/10/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938-39</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich (6), £21/-/-</td>
<td>£21/-/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939-40</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich (7), £21/-/-</td>
<td>£21/-/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-41</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich (5), £16/10/-</td>
<td>£16/10/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941-42</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich, £19/10/- Mrs Trisch, £21/18/- Mr Ernst Hirsh, £250/-/-(housing loan)</td>
<td>£291/8/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942-43</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich, £11/16/8 Mrs Samson, £4/-/-</td>
<td>£15/16/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943-44</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich, £8/-/- Mrs Samson, £8/-/-</td>
<td>£16/-/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944-45</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich, £8/-/- Mrs Samson, £8/-/-</td>
<td>£16/-/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-46</td>
<td>Mrs Friedlich, £1/6/8</td>
<td>£1/6/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946-47</td>
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<tr>
<td>1948-49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949-50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>£794/14/10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Income and Expenditure, Jewish Philanthropic Society of Otago Account Book, box 1, DJCC.

Note: In 1942 the type of bookkeeping used changed and individual donations are no longer recorded, rather the total amount given to each individual is recorded.
1931 records only one subsequent 'relief grant' of £10 in that year. There were no calls on funds in 1932 or 1933, or in the years 1944-1948. Only in the years 1939-1941 and 1943-1944 was there more than one woman in the Jewish community who required the assistance of the Hand in Hand Society. A report covering 1939 to 1941 noted that '[i]he advent of the refugees from Europe called for financial assistance to 3 of the wives of the Students under going their courses at the Otago Medical School and in addition one of the old residents of our community.' Refugees were also the recipients of aid in 1942 and 1943 when a compassionate allowance was given to 'baby Sussman' and Mrs Steinhof respectively. Other aid given in 1943 and 1944 was in the form of compassionate allowances to the same member of the established community, a Mrs S. Morgiel.

There seem to have been more generally 'poor and needy' recipients of help from the Jewish Philanthropic Society of Otago than 'sick and indigent' women who received aid from the Hand in Hand Society, although it is noteworthy that a woman, Mrs Friedlich, received aid the most often. Table 13 shows that in every year between 1930 and 1946 there was at least one recipient, and up until at least 1942 recipients often received aid more than once a year. 1931 was the year in which there were the most recipients, followed by 1934, perhaps a reflection of the depression, although Norman Lust does not remember much unemployment within the Dunedin Jewish Community and thinks that Jewish employers did help out other Jews. Given the existence of the Hand in Hand Society it is surprising that a Mrs Friedlich received aid every year between 1930 and 1946 and that out of the 16 recipients within this period, at least three were women; the case of Mrs Friedlich is explained by a Ladies' Hand in Hand Society Minute Book from 1926 which documents Mrs Friedlich going into a nursing home. The only aid given to refugees made by the Philanthropic Society was a donation given to Mrs Tritsch in 1942 and a housing loan of £250 made to Mr Hirsh in the same year. This reflects that aid was generally given to the refugees by the Dunedin branch of the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society. However, in 1940 the Philanthropic Society loaned the Dunedin Branch of the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society £100, and by 1956 it had loaned it a total of £600.

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41 The Jewish Times, 9, 5, May 29 1930, p.4; 'Report Hand in Hand Society 23 April 1931', Friedlander Collection.
43 Page entitled 'Expenditure', WIZO and Hand in Hand Society Account Book.
44 Interview with Mr Norman Lust.
45 Minutes of the Ladies Hand in Hand Society, 2 August 1926, Minute Book Ladies Hand in Hand Society, box 1, DJCC.
46 Income and Expenditure, Jewish Philanthropic Society of Otago Account Book; 'The Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society Details of Relief Fund as at 5 March 1956', folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
Dunedin Jewish Congregation; although not shown in Table 13, in 1932 the Philanthropic Society loaned the congregation £100 and by 1950 the Congregation owed the Philanthropic Society £380/2/7.\(^{47}\)

Finally, when considering the question of the construction of collective identity one should consider the contribution of non-refugee students at the University of Otago, particularly the questions of whether they participated in the communal life of the Dunedin Jewish Community and whether they socialised among themselves as Jewish students. Although it is not representative of the whole period 1930-1950, a rough picture of the number of Jewish students at the university of Otago during the second quarter of the period can be gleaned from the national Jewish periodicals. In 1935 there were 12 Jewish students studying at Otago University, 11 of whom were medical or dental students; six came from Auckland, two from Wellington and four from Dunedin.\(^{48}\) This was the largest number in many years and this high number continued until December 1937 when *The Jewish Review* named 12 students as passing their exams.\(^ {49}\) The presence of Jewish students on campus was considerably bolstered by the presence of the refugees; in 1939, 17 students successfully passed their end of year exams. Fifteen were medical or dental students, 10 of them refugees.\(^ {50}\) Towards the end of the period 1930-1950 most of the refugee students had finished their course of study, but names mentioned in the *New Zealand Judean Bulletin* in May-June and December 1948, and by Mrs Horn and Mrs Hirsh, indicate there must have been at least 10 Jewish students at the university in the years 1947-1948 who were not refugees.\(^ {51}\)

Oral interviews and the Minutes of the Congregation Committee provide clues as to the extent that the Jewish students participated in the communal and religious life of the Dunedin Jewish community. Norman Lust does not remember students going to *shul* in the early 1930s but as his parents knew a number of families from Wellington and Auckland he does remember them visiting his house frequently; most Sunday nights a student would eat a meal at his home.\(^ {52}\) Dr Laurie Gluckman, who began studying medicine in 1940, did not remember any students going to synagogue, especially as they often had Saturday morning lectures, nor could

\(^{47}\) Income and Expenditure, Jewish Philanthropic Society of Otago Account Book.
\(^{48}\) *The Jewish Review*, 1, 4, June 1935, p.13.
\(^{49}\) Ibid., 3, 10, 20 December 1937, p.14.
\(^{50}\) Ibid., 4, 10, February 1940, p.13.
\(^{51}\) *New Zealand Judean Bulletin*, 8, 2, May-June, 1948, p.12; 8, 6, December 1948, p.9; Interview with Mrs Margot Hirsh and Mrs Maratha Horn.
\(^{52}\) Interview with Mr Norman Lust.
he recall any Jewish student being very religious. In contrast, Mrs Horn, who had several students board with her, thought that while some students towards the end of the period attended synagogue, other did not, and added that students visited her house quite a lot even if they were not living there. A resolution in the Minutes of the Congregation Committee of 12 March 1947 to contact Mr Faine (a medical student) with a view to encouraging Jewish university students to take a spiritual interest in the synagogue also confirms that the students did not have much contact with the community's religious institutions, although this may have changed subsequently, as Mr Hirsh began to entertain students on behalf of the synagogue at the end of the period. Fred Hirsh identified the communal seder as one of the few occasions when Jewish students were in contact with the Dunedin Jewish Community. 'It was also an opportunity to bring the students in - some were in private homes, a lot were in flats or student houses and didn't have much contact with the Jewish community.' Dr Laurie Gluckman also remembers some students taking up an open invitation to attend the annual Passover meal. Thus while students had some contact with members of the Dunedin Jewish community through visits to private homes and by attending the annual communal seder, it appears that they contributed to the difficulty in obtaining a minyan at the synagogue.

The question whether Jewish students at the University kept together was answered differently by Dr Gluckman, Mrs Horn and Mrs Hirsh. Dr Gluckman said that Jewish students did not have specific social groups in his year, whereas both Mrs Hirsh and Mrs Horn recalled a circle of Jewish students who met together on Sunday evenings. 'There were quite a group of young people [...] they really kept together.' These seemingly contradictory opinions suggest that like religious observation and attendance at communal occasions choosing to associate with other Jewish students would have been a matter of individual choice, influenced by whether or not one's peers did the same. Overall, Jewish students at the University of Otago do not seem to have contributed to the collective identity of the Dunedin Jewish Community to a very great extent, but the degree to which they identified themselves with Judaism would have been reflected in the degree to which they associated with the community. This association seems to have been greatest in the latter part of the period 1930-1950.

53 Interview with Dr Laurie Gluckman.
54 Interview with Mrs Maratha Horn.
55 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 12 March 1947; 23 September 1951.
56 Interview with Mr Fred Hirsh.
57 Interview with Dr Laurie Gluckman.
58 Interview with Dr Laurie Gluckman; Interview with Mrs Margot Hirsh and Mrs Maratha Horn; Interview with Mrs Maratha Horn.
A number of events, institutions and people contributed to the Dunedin Jewish Community's collective identity during the period 1930-1950. Several of these events such as Bar mitzvah and the communal seder had a religious focus, but the community's identity extended beyond a common religious profession. Major life events provided a reason for the community to come together, although marriage could also marked the loss of community members. The Dunedin Jewish Social Club contributed to the community's collective identity, but the importance of its contribution varied in accordance with the amount of activities organised and the extent to which these activities were patronised by the community. It appears that the strength of the Social Club, and at the end of the period of the activities which it had once organised, depended on the strength of religious leadership. This theory is supported by the institution of the communal seder, which by 1950 had acquired the function of bringing the whole Dunedin Jewish Community together, thus contributing to the community's collective identity. Despite the fact that numbers of subscriptions varied and that they were sometimes not required to give aid, philanthropic organisations also contributed to communal identity by giving subscribers the feeling that they were assisting those in need amongst their community. Non-refugee Jewish university students had limited contact with members of the community through visiting private homes and attending the seder meal, but despite the fact that some students chose to socialise with other Jewish students, Jewish university students do not appear to have contributed greatly to the collective identity of the Dunedin Jewish community.

The cause of Zionism and the presence of the refugees who needed help from the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society also contributed to the Dunedin Jewish Community's communal identity. These issues will be discussed in Chapters Four and Five respectively as indicators of the relationship between the Dunedin Jewish Community and the wider Jewish world.
Chapter Four: The Dunedin Jewish Community and Zionism

By assessing the importance of the Zionist movement to the Dunedin Jewish Community, one can examine the degree of consciousness within the community of obligations to Jews living elsewhere and how community members viewed the relationship between themselves and the wider Jewish world. Prior to the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Zionism was a political and ideological movement concerned with enabling the Jewish people to return to the promised land of Israel, and following the state's foundation it focussed its activities on supporting and encouraging Jewish immigration there. The movement also had a spiritual side in that it aimed to invoke 'a cultural and spiritual renaissance' of Jews throughout the world. Goldman believes that although the movement did not have a religious message, its content and aim aroused Jewish consciousness and kept Jews within the fold. He also asserts that Zionism received support from every section of the community in New Zealand and that in comparison to other countries, wealthy and influential Jews in this country were among the most ardent supporters of Zionism. In examining the importance of Zionism to the Jewish Community in Dunedin in the 1930s and 1940s, this chapter will assess the validity of these claims.

