

A Brief Biography of Marvin Weiner
By Herbert Weiner

Marvin Weiner, a South New Jersey businessman and entrepreneur, has always had a true love affair with the American Heritage, the Immigrant Experience, and admiring and understanding the Founding Fathers, especially Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, and Thomas Jefferson.).

Over 65 years ago, he started collecting pamphlets, books, and newspapers regarding the American Revolution and its ideals of freedom and liberty. He loved combing through small book stores and poring over catalogs to discover the next treasure to be added to his collection. Whenever he went on vacation, his hobby was rummaging to find a jewel.

Marvin Weiner had a method to his collecting. Whenever one of his pamphlets or books mentioned another pamphlet, book, correspondence or newspaper article, he tried to acquire it. Whenever there was a philosophical work which underpinned the ideas of the American Revolution (Montesquieu, Locke, J.S. Mill, etc.) Marvin Weiner tried to obtain a first or early edition of it, even if it was written in French, Latin, or Greek. He had the idea that he would try to duplicate the library of Thomas Jefferson and use it as his guide. He thrilled at the notion of holding in his hands the same material that was read by the Founding Fathers. Selections from his library were displayed at the University of Pennsylvania's "Inventing Liberty" Exhibition and his pieces have been on exhibit at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia.

Meanwhile, Marvin Weiner's interest in collecting Judaica led him to purchase the [Sabato Morais Ledger](#), one of the key documentations of the development of early Judaism in America. Over the course of many years he transcribed and annotated each entry in the Morais scrapbook and in 1992 donated it to Dropsie College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This work was dedicated to the memory of his father, "Israel Weiner, an unsung hero, and to America which allowed him and millions like him to live in a land of freedom and opportunity".

Marvin Weiner served from 1986 – 1993 as Chairman of the Library Committee of Dropsie College and served on the Board of Directors which oversaw the collection's transition to the Annenberg Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. For the following five years Marvin Weiner contributed to make possible annual seminars which brought together scholars from around the world to discuss and write about Near Eastern topics.

Another significant contribution to the Annenberg Center was the “needle in the haystack” where Marvin Weiner found, purchased and donated the missing first volume of the famous Bomberg Bible, printed in Venice c. 1521.

For their twenty-fifth reunion in 1963, the Class of 1938 decided to build a beautiful walk through the heart of the University of Pennsylvania campus. Marvin Weiner was chosen Class Agent to raise the funds. Due to an extensive letter writing campaign and personal contacts, Marvin Weiner was able to raise the money and Locust Walk stands proudly today in the heart of the campus.

In May of 2006, to commemorate the 300th birthday of Benjamin Franklin, Marvin Weiner donated his collection to Florida Atlantic University where it will be housed in its entirety. No collection of this kind existed in the Southeast United States and FAU committed to catalog, maintain, display and digitize it, giving it a prominent location on the fifth floor of the Wimberly Library. A critical reason for his decision is FAU's commitment to an extensive outreach program including regularly scheduled lectures, exhibits, and programming to involve the University faculty and students, area K-12 students, and the greater South Florida community.

Marvin Weiner considers Benjamin Franklin to be his mentor. In setting up this library and its programs, Marvin Weiner hopes to inspire and motivate many others to follow in the footsteps of Benjamin Franklin and the Founding Fathers and to understand and uphold the tradition of liberty and freedom in America. Marvin Weiner currently resides in Boca Raton, Florida and continues to collect.