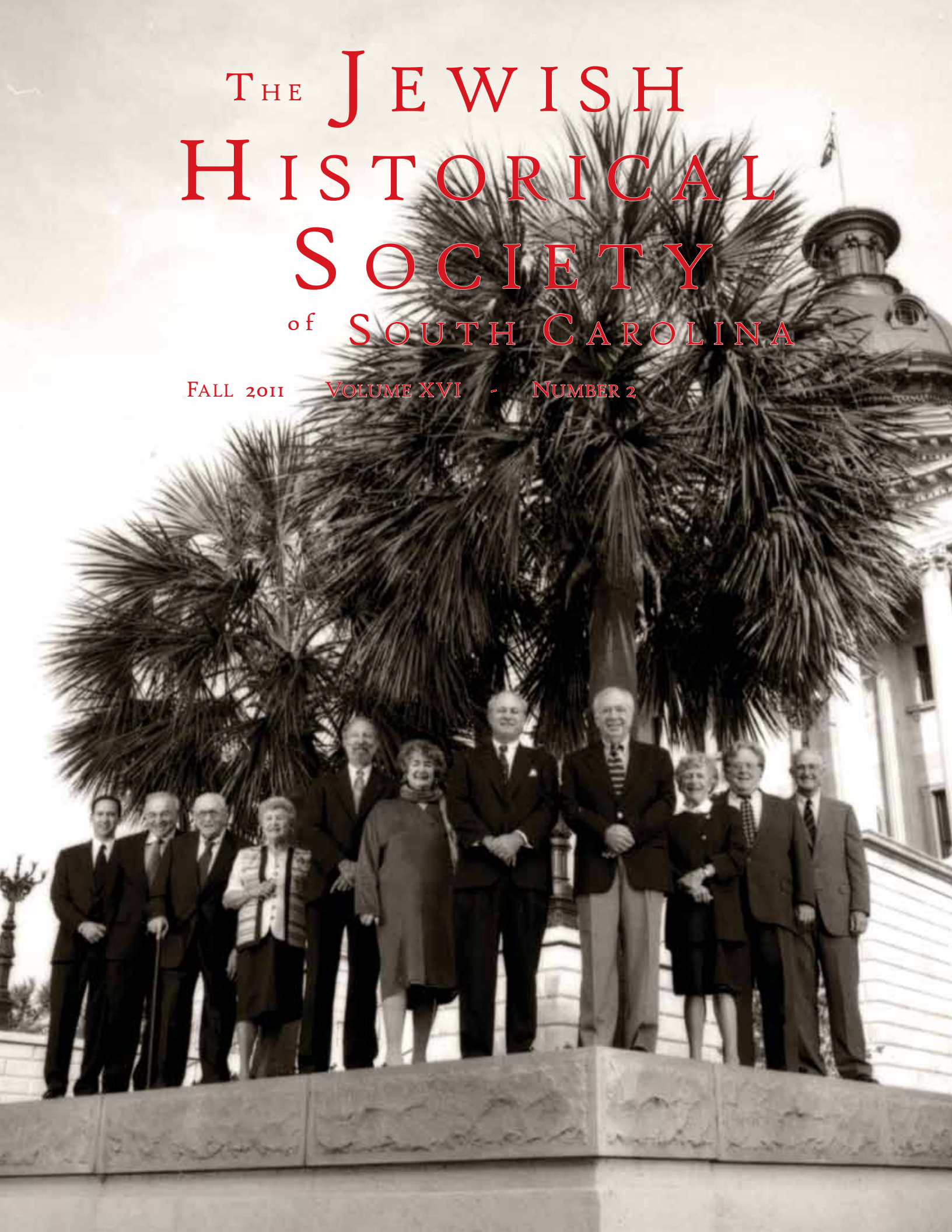


THE JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY of SOUTH CAROLINA

FALL 2011 VOLUME XVI - NUMBER 2





Ann Meddin Hellman
President



The Jewish Historical
Society of South Carolina
Newsletter is published
twice a year.

Dale Rosengarten, editor
Alyssa Neely, asst. editor
Joseph Rubin, designer

www.jhssc.org

In this issue

Letter from the President	3
Ann Meddin Hellman	
Sights, Sounds, and Stories of the Jewish South	4
Dale Rosengarten	
This coming October the Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina joins the Southern Jewish Historical Society for a stimulating weekend on the University of South Carolina campus in Columbia. Read what's in store for conference participants—tours, lectures, music, film, library and museum exhibitions, and more.	
USC Pulls Out All the Stops for Conference Weekend	5
Four special exhibitions will be on display at the University of South Carolina this fall in conjunction with the conference. McKissick Museum will host <i>Palmetto Jews</i> , a revival of Bill Aron's 2000 photo essay, and the new Ernest F. Hollings Library will offer selections from three university archives, showcasing the lives of leading Jewish politicians and merchants, historic Haggadot, and even Joseph Heller's typewriter.	
Conference Participants	7
Schedule of Events	8
Registration Form	10
Capital City Jews: A Legacy of Leadership	11
Alyssa Neely	
From the colonial era forward, Jewish Columbians have made their mark on the city. Beginning with revolutionary leader Francis Salvador in neighboring Ninety Six District, through current city councilwoman Belinda Gergel, Jews have occupied prominent positions in politics, business, and society at large.	
Remembering My Dad, Max Heller	14
Susan Heller Moses	
Max Moses Heller changed the face of his adopted city of Greenville. Arriving as a refugee from Nazi terror, he rose from stock boy to vice president of Piedmont Shirt Company, married the beautiful Trude Schönthal, started his own business and, in 1971, was elected mayor of the city. His children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren remember him as a family man and mentor, fun-loving and full of love. The state of South Carolina mourns his death.	

On the cover:

Jewish legislators and mayors at the State House, Columbia, South Carolina, 2000. Left to right: Joel Lourie (House 1999–2004, Senate 2005–present), Isadore E. Lourie (House 1965–72, Senate 1973–92), Hyman Rubin (Columbia City Council 1952–66, mayor pro tem 1956–66, Senate 1967–84), Sylvia Dreyfus (House 1977–78), David Taub (mayor of Beaufort 1990–99), Irene Krugman Rudnick (House 1973–78, 1981–84, 1987–92), Arnold Goodstein (House 1971–74, Senate 1975–80), Richard Moses (mayor of Sumter 1972–76), Harriet Keyserling (House 1977–92), Billy Keyserling (House 1993–96, mayor of Beaufort 2008 to present), Leonard Krawcheck (House 1967–70). Photo: Bill Aron.

Letter from the President

I cannot believe my term as president of the Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina is coming to an end. It seems like yesterday when I accepted the position to lead this fantastic organization. I could not have done it without the help of the society's board and officers—Vice Presidents Susan Daniel Altman, Joe Wachter, and Phil Greenberg, Treasurer David J. Cohen, and Secretary Rachel Gordin Barnett. Executive Director Marty Perlmutter and Administrator Enid Idelsohn, along with Dale Rosengarten and her staff at Addlestone Library, have made it possible for us to fulfill our mission to promote “the study and preservation of the history and culture of the Jews of South Carolina.”