From the early 1920s onwards a number of delegates visited New Zealand to seek aid for the cause of Zionism as well as other Jewish causes. The cautious reception given to such emissaries in Dunedin in the 1930s and 1940s affords an indication of how Zionism was viewed by the Dunedin Jewish Community. Dr B. Shein of Keren ha-Yesod (Palestine Foundation Fund, the financial arm of the Jewish Agency for Palestine), was the first visitor mentioned in the Minutes of the Congregation Committee, in February 1934. While the committee expressed sympathy towards Keren ha-Yesod and organised a community meeting for Dr Shein, it also exhibited fear of an anti-Zionist backlash in Dunedin; in light of the experience of northern congregations, it resolved that there was to be no publicity outside the congregation regarding Dr Shein's visit. Fear of an anti-Zionist backlash appears to have continued through the 1930s. In May 1937 the president of the congregation made private enquires as to the

1 Cohn-Sherbok, p.594.
2 Anon., 'Why you should be a Zionist', New Zealand Jewish Chronicle, 1, 5-6, March 1945, p.112.
3 Goldman, pp.201-202; Ibid., p.199.
4 Ibid., p.201.
5 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 5 February 1934.
The President of
The Dunedin Jewish Congregation
requests the pleasure of the presence of

Miss Bryant

at a Public Address in the
Concert Chamber, Town Hall, on Thursday,
September 9, 1943, at 8 p.m., by

Dr. Michael Traub,
Official Delegate to New Zealand of the Jewish Agency for Palestine.

His Worship the Mayor, Mr. A. H. Allen, will preside.
advisability of a film about Palestine being shown publicly in Dunedin.⁶ This must have been deemed acceptable, because in September 1938 a Mrs Ariel Benison not only talked at a congregation reception about Palestine and the Women's International Zionist Organisation (WIZO) but was introduced by the mayor of Dunedin when she addressed 'a large representative gathering' in the Regent Theatre, to whom she showed a film on Palestine.⁷ When Dr Shein made a repeat visit in December 1938, however, his request to hold a public meeting and banquet where he would show a film about the development of Palestine was turned down and substituted by an address to the congregation.⁸ It is unclear as to why Mrs Benison was permitted to speak at a public meeting whereas Dr Shein was not. There are several possible reasons; there may have been an anti-Zionist or anti-semitic backlash following Mrs Benison's public appearance, the Congregation Committee may have been increasingly aware of tensions in Europe, or alternatively, it may simply have been felt that it was unwarranted to hold two public meetings within a few months of each other. Precautions continued when a Dr Lowy visited in August 1941 to encourage donations to the Zionist Appeal; while the Congregation Committee was prepared to organise a screening of the film 'A Homeland in the Making' at the Regent Theatre, as well as a meeting of the congregation, it was evidently not an open public screening, as a subcommittee had been formed to decide who would be invited.⁹ By 1943, when Dr Michael Traub came to Dunedin as an official delegate of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, such restrictions no longer seem to have been deemed necessary. Both a congregation meeting and a public meeting at the Town Hall Concert Chamber, presided over by the mayor, were organised and no mention is made in the Minutes of the Congregation Committee of any restrictions.¹⁰ Again, it is unclear why such restrictions were no longer deemed necessary. Perhaps Dunedin residents, some of whom up until this point would probably have been shocked by the idea of Britain giving up colonial territory to

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⁶ Ibid., 27 May 1937.
⁷ The Jewish Review, 3, 8, October 1937, p.12.
⁸ Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 13 December 1938; The Jewish Review, 3, 10, January 1939, p.16.
⁹ Minutes of the Congregation Committee 18 August 1941; 14 September 1941; 17 March 1945. There is no indication in the minutes of 18 August 1941 or 14 September 1941 what Dr Lowy was raising funds for, but in the minutes of 17 March 1945 mention is made of his appeal for Zionist Appeal funds. He was presumably fundraising for the same organisation in 1941.
¹⁰ Ibid., 20 August 1943; Invitation to Miss Bryant, Acting City Librarian, from the President of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation, to the Public Address by Dr Michael Traub, Official Delegate to New Zealand of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, Concert Chamber, Town Hall, Dunedin, 8 pm, 9 September 1943, file Dunedin City Jewish Community', Dunedin Public Library; According to Nancy Taylor, while in New Zealand Dr Traub 'pleaded Jewish suffering as an argument for return to the 1917 Balfour promise of a Jewish national home in Palestine.; Nancy M. Taylor, Official History of New Zealand in the Second World War 1939-1945 The New Zealand People at War, vol. 2, Wellington, 1986, pp.1247-1248.
the Jews, were becoming aware of the tragedy of the Holocaust and thus of the need for a Jewish national state in Palestine. This theory is supported by the fact that in December 1942 accounts from Jewish sources of the extermination of Jews in Nazi Europe were confirmed in the British House of Commons. On 19 December reports of this were carried in New Zealand newspapers including the *Otago Daily Times*, which supplemented its report with an editorial entitled 'Murder of a People'.

During the period 1930-1950 the Dunedin Jewish Community also received several visits from representatives of Zionist causes who appear to have addressed community members without attempting to speak publicly, although not all who wanted to visit were welcomed. In April 1938 a delegate of Oze and Ortz, Dr Lasserhorn, spoke to a 'fairly large number of congregants', Captain Hacohen appealed on behalf of *Keren ha-Yesod* in 1947 and in September 1949 Mrs Kate Gluckman, chairman of *Keren Kayemet le-Israel* (Jewish National Fund) for South Africa spoke about the Israeli Emergency Appeal. A Mr Eliahu Lipovelski of the Farmers Federation of Israel also made a 'deep impression' upon those who met him at a 'drawing-room evening' at the home of Mrs and Mr Hirsh. Some Zionist emissaries were, however, informed that it was not warranted for them to make the journey to Dunedin. It was suggested to a representative of the Friends of the Hebrew University in April 1945 that he delete Dunedin from his itinerary and delegates for the Jewish State Appeal Emergency Campaign were told that although some Dunedin congregation members would contribute to the appeal, it was not worth their while making the trip to Dunedin. This advice may have been based on pragmatism; members of the small community may have donated whether or not emissaries came all the way to Dunedin, or it could reflect that enthusiasm for Zionism was not such that the presence of a representative of a fundraising organisation would encourage reluctant community members to give money. The first scenario appears more applicable than the second because the Minutes of the Congregation Committee record that after Dr Shein's second visit £250/6/- was donated towards *Keren ha-Yesod*. Furthermore, £753/10/- (including a £125 anonymous donation) was collected for the WIZO Youth *Aliyah*

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11 Taylor, p.1247.
12 *The Jewish Review*, 4, 2, April 1938, p.13; Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 19 February 1947; *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle*, 6, 3, June 1949; Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 9 June 1949.
14 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 30 April 1945; 31 May 1948
15 Ibid., 1 August 1939.
(immigration of Jews to Israel) campaign in 1946, despite the fact that no emissaries appear to have visited Dunedin on behalf of this appeal.\footnote{Ibid., 26 April 1946; 15 July 1946; 1 August 1946}

Targeted campaigns were not the only way of fundraising for Zionist causes in which members of the Dunedin Jewish Community participated. The Jewish National Fund (JNF), a worldwide organisation which aimed to purchase land in Palestine/Israel for the Jewish people and then assist with reforestation, fundraised permanently towards these ends, and 'Blue Boxes' were placed in homes to enable people to make donations. Another type of contribution was the donation of the cost of a tree, or alternatively one could donate to the Happy Day or Happy Thought Funds, with larger amounts being inscribed in 'Golden Books' held in Jerusalem.\footnote{Ibid., pp.205-206.} Although Goldman states that blue boxes began to be placed in homes from approximately World War One onwards, neither Fred Hirsh nor Norman Lust remember blue boxes featuring in their homes until after World War Two, and it was only after the start of the New Zealand Jewish Chronicle in 1944 that donations made to the JNF began to be published in a national publication.\footnote{Ibid., p.205; Interview with Mr Norman Lust and Mr Fred Hirsh.} This suggests that the JNF movement in New Zealand gained impetus following the time of The Jewish Review's demise in 1940.

The New Zealand Jewish Chronicle records a number of donations made to the JNF by members of the Dunedin Jewish Community. Donations were made by gentiles as well as by Dunedin Jewish Community members, and the lists of donations suggest that refugee members may have had a stronger interest in Zionism than members of the established community. Between September-October 1945 and April 1950, the New Zealand Jewish Chronicle records eight donations of 'Herzl Cedar' trees by refugees and four by members of the established community, along with one contribution to the Happy Day Fund by a refugee and two by members of the established community.\footnote{Ibid., p.205; Interview with Mr Norman Lust and Mr Fred Hirsh.} Blue box donations from Dunedin were first recorded in the New Zealand Jewish Chronicle in August 1945, with the number of donors and the amounts donated varying from year to year. The first publication did not list names of donors, although it did note that out of the £28/6/6 collected, £14114/3 came from non-Jewish box holders, indicating that although during the late 1930s and early 1940s the Dunedin Jewish Community had taken precautions as to the amount of publicity given to Zionist events outside

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 26 April 1946; 15 July 1946; 1 August 1946
\textsuperscript{17} Goldman, pp.205-206.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., p.205; Interview with Mr Norman Lust and Mr Fred Hirsh.
\textsuperscript{19} New Zealand Jewish Chronicle, 2, 1-2, September-October 1945, p.37; 2, 3, November 1945, inside back cover; 2, 6-7, April-May 1946, p.180; 2, 8, August 1946, p.209; 6, 6 September 1949, p.16; 6, 7, October-November 1949, p.13; 7, 1, April 1950, p.17.
of the Jewish community, by 1945 Zionism was receiving active support from some Gentiles in Dunedin.\(^{20}\)

**Table 14:** Dunedin Blue Box Donations to the JNF 1946-1949

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of Donations From Refugees</th>
<th>Number of Donations From Non-Refugees</th>
<th>Total Amount Donated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 1946</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>£33/1/9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1947</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>£14/9/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1947</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>£2/13/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1948</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>£231/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1949</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>£21/-/1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle*, 2, 8, August 1946, p.209; 3, 5, March 1947, p.97; 3, 6, April 1947, p.117; 4, 5, May 1948, p.17; 6, 5, August 1949, supplement-no page number.

