



# SOUTHERN JEWISH HERITAGE

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## Miriam Weiss: The Very Small Lady With the Very Large Hats

By Harriet Krivcher Freiburger

*In 1962, when I first came to know Miriam Weiss, we were both in graduate school at Memphis State University. She, at fifty-seven and I, at twenty-three, discovered each other during studies of Edgar Allan Poe. Prior to that time, I had noticed the very small lady with the very large hats at services at Temple Israel, but I soon became aware of Miriam's keen sense of humor and her commitment to knowledge and service. I learned that Miriam's "basic Judaism" was "living Judaism," its tenets guiding her through every day. Miriam was an avid writer: she authored a book, *A Lively Corpse*, which was published in 1969; completed a draft of a manuscript, *Papa and Mama Had a Store*; and penned many letters to family and friends. Her writings not only document a lifetime of experiences, but also reveal the essence of her intriguing personality.*

Miriam Strauss Weiss' grandparents came from Germany. Her Strauss grandfather arrived in America in 1879, going first to Alabama, and then, in 1884, to Tupelo, Mississippi, where, following the tradition of his family, he had a butcher shop. Her paternal grandfather sold dry goods, first in Tupelo, then in Memphis, where he opened a store on South Main St., later moving to 739 Union Ave. Miriam's parents, Henry Weiss and Nannie Strauss, met in Tupelo and married after a seven-year courtship.

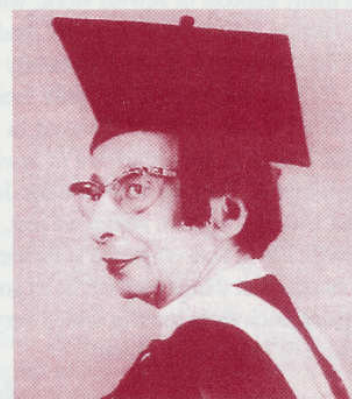
After their marriage, Henry and Nannie lived in Clarendon, Arkansas, for a year; then Nannie returned briefly to Tupelo where Miriam was born in 1905. For the next five years Henry worked in Memphis at B.Lowenstein Bros., after which he again moved his family, this time to Marvell, Arkansas, where Miriam first attended elementary school. Finally the family settled back in Memphis, and Henry and Nannie opened a store of their own at 1382 Poplar, just west of Watkins. Miriam and her younger sister Tessa grew up and remained in Memphis the rest of their lives.

About her maternal grandparents, Miriam wrote: "I have wonderful memories of my grandmother and grandfather. She always called me her prize baby; and I broke the silence barrier at their table. The children were allowed to eat there but were not allowed to talk. I had been talking since I was nine months old, and when I got to the table, I talked. Grandpa told Grandma to make me keep quiet and she refused, said to let me talk. He quite truly said that if I talked, all of the children would. She agreed but...let me talk. So we all talked."

Miriam continued to be "a talker" and established a reputation at an early age for being outspoken and assertive. In one of her letters she notes, "I told them I was going [to college] when I was five years old and saw something about the School of Journalism at the University of Wisconsin, in the paper. I not only said I was going to college but also said that this was the college to which I was going and the course which I would take. Chutzpah."

Having taught herself to read and write long before she entered the first grade in Marvell, Miriam was shocked to learn that her fellow first graders could not do the same. In her manuscript, *Papa and Mama Had a Store*, she recalls: "The teacher of the first three grades, all in the same room, was Mrs.

Dean, a friend of mine. When I suggested that I would be better off in the second grade than in the first with all those backward children who could not even read or write, she agreed, and I went into the second grade. There, too, the students seemed to me to be fairly stupid...I suggested that



*In 1964, Miriam Weiss received a master's degree from Memphis State University.*

*Please see Miriam, Page 3*

JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MEMPHIS AND THE MID-SOUTH - FOUNDED IN 1986  
P.O. BOX 242154, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38124



## President's Message . . . .



Max Notowitz

To conclude the year 2003, my wife, Fannie, and I took a cruise across the Pacific Ocean on a large ship with over 1600 passengers. Judging by the number of people attending the first Friday evening service aboard, we figured a large percentage of the passengers would be Jewish. It was up to us to make contacts and meet people who would help make this

an enjoyable trip.

We were fortunate to meet some interesting people who not only shared our interests but also enhanced our conversations by offering their experiences of life, living conditions, and locations, as well as occupations and avocations.

From an area in California, there was a group of thirteen people, one of whom was a professor at Whittier College. Not only did he share with us a wide range of Jewish subjects, but, as a teacher of Jewish History and Holocaust History at Whittier, he was well informed. The amazing fact is that in places where one might not expect, Jewish subjects get very competent coverage. Another individual in this group was a man who holds national positions on boards of Jewish organizations; he was knowledgeable, involved, and giving of himself and his means to the furtherance of Jewish causes.

A group of six women from Denver, traveling together, coming from various walks of life in their community and active in many aspects of Jewish work, whether religious, communal, academic, or just being involved, made an interesting comparison of the similarities of our community involvements.

There were two CPAs with their wives, from New Jersey, who were also actively involved in their communities, lending their efforts to the betterment of Jewish life and preserving their Jewishness. They, as well as other Jews from the United States and United Kingdom whom we met, helped make us aware that Jewish life in both countries is thriving and resolved some of our concerns that things may not be as good as they look. Personally, I came back from the trip with a very optimistic outlook for the future of Jews and Judaism.

