

THE
JEWISH
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF
SOUTH CAROLINA

*Kugels & Collards: Stories of Food, Family, and
Tradition in South Carolina*

Columbia, SC
October 6-8, 2023



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THE
JEWISH
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY
OF
SOUTH CAROLINA

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The magazine is published twice a year. Current and back issues can be found at jhssc.org

On the cover: the Sura Wolff and Sam Wengrow family sits down to Thanksgiving dinner, Columbia, SC, ca. 1951. Clockwise from left: Sura; daughter, Reberta Wengrow Karesh; Sam; and sons, Henry Ray and Arnold. Courtesy of Arnold Wengrow.

This page: Faye Goldberg Miller's grandmother, Toba Goldberg Gelbart, carrying two ducks ("kushkie" in Yiddish). Chaim and Toba Gelbart, raised chicken and geese in Mogielnica, Poland. Courtesy of Faye Goldberg Miller.

In this issue

Kugels & Collards: A Duo's Planning and Perseverance Shines Through ~ Katharine Allen ~ Historic Columbia's Director of Outreach & Engagement relates the story of how *Kugels & Collards* grew from the seedling of an idea into a thriving food blog with a focus on Jewish families in the Columbia region and, now, a book that examines kitchen-to-table traditions in Jewish households across South Carolina. 4

The Making of Kugels & Collards ~ Rachel Gordin Barnett and Lyssa Kligman Harvey ~ Years ago, two Columbia, South Carolina, women approached Historic Columbia with the idea of sharing local Jewish history by exploring foodways. The resulting blog, *Kugels & Collards*, was launched in 2017 and holds a treasure chest of traditions, both Jewish and southern. Now, these two visionary (and hardworking!) women have produced a book by the same name, and they describe the journey that brought them from blog to book. 6

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From Kugels & Collards, University of South Carolina Press, 2023 ~ Reprinted from the book with permission, read an excerpt from Marcie Cohen Ferris's foreword, followed by selected personal foodways stories.

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The Next Chapter ~ Rachel Gordin Barnett ~ In 2024, the Society will celebrate the anniversary of its founding—thirty years, the full span of a generation, a length of time that brings big changes. The JHSSC is well positioned to greet those changes with vigor, and is poised to continue its mission with a robust agenda. 22



Letter from the President

As my tenure as president nears its conclusion, I would like to reflect on the noteworthy moments and achievements we experienced over the past two years. In March 2022, we celebrated the centennial of Congregation Adath Yeshurun in Aiken, South Carolina. We saw the

opening of the exhibit *A Source of Light* at the Aiken County Historical Museum, and witnessed the unveiling of a historic marker on Laurens Street in Aiken, celebrating the contributions of Aiken's Jewish merchants.

In June 2022, we were able to hold our first in-person meeting since the start of the COVID pandemic. Hosted by Beth Israel Congregation in Beaufort, South Carolina, our program included topics about the Jewish settlers and merchants of Beaufort, and many family stories. It was topped off by a conversation on Reconstruction by Drs. Thomas Holt and Lawrence Rowland, moderated by Judge Richard Gergel.

We hosted the Southern Jewish Historical Society meeting in Charleston in October 2022. More than 125 participants from 22 states came together for a weekend of great presentations and panel discussions, including Dr. Michael Cohen from Tulane University and Dr. Shari Rabin of Oberlin College. A highlight of the weekend was the reception at the College of Charleston's Addlestone Library honoring Dr. Dale Rosengarten, curator of the Jewish Heritage Collection, on her upcoming retirement.

Dr. Belinda Gergel presented an online program in November 2022 with author and Rock Hill native Judy Kurtz Goldman, discussing her newest book, *Child: a Memoir*.

A week after her retirement in February 2023, Dr. Dale Rosengarten was honored by the South Carolina House of Representatives for her contributions to South Carolina Jewish history and the history of sweetgrass basketmaking. Representative Beth Bernstein of Richland County read the resolution passed by the House, and Representative Leonidas Stavrinakis of Charleston presented Dale with a framed copy. Following the presentation, her accomplishments were celebrated at a luncheon co-sponsored by the JHSSC and Historic Columbia.

This past April our spring meeting theme was "Paper Bridges": Letters of Hope and Despair, 1933–1945, featuring Rebecca Wildman, author of the book *Paper Love*. We held discussions on letters written by European Jews to friends and relatives living in the United States during World War II, including correspondence saved by South Carolinians and archived in the Jewish Heritage Collection.

I would like to thank Judge Richard Gergel and Attorney Robert Rosen for all their hard work in presenting our online Sunday Conversations programs that began in July 2020 and continued monthly until June 2022, providing us a safe way to meet during the pandemic. These excellent programs that were streamed on Zoom really kept our members engaged and promoted our Society to a nationwide audience.

On a somber note, we lost one of our founding members and the first executive director of the JHSSC, Dr. Martin Perlmutter, on January 16, 2023. Known as Marty, he did more than anyone to raise awareness of the contributions made by Jewish citizens to the history and culture of South Carolina. The JHSSC collaborated with the College of Charleston and McKissick Museum to arrange for the creation of the exhibit that would become known as *A Portion of the People: Three Hundred Years of Southern Jewish Life*. Marty developed the robust Jewish Studies Program at the College of Charleston, raising it to national prominence, and was the force behind Jewish Studies multi-faceted community programming. On behalf of

the JHSSC we extend our condolences to his wife Jeri, their four children, Jake, Aaron, Daniel, Estee, their eleven grandchildren and sister, Ruth Warren. Z"l.

As we look toward the future, we are in a transition period. Marty is no longer with us and Dale has retired. However, we have a wonderful executive director, Rachel Barnett, who stays on top of the issues, and Dr. Lilly Filler and her nominating committee have presented us a great slate of officers. With their leadership, we will be well-positioned to tackle new challenges and embrace the opportunities that lie ahead to ensure the JHSSC remains sustainable, dynamic, and forward-thinking.

L'shalom,
Alexander Cohen, M.D.
JHSSC President

Slate of Officers for 2024–25

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Kugels & Collards: A Duo's Planning and Perseverance Shines Through

by Katharine Allen, Director of Outreach & Engagement, Historic Columbia

By the end of 2016, Historic Columbia's (HC) Columbia Jewish Heritage Initiative (CJHI) had completed several major projects: the installation of two historical markers, the publication of a walking tour in both print and web formats, and the transfer of nearly 50 new oral histories to the College of Charleston's Jewish Heritage Collection. The steering committee could have concluded its work with these achievements—the initiative had surpassed its initial goals and received several major accolades, including one for heritage tourism awarded by South Carolina's state preservation office.

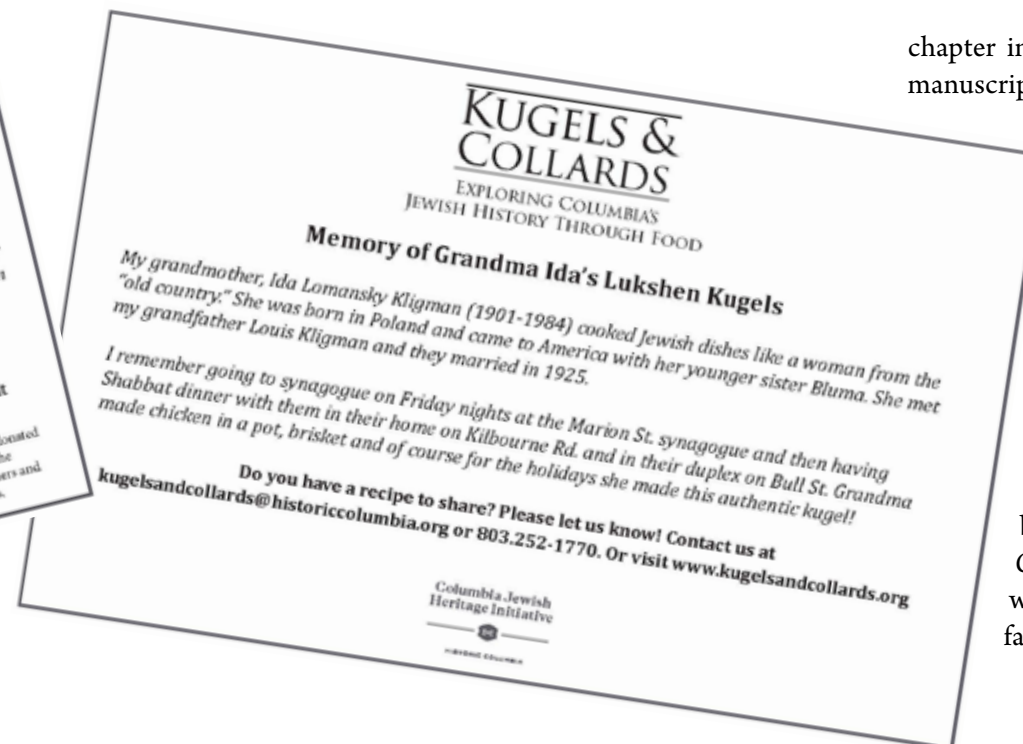
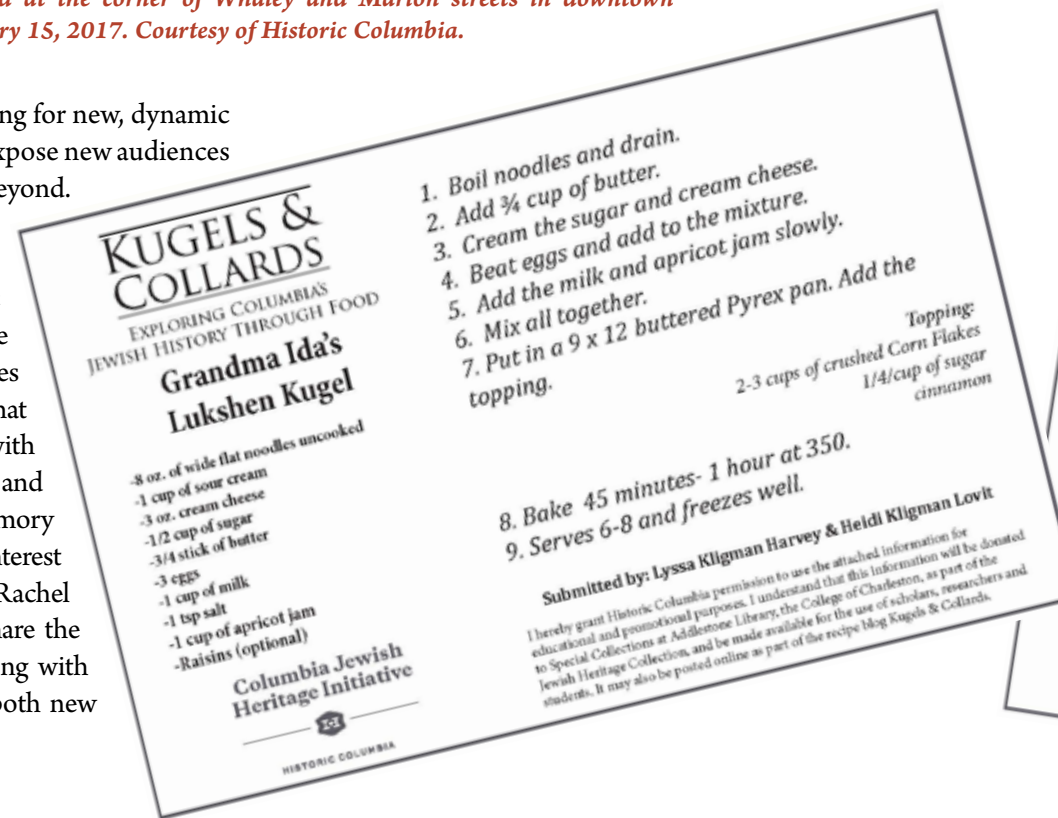
Instead, committee members began looking for new, dynamic ways to share Jewish history, and in turn expose new audiences to Jewish family stories in Columbia and beyond.

