

Mazal Tov ClaraGee Ziment on Your 100th Birthday

An Interview with ClaraGee by Olivia DelCuore



ClaraGee Ziment at 100!
Mazal tov and may you be blessed with
many years of health and joy

Temple Beth Miriam member ClaraGee Ziment was born in 1919 and is celebrating her 100th birthday this May. She has lived a very eventful life, and I had the pleasure to sit down with her as she reminisced with me on this occasion.

ClaraGee grew up in Piqua, Ohio. Her parents were both Russian immigrants who came to America at a young age. They did so because life in Russia was very dangerous for Jews. It was common for Jews to be killed at random without any penalty of law. Although ClaraGee's parents were both brought up as Orthodox Jews, the only organized Judaism in Piqua, Ohio was the Reform Judaism of the German Jews. Her childhood years were not some of her fondest memories, as she recalls being the only Jewish child in her class. The other children would throw stones at her and even the teachers would treat her differently.

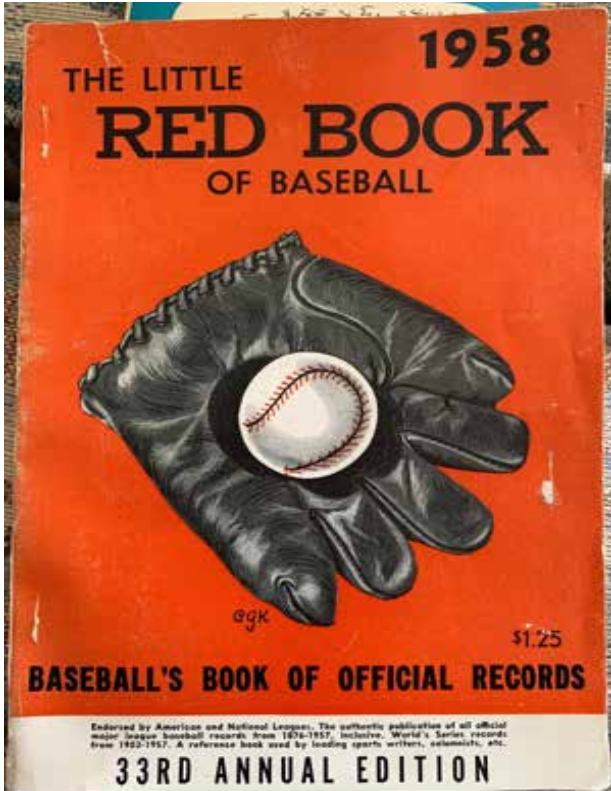
That did not hold ClaraGee back in any way. She would go on to attend the Art Academy of Cincinnati. Actually, she first applied and was accepted to another college, but they rescinded the offer when they learned she was Jewish. That actually was a blessing in disguise because the Art Academy of Cincinnati gave her a very strong foundation in Art Education and ClaraGee went on to become a very successful, accomplished artist. Additionally, it was there at the academy where ClaraGee met her first husband, Stan Stamaty. Together they shared a love for art, humor and laughter and learned a lot from each other in the 35 years they were married.

The start of ClaraGee's career began as a cartoonist when a teen magazine bought some of her pieces. Her career flourished; and her art was published and featured in many magazines and books. ClaraGee was even recognized in the book, *Who's Who in American Art*. She beams with pride as she notes that her son, Mark, followed in her footsteps, becoming a published comic book artist as well.

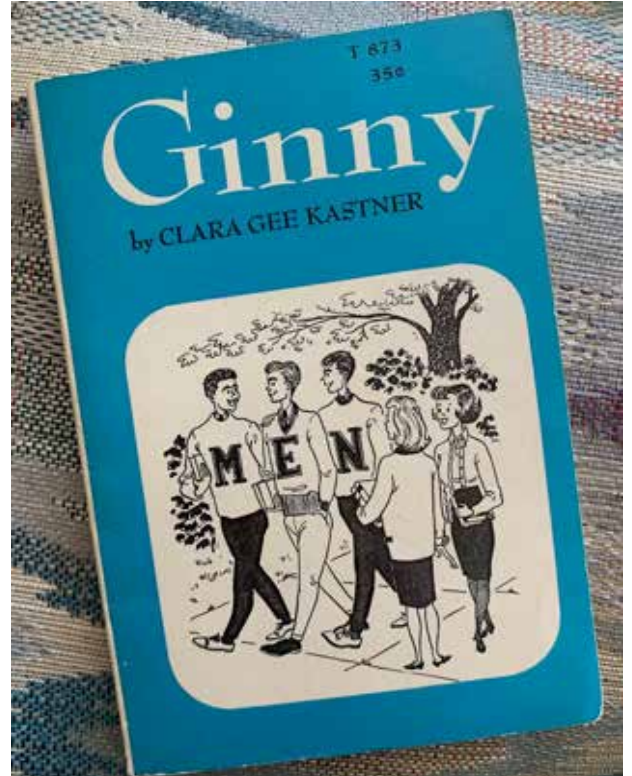
ClaraGee recalls watching Temple Beth Miriam as it was being built. She tells of how she would have to sneak in every Friday night to steal the service as she did not want to ask her husband to pay for a membership. However, ClaraGee has long since made up for those stolen hours by giving back to her community. She describes social action as being her passion, and has devoted countless hours to volunteering.

When her first husband passed away, ClaraGee spent much of her time at Temple Beth Miriam. She took every class, went to every service, and participated in every program that was offered. One of the classes was taught by Milt Ziment, who as it turned, would ask her to be Co-Chair of the Social Action Committee. Together they worked together for causes they were equally passionate about, they wrote newsletters together, went to seminars and conventions and found themselves in love. They have been married ever since, this year marking 35 years!

ClaraGee has certainly led an event filled life, and has impacted the world with her artwork and social action. She is looked upon with admiration and her contributions from the last century will carry forward to the generations of those in the future century.



ClaraGee designed the cover of this book for many years, but was only allowed to sign with her initials because of her gender



ClaraGee had all of her comics from You Magazine combined into this one amazing published book. This book sold for only \$0.35 at the time, but is now worth thousands of dollars.



A piece hanging on ClaraGee's wall from her Hebrew calligraphy collection