Donations to the JNF also appear to have been made on the occasion of the *Seder* on behalf of the 'Unseen Guest'; in May 1948 three members of the established community and 2 refugees gave donations totalling £8/13/-, while in June 1949 £8/9/- was collected from six refugees and six members of the established community.\(^{21}\) The Grass family made a different type of donation in May 1948 when they donated £8 for 'Saving European Jewry'.\(^{22}\) Moreover, Samuel Saltzman, a well known Dunedin philanthropist, seems to have donated a large sum of money towards helping the JNF redeem land and a photo of the land he helped redeem appeared on the cover of a 1949 issue of the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle*.\(^{23}\) Upon totalling the number of families who made donations to the various JNF fundraising activities recorded in the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle* up to April 1950, it was found that donations were made by a total of 10 refugee and 20 established households or families.\(^{24}\) In order to make a comparison between the proportion of refugee and established households who made donations to JNF activities it was necessary to compare the number of households making such donations with the number of people ordering *matzah* for Passover 1945. Representatives of 38 identifiable established and 11 refugee households were observant enough to go to the trouble of *matzah*, and only 52.6 percent of the number of established households that ordered *matzah* made donations to the JNF, compared with 90.9 percent of the number of refugee

\(^{20}\) Ibid., 1, 11, August 1945, p.252.

\(^{21}\) Ibid., 4, 5, May 1948, p.17; 6, 3, June 1949, p.16.

\(^{22}\) Ibid., 4, 5, May 1948, p.17.

\(^{23}\) Ibid., 5, 12, February 1949, cover; 6, 3, June 1949, p.9.

\(^{24}\) Ibid., 2, 1-2, September-October 1945, p.37; 2, 3, November 1945, inside back cover; 2, 6-7, April-May 1946, p.180; 2, 8, August 1946, p.209; 6, 6 September 1949, p.16; 6, 7, October-November 1949, p.13; 7, 1, April 1950; 1, 11, August 1945, p.252; 2, 8, August 1945; 3, 5, March 1947, p.97; 3, 6, April 1947, p.117; 4, 5, May 1948, p.17; 6, 5, August 1949; 4, 5, May 1948, p.17; 6, 3, June 1949, p.16; 5, 12, February 1949, cover; 6, 3, June 1949, p.9.
households. The inference that the refugee members of the Dunedin Jewish Community had a stronger interest in Zionism than members of the established community is supported by Mrs Hirsh: 'I tell you we the immigrants were much more interested in Israel than the settled English people. That was quite a division and we had more heart for the immigrants who came to Israel than they had.' This difference is not surprising as refugees would have had a greater awareness through their own experiences in Europe of the importance of the establishment and growth of a Jewish national homeland to which Jewish survivors from Europe could go following the war. Moreover, the refugee community would still have been building up their financial base in New Zealand and refugees may have especially supported the JNF as the nature of the appeal meant that small donations could be made at a convenient time as opposed to the intermittent demands of targeted campaigns.

The JNF was represented in Dunedin by a committee of community members and was one of several Zionist organisations which had branches in Dunedin. Most likely formed around the time of Dr Traub’s visit in 1943, a Dunedin JNF Committee appears to have existed until the second half of 1945. It then became part of a South Island JNF Committee, whose 1945 and 1946 executive included members of both the refugee and established communities, as well as a former refugee doctor student who was living in Waimate.

Another Zionist organisation was the New Zealand Women’s Zionist Society (Infant Welfare), one of two Zionist organisations listed under Dunedin Communal Institutions in the *New Zealand Jewish Review and Communal Directory* of 1931. It had been formed as the Dunedin branch of the New Zealand Women’s Palestine Infant Welfare Society early in 1929, with the aim of introducing and supporting Plunket societies in Palestine and was represented at the first Dominion conference of the New Zealand Women’s Zionist Society in June 1929. As the name change reflects, the organisation expanded beyond concern solely for infant welfare and became affiliated to WIZO. In comparison to other branches which organised public fairs in the 1920s, in 1930 members of the Dunedin branch of the New Zealand Women’s Zionist Society (Infant Welfare) were opposed to holding public functions to gain

26 Interview with Mrs Margot Hirsh.
27 Goldman, p.205.
28 *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle*, 1, 11, August 1945, p.252; 2, 1-2, September-October 1945, p.37; 2, 8, August 1946, p.209.
29 *New Zealand Jewish Review and Communal Directory*, p.69.
30 Goldman, p.208; *The Jewish Times*, 8, 2, 21 February 1929, p.7; 8, 6, 28 June 1929, p.12.
31 Goldman, p.208.
outside help for Jewish charities, 'it having always been the principle of the community to be self supporting.' The Dunedin branch, now called WIZO, undertook alternative methods of fundraising, including the inauguration of a sewing society in February 1938. A 1946 WIZO-Youth Aliyah campaign to 'rescue babies, children and youth from countries of oppression' and send them to Palestine raised £753/10/-.

Considering the time it must have taken to raise this large sum, it is somewhat surprising that the account book of WIZO and the Hand in Hand Society indicates that WIZO subscriptions dropped from 16 in 1940 to 9 in 1946. This is even more surprising considering that there was 'good attendance' at the meeting which formed the organisation in 1929 and that following Mrs Benison's visit in 1937, The Jewish Review reported that 15 to 20 members attended a discussion of her views and suggestions. A report of the Dominion Conference of the New Zealand Federation of WIZO in March 1949 in the New Zealand Jewish Chronicle indicates that the reason for the Dunedin WIZO branch's sharp decline in support, after apparent enthusiasm in the 1930s, was the illness of one of the most prominent members of the group, Mrs de Beer. This suggests that the enthusiasm and encouragement of prominent individuals was necessary for the continuation of such an organisation. Consequently, the conference decided to merge the Dunedin and Christchurch branches to form a South Island branch of WIZO. No mention is made in the conference report of the fate of the Junior Branch of WIZO in Dunedin, which had received an advance from WIZO in October 1941 and in September 1944 had been named by the New Zealand Jewish Chronicle as one of the Dunedin Zionist organisations affiliated to the Zionist Council of New Zealand. The existence of a Dunedin branch of the Union of Jewish Women of New Zealand, although not a Zionist organisation, should also be noted here. It was formed at the joint annual general meetings of the New Zealand Women's Zionist Society (Infant Welfare) and Ladies' Hand in Hand Society in April 1930 to allow the Union to be representative of all Jewish women and to entitle it to representation at the National Council of Women.

The Junior branch of WIZO was not the only youth-orientated Zionist organisation in Dunedin. The New Zealand Jewish Chronicle of May 1949 names an organisation called

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32 Ibid., pp.208-209; The Jewish Times, 9, 5, 29 May 1930, p.4.
33 The Jewish Review, 4, 1, March 1938, p.17.
34 New Zealand Jewish Chronicle, 2, 6-7, April-May 1946, p.168; Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 26 April 1946; 15 July 1946; 1 September 1946.
35 WIZO and Hand in Hand Society Account Book.
37 New Zealand Jewish Chronicle, 6, 1, March-April 1949, p.18.
38 Ibid.
39 WIZO and Hand in Hand Society Account Book; New Zealand Jewish Chronicle, 1, 1, September 1944, p.21.
40 The Jewish Times, 9, 5, 29 May 1930, p.4.
Dunedin Zionist Youth as having organised small sedarim in 1947 and 1948. The only indication of membership of this group which I was able to find was that 15 copies of the New Zealand Federation of Zionist Youth Bulletin were distributed to Dunedin in 1948. The group does not seem to have been particularly active; for example, no events are listed as taking place in Dunedin in a calender of events for a Jewish Youth Week in 1949. Furthermore, Sol Faine (a member of the Camp Zion Committee) and Fred Hirsh appear to have been among the few Dunedin youth to attend the national Zionist youth camps that were held from the mid 1940s onwards.

In comparison to WIZO, the organisation Friends of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem experienced increased interest towards the end of the period 1930-1950. At the end of 1939 a lecturer at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Dr C. Wardi, visited Dunedin to encourage the establishment of an Association of Friends of the University, an aim which appears to have been successful. The fact that in April 1945 the Congregation Committee sent a letter to an emissary of the organisation advising him to delete Dunedin from his itinerary indicates that it was felt that his or her visit would not lead to more support for this cause. Late in 1948, however, more than 20 Dunedin Jewish Community members enrolled in the organisation after Miss Diane Kolker, the Australian federal organiser, spoke to members and showed a film about the university. This suggests that the organisation in Dunedin had been rather small originally, and that the willingness of the community to support such causes was greater than the Congregation Committee had thought.