A potential path forward emerged in January 2017, when Rachel Barnett and Lyssa Harvey approached Historic Columbia staff with an intriguing idea: use food as a lens through which to share stories of the past. Rachel and Lyssa reasoned that many family stories, although replete with details about businesses, achievements, and relationships, are often deemed by their memory keepers as “not historic,” or perhaps not of interest to the general public. Perhaps, contended Rachel and Lyssa, by asking that an individual share the story behind a beloved family recipe (along with the recipe, of course), CJHI would gain both new participants and a new audience.

But first, the project needed a name and a platform. What started as *Knishes, Kugels & Collards* was quickly shortened to just *Kugels & Collards*, a nod to the easy co-existence of these two foods on the southern Jewish table, itself “symbolic of the intertwining of our food cultures.” The planned format, a food blog, would allow for quick posting and access to a broad, internet-based community of foodies on various social media. HC's Marketing Coordinator Brian Harmon secured the domain and created a WordPress site, and the broader committee,



South Carolina Historical Marker unveiling at Beth Shalom (House of Peace) Cemetery, located at the corner of Whaley and Marion streets in downtown Columbia, January 15, 2017. Courtesy of Historic Columbia.



consisting of HC Executive Director Robin Waites, Rachel, Lyssa, and I, began planning the first year of content.

Over the next several months, as we collectively worked through all the necessities that comprise a blog (“About,” Section Headers, search functionality, just to name a few), Brian Harmon and our director of marketing, Anna Kate Twitty, focused on additional marketing efforts. The *Kugels & Collards* planned launch was at The Big Nosh, a Jewish food festival held in May at the Tree of Life Synagogue. By the time HC staff set up our table, we had in hand a variety of recipes cards branded with the *Kugels & Collards* logo to give away and a newly launched blog.

The goal from the beginning was to reach out to Jewish families living in, or with ties to, Columbia and Richland County. Our first year, readers learned about “B’nai B’rith Women & the South Carolina State Fair” from Jerry Emanuel, and the roles of Max and Selma Dickman, and especially Florida Boyd, who according to author Jackie Dickman,



Lyssa Harvey photographs the *Kugels & Collards* team. From left, David Turner, Emily Brown, Eric Friendly, co-author Rachel Barnett, John Sherrer, Kat Allen, and Robin Waites. Courtesy of Lyssa Harvey.

chapter introductions, and plan the book's launch. As the manuscript took shape, they brought in HC's Director of

Cultural Resources John Sherrer to serve as editor. And here we are, with the book now in publication. Rachel and Lyssa have generously offered any royalties to further the Columbia Jewish Heritage Initiative's goal. But for me, in my role as HC's lead historian, I'm most excited and thankful for the physical legacy that *Kugels & Collards: Stories of Food, Family, and Tradition in Jewish South Carolina* will leave to future generations who seek ways to connect with our complex shared history. As a non-cook, recipe blogs have never interested me. But the *Kugels & Collards* stories have a way of speaking to everyone who wants to learn something—about food, about family, and about our community.

The Making of *Kugels & Collards*

by Rachel Gordin Barnett and Lyssa Kligman Harvey

What began in 2014 as the Columbia Jewish Heritage Initiative (CJHI) to document the Columbia Jewish community's history, led to outcomes none of us could envision. *Kugels & Collards* began as a Columbia-focused blog in May 2017 with our first posts about Grandma Ida's lokshen kugel and Ethel's collards. [Lyssa's grandmother Ida Lomansky Kligman of Columbia and Ethel Mae Glover, who worked for the Gordin family of Summerton for more than four decades.] Since that time, there have been six years of stories and recipes. Unexpectedly, but happily, we have created an archive of family stories and recipes that add to the documentation of the history of Columbia's Jewish community.

Our first conversation with University of South Carolina Press editor Aurora Bell was in November 2019 to discuss the potential of *Kugels & Collards* going statewide with a book of Jewish South Carolina food stories and recipes. Dale Rosengarten and Marcie Cohen Ferris, our mentors throughout the entire process, gave us great advice and direction as we set out to write a proposal for the Press. What we didn't envision in November 2019 was a worldwide pandemic that would keep us all at home and curtail our proposed in-person interviews. Zoom, phone calls, and email quickly took the place of face-to-face meetings. Undaunted, we forged ahead, contacting family members, friends, and JHSSC members, in search of people interested in contributing their story to the book.

In July 2022, our final manuscript was submitted to the Press. Now, a year later (and four years after the

first conversation), we have published a book that is a snapshot of Jewish South Carolina through the lens of food and memory. We know there are many more stories to be told and we encourage those who have an interest to contact us. *Kugels & Collards* belongs to Historic Columbia and the JHSSC. We are the stewards of the project—volunteers who want the stories collected and preserved.

What strikes us when we review the book in its entirety is that the memories, the stories, and the food are universal, whether you are from Eutawville or Charleston. We've come to realize that food is a significant unifier in the southern Jewish experience.

We are Jewish women whose immigrant grandparents made their way to South Carolina. But our families' stories reflect the journeys that generations of Jewish immigrants made to America. As women pulled by the force of both our region and our religion, we recognize the expressive power of food.

Our inspiration to create *Kugels & Collards* came from our mothers and grandmothers, descendants of Eastern European immigrants, as well as the African American women who worked in our homes as housekeepers and cooks and shared their culinary knowledge. We are not the experts of their respective experiences. But we gratefully gather their memories and meals in their honor.

We are very thankful to those who contributed their families' stories to *Kugels & Collards*, and to those who believed in the project and gave invaluable counsel and encouragement along the way.



Above: A holiday table from "Around the Jewish Table" in *Kugels & Collards*. Photo: Forrest Clonts. Below: Lyssa Kligman Harvey (l) and Rachel Gordin Barnett at Clayton Rawl Farms, Lexington, SC, January 2021. Courtesy of Rachel Barnett.

