Overview of the Collection

Collection Title: Mollie Harris Jewish Community Center Collection
Identification: MS-0483
Creator: Harris, Mollie
Physical Description: 6.25 linear ft
Repository: Special Collections & University Archives
5500 Campanile Dr. MC 8050
San Diego, CA, 92182-8050
URL: http://library.sdsu.edu/scua
Email: scref@rohan.sdsu.edu
Phone: 619-594-6791

Biographical Information:
In 1957 the Jewish Community Center moved from its original location, a storefront on El Cajon Blvd and 30th St. in North Park, to 54th St. between El Cajon Blvd. and University Ave. Joseph Astor, when he became the director of the new JCC, moved the Center's library of 538 volumes to the art gallery, and engaged Mollie Harris, a professional librarian. Over the years, she and Joseph Astor developed a Jewish community library at the JCC.

In 1970 the Astor Family provided funds for a library facility which was named the Samuel and Rebecca Astor Judaica Library, in memory of the Astor Family parents. The Astor Family also established a memorial fund for books on Israel, in memory of Tillie Lawrence Omens, mother of M. Larry Lawrence, chief benefactor of the library. The library was dedicated by Dr. Jacob Bronowski and ten years later, in 1980 there were over 5,800 volumes in the library. In that year, the Jewish Historical Society of San Diego first met in the library. The library was the center of Jewish literary life until 1996 when the library was moved to the Lawrence Family JCC in University City. The 54th St. JCC closed in 1998.

Mollie Harris was librarian at the library in the 54th St. JCC, from the early 1960's until 1996. During her tenure as librarian, she built the library from a very small collection to almost 20,000 volumes. She initiated and organized an annual Jewish book fair, held regular book reviews with the help of Ida Nasatir and engaged notable Jewish literary speakers, such as I.B. Singer and Elie Wiesel.

Custodial History:
The materials in this collection were donated to the Jewish Historical Society of San Diego in 2001 by Mollie Harris and her son Andrew (JHSSD #2001.08.) It was transferred to the Library and Information Access August 23, 2011.

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Preferred Citation:
Identification of item, folder title, box number, Mollie Harris Jewish Community Center Collection, Special Collections and University Archives, Library and Information Access, San Diego State University.

Scope and Contents
The *Mollie Harris Jewish Community Center Collection* consists of Harris's working papers from the library regarding staff, long range planning, budgeting, publicity and working documents for programs. It includes detailed information about events and speakers, including guest registers, newspaper clippings and press releases. General program information, staff minutes, policies and documents regarding the functions of the overall JCC are also present.

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