Given the existence of the above organisations, however varied their degrees of activity and membership may have been, it is surprising that it took until 1952 for a Zionist society to be formed in Dunedin. The list of communal institutions in the 1931 New Zealand Jewish Review and Communal Directory includes a Dunedin Keren ha-Yesod Zionist Committee, but this appears either to have stopped following the death of its President Mr E. Halsted in the early 1930s or to have had a separate function from that of a Zionist society, for the minutes of a Congregation Committee meeting in May 1937 state that the committee did not favour the

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41 New Zealand Jewish Chronicle, 6, 2, May 1949, p.16.
42 Ibid., 4, 3, March 1948, p.17.
43 Ibid., 6, 5, August 1949, p.7; 1, 5-6, March 1945, pp.126-127; 2, 3, November 1945, p.64; 6, 9, February 1950, p.21.
44 David L. Nathan to Gerald Benson, 22 December 1939, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC; Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 30 April 1945.
45 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 30 April 1945.
47 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 3 July 1952.
formation of a Zionist society in Dunedin.\textsuperscript{48} A subsequent attempt to form a Dunedin branch of the Zionist Society in 1943 failed. Although a special meeting of the congregation voted to establish a branch in Dunedin and a committee was formed, the society was abandoned after nobody on the committee was willing to assume the position of President or Chairman, apparently due to tensions between the President of the Congregation, Mr John Jacobs, and potential presidential and secretarial candidates.\textsuperscript{49} Following this failure the New Zealand Zionist Council wrote to the congregation committee twice in 1944 to request the Dunedin Zionist Society to affiliate with the council, but were informed that although individual congregation members would be pleased to support the council, there was no Zionist society in Dunedin.\textsuperscript{50} Consequently, although the New Zealand Zionist Council was formed at the first Dominion Zionist Conference in July 1943, there does not appear to have been a Dunedin member of the Zionist Council executive until Dr Sol Faine was appointed at the Sixth Dominion Zionist Conference in 1950.\textsuperscript{51} It was also Dr Faine who facilitated the formation of a Zionist society in Dunedin in 1952, writing to the Congregation Committee to inform it of this development, upon which the committee offered its cooperation.\textsuperscript{52} Thus although there was support among members of the Dunedin Jewish Community for a Zionist society and the cause of Zionism more generally, as in the case of WIZO the existence of a Zionist society depended on the availability of enthusiastic individuals willing to lead such an organisation. With the exception of Mr E. Halsted who led the Keren ha-Yesod Zionist Committee in the early 1930s, this individual was not available until 1952 after Sol Faine had finished his medical studies.\textsuperscript{53}

Goldman suggests that Zionism, while first supplementing Jewish social activities in New Zealand, gradually came to predominate over other communal activities.\textsuperscript{54} This theory does not appear to be completely applicable to the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s. There was a steady flow of emissaries who visited Dunedin during the period to champion various Zionist causes, and while the Dunedin Jewish Social Club was active these

\textsuperscript{48} \textit{New Zealand Jewish Review and Communal Directory}, p.69 Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 26 February 1933; 27 May 1937.
\textsuperscript{49} Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 12 March 1943; Gerald Benson to S. Klippel, 20 July 1943, untitled folder, box 2, DJCC.
\textsuperscript{50} Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 30 January 1944; 21 May 1944.
\textsuperscript{51} \textit{New Zealand Jewish Chronicle}, 1, 1, September 1944, p.21; 1, 5-6, March 1945, p.144; 2, 6-7, April-May, 1946, p.154; 3, 11, September 1947, p.14; 7, 1, April 1950, p.10.
\textsuperscript{52} Minutes of the Congregation Committee, 3 July 1952.
\textsuperscript{53} \textit{New Zealand Jewish Chronicle}, 6, 9, February 1950, p.15.
\textsuperscript{54} Goldman, p.205.
visitors would have provided opportunities for communal activities which were ancillary to those provided by the Social Club. The first part of Goldman's theory is therefore correct, but the second part is not as accurate. While the communal importance of Zionist activities would have increased proportionally to the level of the decrease in Social Club activity in the mid 1930s and while they would have provided one of the few social activities from approximately mid 1943 until the time following the Hirsh family's move to Dunedin in August 1948, following Mr Hirsh's move social activities appear to have increased in importance. Thus while still contributing to communal feeling, the overall importance of Zionism's contribution to communal activities would have decreased again.

It is difficult to assess within a Dunedin context the accuracy of Goldman's belief that Zionism's content and aim aroused Jewish consciousness and kept Jews within the fold. Nevertheless Zionism does seem to have provided a further opportunity for communal contact amongst the Dunedin Jewish Community in the period 1930-1950 and the aims of Zionism combined with the events of the Holocaust may have encouraged community members to think about their own position as Jews in New Zealand and their relationship to the Jewish community elsewhere in the world. While support for Zionism came from both the established and refugees communities in Dunedin, there is some evidence that refugee members of the community were stronger supporters of Zionism after their own experiences in Europe than members of the established community, thus throwing doubt on Goldman's assertion that in New Zealand wealthy and influential Jews were among Zionism's most ardent supporters. Nevertheless, the existence of a number of Zionist organisations within the small Dunedin Jewish Community and the often substantial financial donations made to Zionist causes suggests that there was a high degree of consciousness of obligations to Jews living elsewhere and a feeling within the community as a whole of being connected with the wider Jewish world. This is despite an initial reluctance to and fear of publicising the cause of Zionism amongst the wider Dunedin community and despite the way that the channelling of this feeling into formal organisations appears to have required the presence of an enthusiastic community member, as was the case with the Dunedin Jewish Social Club. Visits by Zionist emissaries, the existence of Zionist groups and contributions to Zionist appeals thus formed an important part of the collective identity of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s.
Chapter Five: The Jewish Refugees from Europe and the Established Jewish Community

The final chapter of this work examines the nature of the relationship between the Jewish refugees from Europe and the established Jewish community in Dunedin in the 1930s and 1940s. While I have followed Ann Beaglehole in differentiating between the two throughout this work, several members of what I have called the 'established' community had actually arrived as immigrants themselves.¹ For example, Mr Julius Romison, a well-known Dunedin confectioner, had been born in Russia and had worked his way across Europe to England before later immigrating to New Zealand and Mr Harold Harrould, a mantle and costume manufacturer, had migrated to New Zealand from England in 1923.² Moreover, the descendants of members of the established community who had not been immigrants themselves had, like other New Zealanders, all emigrated to New Zealand within the previous 100 years. Correspondingly, the distinction between the established community and the refugees is essentially one of choice; members of the established community or their descendants had come to New Zealand voluntarily, while the refugees had come to New Zealand only to escape persecution in Europe. This distinction has parallels to Sander Gilman's distinction between the model of the voluntary dispersion of the Jews, (the 'Galut') and the model of the involuntary exile of the Jews (the 'Diaspora'):

The two models exist simultaneously in Jewish history in the image of rooted and empowered Jews on the one hand, and uprooted and powerless Jews on the other.³

Gilman uses this distinction to explain how Jewish life outside of Israel has been understood as a valid experience since the founding of the Jewish state. Although the context of this distinction is not completely applicable to the situation of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s because the state of Israel was not founded until 1948, Gilman's twin models of the voluntary dispersion of rooted and empowered Jews and the involuntary exile of uprooted and powerless Jews nevertheless corresponds to the distinction between the two

¹ Beaglehole, A Small Price to Pay.
² The Jewish Review, 1, 7, September 1935, p.16; 4, 1, April 1939, p.11.
groups which made up the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s. By
distinguishing between those members of the Dunedin Jewish Community who had been in
Dunedin for a number of years and those who arrived as refugees in the 1930s and 1940s, we
gain further insight into the collective identity of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the period
1930-1950, that of the relationship between rooted and empowered Jews who had chosen to
live in Dunedin, and uprooted and powerless Jews who were forced to come to New Zealand
and who until Hitler's rise to power had themselves been rooted and empowered Jews in
Europe.

In order to examine the relationship between these two groups, this chapter will outline
the situation regarding refugees in Dunedin and examine the contributions made by members of
the established Jewish community in Dunedin and other centres towards the Dunedin Jewish
Welfare Society. It will then examine the nature of the assistance given to refugees by the
Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society and members of the established community. The next section
assesses the motivations behind the assistance the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society gave to
refugees and why a section of the community failed to support the Society. Following this, the
chapter considers the question of whether refugees were ever refused assistance and discusses
other non-Jewish groups involved in aiding refugees. Finally, it examines the nature of the
social relationship between the two groups.

The first mention of the arrival of Jewish refugees from Europe in the Minutes of the
Congregation Committee is on 13 December 1938. The President of the Congregation, Mr D.
Phillips, reported that a New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society had been formed and that he had
attended its first meeting in Wellington on 22 November, and he detailed the results of local
efforts to assist refugees arriving in Dunedin. The first refugee to arrive in Dunedin appears to
have been Dr Monheimer in 1933. Exactly when the next refugees arrived is unclear, but the
February 1937 issue of *The Jewish Review* names a Mr and Mrs Turk of Berlin as living in
Dunedin. Thus although the first refugee arrived in 1933, it was not until December 1938 that
efforts made by members of the established community to help refugees were recorded.

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4 Ibid., p.5.
5 Telephone conversation with Mr Peter Entwisle, Curator of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery, 10
November 1998; Mr Entwisle was told by a friend of Dr Monheimer, Dr John Borrie, that Dr
Monheimer arrived in 1933.
6 *The Jewish Review*, 2, 12, February 1937, p.15.
The situation regarding refugees in Dunedin was unique because the only medical and
dental schools in New Zealand were situated there and refugee doctors and dentists came from
other parts of New Zealand to retrain. Government policy between 1934 and 1938 required
foreign doctors to retrain for one year, a requirement extended to three years from 1938.\footnote{Beaglehole, \textit{A Small Price to Pay}, p.79.} Dentists with German qualifications were also required to retrain for three years.\footnote{T. W. H. Brooking, \textit{A History of Dentistry in New Zealand}, Dunedin, 1980, p.140.} According
to Goldman, fifteen refugee doctors had qualified between 1935 and 1942, and 11 were due to
qualify at the end of 1942, while a list of refugee doctors and dentists studying in Dunedin in
June 1940 records 18 names.\footnote{Goldman, p.230; Goldman does not appear to distinguish between Jewish and non-Jewish refugees; List of refugee doctors and dentists taking professional course at the University of Otago, attached to a letter, refugee doctors and dentists taking professional course at the University of Otago to the Honourable Prime Minister of New Zealand, June 1940.} Despite a 1939 decision not to admit refugee doctors to medical
school for the duration of the war, at least two Jewish refugee doctors commenced their
studies in 1942 and 1943 respectively, while at least five commenced between 1948 and
1950.\footnote{Beaglehole, \textit{A Small Price to Pay}, p.79; Gerald Benson to Frank Salinger, 11 October 1948, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC; Minutes of the Meeting of the DJWS Committee, 20 April 1942; 16 December 1943; 12 April 1948; 10 March 1950; 14 March 1950.} Thus, as well as giving assistance to refugees who were not health professionals, the
established Dunedin Jewish Community was in the unique position of having to assist Jewish
refugee doctors and dentists who were without income during the time in which they were
required to retrain.