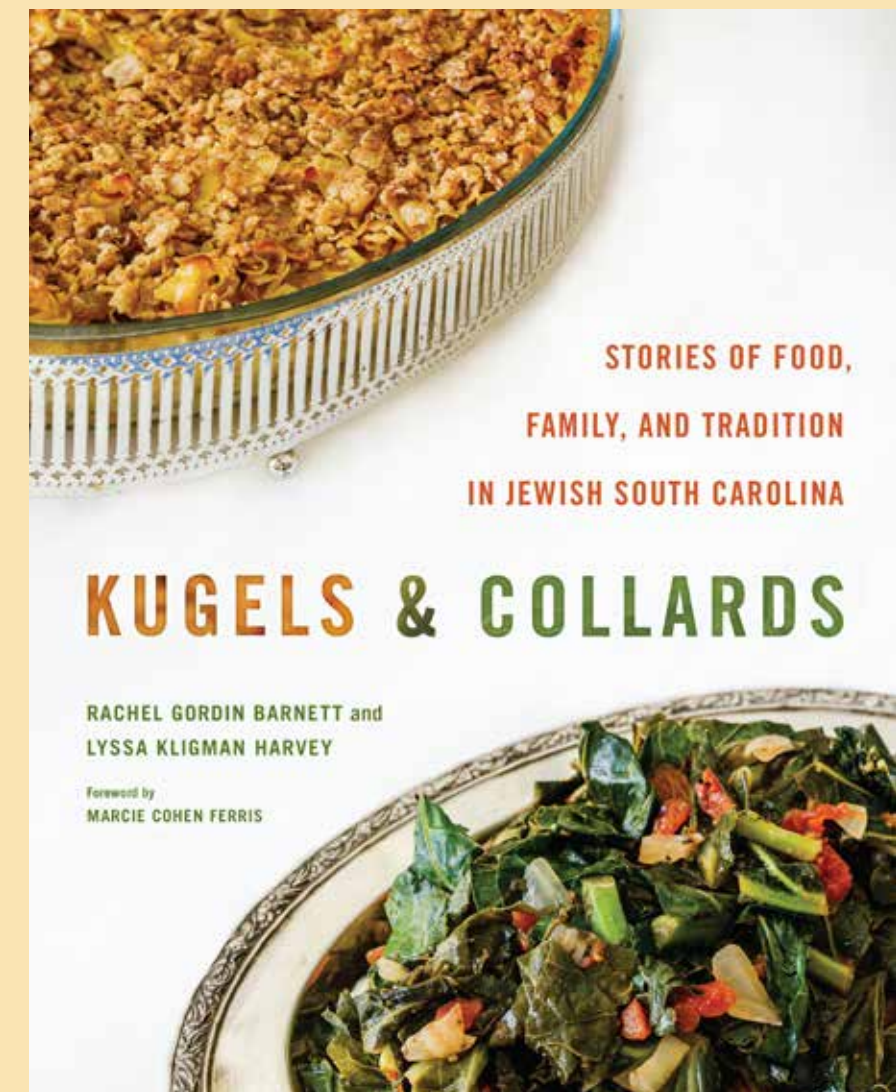


Kugels & Collards

Book on sale now!

University of South Carolina Press, \$36.99

Ebook also available



kugelsandcollards.org

You are invited to the *Kugels & Collards*®

BOOK LAUNCH PARTY

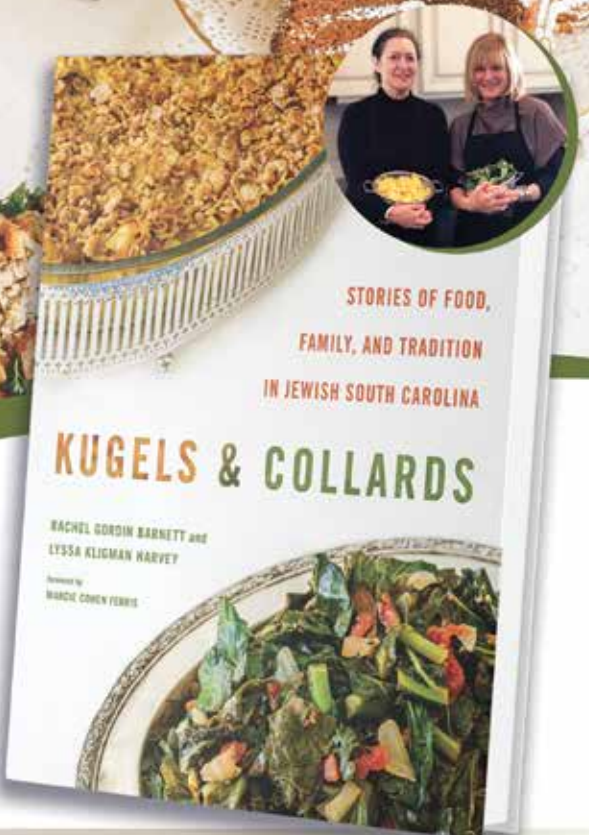
**FRIDAY
OCTOBER 6
6:00-8:00 PM**

Seibels House & Gardens
1601 Richland Street | Columbia, SC

Tickets at historiccolumbia.org/kugelsandcollards

Recipe Tasting Book Signing Meet & Greet

All proceeds from event tickets & book sales will benefit the Columbia Jewish Heritage Initiative, a project of Historic Columbia and the Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina.



Keynote Speakers



Marcie Cohen Ferris is a writer and educator whose work explores the American South through its foodways and the southern Jewish experience. She is an emeritus professor in the Department of American Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the author of *The Edible South: The Power of Food and the Making of an American Region*, *Matzoh Ball Gumbo: Culinary Tales of the Jewish South*, and co-editor of *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History*. In 2018, Ferris received the Craig Claiborne Lifetime Achievement Award from the Southern Foodways Alliance. Her recent book, *Edible North Carolina: A Journey Across a State of Flavor*, explores the vibrant contemporary food movement in the Tar Heel State.



Anne Byrn is a *New York Times* bestselling food writer and cookbook author based in Nashville, Tennessee. For 15 years she was the food editor of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, and she attended La Varenne École de Cuisine in Paris, receiving an advanced certificate. While raising three children and cooking for a busy family she embraced some shortcuts and wrote the bestseller *The Cake Mix Doctor*, one of *Southern Living* magazine's top 100 cookbooks of all time. She is also the author of *American Cake* and *Skillet Love*. When not baking or gardening, Anne writes a weekly newsletter on Substack called *Between the Layers*.

Kugels & Collards: Stories of Food, Family, and Tradition in Jewish South Carolina

October 6–8, 2023 ~ Columbia, SC

Friday, October 6

6:00–8:00 P.M. An Evening of Kugels & Collards ~ Book launch party
Separate ticket ~ see previous page for details

All events, unless otherwise specified, will be held in the Campus Room, Capstone House, 898 Barnwell Street, Columbia, SC

Many thanks to our meeting co-sponsors:



Saturday, October 7

11:30 A.M. Registration and lunch

12:15 P.M. Welcome ~ Joel H. Samuels, dean, College of Arts & Sciences, University of South Carolina ~ Alex Cohen, president, JHSSC ~ Saskia Coenen Snyder, professor of history and director of the Jewish Studies Program, University of South Carolina

12:30 The Language and Legacy of Jewish Foodways ~ Marcie Cohen Ferris

1:45 Break

2:00 Around the Table ~ John Sherrer, moderator

Panelists: Terri Wolff Kaufman, Kim Cliett Long, Rhett Aronson Mendelsohn, Bruce Miller, Faye Goldberg Miller, Anita Moise Rosefield Rosenberg

3:15 Break featuring homemade baked goods provided by local bakers!

3:30–4:45 Jewish Life and Cake ~ Anne Byrn and Arnold Wengrow

5:00–6:30 Reception, Spigner House

Dinner on your own

Reception sponsored by
NELSON MULLINS

Sunday, October 8

9:00–10:00 A.M. JHSSC board meeting. Board elections will be held.

10:00–11:00 Bagel brunch and overview of tours ~ Doyle Stevick and Eric Friendly

11:15–1:15 P.M. TOURS

Anne Frank House
1731 College Street
(each group accommodates 17)
11:00–12:00 (tour 1)
OR
12:30–1:30 (tour 2)

Hebrew Benevolent Society Cemetery
720 Blanding Street
(each group accommodates 20;
sign up for this tour by Sept. 1st)
11:15–12:15 (tour 1)
OR
12:30–1:30 (tour 2)

For registration and hotel information, see page 22 or visit jhssc.org/events/upcoming

The Language and Legacy of Southern Jewish Foodways

by Marcie Cohen Ferris, excerpted from her foreword to *Kugels & Collards*, USC Press.

“Food is an archive, a keeper of secrets.” Michael Twitty, *The Cooking Gene*¹

South Carolina Jewish history is fundamental to our understanding of the Jewish South, a fact convincingly illustrated in the groundbreaking exhibition *A Portion of the People: Three Hundred Years of Southern Jewish Life* (2002) and the accompanying publication of the same title, edited by Dale and Theodore Rosengarten.² Throughout the exhibit and book I marveled at the food-related material culture of Jewish South Carolina in vintage advertisements and photographs of Jewish-owned groceries and general stores, and artifacts such as a printed menu and wedding invitation from 1918, a shohet’s knife and drainboard for kosher butchering, a noodle dough cutter, a food hamper, a satin Passover matzo cover, a Russian samovar (an urn used to boil water for tea), and precious silver items from an English sugar bowl to a family’s cake knife, kiddush cup, and rice serving spoon.



Lazarus family (Charleston, SC) silver kiddush cup, rice spoon, and cake knife. Courtesy of Special Collections, College of Charleston Libraries.

The circa 1830 silver spoon, owned by the Lazarus family of Charleston and held by Black women who served rice to well-to-do family members and their guests, references the prosperous economy of which the Lazaruses were a part. By the 1780s, Carolina Gold rice produced great wealth for Lowcountry planters and Jewish merchants. For enslaved laborers who worked the crop, many skilled in wetland rice farming in their homelands in west Africa, the pearly white grain represented indescribable toil and suffering.³

Throughout the era of slavery and continuing after the Civil War and well into the twentieth century, people of African descent worked as cooks, housekeepers, and caterers in Jewish homes and in synagogues. The dynamics of this labor system and its racial interactions were complex, both intimate and exploitative. Beginning with the post-World War I out-migration of thousands of largely rural Black southerners during the Great Migration and continuing at various rates

through the Civil Rights Movement into the 1970s, Black South Carolinians voted with their feet. Many chose to leave the region and its systemic racism to pursue education and work elsewhere in America.