Over the past two years we have broadened and strengthened our network across the state. In May 2010 in Bluffton, with over 100 people in attendance, we applauded the birth and phenomenal growth of Temple Oseh Shalom. In November we were given a warm welcome at B'nai Israel in Anderson, where we announced our intention to erect an historical marker in honor of the congregation's 100th anniversary.

This past May, along with the College of Charleston's Jewish Studies Program, we co-sponsored a conference on “Jews, Slavery, and the Civil War.” The meeting began with a boat ride to Fort Sumter and the screening of a new documentary, *Jewish Soldiers in Blue and Grey*. For two days Arnold Hall was packed with people listening to presentations and lively debate among top historians of American Jewish history. Professor Jonathan Sarna's keynote speech on General Ulysses S. Grant, open to the public, drew an overflow crowd to the sanctuary of Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim.

In the centerfold of this newsletter, you will find the program for another enticing conference, “Sights, Sounds, and Stories of the Jewish South,” to be held this coming October 27–30th on the beautiful campus of the University

of South Carolina in Columbia. In partnership with the Southern Jewish Historical Society and with support from USC's Jewish Studies Program, Ernest F. Hollings Special Collections Library, School of Music, South Caroliniana Library, and McKissick Museum, and from the law firm Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP, we are able to offer three days of exciting activities and deluxe accommodations. Hats off to program co-chairs Dale Rosengarten and Phyllis Leffler and host committee chair Rachel Barnett for designing and coordinating a wonderful weekend.

JHSSC's board has accepted the nomination of two new members, Fred Glickman from Lake Wylie and Billy Keyserling from Beaufort. We also have agreed to sponsor an historical marker at Adath Yeshurun in Aiken, in celebration of the congregation's 90th year. Society members are urged to suggest other sites for us to consider as candidates for historical markers.


On behalf of my executive board, I would like to thank all who have made JHSSC the vital organization that it is. Special thanks to our Pillars whose commitment of \$1,000 a year for five years provides much of our operating budget. We need more of you!

To register for the October conference, read back issues of the newsletter, view photographs of JHSSC events, or sign up to work on our cemetery survey, go to our site at www.jhssc.org.

While I am stepping down as president, I will continue to work as an active member and

past president of the society, and as your webmaster. I look forward to seeing you in Columbia in October when we will usher in our new officers and board.

Fondly,



Ann Meddin Hellman
hellmana@bellsouth.net

Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina Slate of Officers for 2011–2013

President

Rachel G. Barnett, Columbia

Vice-President of Fund-Raising and Membership

Phillip Greenberg, Florence

Vice-President of Education and Publications

Burnet Mendelsohn, Charleston

Vice-President of Archives and Historical Sites

David Draisen, Anderson

Treasurer

David J. Cohen, Charleston

Secretary

Don Kantor, Okatie

Archivist

Steve Savitz, Columbia

Photos by Bill Aron, 2000



Sights, Sounds, and Stories

by Dale Rosengarten

This fall JHSSC joins with the Southern Jewish Historical Society to present a weekend of scholarship, photography, film, and music on the beautiful University of South Carolina campus in Columbia. With support from USC's Jewish Studies Program, Ernest F. Hollings Special Collections Library, School of Music, McKissick Museum, and South Caroliniana Library, we have designed a three-day immersion in the sights, sounds, and stories of the Jewish South.

The conference will kick off on Friday, October 28th, with a bus trip to Sumter, one of South Carolina's earliest Jewish settlements. There we will see Temple Sinai's spectacular stained glass windows, tour the Sumter County Museum, and visit the Levi family's historic home and garden.

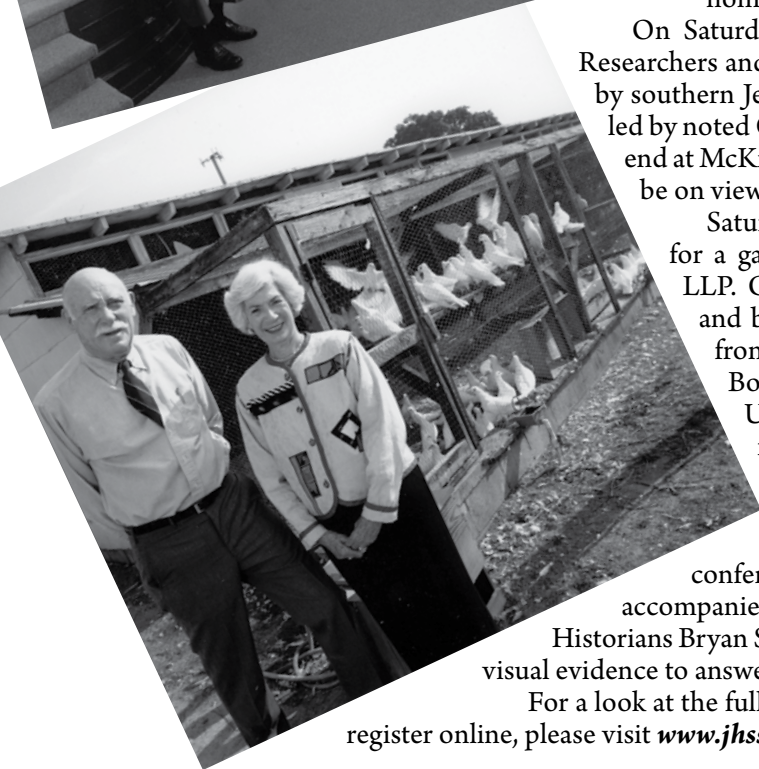
On Saturday, panel sessions will convene in USC's new Hollings Library. Researchers and writers from near and far will explore the challenging terrain trod by southern Jews. The afternoon will continue with a bus tour of the capital city led by noted Columbia historians Belinda and Richard Gergel. The excursion will end at McKissick Museum, where Bill Aron's photo exhibition *Palmetto Jews* will be on view on the first and second floors.

Saturday evening attendees are invited to return to the Hollings Library for a gala reception sponsored by Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP. Guests can take behind-the-scenes tours led by the Hollings staff and browse on their own through exhibits of archival material selected from South Carolina Political Collections, the Irvin Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, and the South Caroliniana Library at USC, and from Furman University's Special Collections. Video clips from *Carvalho's Journey*, a documentary about the great 19th-century painter and photographer, Solomon Nunes Carvalho, will also be on view.

Sunday the venue switches to USC's School of Music for the conference finale. Composer Meira Warshauer will perform original work, accompanied by cellist Robert Jesselson and mezzo-soprano Janet Hopkins.

Historians Bryan Stone and Jerrod Tanny will wrap up the morning by showing audio-visual evidence to answer the serious question, "What's so funny about southern Jews?"

