



## SUSAN EZRINE

**SUSAN "SUE" EZRINE** was born in Jamaica, Queens, New York in 1953, the daughter of Emanuel and Zelda Hartman Sprei. Sue received her nursing degree from the University of Maryland in 1975. She met her husband, Barry Ezrine, in a college physics class. The Ezrines moved to Lexington, Kentucky in 1977 for her husband's work in the horse industry, where he manages Patchen Wilkes Farm. When they first arrived in Kentucky, they did not get involved in the Jewish community right away. But it was important to the Ezrines that they raise their children, Rachel and Benjamin, in a Jewish home, so when they were born, the family joined Ohavay Zion Synagogue. "But my husband and I were both in non-traditional-- you know, sort of non-traditional Jewish professions. We didn't link up with a lot of Jewish families. And it's when we joined the Synagogue that Lexington really became a home."

Sue became increasingly active in the synagogue, first joining the Sisterhood, and finally becoming the synagogue president. She also participated in Hadasah, a Jewish women's organization, and in Chevra Kadisha, the traditional Jewish burial society. Sue credits her work in the latter organization with some of her most distinct and transformative Jewish experiences. "I think it's the sense of totally giving yourself when you know you're not getting anything in return. Um, and just a, a closeness to the ritual and things that have been done-- you know, this same thing has gone on for generations and generations. And the way we honor and treat our dead. And just being a part of that."

As her involvement in the synagogue deepened, Sue aspired to become a bat mitzvah, as she had not done so at the typical age of twelve or thirteen. In fact, so inspired was Sue that she prepared for and performed the ceremony twice, first under Rabbi Eric Slaton and then again under Rabbi Sharon Cohen. Sue also learned to serve as a *gabbai* at the synagogue, whose role is to help ensure the worship service proceeds appropriately, particularly during the times surrounding and during the Torah scroll reading.

"I think from what I've done in the past and what I continue to do, that I'm showing, you know, young women in at least the Conservative movement that they have options and can do anything within the congregation."

Sue and Barry raised their children on Patchen Wilkes Farm, where the family has lived since moving to Lexington in the 1970s. Looking back on her time in Lexington, she says,

"One of the things I love about Lexington and not just the Jewish community, but, but overall is sometimes if you're in a bigger city you tend to end up in a pocket or this little hole with basically people who are all like you... And being in Lexington, I feel like I've just had the opportunity to have such a diverse group of friends... living in Lexington in a smaller place also pushed me to be more involved with the Jewish community."