Consider another object—a young woman’s commonplace book—that like the rice spoon, the shohet’s knife, and the samovar, reveals a space where region, food, and religion converged in the Jewish South. The booklet’s front cover is inscribed, “The property of Miriam G. Moses, 1828.” Now preserved in the archives of the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the book belonged to Miriam Gratz Moses (1808–1891).⁴ After the death of her mother, Rachel Gratz Moses and her infant sister, Gertrude, during the High Holiday season of 1823, teenager Miriam and her

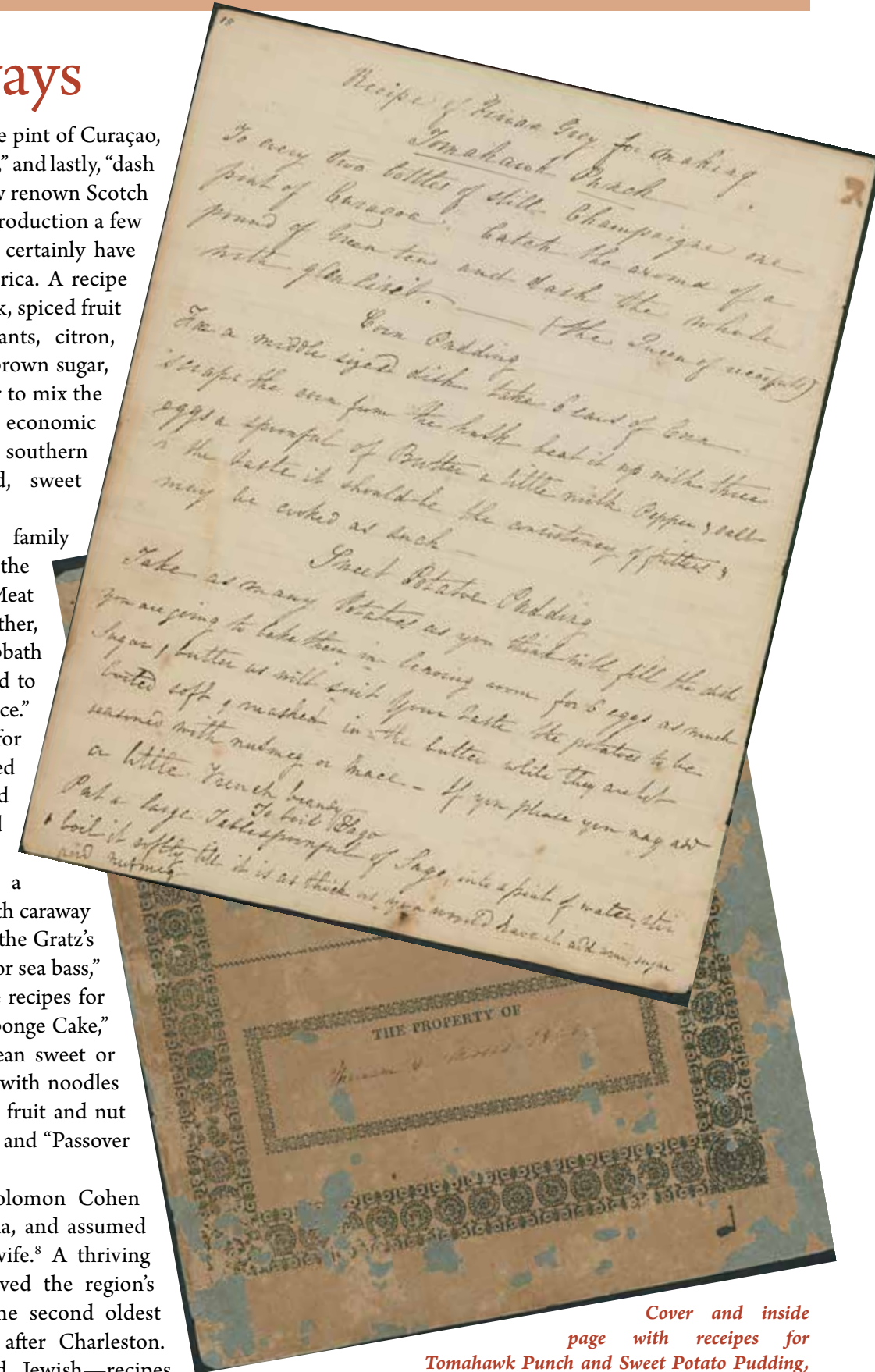
five siblings were raised in Philadelphia by her aunt, the well known Jewish educator and philanthropist Rebecca Gratz.⁵ Miriam’s commonplace book was typical of the era, with its mix of recipes, recent books read, foreign language exercises, extracts of published verse and prose, and highlighted lists of historical happenings. More distinctive, though, was the particular mix of the recipes she chose to include.

In her commonplace book, Miriam wrote out, in measured and elegant script, recipes that speak of her racial and class privilege, her observant Judaism, a young woman on the precipice of marriage, and the possibility of that match taking her to the American South. Most of the recipes are canonical dishes of early 19th-century middle-class America from tomato ketchup to rice pudding, flannel cakes (pancakes), and gingerbread, while others are evidence of a monied Atlantic world family who enjoyed chocolate, brandy, tropical fruits, roasted meats, poultry, and fresh fish. Miriam’s list of ingredients for “Tomahawk Punch” includes

two bottles of still champagne, one pint of Curaçao, the “aroma of a pound of Green tea,” and lastly, “dash the whole with Glenlivet,” the now renown Scotch whiskey, which had only started production a few years before in 1824, and would certainly have been a prized possession in America. A recipe for “N.Y. Black Cake,” a dense, dark, spiced fruit cake composed of raisins, currants, citron, rose water, ten eggs, a pound of brown sugar, a gill of brandy, and “enough flour to mix the fruit with,” connotes the Gratz’s economic ties to the Caribbean.⁶ There are southern standards: biscuits, corn bread, sweet potato pudding, and pound cake.

The recipes reflect Miriam’s family observance of kashrut, including the absence of pork and shellfish.⁷ Meat and dairy are not cooked together, and for dishes eaten on the Sabbath such as beef fricassee, she specified to “separate the meat from the sauce.” She includes kosher-style recipes for veal cutlets, mutton stew, “kimmeled meat or fresh tongue,” (beef stewed with root vegetables, spices, and port wine to which caraway seed and vinegar is added; kümmel, a German herbal liqueur flavored with caraway seeds and cumin connects back to the Gratz’s Prussian origins), “fried black fish or sea bass,” and how “to render fat.” There are recipes for Jewish holidays such as “Pesach Sponge Cake,” “koogle,” (kugel, a central European sweet or savory egg pudding usually made with noodles or potatoes), “Haroseth,” (a sweet fruit and nut paste eaten at the Passover seder), and “Passover soup dumplings” (matzo balls).

In 1836, Miriam married Solomon Cohen Jr. of Georgetown, South Carolina, and assumed the role of a wealthy planter’s wife.⁸ A thriving mercantile city, Georgetown served the region’s rice plantations, and was also the second oldest Jewish community in the state after Charleston. The presence of southern—and Jewish—recipes in her commonplace book suggest the influence of the South’s much-touted cuisine in this era, as well as a young woman preparing for her responsibilities



Cover and inside page with recipes for Tomahawk Punch and Sweet Potato Pudding, from the commonplace and recipe book of Miriam Gratz Moses in the Miriam Gratz Moses Cohen Papers, #2369, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

as a Jewish wife and mother in South Carolina. It is not improbable that Miriam would have encountered southern-style dishes prepared by a skilled Black cook.

In *Kugel & Collards*, authors Rachel Barnett and Lyssa Harvey bring dozens of recipes and stories together in a volume that celebrates the food history and narratives of generations of Jewish South Carolinians. Woven throughout this work are the fundamentals of South Carolina Jewish foodways: the power of family and transregional kinship and religious connections, the historical influence of skilled African American cooks and food entrepreneurs, and the culinary flavors and ingredients of the changing global South.

Notes

1. Michael W. Twitty, *The Cooking Gene: A Journey through African American Culinary History in the Old South* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2017), 70.
2. Dale and Theodore Rosengarten, eds., *A Portion of the People: Three Hundred Years of Southern Jewish Life* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2002).
3. William Dusinberre, *Them Dark Days: Slavery in the American Rice Swamps* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2000).

4. Miriam Gratz Moses Cohen Commonplace and Recipe Book, 1828, in the Miriam Gratz Moses Cohen Papers #2639, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

5. Dianne Ashton, *Rebecca Gratz: Women and Judaism in Antebellum America* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997), 112; Dianne Ashton, "Shifting Veils: Religion, Politics, and Womanhood in the Civil War Writings of American Jewish Women," in *Women and American Judaism: Historical Perspectives*, eds. Pamela S. Nadell and Jonathan D. Sarna (Hanover: Brandeis University Press/University Press of New England, 2001), 93; Laura Arnold Leibman, *Once We Were Slaves: The Extraordinary Journey of a Multiracial Jewish Family* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 135.

6. Julia Moskin, "A Fruitcake Soaked in Tropical Sun," *New York Times*, December 19, 2008, <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/19/dining/19cake.html>.

7. Miriam Gratz Moses Cookbook and Commonplace Book, 1828; Manuscript Cookbooks Survey, 2022, <https://www.manuscriptcookbookssurvey.org/>.

8. Pamela S. Nadell, *America's Jewish Women: A History from Colonial Times to Today* (NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2019), 41; "Georgetown, S.C.: Historical Overview," Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities, Institute of Southern Jewish Life, Jackson, MS, <https://www.isjl.org/south-carolina-georgetown-encyclopedia.html>.