For a look at the full conference schedule and registration form, turn to pages 8–10. To register online, please visit www.jhssc.org/events.





ries of the Jewish South

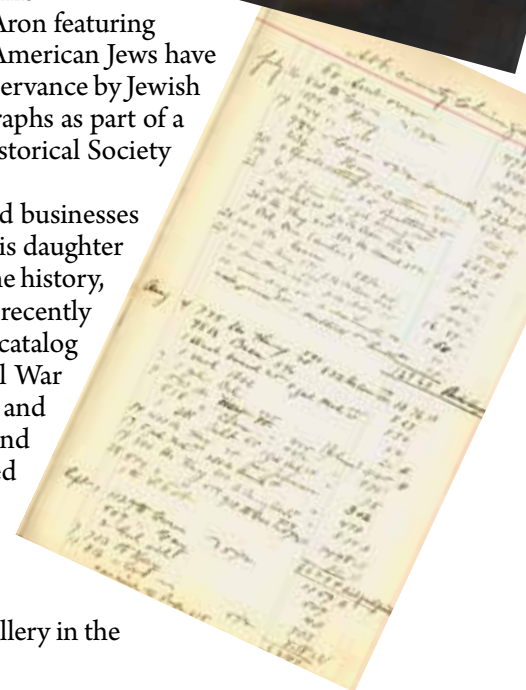
USC Pulls Out All the Stops for Conference Weekend

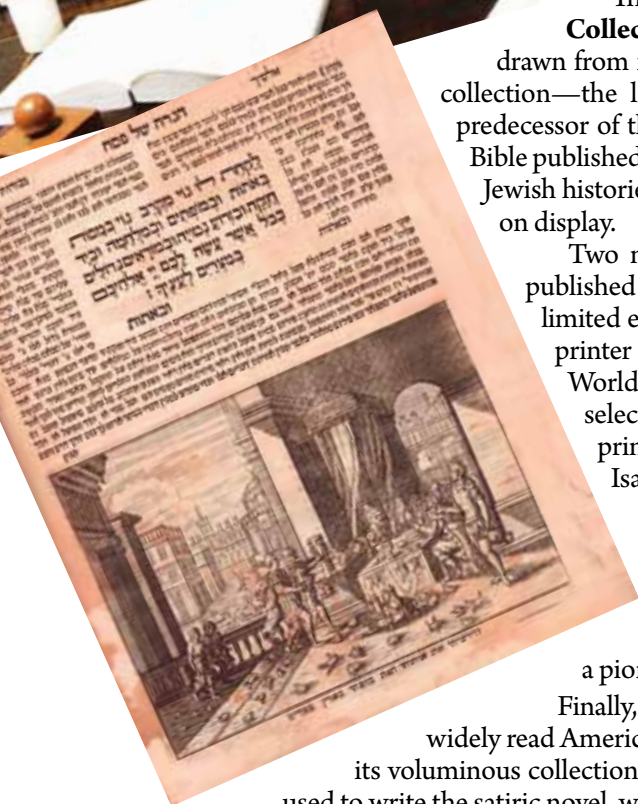
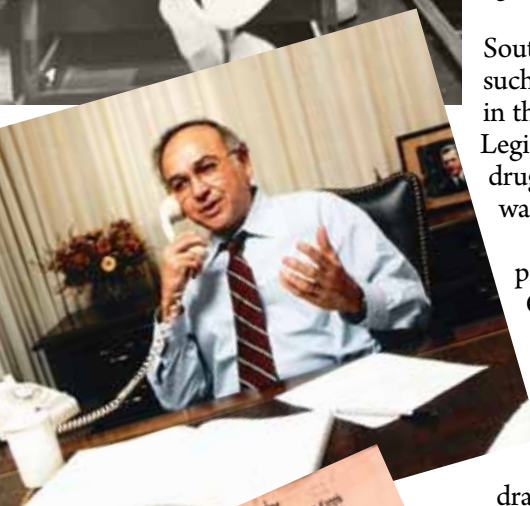
Not one, not two, not three, but four special exhibitions will be on display on the University of South Carolina campus this fall to complement the upcoming joint conference. This abundance of images, artifacts, and archival materials is drawn from the holdings of McKissick Museum, the South Caroliniana Library, and the South Carolina Political Collections and Irvin Rare Books and Special Collections departments housed at the new Ernest F. Hollings Library. Thanks to Jane Przybysz, Allen Stokes, Herbert Hartsook, and Jeffrey Makala, here is a preview of what's happening this fall.

In 2002, the national traveling exhibition *A Portion of the People: Three Hundred Years of Southern Jewish Life* changed popular conceptions about the South's significance in American Jewish history. Created by a six-year collaboration among the Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina, the Jewish Heritage Collection and the Yaschik/Arnold Jewish Studies Program at the College of Charleston, and McKissick Museum at USC, this landmark exhibition and catalog included a photo essay by acclaimed photographer Bill Aron featuring images of contemporary Jewish life across the state. *Palmetto Jews* reflects the prosperity American Jews have enjoyed since World War II and documents the trend toward more traditional religious observance by Jewish South Carolinians. In October 2011, **McKissick Museum** will mount Bill Aron's photographs as part of a university-wide effort to set the scene for the joint conference of the Southern Jewish Historical Society and JHSSC.

Selections from the **South Caroliniana Library** (SCL) relating to Jewish families and businesses will be on display in the Hollings Library. Businessman and journalist August Kohn and his daughter Helen Kohn Hennig assembled a library of over 4,000 books and pamphlets dealing with the history, literature, and culture of South Carolina from the 18th to the 20th centuries. SCL has recently published a catalog of the Kohn collection and will exhibit choice titles and offer the catalog for sale. Jewish mercantile businesses established across South Carolina before the Civil War and for decades afterwards will be represented by the papers of two major firms. Simon and Leopold Strauss operated as wholesale grocers and commission merchants in Charleston and Bennettsville, employing Samuel Iseman as a traveling salesman. Wolf Rosenberg established Rosenberg & Co. in Abbeville after moving there from Chester in 1872. Rosenberg's partner, G. A. Visanska, was a longtime resident of the upcountry town. Wolf Rosenberg sold his interest in the company to his cousin Philip in 1877 and returned to his native Poland. The business subsequently operated under the name P. Rosenberg & Co.

From September 1 to November 30th, **South Carolina Political Collections**, in its gallery in the





Hollings Special Collections Library, will present an exhibition entitled *When Vision and Strength Were Needed: Jewish Leaders in South Carolina Government*, featuring the collections of Sol Blatt, Isadore Lourie, and Harriet Keyserling. Each of these three leaders left rich collections of personal papers documenting their lives, their impact on South Carolina, and their religion.

The exhibit title is taken from remarks made by former governor Richard Riley on the occasion of Lourie's 1992 retirement from the state senate. Riley noted, "Much of the major legislative accomplishments of the past quarter century is due to the leadership and caring of Isadore Lourie. He's been there, with his colleagues, when vision and strength were needed."

Sol Blatt (1895–1986) represented Barnwell County in the South Carolina House of Representatives from 1933 to 1986, and served as Speaker from 1935 to 1946 and 1951 to 1973, when he gave up the office and was immediately named Speaker Emeritus. As Speaker, Blatt used his power to help modernize state government and lead South Carolina's transition from a chiefly agricultural economy to a far more industrial one.

Isadore Lourie (1932–2003) represented Richland County in the South Carolina General Assembly from 1965 to 1992. He authored such legislation as the Freedom of Information Act and bills resulting in the creation of the Commissions on Aging and the Blind and the Legislative Audit Council, the exemption of sales taxes on prescription drugs, and the establishment of public kindergartens. Lourie also was a founder of the Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina.

