

OUR HISTORY

*Greater Atlanta Hadassah at 96 **

Spanning generations and reflecting the growth of the Atlanta Jewish community, Greater Atlanta Hadassah has evolved from the original eighteen charter members to the current membership of 3,549 members and associates, of which 99% are life members.

1916- 1929 DECADE OF BEGINNINGS

In the early years, members formed sewing circles to produce supplies and organized clothing collections to ship to the Palestine Supplies Bureau. Dues were collected monthly and the Chapter minutes noted that "despite the depression and hard times", quotas for all projects were met, including the local Infant Welfare Fund. Members distributed JNF Blue Boxes and planted trees on the Stone Mountain road to beautify the local area, and placed milk containers in the local department stores to collect funds to provide milk for the children in pre-state Israel.

1930'S - DECADE OF DESPAIR

In 1933, Hadassah celebrated the opening of the Hadassah-Hebrew University Hospital on Mount Scopus. As World War II began in Europe, Hadassah launched emergency shipments of medical supplies, drugs and clothing to Palestine. Mobilized to support the U.S. war effort, the Chapter embraced National Hadassah's campaign to sell \$200 million in United States Defense Bonds.

1940'S - DECADE OF FEAR & HOPE

Israel's War of Independence created strenuous demands on Hadassah's resources, but in 1948, Atlanta Hadassah joyously celebrated the declaration of the State of Israel.

1950'S - DECADE OF A NEW FUTURE

In the 1950's, efforts focused on Hadassah's pledge to sell \$30 million in Israel Bonds in support for the new State of Israel, and to concentrate on fundraising for a new Medical Center. Bon voyage parties celebrated every visit to Israel, which were infrequent and rare for the time.

During the 1950's and 1960's era, chapter meetings featured elaborate fashion shows which showcased fashions from Hadassah's Alice Seligsburg Trade School. Hadassah's educational programs expanded from the Alice Seligsburg and the Brandeis schools to the present day Hadassah College Jerusalem.

1960'S - DECADE OF NEW FRONTIERS

In 1961, the dream of a comprehensive medical center was realized when patients were moved into the Medical Center at Ein Kerem. Atlanta proudly displayed the "Blue and White Moving Day" banner, awarded for exemplary fundraising for the June 6 Moving Day.

1970's - DECADE OF CHALLENGE & CHANGE

In 1967, during the Six Day War, the Chapter responded overwhelmingly to the emergency appeal to provide the Hadassah Hospital with supplies and medicines, and to provide protection for the Youth Aliyah frontier villages. Atlanta shared, in spirit, the glory and victory when the

National Hadassah president accepted the keys to the reclaimed Mount Scopus Hospital. In 1975, Atlanta members were among the 1,500 people attending the rededication ceremonies.

1980's - DECADE OF NEW BEGINNINGS

To meet the changing times and to meet the needs of the growing and demographically changing community, over the years the Chapter changed its structure from one chapter to a chapter with five groups, which gradually expanded to 10 groups. Later, the Chapter transitioned to five chapters, and in 1994, elected to become the Greater Atlanta Hadassah chapter, with day-time and evening groups, to address the evolving lifestyle of the membership.

1990's -DECADE OF COLLABORATION

Atlanta Hadassah initiated new programs during the 1990's, including: the *Chesed Student Award*, an annual event to recognize exemplary students in the Jewish day and religious schools in the metropolitan area; [Check It Out](#), a breast cancer prevention program for high school girls, in partnership with Northside Hospital; and [Training Wheels](#), a program for preschoolers and their families.

2000's - DECADE OF GROWTH

The Health Professionals group of Greater Atlanta Hadassah, created in the late 1990's, provided the leadership for a number of community-wide projects and programs designed to enrich one's body, mind, heart and soul. GAH sponsored community health education forums on women's health concerns, including "Jews, Genes and Cancer" (March 27, 2011) sponsored by Myriad Genetics, "From Generation to Generation: Is Your Family at Risk for a Jewish Genetic Disease?" (February 21, 2010) sponsored by Genzyme, and "Coronary Heart Disease and Stroke" (February 25, 2007).

Atlanta Hadassah's advocacy program gained momentum in the 1940's with a campaign which urged a change in the immigration laws by supporting the passage of the Displaced Persons Bill to help rescue the displaced Jewish population. Present-day advocacy programs focus on women's and children's issues, including equal rights, reproduction rights, health, domestic violence and support of Israel.

As Greater Atlanta Hadassah celebrates its 96th birthday and reflects on the full harmony of the Hadassah story and its rich past, we behold the promise of tomorrow. Spanning the generations, Hadassah volunteers reflect the diversity of American Jewish women in age, geography, religious observance, profession and life experience. Hadassah built a movement, helped to build a nation, and continues to help women build themselves by fostering a spirit of creativity, self-fulfillment and group development. We are sustaining this amazing journey by accepting new challenges, inspired by Hadassah's past, and enthusiastic about the future.

** This history builds on the story of Atlanta Hadassah from 1916 -2007, compiled by Colleen Weston and committee on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of Atlanta Hadassah. Please help us make this history more complete with the addition of your own photographs or other memorabilia. Please send items you would like to contribute to Greater Atlanta Hadassah, 47*

Perimeter Center East, Suite 210, Atlanta, Georgia 30346. The official Greater Atlanta Archives can be viewed in the Chapter office.