Family Pride: Recipes from a Sephardic Family

by Anita Moïse Rosefield Rosenberg, from *Kugels & Collards*, USC Press

Looking back, there's no doubt family stories told and retold have been embellished, but at the root of each one is a well of family pride in those who came before us and those who came together in celebration. This is how I heard it.

The historical family names included: Moïse, Moses, Lazarus, Lopez, Harbie, Harby, Rodrigues, Solomon, Solomons, Benjamin, and de Torres—and the history behind those names takes us back centuries. On August 3, 1492, a day after Spain issued its Edict of Expulsion ordering the exodus of the country's Jews, Luis de Torres sailed

on the *Niña* to the New World as Christopher Columbus's cartographer and translator. The Harbie family, along with other Sephardic refugees, escaped to Fez, Morocco, where

the family lived for several generations. There, Isaac Harbie served the King of Morocco as secretary and lapidary. His son Solomon Harby (the spelling of the family name changed) arrived in Charleston in 1781 and married Rebecca Moses, daughter of Myer Moses, in 1787. Their son, Isaac Harby, Jewish reformer and intellectual, was born in Charleston in 1788.



Moïse family gathering, Sumter, SC, 1974. Photo: Wilber Jeffcoat, courtesy of © Sandlapper Society, Inc. For more information, contact the South Carolina State Library, statelibrary.sc.gov.

During the Spanish Inquisition, other family members went north to London, Amsterdam, and Alsace-Lorraine on the border of France and Germany, and eventually to the Caribbean. It is known that Abraham Moïse was a prosperous landowner and tradesman living in Saint-Domingue with his wife, Sarah, and four sons before they fled to Charleston in 1791, leaving behind everything they owned. Abraham and Sarah had five more children in Charleston. The family was active in Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim. Their daughter Penina was a prolific poet, writer, and teacher, who wrote the lyrics

for the congregation's hymnal—the first collection of Jewish hymns published in America.

Today, as descendants of these pioneers, we work, enjoy leisure and family time, worship, and cook using Sephardic recipes long-modified and surely influenced by Lowcountry and Gullah-Geechee traditions adapted to our Carolina surroundings. Any occasion demands a family gathering. Toasts, great food, and storytelling dominate the hours. We come from near and far across the United States to celebrate each other. A family reunion demands our attendance.

In 1975, Ethel McCutchen Moïse wrote an article about the family cookbook for *Sandlapper Magazine* that was published from 1968 until 1983. Here is an excerpt:

Family get-togethers are not unusual, and neither is recipe swapping, but recently I became involved in what turned out to be a unique recipe swapping situation. It all began when several of our Moïse clan in Sumter were having dinner together. One of the topics Moïse always seem to enjoy talking about is food and this was no exception—except that talk turned to fond remembrances of some of the great cooks we have had in the family, some of whom had gone to their reward, taking many of their treasured and unrecorded recipes with them. One suggested we put together a cookbook for the family; another said, "Ethel, you do it;" the next thing I knew, I was sending letters to all the far-flung members of the Moïse clan. Response was prompt and overwhelming with favorite family recipes coming from Pennsylvania, Indiana, Florida, Texas, California, Arizona, Hawaii, and all points in between—but all with roots in South Carolina.

We Ate Like Our Southern Neighbors

by Rhetta Aronson Mendelsohn and Carol Aronson Kelly, from *Kugels & Collards*, USC Press

Growing up in Orangeburg in the 1950s and '60s, we were southern and Jewish and totally a part of the community. After World War II, our parents, Rose Louise Rich Aronson and Harold M. Aronson, worked very hard to establish a successful business—Aronson Awning Company. We lived in a small house before moving to a more affluent neighborhood in 1960. Our grandparents lived close by.

Our grandmother, Henrietta Block Rich, spent her life as a homemaker, sharing her special matzo balls with friends and neighbors. She visited all the local farmers markets and spent her time sitting on the front porch shelling butterbeans and peas while our grandfather, Lipman Philip Rich, cracked

the pecans. Granny, as we called her, took us to her friends' homes to pick figs that she made into wonderful preserves, cucumbers that she turned into dill pickles, and chestnuts that

she put into the Thanksgiving turkey. Every Saturday morning, Papa, as we called him, appeared at our door with boiled peanuts and a Coke for us. Until she passed away in 1984, Granny never failed to send us home with something wonderful from her kitchen, most notably, her smothered chicken that everyone loved. We still use her tattered copy of *The Settlement Cook Book* and her recipes written in pencil on scraps of paper and the backs of checks.

Following in her mother's footsteps, our mother became



Rose Louise Rich Aronson. Courtesy of Rhetta Aronson Mendelsohn.

known as the best cook in Orangeburg. In addition to working every morning at Aronson Awning Company, she cooked three meals a day. We mostly ate at home, only sometimes going to the country club or a local restaurant, Berry's on the Hill. Dinner was in the middle of the day when she and Daddy came home to eat. Daddy went back to work but Mother stayed home. On Saturdays, we had fried chicken and macaroni and cheese, prepared with the expert help of Jessie Mae Palm. Jessie Mae lived in her home near an enclave of relatives with her husband and daughter, Terri. She taught me how to iron and clean windows, a job we always did together.

On Sundays we had rib roast or steak prepared on the grill by Daddy's hands. We enjoyed the bounties of the southern seasons—corn, butter beans, white acre field peas, peaches, figs, pecan deserts. Also, we all enjoyed barbeque from the locally famous Dukes establishments. We ate bacon and ham along with chicken and fish that Papa caught in the nearby lakes and the Edisto River. We ate grits, canned salmon, and Vienna sausages.

Truly, we ate like our southern neighbors but with a few notable exceptions—Granny and Mother did not cook with

bacon grease or store it in a special little can on top of the stove. They always used Fleischmann's margarine. Our menus included things our neighbors knew nothing about—chopped liver, herring, blintzes, bagels, lox, brisket, potato and noodle kugel, matzo balls, matzo brei, and more. So, when we went to the beach every summer, we took along fried chicken, barbeque, and deviled eggs, as well as chopped liver, herring, and brisket. Mother could put on a lovely dinner party at a moment's notice and prepare fabulous bite-size hors d'oeuvres and sweets for cocktail parties. Her recipes reflect a slower pace of life—with time to put love and labor into her cooking. Our Jewish heritage is still very much a part of how we cook today. Although we cook fewer casseroles and sweets, we fall back on Granny and Mother's recipes as delicious and dependable for family meals as well as for company.

In the 1950s, Granny and Mother sold cookies to raise money to build Orangeburg's Temple Sinai. It was no secret that we were one of about twenty Jewish families in Orangeburg. We personally never experienced antisemitism in our small South Carolina community.

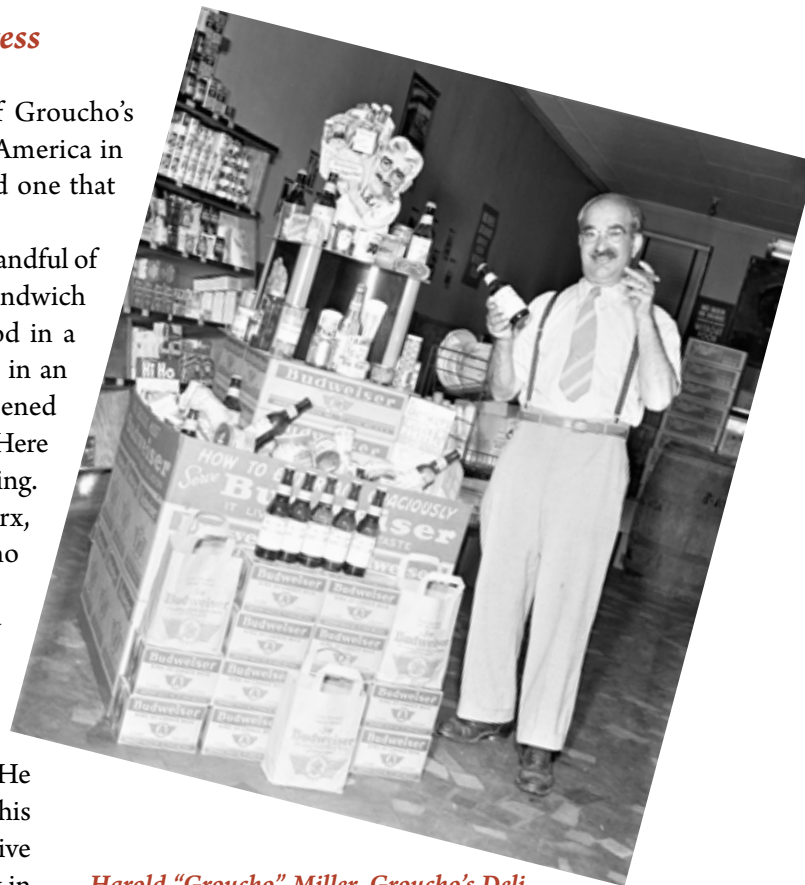
Groucho Miller's Russian Blintzes

by Bruce Miller, from *Kugels & Collards, USC Press*

Harold "Groucho" Miller, my grandfather and founder of Groucho's Deli, was the son of Russian immigrants who arrived in America in 1899. The history of Groucho's name is a story unto itself, and one that can only be told as follows.

