



## **ABOUT JNF BLUE BOX**

In the ongoing saga of the small Blue Box and the “Big” Jewish dream, the Blue Box has its honoured place, a proud symbol of Jewish identity.

Found in homes, synagogues and schools, it remains the most visible symbol of Jewish National Fund. Its symbolic importance and educational value remains firm and reaffirms our partnership with the land of Israel.

The Blue Box is a Zionist Symbol. The Blue Box is a symbol – a symbol of JNF and its effort to develop the land, plant parks and forests, prepare the ground for settlement and agriculture and build roads and water reservoirs. It is a symbol of the bond between Jew and Israel. It is also a vehicle for educating youngsters and involving them in these efforts in order to foster their identification with the Zionist enterprise and the State of Israel.

JNF’s collection box, the Blue Box (so called because of its blue and white colors) has been part and parcel of the Zionist Movement since its inception. Professor Zvi Hermann Schapira, whose concepts and suggestions led to the establishment of JNF at the 5th Zionist Congress in Basle on 19 Tevet, 5662 (December 28, 1901), had unveiled a tin collection box – a pushke – as early as 1884. Calling it the Keren Kayemeth Le’Israel box, he invited colleagues at a gathering of the “Zion Association” to contribute to the redemption of the land and Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel.

Upon JNF’s establishment, a bank clerk by the name of Haim Kleinman from Nadvorna, Galicia placed a Blue Box marked Keren Le’umit (National Fund) in his office. He suggested that such a box be placed in every Jewish home and that everyone contribute to the newly created national fund at every possible opportunity. The idea had been well rooted in Jewish tradition for hundreds of years. The proceeds of the Blue Box were slated for the redemption of the land itself, and it was distributed in Jewish communities throughout the world.

The very act of collecting funds in a special box aroused in Jews everywhere a longing for the tastes and fragrances of Eretz Israel and strengthened their yearning for the homeland.

The first Blue Boxes were produced in 1904. One of these was placed by Theodor Herzl in his study (and can still be seen in Herzl’s Room in Jerusalem). Their impact was immediate, not only in terms of the money they generated but as an expression of the deep bond between Diaspora Jewry and the small Jewish community and the soil of Eretz Israel. In the thirties, for example, about one million JNF Blue Boxes were to be found in Jewish homes around the country.

**Place a Blue Box in your home, at work, in school, in community centres – it always has its honoured place!**