The first available record of a formal organisation of members of the established
Dunedin Jewish Community which assisted refugees is the Minutes of the Meeting of the
Refugee Sub-Committee of March 3 1939.\footnote{Minutes of the Meeting of the DJWS Committee, 8 March 1939.} From December 1939 onwards the committee
minute book designates the group the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society Committee, indicating
that it was formally affiliated with the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society.\footnote{Ibid., 1 December 1939.}

Meetings of the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society Committee were normally attended by
approximately four members of the established community and membership of the committee
remained fairly constant throughout the period 1939-1951.\footnote{The main members appear to have been Mr Gerald Benson, Mr Max Manning, Mr Samuel Saltzman, Mr Frank Salinger, Mr Frank Halsted and Mr J. B. Moss. Others who attended from time to time were Mr John Jacobs, Mr P. L. Halsted, Mr Leon Cohen, Mr S. Goodman and Mr August de Beer; Minutes of the DJWS Committee.} Other members of the established
community participated in the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society (DJWS) by contributing
financially towards assisting refugees. By May 1939 £517115/- had been donated and £457/1/1 advanced to or expended upon 11 refugees, while by the end of August 1948 a total of £2440/8/8 had been subscribed to the DJWS by members of the Dunedin community out of a total of £3973/10/8 advanced to refugees by the society.\(^\text{14}\) The list 'Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society Details of Relief Fund as at 5.3.56' provides the names of those members of the Dunedin Jewish Community who contributed to the DJWS. The total amount contributed is recorded as £2597/18/8 from 38 donors. Of these 38 donors, approximately 30 were members of the established Dunedin community and total donations made by individuals in this group ranged from between £1/1/1 and £400. Other donors included Jews living outside of Dunedin, four refugees, a non-Jewish minister and an estate. Another type of contribution was loans to the DJWS; these were made by four members of the established community and four former refugee doctors as well as by the Philanthropic Society.\(^\text{15}\)

At first glance it appears that a large number of established community members gave an extraordinarily large amount of financial help to refugees in Dunedin. The figure of £2597/18/8 is, however, the sum of a twenty year period. Furthermore, there are indications in letters from the Chairman of the DJWS, Mr Gerald Benson, which were designed to encourage contributions to relief funds from Jewish organisations outside Dunedin, that the DJWS Committee may have had problems encouraging established members of the Dunedin community to make contributions, particularly during the period 1939-1942. For example, in a letter to the Auckland branch of the Jewish Welfare Society Mr Benson touched upon the problem of getting the support of members of the established community:

[i]t will not be difficult for you to realise that in a small community like Dunedin, not only is it impossible to raise funds sufficient to cover the expenses of the Students at the University but it is even more difficult to get individuals amongst our own people to take a really active and sympathetic interest [...].\(^\text{16}\)

\(^{14}\) Minutes of the Meeting of the DJWS Committee, 22 May 1939; 'Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society Summary of Contributions to the Society, Advances, Repayments', folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC; No date is given but the amounts listed as considered good and considered bad are the same as those listed on the sheet 'Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society Advances as at 31 August 1948', folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.

\(^{15}\) 'The Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society Details of Relief Fund as at 5.3.56'.

\(^{16}\) Chairman of the Dunedin Branch of the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society to the Honourable Secretary, New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society, Auckland, 1 July 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
In a subsequent letter to the President of the Auckland Jewish Benevolent Society, he claimed that there were only half a dozen Jews in Otago who had contributed financial assistance to any extent and expressed his reluctance to continually ask the same people for money. Yet in other letters Mr Benson expressed surprise that in the absence of well-to-do members the small community had been able to contribute as much as they had done. He seemed to feel that Jews in Dunedin had, for the most part, done their fair share:

The very limited number of Jews in Dunedin have, in the main, done more than their share and our funds have now become exhausted [...] Although a few Jewish people in Dunedin have been generous in their financial assistance commensurate with their financial means, I fear there is little more we can expect from Dunedin other than meeting their arranged commitments for the future.

In order to assess the accuracy of these statements it was necessary to compare the 1956 list of those who made donations with the names of household representatives recorded in the list 'Dunedin Jewish Community' found in the WIZO and Hand in Hand Society Accounts Book which was written between February 1940 and December 1941. At least 57 of the 81 household representatives named were members of the established Dunedin Jewish Community. Of these 57 only 26 names are recorded on the 1956 list of contributions to the DJWS. It therefore appears that the DJWS's difficulty in getting donations from some of the established Dunedin Jewish Community alluded to by Mr Benson may well have been real.

It also seems that only a small number of members of the established community made substantial donations to the DJWS. In August 1939 nine members pledged a total of £430 at rates of between £10 and £70 each per annum for three years, but only 8 other members contributed £10 or above on one or more occasions between 1939 and 1942. One reason for this lack of substantial donations and for less than half of the households in the established

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17 Gerald Benson? to L. Marks, President of the Auckland Jewish Benevolent Society, 18 September 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
18 Gerald Benson? to David Nathan, 21 July 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
19 Gerald Benson? to David Nathan, President of the Auckland Branch of the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society, 22 April 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
20 'The Dunedin Jewish Community', undated.
21 There are 4 members of the established Dunedin community who are named on the 1956 list as having made donations, but do not appear on the list 'The Dunedin Jewish Community'.
22 One of the pledgers appears not to have realised his pledge, and another appears to have lowered it by £20; Minutes of the DJCC Committee, 10 August 1939; 12 August 1940; 3 June 1941; 12 August 1941; 6 August 1942; List 'Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society', dated 1940 with names of donors, amount donated and month of donation, untitled folder, box 2, DJCC; List 'Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society Re Doctors and Dentists at Otago University Income for 1940 and 1941', folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
community having contributed to the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society is suggested in a further letter from Mr Benson soliciting contributions from other Jewish centres:

At one time we had a number of members of our own community in the position to assist liberally in Jewish Social and/or Relief work but unfortunately the Community here is now very depleted and comprises mainly of folk not in a position to extend financial aid. Thus while less than half of households in the established Dunedin Jewish Community appear to have made financial contributions to the DJWS to enable them to assist refugees in Dunedin and only a small number of households made significant donations, one reason for this may have been that a number of households within the established community had financial difficulties of their own. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that Mr Benson expressed astonishment that the established Dunedin had contributed as much as it had. However, phrases like 'it is even more difficult to get individuals amongst our own people to take a really active and sympathetic interest', 'a few Jewish people in Dunedin have been generous in their financial assistance commensurate with their financial means', and 'the same very few who are able and willing to make the sacrifice' point to the possibility that there was a section of the established community which had the financial means to support the DJWS but chose not to support the DJWS either financially or with sympathy for its activities.

The DJWS also had difficulty getting Jewish groups in other centres to contribute towards the financial support given to refugee doctors and dentists. The DJWS was conscious of the fact that for the most part the refugee doctors and dentists had come to Dunedin solely for the purpose of retraining and that afterwards they would move elsewhere. At a meeting of the Central Executive Committee of the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society, the Dunedin representative Mr M. S. Meyers told Central Executive Committee that

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23 Gerald Benson? to David L. Nathan, 22 February 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
24 Gerald Benson? to David Nathan, 21 July 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
25 Chairman of the Dunedin Branch of the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society to the Honourable Secretary, New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society, Auckland, 1 July 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC; Gerald Benson? to David Nathan, President of the Auckland Branch of the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society, 22 April 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC; Gerald Benson? to Harold C. Moses, undated but dating from late 1941, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
[...] they would not remain in Dunedin after they had completed the course and were registered to practice. It would be different if they would eventually settle in Dunedin and form part of their Jewish community.\textsuperscript{26}

This meeting decided that Auckland and Wellington would contribute to assisting refugee doctors and dentists in need for three years at a rate of £150 per annum, whilst Dunedin and Christchurch pledged £100 per annum.\textsuperscript{27} A second Central Executive meeting in January 1940 decided to continue with this rate of contribution, despite the Dunedin branch's protestations that it was facing a financial crisis.

Having regard to the limited resources available to the Society the Conference is of the opinion that it is wrong in principal to apply such a substantial sum of money towards the relief of a comparatively small number of persons [...] the Doctors and Dentists concerned be advised that the Conference regrets its inability to see its way clear to recommend any substantial increase in such allocation [...].\textsuperscript{28}

The second Central Executive Meeting also agreed that while doctors and dentists should repay the sum they were given as assistance, each contribution by members of established communities should be regarded as a donation.\textsuperscript{29} The details of the DJWS relief funds from 1956 reveals that in actuality Wellington loaned the DJWS a total of £500 and Christchurch a total of £150. Auckland, however, contributed nothing apart from guaranteeing bank overdrafts for two refugee doctors of £500 each.\textsuperscript{30} While the DJWS appreciated these guarantees, it was still disappointed at the lack of substantial contribution by Auckland. Mr Benson noted that 'there are nearly 17 Guarantors to the Auckland scheme so that each Guarantor's total liability over three years is £58 odd [...] Amongst the Guarantors are the wealthiest Jews in New Zealand'.\textsuperscript{31}

Indeed, the Auckland Jewish Community does not appear to have supported the Dunedin community as much as it could have. The New Zealand Census of 1936 shows that the established Jewish community in Auckland was more than four times as big as the Dunedin established community, with 814 people Aucklanders identifying their religious profession as

\textsuperscript{26} Minutes of the Meeting of the Members of the Central Executive Committee Held at the Office, 39 Farish Street, Wellington, 25 July, 1939, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{28} Minutes of the Meeting of the Central Executive Held at the Office of the New Zealand Welfare Society, Wellington Branch, 24 January, 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{30} 'The Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society Details of Relief Fund as at 5.3.56'; Gerald Benson? to Mr J. Meltzer, 15 August 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.

\textsuperscript{31} Gerald Benson? to Mr J. Meltzer, 15 August 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
Jewish compared to 173 residents of Dunedin. Furthermore, in almost every instance the refugee doctors who had come to Dunedin to retrain had first settled in Auckland or Wellington. Even taking into consideration that Auckland had its own problems with and financial commitments to refugees in its city, as was firmly pointed out to the DJWS by an assistant secretary of the Auckland branch, it is arguable that the Auckland Jewish Community could have aided the DJWS in assisting the refugee doctors and dentists more than it did.