Harold "Groucho" Miller came to Columbia in 1940 with a handful of original recipes for potato salad, coleslaw, and various salad and sandwich dressings, most of which were thought up during his childhood in a Philadelphia orphanage. Groucho's son, Ivan Miller, recollected in an interview with the *Columbia Record* in 1986, "When Pop first opened this store, Columbia was a small town, and everything had a label. Here he [Harold Miller] was this really crazy kind of guy. Always joking. Always had a big cigar. A mustache. He looked like Groucho Marx, he talked like Groucho Marx, and to Columbia, he was Groucho Marx. So that is how the name came about."

Throughout the generations, Groucho's Deli has used only the highest quality products and ingredients, which has, in turn, led Groucho's to legendary status. One recipe that never made it to Groucho's Deli menu was learned by Groucho Miller during a stint as a Vaudeville emcee in Philadelphia in the 1920s. He befriended a Russian Jewish comedian who taught him one of his favorite recipes—blintzes—a time-consuming and labor-intensive dish. They were available for sale at Miller's Deli on opening day in 1940. A year later the name was changed to Groucho's Deli.



Harold "Groucho" Miller, Groucho's Deli, Columbia, SC, 1940s. Courtesy of Bruce Miller.

Ezella's Kosher Collards

by Kim Cliett Long, from *Kugels & Collards, USC Press*

This is a story about a great-grandmother, a grandmother, a mother, and her legacy. People often leave their property to their children as an inheritance and in remembrance of them and other ancestors. We also see artifacts reminiscent of the days gone by and other vintage elements that remind us of ancestors in the most vivid ways possible. Such are mesmerizing remnants of the past. This story speaks of such beautiful remnants of family memory, history, and culture, except in this story, they are honored, remembered, and passed on through the sense of taste rather than property or artifacts. It has been said that foodways can take you back in time, helping you remember your past and your roots. I believe this wholeheartedly and soulfully.

The roots of my ancestry lie in the plantation fields of 18th through mid-19th century South Carolina. The story of my maternal great-great-grandmother and that of her enslavement began on one of the state's vast rice plantations. Our family knew only a few snippets of information about her. Her name was Peggy. After gaining her freedom, she boarded with and served as a housekeeper for an unmarried Jewish schoolteacher, Jewel Jacobs of Aiken. In a time of little to no health services for enslaved or newly emancipated women, Peggy died giving birth to a daughter, Ezella, whom Jewel took under her wing and raised. During Ezella's early childhood, Jewel met a young Jewish storekeeper, Saul Goldstein, of Americus, Georgia. Saul and Jewel later married, and Jewel moved to Americus as they established their new home and life together. Ezella relocated with the Goldsteins and Jewel taught Ezella how to keep a home.

Although Ezella was quite skilled in sewing, her greatest gift was cooking. She was well known as a great cook throughout Sumter County, Georgia, for which Americus was the county seat at that time. Ezella was always in demand and was called on to cater many special occasions. She was an exceptional baker and excelled in baking and decorating wedding cakes. Tea cakes and fancy wedding and holiday cookies were her favorites to bake. Ezella created a family tradition with her wedding cookies.

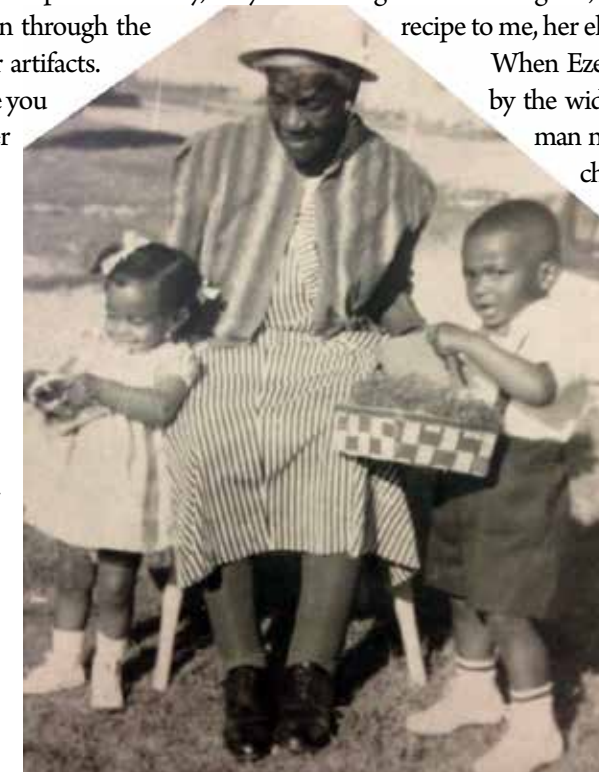
Unable to read and write, Ezella did not use recipes; she later

taught her own daughters to cook by sight, smell, and taste. She decided that only the oldest girl of each generation should be taught to make the famous wedding and holiday cookies. Because there was no recipe, the methodology required strictly knowing the correct consistency for the dough and taste. Many hours ensured that her oldest daughter, Ida Mae, perfected the cookies and retained the commitment to teach the next generation's oldest daughter: her daughter, Willie Mae. Willie Mae passed on the recipe to me, her eldest daughter.

When Ezella was of marrying age, she was courted by the widowed father of one of her best friends, a man named Ruben Hollomon. Ruben had four children with his first wife. They all coexisted well. Ruben and Ezella went on to have twelve more children; seven of the children reached adulthood. Ruben was a natural businessman, who worked hard, saved his money, acquired hundreds of acres of land, beginning as a sharecropper and later becoming a landowner. Ruben died leaving Ezella well provided for as a young, widowed mother with seven children. Once the children reached adulthood, the family moved to Macon, Georgia. This story now has come full circle when Ezella's great-granddaughter came to live in Charleston.

Because Ezella never knew her mother, she poured all her love and affection into her children. She was a nurturing, doting mother

who worked and taught her five daughters her gift of cooking and baking. She was also an exceptional seamstress, another skill she passed on to her daughters. After growing up in a Jewish household, there were many dietary customs that Ezella devoutly observed. She did not keep a strictly kosher kitchen, but she did not serve pork or shellfish in her home. She always referred to her cooking as "kosher." While she was in the Goldstein household, she cooked many southern specialties, attributed to West Africa, but without the typical pork used to season. These dishes included black-eyed peas, all types of greens, collards, mustards, turnips, green beans and cabbage, and other vegetables. It was an honor to enjoy her meals. Everyone marveled at Ezella's ability to make such delectable well-seasoned dishes without pork. Her recipe for healthy collard greens has been passed down.



Ezella Cliett with her first two great-grandchildren, Kim Ydette Cliett and Kerry DeJuan Butts. Courtesy of Kim Cliett Long.

Jewish Life and Cake

by Arnold Wengrow, from *Kugels & Collards, USC Press*

When I was going to Schneider Elementary School in Columbia in the early 1950s, my mother, Sura Wolff Wengrow, instructed me how to identify her when I was asked my parents' occupations. My father, Sam Wengrow, was a dry goods merchant. He owned Wengrow's Department Store in Allendale, where my mother, born in 1908, had grown up. She was to be called a homemaker, never a housewife. "I'm not married to the house," she said.



Sura Wolff Wengrow and some of her elaborately decorated cakes, this page and next. Special Collections, College of Charleston Libraries.

Daughters of Israel, and she ran the shul's gift shop from the time it consisted of a single tall glass cabinet in the downstairs social hall on Marion Street to the spacious built-to-her-specifications emporium in the education wing at Beth Shalom Synagogue on Trenholm Road.

My mother was an efficient, if not an ardent, cook. She kept a thick loose-leaf notebook stuffed with handwritten recipes gleaned from many sources. In it are year-by-year lists she called her Passover order—how many boxes of matzo were used and what kosher meats

Indeed, she was never a stay-at-home mom. My mother always was on the go as a volunteer. We moved to Columbia from Allendale in 1950 so my brother could prepare for his bar mitzvah. But just as

importantly, my mother wanted to plunge deeply into the life of the Beth Shalom Congregation, then known as the House of Peace Synagogue. With only four Jewish families in Allendale, my mother had missed being part of a Jewish community for twenty years, and she was determined to make up for lost time. She was president at least twice of the women's auxiliary known as the

were to be shipped by Greyhound Bus from Charlotte and picked up at the depot on Blanding Street.