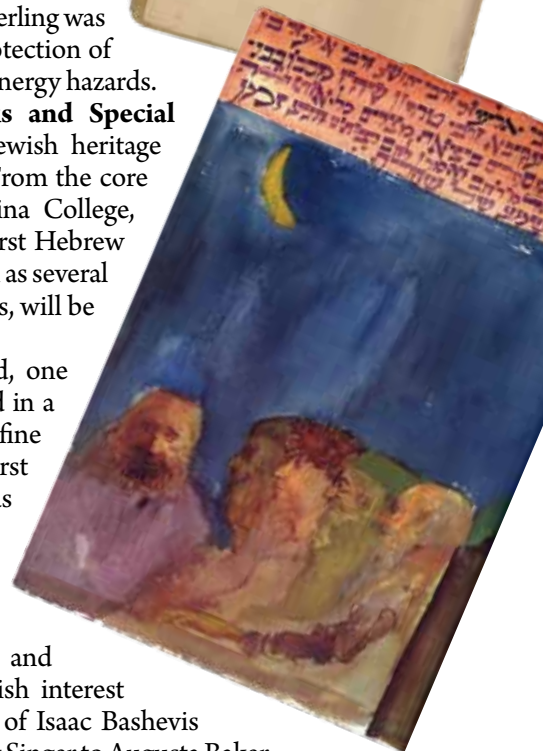
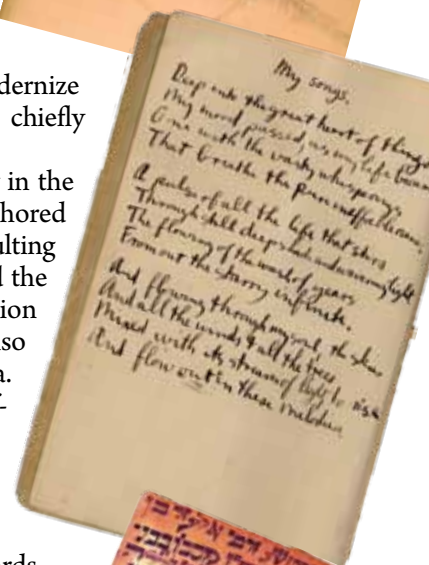
Harriet Keyserling (1922–2010), a Democrat and self-proclaimed "New York Jewish liberal," represented Beaufort County in the South Carolina House of Representatives from 1977 until her retirement in 1992. Mrs. Keyserling was a tireless advocate of education, the arts, and protection of the environment from nuclear waste and other energy hazards.

The **Irvin Department of Rare Books and Special Collections** will exhibit works relating to Jewish heritage drawn from its many collections and subject areas. From the core collection—the library of the antebellum South Carolina College, predecessor of the University of South Carolina—the first Hebrew Bible published in America (Philadelphia, 1814), as well as several Jewish histories dating from the 17th and 18th centuries, will be on display.

Two notable Haggadot will also be exhibited, one published in Amsterdam in 1781, and one created in a limited edition in 1974 by noted book artist and fine printer Leonard Baskin. From its extensive First World War collections, the department has selected original art, manuscripts, and rare printed editions by British poet and artist Isaac Rosenberg.

The Augusta Baker Collection of African American children's literature and folklore includes many works of Jewish interest and will be represented by a volume of Isaac Bashevis Singer's folktales originally presented by Singer to Augusta Baker, a pioneering children's librarian and storyteller.

Finally, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*, the most widely read American novel of the post-World War II period, the library will display selections from its voluminous collection of Heller's papers, including manuscripts, photographs, and the very typewriter used to write the satiric novel, which, in the words of a *New Yorker* magazine review, was "shouted onto paper."



SJHS/JHSSC Conference Participants

Rachel Bergstein is a Ph.D. candidate in Modern Jewish History at Yale University, now working on her dissertation, "From Leo Frank to Civil Rights: Jews in the New South City, 1915–1968."

Joseph Butwin is a professor of English at the University of Washington, where he has taught since 1970. He has published studies of Victorian England and has written, in collaboration with his mother, Frances Mazo Butwin, a critical biography of Sholom Aleichem (Boston, 1978). His essay "Tevye on King Street" appeared in *American Jewish History* in 2007.

Marni Davis teaches at Georgia State University in Atlanta, where she specializes in modern Jewish history and the history of ethnicity and immigration in the United States. Her book *Jews and Booze: Becoming American in the Age of Prohibition* is forthcoming from New York University Press.

Catherine R. Eskin is an associate professor of English at Florida Southern College and the archivist for Temple Emanuel, a Conservative synagogue founded in 1932 in Lakeland, Florida. Active in early modern English literature pedagogies and, more recently, non-fiction writing, her research interests include antisemitism, social relationships, and the politics of the American South.

Robert Gillette was a public school educator for 40 years. Nationally recognized for his high school program OTO, Opportunities to Teach Ourselves, in Fairfield, Connecticut, he also has created curricula in Jewish education. His book *The Virginia Plan: William B. Thalhimer and a Rescue from Nazi Germany* was published by the History Press in 2011.

Janet Hopkins, assistant professor of voice at the University of South Carolina, is a 16-year veteran of the Metropolitan Opera. A mezzo-soprano, she recently performed the Verdi Requiem at the Kennedy Center in Tulsa, Minnesota, in an innovative version that links the masterpiece to its defiant performance by the imprisoned musicians of Theresienstadt.

Robert Jesselson is a Carolina Distinguished Professor at the University of South Carolina where he teaches cello and plays in the American Arts Trio. He has performed in recital and with orchestras on four continents, and in music festivals in Nice, Granada, Santiago, Spoleto, Aspen, and the Grand Tetons.

Allen Krause received his ordination, master's degree, and later an honorary doctorate from Hebrew Union College and has done graduate work in American history at the University of Chicago, the University of California, Berkeley, and Harvard University. He served as senior rabbi at Temple Beth El of South Orange County from 1984 to his retirement in 2008. A part-time lecturer at the State University of California since 1972, he is working on a book about the role Southern rabbis played in the civil rights movement, the subject of his master's thesis.

Steve Rivo is an award-winning filmmaker who has produced, directed, and written documentaries for PBS, MTV, TruTV/Court TV, Discovery Channel, VH1, and independently. Selected credits include co-producer of the Emmy and DuPont award-winning PBS series *New York: A Documentary Film* (directed by Ric Burns) and producer of two of Burns's Emmy-winning films for PBS's *American Experience* series, *Eugene O'Neill* and *Ansel Adams*.

Hyman Rubin III is associate professor of history at Columbia College, SC, where he has taught for 12 years. A native of Columbia, he graduated from Yale University with a B.A. in history and received his Ph.D. from Emory University in U.S. history with an emphasis on the American South. His research focus is on Reconstruction politics, and his book *South Carolina Scalawags* was published in 2006 by the University of South Carolina Press.

Edward S. Shapiro is professor of history emeritus at Seton Hall University and author of *A Time for Healing: American Jews Since World War II*, *Crown Heights: Blacks, Jews, and the Brooklyn Riot of 1991*, and *We Are Many: Reflections on American Jewish History and Identity*.

Ellen Solomon holds an Ed.D. from Harvard University and has taught writing and social science at Harvard and Bard College. With co-author Victoria Steinitz, she created portraits of American adolescents for *Starting Out: Class and Community in the Lives of Working-Class Youth*, which won the 1986 Robert Park award.

