

Dear Steven,

My name is Sheldon (Shelly) Bramson and I am writing today in response to the recent article in the Jewish Advocate. It is so pleasing to know that Temple Israel will be celebrating its 100th anniversary this summer.

My family attended summer services from the early 1940s to the early 1960s. Although we were very “modern orthodox” attending services at a conservative venue was never an issue when it came to Temple Israel.

As a child growing up during those years I remember looking forward to the Shabbat services each weekend. The building itself was, and still is, an awesome structure and I never remember a day when air conditioning was necessary.

Besides the physical plant, there are many things about Temple Israel which left me with such fond memories.

1. Attendance - Getting a seat in the sanctuary on Saturday morning was often a challenge, especially if there was a Bar Mitzvah. (Didn't do Bat Mitzvahs yet)
2. Rabbis - During my twenty years I distinctly remember Rabbi Sidney Steiman followed by JTS student rabbis such as Gerald Wolpe, Shamai Kanter and Gerald Zelermyer. They were all so young with such promising careers.
3. Cantor – To this day, I miss the chanting of Chazan Joshua Goldberg. If there was a crack in the walls or ceiling it was from his hitting a high note. Each Shabbat morning he would select one or two of his favorite “tefilot” for a solo. His chanting of the Kiddush on Friday night was and still is my favorite.
4. Sexton – Don't know how many of the young people in Nantasket today have heard about Mr. Julius Rinek. His knowledge and reading of Torah as well as his interfacing with the congregation extended his tenure from Temple Israel to Temple Beth Shalom. I can't imagine the number of Bar and Bat Mitzvah children he tutored.

Mr. Rinek never forgot a name or event. My last Shabbat at TI prior to entering the Army was in August 1962. Almost 20 years later I was at the Temple Beth Shalom attending the Bat Mitzvah of a friend's daughter. I walked up to Mr. Rinek and asked him in Hebrew (he liked that) if he remembered me. Even in his late years, he looked at me and responded by reciting my full name and that of my family in Hebrew.

5. Leadership - Upon browsing your wonderful website I could not help but fondly remember the names of the presidents, especially those who served in the 40s, 50s and 60s. What was so amazing about these leaders and, for that matter, the entire membership was that during most of the year these people attended and volunteered at Orthodox, Conservative and Reform synagogues and they still took the time and energy needed to ensure the success of a Jewish summer community.

It was this group of men who came together to plan and fund the building of the Nantasket Youth Center. It was a place for children like me to go each evening, stay out of trouble, and socialize with friends while learning new skills. The Saturday night “record hop” with famous disc jockeys was always a highlight of the weekend.

6. Shabbat Study Group – Each Saturday afternoon prior to Mincha a study group would meet in the rear of the sanctuary. An elderly sage by the name of Mr. Kraftchinsky, the patriarch of the Kraft family, would lead the discussion and share his wisdom.

I am so happy to read about the current activities of the summer community and wish you the best.

Shelly Bramson  
Boston