The lack of support for the DJWS by the Auckland Jewish community and by a section of the established Jewish population must have been particularly frustrating as the DJWS did experience real financial difficulties in the early 1940s. The Society was in debt and on more than one occasion it was forced to default on or reduce promised advances to the refugee doctors and dentists and their families whom it was supporting. Several letters sent to other centres by the Chairman of the DJWS threatened that it would be forced to stop functioning if funds did not become available. Nevertheless, the society did continue to give help to a number of Jewish refugees.

Most help given by the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society was in the form of payment of university fees and or advances for living costs for Jewish refugee doctors and dentists and their families. At least 20 Jewish refugee doctors and dentists were given some form of financial assistance by the society between 1939 and 1950. Living allowances and fees were not the only things the DJWS assisted refugee doctors and dentists with, however, and doctors and dentists were not the only refugees who received help from the society or from other community members. One example is Mr Benson's attempt, using contacts of the Auckland President Mr David Nathan, to get an extra charge waived which had been imposed by a Viennese transport company on a refugee doctor, Dr Hersch, and which had to be paid before Dr Hersch's furniture could be collected. Another was the advance of £80 to Dr Kurzweil in

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33 Gerald Benson? to the President of the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society, Christchurch, 5 November 1940, untitled folder, box 2, DJCC.
34 E. Heynemann, Assistant Secretary of the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society Auckland, to Gerald Benson, 6 August 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
35 Gerald Benson? to David Nathan, 22 April 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC; Chairman of the Dunedin Branch of the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society to the Honourable Secretary, New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society, Auckland, 1 July 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC; Chairman of the Dunedin Branch of the Jewish Welfare Society to the Secretary, Jewish Welfare Society, Auckland Branch, 20 July 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC; Minutes of the DJWS Committee, 29 August 1940.
36 Minutes of the DJWS Committee; Gerald Benson to Frank Salinger, 1 October 1948, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
37 Minutes of the DJWS Committee, 22 May 1939; Correspondence involving this charge can be found in the folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
1943 to assist him in setting up practice, although in 1941 Dr Kent-Koplowitz had been
refused similar assistance on the grounds that it was beyond the scope of the society's
activities. The DJWS also guaranteed a number of bank overdrafts to allow refugees to set
up businesses; this aid was given to a veterinary surgeon, Dr Fromm, to enable him to set up
practice, to a former judge of the Austrian Supreme Court, Dr Hans Tritsch, to enable him to
set up a delicatessen selling savouries and to the husband of a refugee doctor, Mr O. Newman,
who wished to take over a confectionary business. A loan to the employer of Mr Susmann,
husband of another refugee doctor, was jointly guaranteed by both the DJWS and Mr D.
Langley, a member of the established community. This loan enabled Mr Susmann to be
employed repairing fruit cases all year round rather than seasonally. Assistance to pay
university fees for non-medical courses was also given to a Miss Garai and to the son of Dr
and Mrs Kirscher who wanted to complete engineering at Canterbury College. A very
different example was the payment of board and added expenses of another refugee, Miss
Krieg, to recover from ill health in Roxburgh.

Members of the established community also contributed financial aid on a personal
level. For example, in October 1940 an anonymous member of the community donated £50 to
be distributed among refugees in need of a little extra assistance, and after the closure of Mr
Tritsch's business £77 was donated by 'sympathisers' to pay off his overdraft. Mr Gerald
Benson also appears to have been particularly active in assisting refugees both in Dunedin and
within the wider South Island to find employment. He assisted a refugee to gain a job at a mine
in Cromwell, attempted to find a job in Dunedin for a German designer of knitted goods and
helped an Austrian refugee on the West Coast with an unjust employment agreement. He and
Mr Samuel Saltzman also signed the guarantee for Mr and Mrs Josef and Martha Horn (sister
and brother-in-law of Mr Ernst Hirsh) to come to New Zealand under which they agreed to
pay all charges incurred by the crown or a public body within five years of their arrival in New

38 Minutes of the DJWS Committee, 7 July 1943; 12 August 1941.
39 Ibid., 8 March 1939; 6 November 1939; 2 March 1942; Gerald Benson? to Mr Harold C. Moses, 10
December 1943.
40 Minutes of the DJWS Committee, 13 April 1942; 20 April 1942.
41 Ibid., 30 June 1940; 12 April 1948.
42 Ibid., 16 December, 1943.
43 Anonymous to Gerald Benson, 8 October 1940; folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC; Minutes of the
DJWS Committee, 14 January 1941.
44 Lily Schwarz to Gerald Benson, 14 February 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC; Julius
Fleischmann to Gerald Benson, 18 June 1938, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC; Secretary of the
Bruce Woollen Manufacturing Co. Ltd. to Gerald Benson, 20 July 1939, folder entitled 'Refugees', box
2, DJCC; Minutes of the DJWS Committee, 3 June 1941; The correspondence regarding the refugee
(Mr Franz Barta) and the unjust employment contract is held in the untitled folder, box 2, DJCC.
Zealand, as was required by government policy for all refugees entering New Zealand. Thus while the assistance given by the DJWS and associated members of the established community was predominantly financial and directed towards the doctors and dentists and their families, aid took a variety of forms and was also given to refugees who were not involved in the medical profession. The stated intention of the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society was to act as 'true friends, guides and philosophers to the newcomers', and the DJWS certainly appears to have acted as a financial friend towards a number of Jewish refugees in Dunedin in the 1930s and 1940s. It should be noted here that the DJWS was not the only Jewish organisation in Dunedin which aided refugees; the Ladies' Hand in Hand Society also gave limited assistance to wives of refugee doctors and to Mrs Steinhof, and as well as lending £600 to the DJWS the Philanthropic Society assisted Mrs Tritsch and made a £250 housing loan to Mr Hirsh. Nevertheless the DJWS remained the main source of financial assistance for Jewish refugees in Dunedin in the 1930s and 1940s.

At this point it is appropriate to consider why the DJWS and its members assisted Jewish refugees in the ways that it did and why a section of the established Dunedin community did not support the DJWS. Ann Beaglehole has written that the New Zealand Jewish Community's response to the refugee crisis was shaped by the attempt to achieve a balance between conflicting aims and identities, including the traditional humanitarian values of Judaism, self interest in maintaining the good name of the Jews and 'the "prevailing ethos of ethnic anti-conspicuousness" and fear of anti-Semitism' which made them wary of activities endangering the established Jewish community. The DJWS, however, does not appear to have been concerned that their support of refugees would ignite anti-Semitism or blacken the good name of the Dunedin Jewish community. Rather, it felt that if assistance was not given to refugees in Dunedin, and particularly the refugee doctors and dentists, this would reflect badly upon the Jewish community and provide ammunition for anti-Semites. In a letter to the president of the Auckland Branch of the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society, Gerald Benson expressed his belief that should the DJWS be forced to stop functioning due to lack of finance, this would not only be disastrous for Jewish refugees in Dunedin,

45 Copy of N.Z. Customs Deed Under the Immigration Restriction Acts Between the Crown and Samuel Saltzman and Gerald Benson for Josef Horn and wife Marta (sic) (unsigned), folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC, Delowe, p.24.
47 'Report 24 March 1942'; 'The Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society Details of Relief Fund as at 5.3.56'; Income and Expenditure, Jewish Philanthropic Society of Otago Account Book.
48 Beaglehole, A Small Price to Pay, p.20.
but I fear a sensation will be caused throughout New Zealand and reflect most seriously upon the whole of the Jewish people in the country [...] [W]hilst the majority of the members of the University Senate and Professors are sympathetic there are a few dangerously anti-Semitic who would not fail to promote intense propaganda at the failure of the New Zealand Jews to adequately assist the comparatively few refugees who have been admitted into New Zealand.  

In a separate letter to the Honorary Secretary of the Auckland branch, he commented that it was difficult enough for refugees to gain permission to come to New Zealand, and that it would be prejudicial if they were forced to default on 'residential payments' due to the DJWS's inability to support them. Given these beliefs, the lack of support from a section of the established Dunedin Jewish community and from the large Jewish centre of Auckland would have been particularly frustrating for the DJWS committee. I have been unable to find concrete evidence as to why a section of the Dunedin Jewish community failed to support the DJWS, but Beaglehole's analysis suggests that reasons could include a lack of identification with the traditional humanitarian values of Judaism and the fear that by supporting the refugees it would become conspicuous that they were Jewish. Wilfred Simenauer observed that members of the established community were uncomfortable with the fact that many of the refugees were German and that the established Jewish community was as politically insular regarding events in Europe as the non-Jewish community. This suggests that another reason for a section of the established community not supporting the refugees was to prevent oneself being identified with 'enemy' aliens. Whatever the reason, the lack of support does indicate disagreement with the DJWS position that the failure to assist Jewish refugees would reflect badly upon and endanger the position of the established Dunedin Jewish Community.

Having examined the financial assistance which was given to refugees by the DJWS and members of the established Jewish community and why it was given, it is pertinent to question whether the DJWS ever refused assistance to Jewish refugees in Dunedin. In reply to a 1951 request from the DJWS asking Mr O. and Dr C. Newman for assistance in helping other refugee doctor students, Mr Newman replied that not only were they in a position to assist, but his wife had been refused aid by the society when she had applied for a loan to pay her

49 Gerald Benson? to David Nathan, 22 April 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
50 Gerald Benson? to the Honorary Secretary of the New Zealand Welfare Society, Auckland, 22 July 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
51 Interview with Mr Wilfred Simenauer.
university fees. The DJWS Committee replied that this was incorrect; no refugee had ever been refused assistance by this society.⁵² The Minutes of the DJWS Committee show that this statement is not entirely true; it had, for example, refused to financially assist Dr Kent-Koplowitz to set up practice and had decided it was unable to assist a request to help a recently married refugee buy furniture.⁵³ It is likely, however, that the DJWS never refused assistance where it felt that was genuinely needed to enable a Jewish refugee to attend university or to establish a source of income, while the granting of other assistance may have depended on the availability of money for such aid. The willingness of DJWS committee members to assist Jewish refugees in genuine need is shown by the fact that they decided, despite the opposition of the President of the Congregation Mr John Jacobs, that assistance would not be declined on the grounds of a refugee having a non-Jewish spouse.⁵⁴ Fred Hirsh is correct to say that 'there was no way they would say no to anybody - they couldn't turn a refugee away'.