Bryan Edward Stone is author of *The Chosen Folks: Jews on the Frontiers of Texas*, winner of SJHS's best book award for 2011. He is an associate professor of history at Del Mar College in Corpus Christi, Texas, and a visiting professor at the Schusterman Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Texas at Austin.

Jarrold Tanny, assistant professor of history at the University of North Carolina/Wilmington, received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley, focusing on Russian-Jewish history. His forthcoming book *City of Rogues and Schnorrers* examines how the city of Odessa was mythologized as a Jewish city of sin, celebrated and vilified for its Jewish gangsters, pimps, bawdy musicians, and comedians.

Meira Warshauer was born in Wilmington, NC, and lives in Columbia, SC. Her southern Jewish roots informed her score for the documentary *Land of Promise: The Jews of South Carolina* and large scale compositions *Shacharit* (Morning Service) and *Ahavah* (Love), released on the Albany Records CD *Streams in the Desert*. Recipient of JHSSC's first Arts and Cultural Achievement Award, Warshauer has taught at Columbia College, the University of South Carolina, and Coastal Carolina University.

Captions clockwise from the lower left: Pages 4 and 5 – Wendell Levi, Jr. and Patti Levi Barnett, Palmetto Pigeon Plant, Sumter – Robert A. Moses, Temple Sinai, Sumter – Columbia Jewish Day School, Beth Shalom Synagogue – Jeff Zaglin, Greenville Army and Navy Store – Hy Brand, Conestee Mill – Tree of Life, Columbia – Group photo, front row: Charles C. Wilson, August and Irene Kohn, back row: unknown, Mrs. and Mr. Purdy – Rosenberg Mercantile Company account with Abbeville County chain gang, 1897. Page 6 – Amsterdam Haggadah, 1781 – SC Senator Isadore Lourie – Speaker of the SC House of Representatives Solomon Blatt, Sr. – Isaac Rosenberg's self-portrait and manuscript poem – "The Rabbis in B'nai Brak" from Leonard Baskin's Haggadah, 1974.

Sights, Sounds, and Stories

Joint Conference of the Southern Jewish Historical Society

With support from the University of South Carolina's Jewish Studies Program, the University of South Carolina School of Music, South Caroliniana Library, and McKissick Deane Library

Thursday, October 27th

Arrivals/Registration – Inn at USC (www.innatusc.com), 1619 Pendleton Street, Columbia, SC

6:30 P.M. SJHS Board – dinner at the home of Richard and Belinda Gergel, followed by meeting at the Inn

Friday, October 28th

8:00 A.M. Breakfast – Inn at USC (included in room rate)

DAY TRIP TO SUMTER, SOUTH CAROLINA

9:00 Buses depart for Sumter
 10:00 Temple Sinai – Talk and tour of the sanctuary and its spectacular stained glass windows
 by Elizabeth Moses and Robert A. Moses
 Sumter County Museum – Presentation of the museum's Jewish collections
 Home and garden tour led by Dr. Wendell and Katie Levi
 4:00 P.M. Buses return to Columbia
 6:00 Dinner at Tree of Life
 7:30 Shabbat service, Tree of Life
 Rabbi Daniel Sherman

Saturday, October 29th

8:00 A.M. Breakfast – Inn at USC (included in room rate)

PANEL SESSIONS

Ernest F. Hollings Special Collections Library (enter through Thomas Cooper Library)

University of South Carolina, 1322 Greene Street, Columbia, SC

9:00 TOLERANCE AND TENSIONS – Moderator: Ellen M. Umansky
 Allen Krause The Hazan, the Minister, and the Merchant: A 177-Year-Old Lesson from Charleston, SC
 Hyman Rubin III South Carolina's Jewish Republicans during Radical Reconstruction
 Marni Davis Allies or Adversaries? Jewish and Irish Immigrants in the New South
 Rachel R. Bergstein A Tale of Two Rabbis: How David Marx and Tobias Geffen Imagined Judaism in the South

11:00 THE TOPOGRAPHY OF EXCLUSION – Moderator: Lauren L. Sklaroff
 Robert Gillette The Virginia Plan: William B. Thalhimer and the Resettlement of German Refugees
 Edward S. Shapiro Fighting the War: Southern Jewish Chaplains and the Evolution of American Jewish Identity during World War II
 Catherine R. Eskin Jewish Sacred Space in a "City of Churches": Temple Emanuel in Lakeland, Florida

12:30 P.M. Lunch

Stories of the Jewish South

Southern Jewish Historical Society and Society of South Carolina

Studies Program, Ernest F. Hollings Special Collections Library,
McKissick Museum, and Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP

- 1:15 HISTORY AND MEMORY – Moderator: Dale Rosengarten
Joseph Butwin Old Countries: A Jewish Writer in the Southern Diaspora
Ellen Solomon Creating Ruchel Solomon: The Imaginatively Constructed Individual
- 3:00 CAPITAL CITY BUS TOUR led by Richard and Belinda Gergel
Big Apple, Beth Shalom's first synagogue – Holocaust monument, Memorial Park –
Hebrew Benevolent Society Cemetery
- 4:30 Open house at McKissick Museum – Bill Aron's *Palmetto Jews*
- 6:00 Reception – Hollings Library
Guided “behind the scenes” tours on the half-hour, beginning at 5:30pm
Exhibits: papers and campaign memorabilia of Isadore Lourie, Harriet Keyserling, and Sol Blatt
from South Carolina Political Collections; Judaica and rare books from Hollings Special
Collections and South Caroliniana Libraries; Max Heller papers from Furman University's
Special Collections and Archives
Preview screening of selections from *Carvalho's Journey*, a new PBS documentary film, presented by
producer/director Steve Rivo
- 7:30 Dinner on your own

Sunday, October 30th

- 8:30 A.M. Breakfast – Inn at USC (included in room rate)
Concurrent (both at the Inn): SJHS membership meeting, JHSSC board meeting

Recital Hall, School of Music

University of South Carolina, 813 Assembly Street, room 206, Columbia, SC

- 10:00 SOUNDS OF THE JEWISH SOUTH:
THE MUSIC OF COMPOSER MEIRA WARSHAUER – Moderator: Phyllis Leffler
Performance and panel – Meira Warshauer, piano, Robert Jesselson, cello, and Janet Hopkins, mezzo-soprano
- 11:30 WHAT'S SO FUNNY ABOUT SOUTHERN JEWS?
PERFORMANCE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE TRADITION – Moderator: Eli N. Evans
Bryan E. Stone Havah Nagilah, Texas-Style: Christian Zionism and the Cornerstone Church
Jarrod Tanny From the Borscht Belt to the B'nei Mississippi: Jewish Humor's Encounter with the South
- 12:30 P.M. Box lunch and adjourn

SIGHTS, SOUNDS, AND STORIES OF THE JEWISH SOUTH
Joint Annual Conference
Southern Jewish Historical Society & Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina
October 27–30, 2011 Columbia, SC

Registration deadline is October 15, 2011

Last Name _____ First _____
 Spouse/Friend _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ E-mail _____
 Name(s) on name tags _____

Please make reservations for the following:

Registration for **FULL program including all meals**: \$150 per person \$ _____

Registration for optional tour to Sumter, SC: \$50.00 per person \$ _____

Separate attendance at select events:

Saturday events including evening reception: \$100.00 per person \$ _____

Saturday evening program only: \$50.00 per person \$ _____

Sunday program with lunch: \$50.00 per person \$ _____

JHSSC and/or SJHS membership dues (see below) \$ _____

TOTAL PAYMENT INCLUDED \$ _____

Register online at www.jhssc.org/events

with Visa or MasterCard
 or by check payable to JHSSC
 Yaschik/Arnold Jewish Studies Center
 College of Charleston
 Charleston, SC 29424

Conference hotel: Inn at USC

1619 Pendleton Street, Columbia, SC 29201
 Phone 803.779.7779 – mention SJHS / JHSSC
 Room rates: \$115.00 per night plus tax
 Rate includes breakfast, parking, Internet
Prices valid until September 27, 2011

Questions:

Enid Idelsohn Email: IdelsohnE@cofc.edu
 phone: 843.953.3918 fax: 843.953.7624

*Kosher-style meals will be served. If you prefer
 strictly kosher meals, please check here.*

☐

You must be a member of either JHSSC or SJHS to attend.

JHSSC dues for 2012

_____ Individual / Family membership \$36

_____ Joint membership in *both* JHSSC and SJHS \$70

_____ Friend \$200

_____ Sponsor \$350

_____ Founding patron \$1,000

_____ Pillar (\$1,000/yearly / 5 years) \$1,000

_____ Foundational pillar (\$2,000 yearly / 5 years) \$2,000

SJHS dues for 2012

_____ General member \$36

_____ Student (individual only) \$15

_____ Patron / Institutional \$50

_____ Century Club \$100

_____ Cedar \$500

_____ Sycamore \$1,000

_____ Magnolia \$2,500

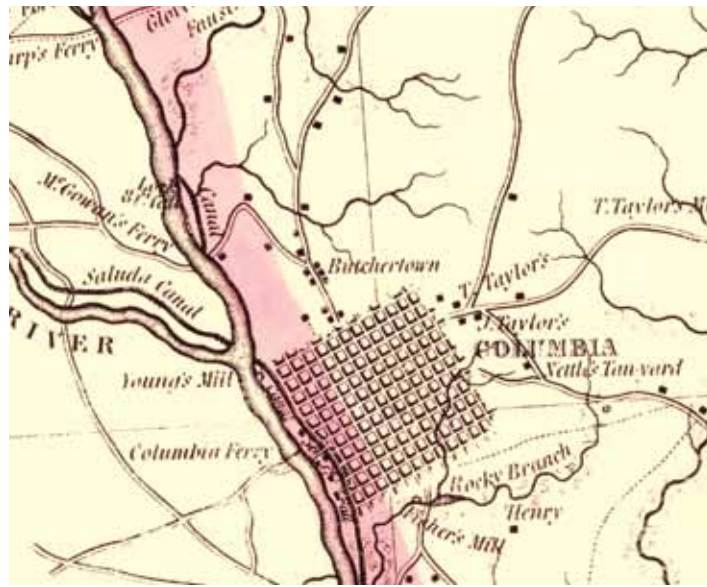
Capital City Jews: A Legacy of Leadership

by Alyssa Neely

Europeans began occupying South Carolina's backcountry in the 1730s, lured by the colonial government's offer of 50 acres to anyone who would move to the interior. The rolling hills and rivers of the midlands promised newcomers land for farming and water power for milling. Jews were among the region's earliest colonial settlers and, from the era of the American Revolution onward, have occupied prominent positions in society and politics. Francis Salvador of London arrived in South Carolina late in 1773 and established an indigo plantation in Ninety Six, the colony's second most populous district. In September 1774, he placed an ad in the *South Carolina and American General Gazette* for an overseer to "look after about thirty slaves." A devoted Patriot, he was elected to the First and Second Provincial Congresses and, when war broke out, joined the local militia. Less than three years after making South Carolina his home, Salvador was killed in an ambush by Tories and Cherokees. Besides being the first professing Jew to serve in a legislative assembly in America, he was the first Jew known to have given his life to the revolutionary cause.

In 1786, when Columbia was designated the state capital, seven Jewish men from Charleston were among the first to invest in town lots. In 1790, the first federal census listed nearly a dozen men in the city with Jewish-sounding surnames, such as Jacobs, Meyers, and Lyons. Centrally located and the seat of state government, the new capital became a bustling crossroads and also the site of South Carolina College, the future University of South Carolina, founded in 1801 and ready for students four years later. The first Jewish students to receive their diplomas were Franklin J. Moses, Sr. (1823), Joseph Lyons (1832), and David Camden DeLeon (1833).

Chapman Levy, a Camden native, was admitted to the Columbia bar in 1806. Legislator, soldier, landowner, proprietor of a brickyard, Mason, and expert on the practice of dueling, Levy



Map of Columbia from Robert Mills's Atlas of the State of South Carolina, 1825. Special Collections, College of Charleston.

is listed as a founding member of the Camden Protestant Episcopal Church, though it is unclear if he converted to Christianity. Records reveal that Levy owned 31 slaves in 1820, more than any other person of Jewish descent in the state. In 1816, one of his enslaved workers, March, was found guilty of "attempting to raise an insurrection" in Camden. March was condemned, with six other slaves, to be "hanged by the neck" for his treachery.

Levy lived in Columbia in the 1820s, but returned to his hometown later that decade. In the mid-1830s, he resettled in Mississippi, where he appears

to have prospered. According to Edward Sanders, a descendant of Levy slaves, he purchased approximately 40 Negroes from a single buyer for more than \$30,000. A year later, he sold almost all of them, with the exception of two families, back to the original owner. He made provisions for at least one of those families that the parents and children not be separated.

The Jewish population of Columbia grew with the general populace; by 1830, an estimated 70 Jews were among its residents. Fortunes were made and quickly lost in the capital, now struggling to become a commercial hub. Jews, generally well accepted, were active in civic affairs. They served in the Richland Volunteer Rifle Company, joined the Masons, and acted as bank officers. While credit reports reveal threads of discriminatory stereotyping running through the antebellum years, Jews nevertheless achieved high positions in local politics. In 1827, Judah Barrett became the first Jew in Columbia to hold an elected post. He served as warden, or city councilman, for two terms, before succumbing to debt and moving to New Orleans.

Dr. Mordecai Hendricks DeLeon held the intendant, or mayoral, post for three consecutive terms starting in 1833. He was the descendant of prestigious families on both sides. His father, Jacob DeLeon, was born into a far-flung Sephardic clan, with roots in Spain and the Netherlands. Jacob grew up in Spanish Town,



Miniature portrait of Chapman Levy (1787–1849), artist unknown, ca. 1835. Gift of Thomas W. Crockett in honor of Loraine Crockett. Special Collections, College of Charleston.

Jamaica, then in 1789 married Hannah Hendricks of New York, daughter of a successful shipping family that specialized in copper. After living for a time in Kingston and New York, the DeLeons settled in Charleston, South Carolina, and in the early 1820s moved to Columbia. There Mordecai oversaw two medical facilities, an asylum for the mentally ill and a general hospital that maintained wards for blacks as well as whites. His wife, Rebecca Lopez DeLeon, headed the Ladies Benevolent Society, whose members included Columbia's social elite.