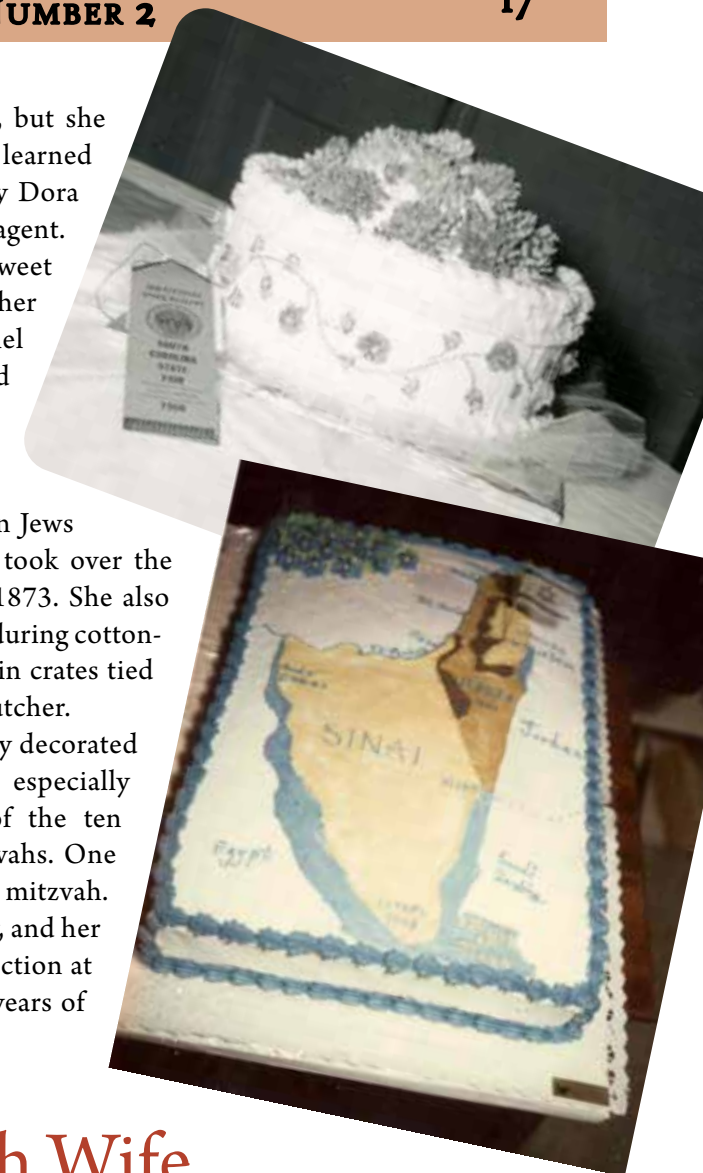
My mother's rule about cooking was that she only prepared one meal a day. That was what she called dinner, a hot meal served in the middle of the day—whether there was anyone at home to eat it or not. In Allendale, my father always came home at noon for this family meal, and there was a strict rotation of what was served each day. Thursday was meatloaf day, and Friday was salmon croquettes, mixed from Double "Q" canned salmon and matzo meal, formed into beautiful little pyramids, coated with matzo meal, and fried until brown and crispy.

When we moved to Columbia, she made dinner every morning, although my father was there only on Thursdays and Sundays. She left a plate for me warming under a big white soup bowl over a simmering pot of water to eat on my own when I came home from school. She was probably off to the shul gift shop. My sister, fourteen years older, was already married in Camden, and my brother, seven years older, was off doing whatever it is big brothers do at Dreher High School. My mother didn't like getting up early in the morning. By the time I was in the fourth grade, I realized that instead of worrying her that I was going to be late for school, I could make breakfast for myself. For supper, there were always plenty of leftovers in the refrigerator for sandwiches. My mother's greatest kitchen legacy was letting me learn to cook for myself, something I enjoy to this day.

Everyday cooking wasn't enough of a challenge for my mother, but she loved the precision and creativity of baking and home canning. She learned to grow tomatoes in Allendale in a girls' Tomato Club organized by Dora D. "Mother" Walker, the state's first county home demonstration agent. Sometime in the 1940s, my mother came across a recipe for a sweet tomato jam spiced with cinnamon and cloves, and it became one of her specialties. She made mandelbread from a recipe given to her by Ethel Young, the wife of Joe Young, another Allendale Jewish merchant. And she was especially fond of a dense and fragrant blueberry cake with a thick streusel topping from a recipe used by her mother, Rachel Pearlstine Wolff.

Mrs. Wolff lived one of those stories that are legend for southern Jews in small towns. Widowed in 1914, with three young children, she took over the businesses her husband had started on Main Street in Allendale in 1873. She also kept a kosher boarding house for Jewish salesmen who needed to stay during cotton- and watermelon-buying seasons. She raised chickens and took them in crates tied to the top of the car to Augusta, Georgia, to be killed by the kosher butcher.

My mother's crowning culinary achievements were her elaborately decorated cakes. They were part of many birthdays and weddings, but she especially enjoyed designing Jewish-themed cakes—Torah scrolls, tablets of the ten commandments, open prayer books—for bris and bar and bat mitzvahs. One mother froze a portion of her son's bris cake and served it at his bar mitzvah. My mother became a go-to baker-decorator for the Jewish community, and her photograph album of her creations, now in the Jewish Heritage Collection at the College of Charleston, is a history in cake of some fifteen or so years of Columbia Jewish life.



A Good Jewish Wife

by Terri Wolff Kaufman, from *the Kugels & Collards blog*

When my mother, Elsie Wolff (o.b.m.), married in 1952, she worked hard at being a good Jewish wife. We four kids didn't understand how diligently she worked until we found the evidence after her passing. Tucked away in our family home were a Hebrew workbook, circa 1950, a how-to-win at bridge book, and some old cookbooks, all with intense study notes in Mom's handwriting. As I examined them, I thought about what they might mean viewed through my mother's whole life.

Elsie Benenson visited her sister and brother-in-law in Columbia, South Carolina, in August 1952. Jeannie and Bob Rosichan fixed her up on a blind date with an architect "with good prospects" from their Tree of Life temple congregation. The two hit it off, and Louis Wolff and Elsie married that December. After honeymooning in Havana, they settled into an apartment downtown in Cornell Arms. As a newlywed,

Elsie formed a community of social touchpoints and closest friends through the Tree of Life and the women in Sisterhood.

I imagine moving to Columbia was quite a sea change for my mom. She had lived and worked in New York City for seven years and loved big-city fashion, food, and culture. According to her, she and her roommates worked all day and went out most nights dining, dancing, and/or dating. I don't imagine cooking was a big thing (or eating, as evidenced by her figure in those days). Before New York, she graduated from LSU with a business degree. And before that, she grew up in small-town Alabama – the youngest of six children in the only Jewish family in town, with an immigrant father and first-generation American mother. While she strongly identified as Jewish (she spent time with her mother's extended family in Augusta, Georgia, and belonged to a Jewish sorority in college), there must have been gaps in her formal Jewish education.

Mom became very active in Sisterhood and remained so for most of her life. In the 1960s and 1970s, I vividly remember her involvement with the annual Holland bulb sales and other fund-raising activities for the temple. At the Heyward Street building, Sisterhood provided flowers for the bima at Friday night services and members took turns baking for every *oneg Shabbat*. Sisterhood also planned and executed holiday events there, such as Yom Kippur break-the-fast and, as I recall, contributed to the annual religious school Purim carnival. (Some of you will relate to this: each of Mom's platters had a strip of masking tape on the bottom with "Wolff" written on it, so she could claim them after an event was over. There must have been a lot of food brought to those activities!)

The women of Sisterhood were also Mom's friends. She went to lunch with them, played bridge and/or tennis with them. They and their husbands hosted cocktail or dinner parties and, in turn, attended my parents' parties. One or more ladies were at our home every week, it seemed: Tobae, Midge, Marian, Evelyn, Evie, Sylvia, Roz, and many others over the years, both in the apartment and after we moved to our permanent home on Westshore Road in 1963.

Dad loved to eat, and Mom loved to cook; it was a creative outlet for her (which I inherited—in later years after I had my own family, she often called me her balabusta). Mom was a "super-taster"—she followed a recipe to a certain point and

then added touches to her taste, which in my opinion made the food delicious. Her cooking was southern, bent toward sweet. Other than the occasional Swanson pot pies my siblings and I got when Mom and Dad went out, all of our meals were homemade.

While every night's dinner was something to look forward to, Mom outdid herself for parties, family birthdays, and holiday meals. The latter usually included a random Jewish student from USC or soldier from Fort Jackson at the table—Mom couldn't stand the idea of anyone being alone

on Thanksgiving or Passover. Over the years, Mom contributed recipes to local cookbooks such as *The Stuffed Bagel* (Hadassah) and *Columbia Cooks with Fun and Flavor*, published by Heathwood Hall Episcopal School.

Mom loved to bake for other people. She made divinity candy (her favorite) and spiced pecans for bridge club, baked jelly cookies for friends' children and grandchildren at Christmas and Hanukkah, and brought pound cakes to every event from *oneg Shabbats* to funeral repasts. There was always a pound cake in the freezer for a quick turn-around in case someone Jewish died.

Looking back, I don't know if the areas of expectation that constituted a "good Jewish wife" of my parents' generation were Dad-driven or Mom's decision—they were both smart, hard-working, and very exacting of themselves and others. But I can tell you that my mother succeeded.



Above: Elsie Benenson Wolff and Louis Wolff at their wedding reception, 1952.

Below: Elsie's portrait and a pound cake made following her recipe, posted on the Kugels & Collards blog.



Legacy

by Laurie Goldman Smithwick, from Kugels & Collards, USC Press

I would love to say that I grew up cooking at my grandmother's knee. That I spent endless hours of my childhood in a steamy, bubbly kitchen dusted with powdery-flecked-shafts-of-light, perched on a stool watching her every move, waiting for those moments when an oversized spoon was touched to my lips for me to learn taste. Well, no. Not quite. I do love to cook, but that story is not my story. All my grandparents died before I was twelve years old. In their place, I had Mattie.

Mattie Culp was born in 1918 in Chester, South Carolina. She had a daughter, three granddaughters, and six great-grandchildren. And she was known to the entire congregation of her African Methodist Episcopal Zion church as "Mother Culp."

Mattie Culp was also the Black woman who worked for my grandparents in Rock Hill, South Carolina. She lived in their house, cleaned, cooked, took care of my mother as a child. She also looked after my cousins, my brother, and me, flawlessly filling for us the role of beloved grandmother.

Mattie taught me the kind of cooking that doesn't have a recipe—although, she didn't actually teach me. Mostly, she cooked while I watched and asked questions like, "How much flour did you just add to those pan drippings to make gravy?" And her answers sounded like this: "What do you mean how much flour? You look at how much drippings you have and you add enough flour. If it tastes right, you added enough." She wasn't being mean or rigid, just sensible, as if to say, "Don't worry about measurements — just cook." Like I needed to concentrate and just do it right.