It should be noted that the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society was not the only organisation in Dunedin which assisted Jewish refugees. The Dunedin Refugee Emergency Committee was also active, headed by its president Mr Brugh, a member of the University of Otago Council and assisted by Mrs Benson, whose husband was a professor at the university.⁵⁵ In June 1940 Gerald Benson attended a meeting of this committee and reported back to the DJWS that he was 'very surprised to learn of the wonderful work being done by the members'.⁵⁶ The Dunedin Refugee Emergency Committee appears to have been primarily made up of Quakers, and unlike the DJWS it assisted both Jewish and non-Jewish refugees. Assistance given by the Quaker community also appears to have had a practical as well as financial orientation. Canon Paul Oestreicher recalls his family receiving practical support in all sorts of ways from the Quaker community which was known for caring for any German refugees and whose members saw themselves as sensitive to the need of all refugees.⁵⁷ Mrs Hirsh and Mrs Horn remembered attending weekly English classes run by 'the Sullivans' who were Quakers, and who also gave them recipes and looked after Mrs Hirsh's sons when she

⁵² Minutes of the DJWS Committee, 14 March 1951; 7 June 1951.
⁵³ Ibid., 12 August 1941; 13 April 1942.
⁵⁴ Ibid., 22 May 1940.
⁵⁵ Chairman of the Dunedin Branch of the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society to the Honorary Secretary, New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society, Auckland, 1 July 1940; Gerald Benson to John Jacobs and S. Saltzman, 15 May 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC.
⁵⁶ Minutes of the DJWS Committee, 4 June 1940.
⁵⁷ Interview with Canon Paul Oestreicher.
went away. Indeed, Mrs Hirsh believed that her family received more help from the Quakers than the Jewish community, but noted that at that time her family had an income and unlike many refugee doctors and dentists were not dependent on financial support from the DJWS.

The Jewish and Quaker organisations cooperated in a number of ways towards assisting and endeavouring to further the position of refugees. The DJWS sent £10 to the Refugee Emergency Committee to assist one Jewish refugee doctor whom the committee was supporting and contributed towards living costs for another for whom the Refugee Emergency Committee paid university fees, representatives of the two groups meet to discuss the problems of local refugees and they also cooperated in the drafting of a letter which the refugee doctor and dentist students sent to the Prime Minister assuring him of their loyalty. Hence the assistance given to Jewish refugees by the DJWS should be viewed as having occurred within the wider context of concern for refugees from Europe in Dunedin.

One of the most important indicators of the collective identity of the Dunedin Jewish Community is the nature of the social relationship between the established Jewish community and refugees in Dunedin. Ann Beaglehole believes that in New Zealand in many cases "the relationship between the newcomers and the established Jewish community was not entirely satisfactory, in spite of the Jewish Welfare Society's stated intention to act as "true friends, guides and philosophers to the newcomers"" and argues that one source of conflict arose from the gulf between the fairly orthodox New Zealand established communities which held on to Jewish rituals and traditions and the more secular refugees. This source of conflict does not appear to have existed to the same extent in Dunedin as it may have in other centres. The community's religious leadership was supplied by refugees for much of the period and the Dunedin Community as a whole does not appear to have been very orthodox or to have adhered very strongly to Jewish religious practices. Moreover, unlike the case of non-refugee university students, I have found no evidence suggesting that community leaders were unhappy with the degree of religious adherence or community participation of the Jewish refugees.

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58 Interview with Mrs Margot Hirsh and Mrs Martha Horn.
59 Interview with Mrs Margot Hirsh.
60 Minutes of the DJWS Committee, 8 September 1940; 10 October 1940; 12 May 1940; 22 May 1940; Chairman of the Dunedin Branch of the New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society to the Honourable Secretary, New Zealand Jewish Welfare Society, Auckland, 1 July 1940; Gerald Benson? to Mr Brugh, 3 June 1940, folder entitled 'Refugees', box 2, DJCC; Refugee doctors and dentists taking professional courses at the University of Otago to the Honourable Prime Minister of New Zealand, June 1940.
61 Beaglehole, A Small Price to Pay, p.63; Ibid., p.64.
62 The exception to this is Canon Paul Oestreicher's recollection of enmity between the majority of the members of the established Dunedin Jewish Community who were very explicitly Jewish in an ethnic
A further aspect of the unsatisfactory relationship between the refugee and established Jewish community which Beaglehole identifies is a reluctance on the part of the established community to mix socially with the refugees. Likewise, Jack Delowe has recorded examples of refugees and other immigrants in the period 1914-1956 in Auckland who found it difficult to be accepted by the established Jewish community or to be invited to socialise with them. This pattern of behaviour also appears to have occurred in Dunedin; with the exception of events such as the communal seder there was a lack of substantial social interaction between the refugee and established Jewish communities.

Although Ted Friedlander, a member of the established Jewish community, recalled that the refugees were quite accepted and became good members of the community and good friends, Wilfred Simenauer recalled that while his family was a novelty before the war broke out, after its commencement

a certain cool cloud descended on the relationship between [...] the average New Zealand Jew and the refugees. I think they were uncomfortable with the fact that we were German and I don't remember us socialising with New Zealand Jewish families. In fact the most socialising we did was with people of English origin who seemed to have a bigger understanding obviously of what the hell was going on in Europe.

Mrs Hirsh also talked of the friendship and support which her family received from an English immigrant, and noted that while members of the established community were very helpful with the communal seder, most of the family's friends were refugees and her family had very little contact with the established community who 'didn't have an open house for the refugees'. The concept of an open home into which guests were welcomed seems to have been a particularly European one. Canon Paul Oestreicher, for example, noted that his mother kept an open home, into which guests were invited for events like Sunday morning chamber music.

Given that a 'cool cloud' descended on the relationship between the refugees and the established community after the outbreak of war and that the established community did not open their homes to the refugees, it is not surprising that Mrs Horn recalled that the refugees

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63 Beaglehole, A Small Price to Pay, p.65.
64 Delowe, p.40.
65 Interview with Mr Ted Friedlander; Interview with Mr Wilfred Simenauer.
66 Interview with Mrs Margot Hirsh.
67 Interview with Canon Paul Oestreicher.
kept together. Moreover, Mrs Hirsh commented that when the Jewish doctors were in Dunedin there was always something on at weekends at the Hirsh home or the Horn home, but communal life for the refugees did not tend to involve the local original residents of the community. It is important to note, however, that the impetus for the lack of social interaction between the refugees and the established communities may not have come only from the established community. Fred Hirsh believed that 'the refugees probably had a greater empathy for each other and possibly found it easier to be free and communicate with the other refugees because they had something in common.' Furthermore, one should not make the mistake of assuming that there was a sense of community among all the refugees. Wilfred Simenauer agreed with the suggestion that there were pockets of friends rather than a community feeling among the refugees and noted that there were often factions among them.

To summarise, the Dunedin established community was in the unique position of having to assist Jewish refugee doctors and dentists who were required to retrain at the University of Otago. The assistance given by the rooted and empowered Jews of the established Dunedin Jewish Community to the uprooted and powerless Jews who had come to Dunedin as refugees from Nazi Europe was predominantly facilitated by the Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society. However, less than half of households in the established Jewish community appear to have made donations to the DJWS and only a small number of those donations were of a significant size. This may have been due to some households in the Dunedin Jewish community having financial problems of their own but it also appears that a section of the established community who had the financial means to support the DJWS chose not to have done so. The fact that the DJWS had difficulty getting other established communities to assist it, particularly the community in Auckland, also contributed to the financial difficulties experienced by the DJWS in the early 1940s. Nevertheless, although the aid given to refugees by the DJWS and individual members of the established community took a variety of forms, it was primarily of a financial nature. While this aid was often directed towards refugee doctors and dentists, it was also given to refugees not involved in the medical profession. One motivation behind the assistance given by the DJWS appears to have been concern that failure to assist refugees would reflect badly on the established community and provide ammunition for anti-Semites, and assistance does not appear ever to have been refused to those who genuinely needed it to

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68 Interview with Mrs Martha Horn.
69 Interview with Mrs Margot Hirsh.
70 Interview with Mr Wilfred Simenauer.
establish a source of income or attend university. The fact that the DJWS cooperated with the Quaker Dunedin Refugee Emergency Committee shows that this assistance should be seen in the wider context of concern for refugees from Europe in Dunedin. Unlike other Jewish communities in New Zealand, conflict between a more orthodox established community and more secular refugees does not appear to have occurred in Dunedin, although Dunedin conformed to the national pattern of little social interaction between members of the established community and refugees.

Finally, although there was varying amounts of assistance and support given to the refugees by the members of the established community and little social interaction between the two groups, there is some indication that the established Dunedin community may have been more supportive overall towards refugees than was the case elsewhere in New Zealand. In March 1942 the refugee Dr Hans Tritsch died and Mrs Tritsch expressed a desire to move to Auckland.\(^\text{71}\) Dr Hersch, a former refugee doctor in Dunedin, wrote to Mr Gerald Benson that he would help Mrs Tritsch as much as possible.

> Unfortunately the community of Auckland is quite different from the Dunedin community so that I am afraid that she will not have a big help from them. I didn't meet any one of them here but everybody says that they will not assist her.\(^\text{72}\)

Thus, while the lack of support from some sections of the established Dunedin Jewish community and the lack of social interaction between the refugees and the established community suggest that it may not be possible to speak of a unified 'collective identity' among the Dunedin Jewish population, the collective identity in Dunedin amongst the refugees of the and the established community may have been stronger than in other Jewish communities in New Zealand.

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\(^{71}\) Register of Burials Dunedin Jewish Congregation; Minutes of the DJWS Committee.

\(^{72}\) H. Hersch to Gerald Benson, 7 April 1942, untitled folder, box 2, DJCC.
Conclusion

The phrase 'ripples from Europe' aptly describes the limited but noticeable impact which events in Nazi Europe and the arrival of refugees from there had on the demographic and communal characteristics of the Dunedin Jewish Community and the way that the established community accommodated the refugees.

The Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s was a community that was demographically in decline; despite an influx of Central European refugees in the late 1930s and early 1940s, the overall number of Dunedin residents identifying themselves as Jewish in the census of the period fell from 190 to 126. Moreover, the number of households with at least one member who had some degree of active involvement in Judaism was also declining.

Almost all members of the Dunedin Jewish Community lived in the boroughs of St Kilda or Dunedin City and residential tendencies were observable amongst both the established and refugee communities. Although no members of the established community worked in unskilled or rurally based jobs, occupations were diverse, with the clothing industry being of special occupational significance, as had been the case in the Dunedin Jewish Community in the nineteenth century. Occupations of established members of the community differed greatly from those of refugees, many of whom studied or worked at the medical school. The occupational make-up of refugees in Dunedin also appears to have differed from their counterparts elsewhere in New Zealand.

For those members of the Dunedin Jewish Community who were members of the Dunedin Jewish Congregation, religion provided a common bond. With the exception of the Congregation Committee, the religious institutions which facilitated this bond were not particularly strong. Synagogue attendance was generally low, until 1948 the congregation's religious leadership was uncertain and changing and although there was a desire for religious leadership there was an inability or unwillingness to pay for it. Religious education for children was accordingly provided by a number of different members of the community during the 1930s and 1940s. On the whole, religion did not appear to be an overly important force in the lives of members of the Dunedin Jewish Community, especially as community members did not strictly obey Jewish religious laws concerning Sabbath and dietary observance. Nevertheless,
the congregation did ensure that their children would be able to make an informed choice about their degree of religious observance in the future and ensure that the common bond of religion would remain by ensuring the availability of some form of religious education for children throughout the period. The congregation appears to have been a fairly liberal one, in which some tolerance was exhibited towards those who married out of the faith and towards different beliefs within Judaism.

Annual events and major life events provided an opportunity for the community to come together in celebration or in grief. Although some of these events such as Bar mitzvah and the communal seder had a religious focus, the community's collective identity extended beyond common religious profession. One institution which contributed towards this identity was the Dunedin Jewish Social Club, although the importance of this institution varied according to the number of activities organised and to the extent they were attended by community members. This appears to have been dependent upon the strength of religious leadership, as was the communal seder which by the end of the 1940s had come to acquire the function of bringing the community together as a whole. Philanthropic organisations also contributed towards communal identity by giving subscribers the feeling that they were helping the needy amongst the community. Jewish university students, on the other hand, do not appear to have contributed greatly towards the Dunedin Jewish Community's collective identity.

Zionism provided a further opportunity for the construction of communal identity amongst the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s in the form of visits by Zionist emissaries, the existence of a number of Zionist groups and contributions to Zionist appeals. Support for Zionism came from refugees and established members of the community, but there is some evidence that after their experiences in Europe, the refugees supported Zionism to a greater extent than the non-refugee community. Overall, however, the existence of a number of Zionist organisations within the small Dunedin Jewish Community and the often substantial donations made to Zionist causes suggest that there was a high degree of consciousness of obligations to Jews living elsewhere and a feeling of being connected with the wider Jewish world within the community as a whole. The aims of Zionism combined with the persecution of Jews in Nazi Europe may have encouraged established community members to consider their position as Jews in New Zealand and their relationship to Jews elsewhere in the world. This is despite an initial reluctance to and fear of publicising the cause of Zionism.
amongst the wider Dunedin community and despite the way that the channelling of Zionist feeling into formal organisations appears to have required the presence of an enthusiastic community member, as was the case with the Dunedin Jewish Social Club.

Due to the fact that the only medical and dental schools in New Zealand were located in Dunedin, the established Dunedin Jewish community was in the unique position of having to assist Jewish refugee doctors and dentists who were required to retrain at the University of Otago. The Dunedin Jewish Welfare Society was the primary facilitator of assistance given to refugee doctors and dentists as well as other refugees. Not all of the established Dunedin Jewish Community supported the DJWS; there was a section of the established community which had the financial means to support the DJWS but chose not to do so. The DJWS's financial difficulties in the early 1940s were exacerbated by the fact that it had difficulty in getting other established Jewish communities in New Zealand to assist it. Despite these difficulties, the aid given by the DJWS and individual members of the community was predominantly of a financial nature and directed towards refugee doctors and dentists, although aid was also given to refugees not involved in the medical profession and took a variety of forms. Aid does not appear to have ever been refused to a refugee who genuinely needed it to establish a source of income or attend university, with one reason for this being the fear that failure to assist refugees would provide ammunition for anti-Semites and reflect badly on the non-refugee community. This assistance should also be seen within the context of a wider concern in Dunedin for the welfare of refugees from Europe shown by groups such as the Quaker Dunedin Refugee Emergency Committee. The relationship between the established and refugee communities in Dunedin appears to have differed from that within of the Jewish communities in New Zealand. Although the Dunedin community mirrored the national pattern of little social interaction between members of the established and refugee communities, there appears to have been no conflict between a more orthodox established community and more secular refugees, and there is some indication that the Dunedin established community may have been more supportive overall towards refugees than was the case elsewhere in New Zealand.

Although the lack of support from some sections of the established community towards the DJWS and the lack of social interaction between the established community and the refugees indicates that it may not be possible to speak of a completely unified 'collective identity' amongst the Dunedin Jewish population, this work has examined a number of
institutions, events and people which contributed towards a definite communal identity with religious, social, Zionist and philanthropic manifestations. In doing so, it has contributed towards our knowledge of the diverse communities which made up the wider Dunedin community during a period of time in which the Jewish community's counterparts in Europe were being persecuted and murdered. By focussing on the years 1930-1950 it constitutes a meeting point between those works focussing on the New Zealand experiences of the refugees from this persecution and those concerned with the wider history of the New Zealand Jewish Community.

There has not been room in a dissertation of this nature to examine the individual lives of members of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s. While some biographies, such as those of the Theomin or the Halsted families, are well known, there are a number of people who made a large contribution to the history of the Jewish community and the city of Dunedin, such as the philanthropist Samuel Saltzman, whose lives have not been documented. This is reflects the lower profile of the Dunedin Jewish Community in the 1930s and 1940s in comparison to the turn of the century. Areas for further research include the experiences of the refugee doctors and dentists, both as they retrained in Dunedin and as they moved elsewhere, the Quaker Dunedin Refugee Emergency Committee and the attitudes within the wider Dunedin community towards Judaism and the Dunedin Jewish Community.

This study has examined the demographic and communal characteristics of the small Dunedin Jewish Community in times of turbulence elsewhere and shown how the community responded to and was affected by the ripples of the tragedy of the Jewish experience in Nazi Europe. The picture emerges of a settled, not overly religious, fairly liberal and pragmatic established community which accommodated the arrival of refugees with very different experiences from their own and which exhibited a consciousness of obligations towards these refugees and a feeling of being connected to Jews living elsewhere. But assistance was not only given in one direction; the refugees also assisted the established community by providing religious leadership and helping to revive collective identity.
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Appendix 1: Note re Statistics

When rounding percentages, the decimal place to which values were rounded was chosen to ensure that people were not gained or lost in percentage terms.

eg: Table Three, Year 1926:

Total number of Dunedin residents identifying themselves as Jewish = 190
Total population of Dunedin = 85095
One person = 100/85095 = 0.001175157%
Percentage of Dunedin residents identifying themselves as Jewish = 0.223279863%

Therefore to ensure people were not gained or lost in percentage terms, the percentage value was rounded to 0.223%.
### Appendix 2: Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aliyah</strong></td>
<td>The immigration of Jews to Israel.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bar mitzvah</strong></td>
<td>The attainment and occasion of the assumption of the status of religious maturity by males at age 13.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chevra Kadishah</strong></td>
<td>Burial Society.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Halakah</strong></td>
<td>The body of law comprising the rules and ordinances of Jewish religious and civil practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kashrut</strong></td>
<td>The body of regulations governing Jewish diet.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Keren ha-Yesod</strong></td>
<td>Palestine Foundation Fund, the financial arm of the Jewish Agency for Palestine.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Keren Kayemet le-Israel</strong></td>
<td>Jewish National Fund.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kosher</strong></td>
<td>Food which is fit to be consumed according to Jewish law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Matzah</strong></td>
<td>Unleavened bread.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minyan</strong></td>
<td>A group of ten male Jews aged 13 years or over constituting the minimum number for communal worship.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Purim</strong></td>
<td>Name given to any annual celebration instituted by a Jewish community to commemorate a deliverance from danger.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Seder</strong></td>
<td>Ceremony which takes place on the first night of the Passover, usually in the home, and includes a festival meal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shehita</td>
<td>The ritual slaughter of animals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shohet</td>
<td>A qualified ritual slaughterer of animals and poultry.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shul</td>
<td>Synagogue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simhat Torah</td>
<td>Holy Day on which the annual completion of the reading of the Torah is celebrated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sukkah</td>
<td>Decorated booth erected during the festival of Sukkot symbolising God's protection of the Israelites during their 40 years of wandering in the desert.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sukkot</td>
<td>One of three pilgrim festivals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torah</td>
<td>In the narrow sense, the term is synonymous with the Written Law of the Five Books of Moses; in the wider sense it also refers to the Oral Law given by God to Moses to explain the Written Law.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: All definitions were sourced from Cohn-Sherbok except * from Goldman, p.239.
Appendix 3.1: Residential Distribution of the Dunedin Jewish Community

1930-1950

Methodology: All identified residences were plotted on the map.

Separate symbols were used for residences of members of the established and refugee communities.

If a family or individual lived in more than one residence during the period, each residence was included.

If more than one Jewish family or individual lived in a particular residence, either simultaneously or at different times, alternative symbols were used.

Sources:

Stone's, 1930; Stone's, 1940; Stone's, 1950.
List of names and addresses of those ordering 'motzos' (matzah) and meal, undated, and attached invoices dated November 1944- March 1945.
'The Dunedin Jewish Community', undated.
'Refugees in Dunedin, June 1940'.
Untitled list of Refugees in Dunedin, August 1945.
'LIST of Refugee Aliens in no Relation to the Jewish Community in Dunedin, 1 August 1945'.
Minutes of the DJWS Committee.
Appendix 3.2: Residential Distribution of the Dunedin Jewish Community 1930-1950