Henry Lyons, a director of the Commercial Bank of Columbia, served as warden for eight years and, in 1850, became the city's second Jewish mayor. His brother-in-law, Charlestonian Moses Cohen Mordecai, was a state representative from 1845 to 1846 and state senator from 1855 to 1858, and in the weeks following the fire that devastated Columbia in February 1865, became the city's "food administrator."

A number of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe settled in Columbia in the mid-1800s, decades ahead of the large influx of Ashkenazim that would pour into the United States at the turn of the 20th century. Newcomers Abraham Isaac Trager, Philip Epstein, and Henry Steel did not hold government posts, but the three men, from Lithuania, Poland, and Austria, respectively, served as lay leaders for Jewish services and



Henry Lyons (1805–1858), artist unknown, ca. 1850. Gift of Sandy Luce. McKissick Museum, University of South Carolina.

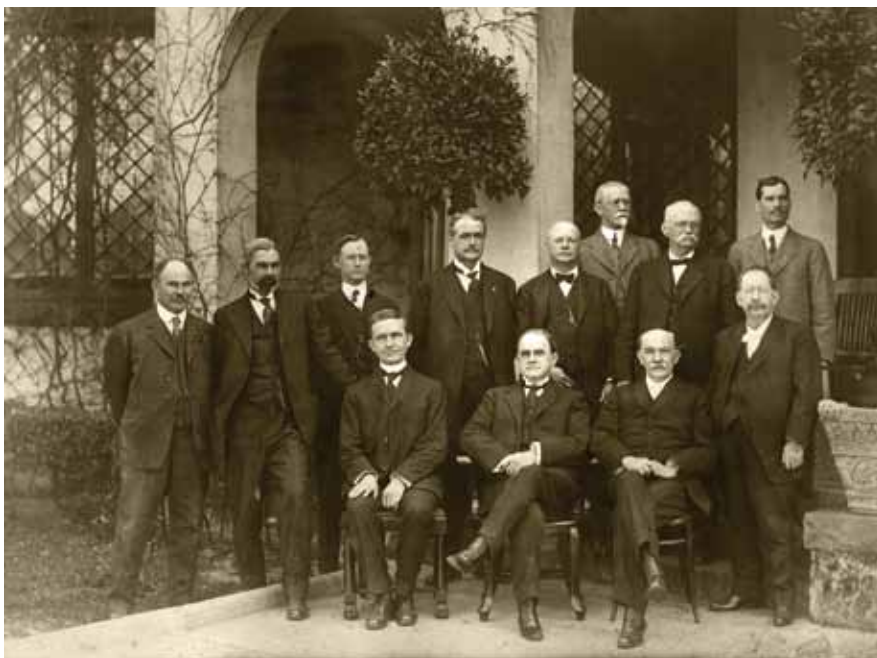
rites of passage. In the years following the Civil War, while Ashkenazi families were settling in, descendants of the early Sephardic settlers were moving on and, by the 1890s, most had left Columbia.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Columbia's Jews were operating their own businesses and participating in local organizations and politics. Polish immigrant Mordecai David came to the capital from Charleston right after the Civil War. A brother-in-law of Philip Epstein, he owned a number of businesses and served on city council in the early 1900s. Restaurant owner Theodore M. Pollock ran the Wheeler House and the Pollock House, advertising "Fruits, Confectionary and dining saloon." In the early 1880s, both Pollock and David C. Peixotto, clothing merchant and auctioneer, served on Columbia's city council.

August Kohn, the son of a German immigrant who settled in Orangeburg in 1850, moved to Columbia in 1885 to attend South Carolina College. In 1892, the young journalist was hired as Columbia bureau chief of Charleston's *News and Courier*. In addition to his regular duties, Kohn reported on every session of the general assembly. Although he gave up daily reporting in 1906 to pursue business interests, he continued to contribute feature articles and provide legislative summaries to the newspaper. Soon after scaling back his work as a reporter, he opened August Kohn & Company, a real estate

and investment firm. Admired for his integrity and philanthropy, Kohn gained prominence in his community and the state. Besides acting as a trustee for the University of South Carolina, he was a Mason and a Shriner, and served as president of Tree of Life and the Hebrew Benevolent Society. His brother Sol, who came to Columbia from Orangeburg in 1918 to run Kohn's Department Store on Main Street, was a founder and the first president of the Columbia Merchants' Association.

Helen Kohn, daughter of August and Irene Goldsmith Kohn, assumed adult responsibilities in 1913 at age 17 when her mother died. She ran her father's household, watched over two younger brothers, and stepped into her mother's leadership position at Tree of Life's religious school, all the while keeping up with her college studies. Helen married Julian Hennig of Darlington and, as she raised their children, earned a master's degree in history at the University of South Carolina. The lone woman on Columbia's Sesqui-Centennial Commission, she served as chair of its History Committee, and supervised and edited *Columbia: Capital City of*



Board of Trustees of the University of South Carolina at the home of August Kohn, March 11, 1915. Left to right: Standing – August Kohn, David R. Coker, W. M. Hamer, Jos. A. McCullough, P. A. Wilcox, Dr. W. T. C. Bates, Jas. Q. Davis, C. E. Spencer, Huger Sinkler. Seated – J. E. Swearingen, R. I. Manning, Wm. S. Currell. Photo courtesy of South Caroliniana Library.

South Carolina, 1786–1936. She continued to write books and work with community organizations such as the Red Cross, Community Chest, the Columbia Art Museum, the USO, Town Theater, the Family Service Center, and the South Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs. Helen also devoted herself to the Tree of Life congregation, leaving an indelible impression on its members, particularly the children who attended the Sunday school. She was involved in every facet of synagogue life and served as an officer in the state and national Sisterhood organizations.

Hyman Rubin, who joined his father in his wholesale dry goods distribution business, J. Rubin & Son, had a long and distinguished career in local and state politics. He served on Columbia's city council from 1952 to 1966 and in the state senate from 1967 to 1984. A champion of social justice, particularly racial integration, he founded the Columbia Luncheon Club, a forum where blacks and whites could discuss issues of mutual concern. Rubin sat on the boards of the Chamber of Commerce, the Republic National Bank, Community Chest, and the South Carolina Federation of the Blind. In 1997, he was presented with the Distinguished Service Award from the Greater Columbia Community Relations Council, an organization he had founded and served as a board member.

In 1937, the city's Jewish population was estimated at 680 and stores owned by Jewish merchants lined Assembly and Main Streets. Lourie's, "Columbia's Leading Fashion Store for Men and Women," opened in 1948, a branch of the family's St. George store. The owners, Sol and Mick, were sons of Russian immigrant Louis Lourie, who had followed a cousin south and founded stores in South Carolina and Georgia. The brothers' success enabled them to expand their business and open new locations in Columbia.

The Louries also made their mark in politics. Isadore Lourie graduated from law school at the University of South Carolina in 1956 and was practicing law in Columbia when he



Lourie's at night, Columbia, SC, 2000. Photo: Bill Aron.

was elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives in 1964. He served in the state senate from 1973 until he retired in 1992. He considered himself a "staunch Democrat" and fought for causes that benefited the average citizen. In 1994, he became founding director of the Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina, leading the drive to establish an organization dedicated to exploring and preserving the state's Jewish history. Isadore's son, Joel, served from 1999 to 2004 in the house and, in 2004, was elected to the state senate, serving Kershaw and Richland Counties.