So, I watched, and ate, and watched, and ate. The best fried chicken I have ever put in my mouth. The flakiest, fluffiest biscuits. Sweet potatoes that tasted more like pudding. The most comforting chicken pot pies. And sometime after college I started trying some of her recipes on my own. This usually

involved a long phone conversation with Mattie where I took extensive notes that didn't make sense as I wrote them: "Then you add your baking powder. Taste it. If it don't taste right, add some more." Some recipes required two phone calls.

I bumbled through and kept trying to serve people dishes that I called "Mattie's (insert food here)." Now, after years of practice, I can make consistently good buttermilk biscuits having never had a recipe in front of me. I can make fried chicken that mostly comes out right. Sometimes I have good gravy to add to the meal, sometimes not.

In doing this, I have come to understand a life lesson

that applies to more than just cooking: if it doesn't taste right before it's cooked, it certainly won't taste right after it's cooked. For me, "right" means that mysterious blend of inexact amounts of salt and spices and secret ingredients that makes it taste exactly like Mattie's.

When Mattie became too ill to cook, it took seven of us to replicate her Thanksgiving meal. Seven people. To put

together a dinner usually prepared by one person. Of course, she was there, coaching us every step of the way. But it felt good to cook for Mattie, and it tasted pretty much just like hers. And we were all very proud of ourselves.

Since 2007, we've had to celebrate Thanksgiving without Mattie. Everyone has a job. I make Mattie's cornbread dressing and Mattie's turkey gravy; my mom makes Mattie's sweet potatoes; my brother makes Mattie's turkey. Everything is delicious, everyone is happy, and I'm grateful to have had so many years with Mattie humming her way around my grandmother's and my aunt's and my mom's kitchens.

But I also feel sad. Sad that Mattie's cooking is no longer an activity but a subject. That her gospel purring is no longer something to listen to but to talk about. That her place at our table is no longer a presence but a legacy.



Laurie Goldman Smithwick and Mattie Culp, Charlotte, NC, 2001. Courtesy of Laurie Smithwick.

Rosenblum family seder, Anderson, SC, 1941
Special Collections, College of Charleston Libraries



Around the Table

"For the Brody family of South Carolina and North Carolina, a family grounded in retailing, Thanksgiving is a special holiday. It provides a chance for extended families separated by distance to reconnect to their youth and for the younger cousins to learn from their uncles and aunts."

—Harold J. Brody and Sheila Brody Cooke in *"The Art of Southern Jewish Entertaining,"* Kugels & Collards, USC Press, 2023

by Alyssa Neely

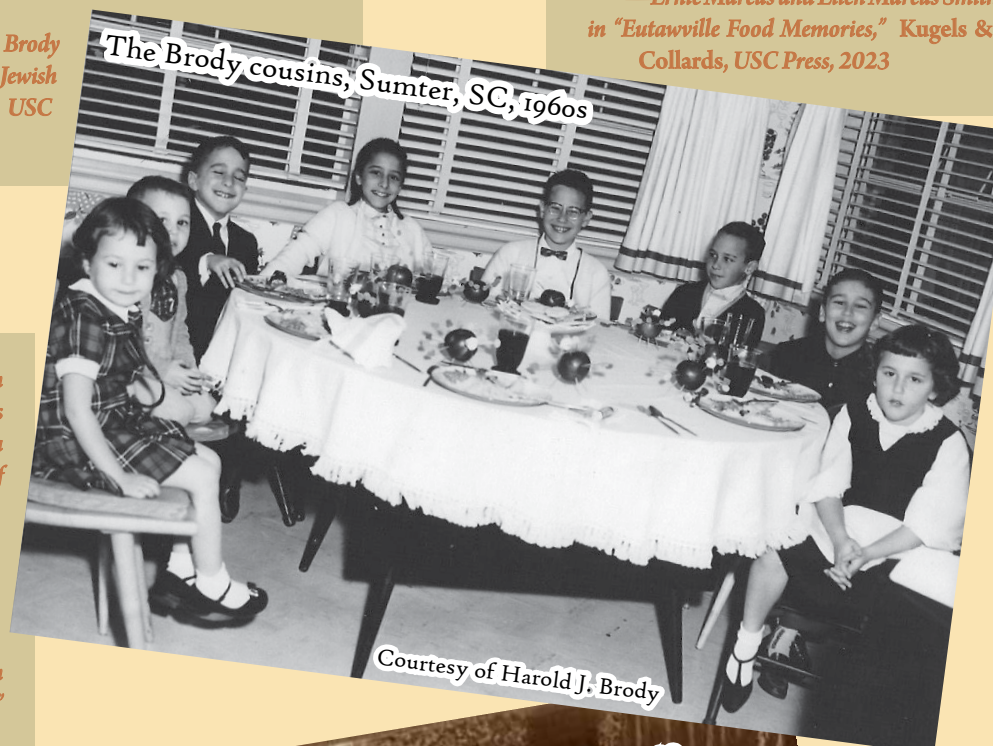
"The most palpable memories revolve around food (what else?)—a mix of traditional South Carolina fare like fried chicken, rice and gravy, okra and tomatoes, and dishes passed down from Eastern Europe."

—Ernie Marcus and Ellen Marcus Smith in *"Eutawville Food Memories,"* Kugels & Collards, USC Press, 2023

"My parents started a family tradition that all of us were to have the Shabbos meal together on Fridays. Mamma cooked a big meal with dessert, and of course we'd have the Shabbos blessings. When we got married and had our own children, we all still came to our parents' house for Shabbos dinner."

—Mickey Kronsberg Rosenblum in *"Mamma Learnerd to Cook,"* Kugels & Collards, USC Press, 2023

The Brody cousins, Sumter, SC, 1960s



Courtesy of Harold J. Brody

Wedding reception, Louise Levi and Harry Marcus, Eutawville, SC, 1949



Courtesy of Ernie Marcus



Rabbi David Karesh and Fort Jackson soldiers, Columbia, SC
Courtesy of Beth Shalom Synagogue, Columbia, SC

Shabbos dinner, Freddie Weinberg and Milton Kronsberg family, Charleston, SC, 1950s



Courtesy of Mickey Kronsberg Rosenblum

Ida Levy and Isidore Gergel family seder, Columbia, SC, ca. 1930



Courtesy of Beverly Gergel Barnett



Seder for the children of Beth Or, Kingstree, SC, 1952
Photo by Jerome Moskow

Seder at Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim, Charleston, SC, 1945



Special Collections
College of Charleston Libraries

The Next Chapter

by Rachel Gordin Barnett, JHSSC Executive Director

“There is nothing permanent except change.” –Heraclitus

This is a column about change and how for almost 30 years, the Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina’s existence was consistent year in and year out. Our longtime executive director, Marty Perlmutter, was at the helm, steering the Society. Dale Rosengarten was building the Jewish Heritage Collection at Addlestone Library, and David Cohen was the treasurer of the organization, working with Marty. The Society’s stalwart members and Pillars enabled the mission of the Society through their financial support and entrusted their family’s history to the Jewish Heritage Collection through donations of family papers, photographs, oral histories, and memorabilia. Foundations supported the Society by funding our key projects, among them the Jewish Merchant Project, cemetery records, Documenting South Carolina’s Synagogues, and other endeavors that have enabled the Society to become what it is today.

The rhythm of the Society was disrupted a few years ago with the retirement of Marty Perlmutter and the appointment of Mark Swick as executive director. Changes continued with Mark Swick’s departure and me taking the position of executive director, followed that same year with the pandemic and monthly Zoom programs. In January 2023, Marty’s passing left an enormous hole in all of our lives. Dale Rosengarten’s retirement in February 2023 and changes in our administration as Enid Idelsohn limits her work with the Society continues the

trend. We have lost past presidents and dear members. Each of the changes has been seismic and painful.

But the thing about change is how an organization handles it and the Society has proven to be resilient. Thirty years is a long run, and we are fortunate that the foundation laid in 1994 is solid, so much so that in 2023, even with many changes, we are thriving as an organization.

Now, the next chapter of the JHSSC is about to begin. Max Daniel will be joining Addlestone Library as coordinator of the Jewish Heritage Collection and Alyssa Neely will take on more responsibility as the JHSSC administrator and editor of the magazine. Our membership is strong, but we know we must engage younger members. This is of utmost importance as we move forward into our next decades. Thankfully, our Pillars and Foundations continue to believe in our mission to “study, preserve, and promote awareness of the history and culture of South Carolina’s Jewish community.”

“What’s dangerous is not to evolve.” –Jeff Bezos

The Society must evolve, and to do that we must attract new members and encourage all who join to become involved. We need an active Board of Directors and I encourage anyone with interest or suggestions to contact me at rgbarnettsc@gmail.com.

Meeting registration, Columbia, October 7–8, 2023

Fee (per person):

Saturday & Sunday \$125

Saturday only \$75

Sunday only \$50

Online at jhssc.org/events/upcoming
with Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express

Or by check, payable to:
JHSSC, c/o Yaschik/Arnold Jewish Studies Program
96 Wentworth Street, Charleston, SC 29424

A block of rooms is reserved until September 6, 2023, at the special rate of \$199 avg./night at the Graduate, 1619 Pendleton Street, Columbia, SC. Call 803-779-7779 or go to their [website](https://www.graduate.com).

Questions:

Enid Idelsohn, idelsohne@cofc.edu
Phone: 843.953.3918; Fax: 843.953.7624

or

Visit jhssc.org/events/upcoming

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