

July 4, 2021 Independence Day, Burlington, Vermont

Dear OZ Congregants, Members of the Board of Directors and friends:

I am writing to submit my resignation as the Co-Archivist of Ohavi Zedek Synagogue. My resignation is effective on December 31, 2021.

Every minute of my service as the OZ Archivist and Co-Archivist (now well over 36 years) has been full of adventure, discovery, revelation and education for me. I first started working with the OZ Archives with Myron Samuelson, my predecessor, in 1984 to plan the Centennial Celebration of Ohavi Zedek Synagogue. It was my profound honor to create the OZ Centennial Exhibits, the OZ Centennial Timeline and the Samuelson Archives Cabinets in 1985. In 2015, I witnessed a dream come true, with the rescue, stabilization and move of the Lost Mural. The conservation and restoration of the Lost Mural is now revealing splendid results. In 2021, as OZ's Archivist, I was also fortunate to serve as the Vermont Contributor to the New England Jewish History Collaborative (nejhc.org).

Over the last year, with the assistance of my very good friend and Co-Archivist, Jeff Potash, we have been considering how to make the OZ Archives more inclusive and how to most effectively preserve and honor our congregation's collective history and our building donors' memories. Prior to the end of this 2021 year, I will be assisting in creating Dropbox links to OZ Archival materials for OZ and its congregants to access our archival computer materials.

Copies of the OZ Archives data will be shared with OZ Board members and the Vermont Historical Society. I am happy to meet with any OZ volunteers during the 2021 and 2022 years to review these files, and to show them the materials that are presently located within the Samuelson Archives Lounge cabinets, OZ Archives file cabinets and the OZ Archives storage space in the Wall Sanctuary choir loft. I am also available to help volunteers compile a list of future OZ archival tasks and lists of materials to be collected by Archives Committee members and volunteers. Projects are already planned to share our materials with members of our congregation, Pre-School and Hebrew School parents.

I am tendering my resignation notice now so that OZ can recruit new members to the OZ Archives Committee and other volunteers by the next congregational meeting. For volunteers who are interested working with the OZ Archives, there is a separate OZ endowment fund available to the OZ Archives Committee to carry on further archival activities, and purchase archival supplies, named the Judith A. Cohen Archives Fund. Nevertheless, I also encourage congregants to lobby for a

designated line item for the OZ Archives and for accessible and adequate storage space for the OZ Archives.

After completing innumerable speaking engagements about Ohavi Zedek's history, Burlington's "Little Jerusalem," and the "Lost Mural," I now look back with wonder and hope that others will carry on the tasks handed to me by our prior Archivist, Myron Samuelson. Immersing oneself in the OZ Archives gives one a sense of purpose, community and tradition that I will always cherish. Simply put, serving as an OZ Archivist has left a mark on my heart, one that is seared into my soul.

I am delighted that information that I started to research in college continues to be chronicled by the OZ Archives and by students and documentaries. The stories of Burlington's "Little Jerusalem" and Ohavi Zedek represent the Vermont Jewish Community, a story filled with tragedies and triumphs, and bright symbols of hope and immigrant survival in a strange land. I do hope other people decide to work within, collect, document and interpret the Ohavi Zedek Archives; they will most certainly obtain as much pleasure and satisfaction as I have.

Following my resignation as OZ Archivist, I will continue as a Co-Founder and Board Member of the Lost Mural Project to engage in public speaking, interviews and tours about Burlington's "Little Jerusalem" and the Lost Mural Project. Further, I intend to assist in the initial designs, text, mapping, kiosks and preparation of other content for the Lost Mural Project's education and immigrant history center.

I am requesting that the OZ Board publish my resignation in the Voice and on affiliated Facebook pages to reach all congregants, Pre-School parents and Hebrew School parents for the purpose of recruiting volunteers with any time to help preserve the OZ Archives. Learning about our shared community history, and the history of our current members, will enable all of us to remember and foster our traditions and honor our dedicated forbears.

I do not wish to be honored by OZ in any way; it is and always will be my honor to have served as an Ohavi Zedek Archivist and to have participated in the good works of the OZ Archives and the Lost Mural Project. If congregants or others wish to make them, donations can be directed to the Ohavi Zedek Judith A. Cohen Archives Fund or to the Lost Mural Project, online or by mail.

I wish you all of the joys of community, history, life, love and tradition filled with good health, family and friends.

Best wishes and with great appreciation,
Aaron Goldberg, Co-Archivist, Ohavi Zedek Synagogue

“Who is an Archivist? Archives are for life and for living. They are not about getting lost in the past but about understanding the present. Being an archivist or record keeper is a fascinating role. There are not many jobs where it can be said that what you do today will matter hundreds of years from now. An archivist or record keeper needs a passion for history, an eye for detail and a strong commitment to service. The return is to be a custodian of society's memory.” (International Council on Archives).