During the 20th century, a number of South Carolina Jews called Columbia home for the months when the legislature was in session. Sylvia Dreyfus of Greenville, Irene Krugman Rudnick of Aiken, Harriet Keyserling and her son Billy Keyserling of Beaufort, and Leonard Krawcheck of Charleston all served in the House of Representatives. Arnold Goodstein, also of Charleston, served in both the house and the senate, and Sol Blatt of Blackville was Speaker of the House for more than three decades.

In the 1990s, in an effort led first by Ben Stern and then his son and daughter, Bill Stern and Dr. Lilly Filler, Columbia's Jewish community worked to establish a Holocaust Memorial. The campaign was supported by the University of South Carolina and Fort Jackson, among other participants. Designed by Irwin Hyman, the memorial was dedicated in June 2001 in the city's Memorial Park.

Founding member and past president of JHSSC Belinda Gergel has been serving on Columbia's city council since July 2008. Besides promoting the idea that more women are needed in leadership positions, the retired Columbia College professor supports the city's bus system, seeks solutions to the problem of homelessness, and fights to preserve the "character and integrity" of residential neighborhoods.



Columbia's Holocaust Memorial, dedicated on June 6, 2001. Photo: Lauren Cannady.

For more information on Columbia's Jewish history, go to the Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities at www.isjl.org/history/archive, and click on SC.

Remembering My Dad, Max Heller

by Susan Heller Moses



Paula, Leah, and Max Heller, Vienna, Austria, 1923.

Heller died on June 13, 2011, the way he had lived—with hope, optimism, and a belief in the goodness of others. These same qualities provided him the courage, in 1938, to risk passage to America.

I remember a story my father told me about the day he and his sister, Paula, fled Europe. He was 18 years old and knew it was time to get out of Nazi-occupied Austria. At the train station they said their goodbyes to their parents, Israel and Leah, unsure if they would see each other again. After boarding, Max and Paula pushed down the window by their seats and held tightly to their parents' hands. As the train began to move, they had to let go. Brother and sister looked back until their beloved parents faded completely out of sight.

Thanks to the kindness of Mary Mills, a young American girl Max had met in Vienna the year before, and Shepard Saltzman, the man she asked to sponsor Max with a job in his shirt factory, he was on his way to Greenville, South Carolina. On the day he arrived, he and Saltzman went to lunch. My father had \$1.40 in his pocket. When Saltzman offered to pay, my father refused. "When I can afford to buy you lunch," he said, "then you can buy me lunch."

That same day, my father began working as a stock boy and sweeping floors at the Piedmont Shirt factory. He eventually became vice president of the business and a few years later started Maxon Shirt Company. In 1940, Trude Schönthal, a beautiful

Viennese girl he had met before leaving Austria, escaped to America after a harrowing trip. She and her parents moved to Greenville and, on August 2, 1942, Max and Trude were married. Luckily, Max's parents escaped and joined them. Between the Hellers and the Schönthals, they lost over 90 family members to the horrors of Hitler.

Max never forgot the kindness of the people of Greenville. After selling his successful business in 1968, he dedicated his life to public service. He served

on city council for two years and, in 1971, was elected mayor of Greenville. For eight years he led the drive to revitalize downtown. As mayor, he desegregated all city departments and commissions and worked tirelessly to create affordable housing. Asked if Max Heller had bridged the cultural differences between Jew and Gentile, black and white, rich and poor, Rabbi Julie Kozlow replied, "Max was the bridge."

At his funeral service, Francie described our father as "a public person" but also "a very private person." She recalled "Sunday mornings as a child, when my parents would put Viennese waltzes on the record player and dance through the house. I remember dinner together each night with lively discussions."

Everyone in the synagogue knew of the great things my dad did. When it came my time to speak, I told them some things he didn't do. He didn't envy. He didn't complain. With his body racked in pain, he sang. He never lost his sense of wonder about the world. Not long before he died, we sat outside on the terrace of the home he and my mother built 60 years ago. He looked around at the trees, at the beginning of the summer blossoms, and said, "Look at this. What more could I want?" He didn't email or text or twitter. He communicated personally. He never took art lessons, but in his spare time he painted beautiful canvases that hang in our homes.



Max Heller at age 10, Vienna, 1929.



Trude and Max, May 1941. All photos courtesy of Susan Heller Moses.

Steven spoke next. "Dad loved to have fun and he was so absolutely funny. He would pretend to sing opera using some Italian gibberish that made no sense to us or to any Italian person. He sang Yiddish theater songs from his childhood in a comedic playful way. He wanted everyone to have the chance he had, to live in freedom as an equal. He was my mentor. He was a balanced man and a wonderful father. I asked him not long ago what were some of his favorite childhood memories. He told me about Saturdays, the Sabbath, when he was a boy in Vienna. He would climb onto the family bed with his father, mother, and sister. His mother, Leah,

would tell them stories and sing songs from the small village of her youth, sad and beautiful songs. While he was telling me about this, he began to sing those songs and tears ran down his face."

Eldest granddaughter, Lauren Hurvitz, said that Popi was more than a grandfather to her. He was her father, someone she wanted to spend time with, laugh with, confess to, make proud, and whose opinion mattered.

"Enjoy every moment for what it is and have no regrets for what you could have done," Max counseled. "You must be able to find humor, even in the darkest moments. Martinis are best straight up and dry, with a twist."

Granddaughter Lynne Moses Garfinkel recounted coming to Greenville on election night in 1979, when she was 11 years old. Beaten in a bitterly fought congressional campaign, Max dried her tears. Later, when she ran for class secretary and lost by six votes, it was Popi Max who comforted her and told her to hold her head high, to congratulate the winner, and look forward, not back.

Grandson Daniel Moses said a thousand words would not do justice to his grandfather, but he chose two: "instinctive and selfless."

Granddaughter Sarah Heller read a passage from *The Diary of*



Max Heller, mayor, and Greenville City Council, 1971.

Anne Frank that she and Popi Max both loved: "It's really a wonder that I haven't dropped all my ideals, because they seem so absurd and impossible to carry out. Yet I keep them, because in spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart. . . . How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

Several of the great-grandchildren described their beloved Popi. "He was kind and funny and he really cared about us. He accepted everyone for who they are. He asked about

what we were doing and really listened to our answers. I will always remember the way he raised his hands in joy when he saw me coming."

The funeral procession for my father passed through downtown Greenville on the trip between Beth Israel Synagogue and Graceland Cemetery. Scores of citizens stood with their hands on their hearts as we drove slowly down his beloved Main Street. Bouquets of flowers had been laid at the feet of the bronze sculpture dedicated on Max's 90th birthday. As we passed City Hall, we noticed the employees outside, hands on hearts, waving, blowing kisses. A black ribbon had been tied around the building. The city that had taken him in, the city that he loved and transformed, was saying a final goodbye.



The Heller family at Beth Israel, Greenville, on Max's 90th birthday, 2009.





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See pages 8–10 for more information.**