*Max*

The purposes of the Jewish Historical Society of Memphis and the Mid-South are:

- The collection, presentation, exhibition, publication, dissemination and interpretation of material of every kind having reference to the settlement, history and life of Jews in Memphis and the Mid-South.
- The promotion and encouragement of education, research and study of the history of Jews in Memphis and the Mid-South and in relation to American and World History.

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*\*Of Blessed Memory*

## Coming Attractions: Save the Dates!

On Sunday, April 18, Netty Vanderpol, renowned fiber artist and Holocaust survivor, will be in Memphis to speak about her art. Her talk, at 2:00 pm in the Shainberg Gallery at the Memphis Jewish Community Center, is free and open to the public. A meet-the-artist reception will follow her presentation.

The exhibition is sponsored by the Jewish Historical Society of Memphis and the Mid-South, the Memphis chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women, the MJCC, Hadassah, Facing History and Ourselves, Temple Israel, Mr. and Mrs. Herschel Feibelman, Klazmer/Sklar Homes, Mrs. Mildred Schwartz, and Yarniverse.

Ms. Vanderpol works in needlepoint, using soft yarn to show harsh realities. Her works will be on display at the MJCC from April 4-25.

On Sunday, June 6, at the annual meeting of the Jewish Historical Society of Memphis and the Mid-South, Helen Epstein, author of the book *Where She Came From: A Daughter's Search for her Mother's History*, will be the featured speaker.

After the death of her mother, Epstein decided to learn more about her ancestors, who were victims of the Holocaust. Beginning with a twelve-page letter and an unpublished memoir found in her mother's New York apartment, she conducted years of research throughout Czechoslovakia, Austria, and Israel to piece together this portrait of her family's past, despite history's best efforts to annihilate it.



we might try the third grade, and Mrs. Dean beamed and agreed. There I did very well until we suddenly found ourselves back in Memphis...the principal at Maury where I finally ended up...looked at me, checked my age, clucked at the ways of country schools, and put me in first grade. As a result, I spent the next three years standing in the hall for talking in class."

Her many hours spent in Papa's store inspired memories.

She constantly had her nose in a book, which caused her mother frequently to chide, "Go out and play and get some fresh air; you'll ruin your eyes reading all the time." This did not deter Miriam from reading in her favorite spot in the store—on the pants table. As she explained in her manuscript, "The store was heated by a Cole's Hot Blast stove in the area behind the pants table, and it did an inadequate job for that big store; but the heat was just fine at the pants table, and so it was on that table that I established myself, using the pants as upholstery for a couch effect on which I stretched to read....It was also a location which no one else tried to preempt, especially after Papa discovered a mouse nest with babies in it among the pants."

Miriam did graduate from college in June, 1926, as planned, but, as she wrote to update an old friend from her University of Wisconsin years, "I never worked at it [journalism] for any length of time and am rather glad that something curdled along the way. The 'instead of' has made it possible for me to do many things I have wanted to do...I worked for six years at the Hebrew Watchman...When the banks failed to open on March 6, 1933,...that job ended...I found three jobs and chose to go to Sears, Roebuck and Company, as the job there sounded less pedestrian than the other two. I meant to stay not more than six months 'until things opened up,' but it was nearer six years before they did. By that time I had a considerable stake in the business, had progressed from being an inquiry correspondent to being the plumbing and heating estimator and draftsman..." (To become adept at that job, Miriam obtained a degree in plumbing and heating for which she was subsequently licensed.) Miriam stayed at Sears for thirty-two years.

"Working for Sears has made it possible for me to live comfortably and happily, and I am grateful to God for this. I...have known the struggle for a bare existence. When Papa's business failed, in 1927, I had an income of \$75 per month. Papa had no job; Sam (my sister's husband) had just come down with tuberculosis; and [my sister] was working and spending every penny on him. Four of us managed somehow, but it was not easy." Looking back, she wondered "where the years have gone. A great many of them were wasted, as all I did was go to work and come home from work..."



On her tour of the Orient aboard the Pacific Far East Line's freighter *Philippine Bear*, with Captain S.M.A. Rogenes.

A new world opened for Miriam when she returned to college and graduated with a master's degree in English from Memphis State University, "the only person," department head Dr. Walter Evans told her, "who has ever gone through graduate school at Memphis State in English with straight A's." Commercial Appeal interviewer Kenneth Starck reported, "Miss Miriam Weiss lit up a cigaret-size cigar yesterday and said she had lived long enough to know what she wanted to do and that she was going to do it.... Miss Weiss said she decided to take a graduate degree because 'I wanted somebody to talk to. I just thought I'd enjoy talking.'"

Commencement spurred a fresh interest in writing. Her articles appeared in the *Journal of Mississippi History* and the *Mississippi Quarterly*. Prestigious publisher Thomas Yoseloff accepted her book, *A Lively*

*Corpse: Religion in Utopia*. In it, Miriam "approached the Utopian dream from the point of view of religion—at a time when the God is Dead theory was gaining many advocates..." In the book's foreword, she wrote, "Religions have always been a particular interest of mine, and it was natural to choose the religions of Utopia as the, to me, most interesting one area. Because I have been reared in the original monotheistic religion, the Judaic approach necessarily colors much of the thinking...In spite of all the failings of the written Utopias, in spite of man's many failures to reach anywhere near such a goal as yet, I still firmly believe that it is possible to create a land where all is well and in which man can be an individual,

Please see Miriam, Page 4



call it what you will—Utopia, the Messianic Era, the millennium.” On the book’s back cover, the author described herself: “I am, first of all, a general busybody.”

Miriam was a collector of thousands of books and hundreds of cats made of glass, ceramic, wood, and other materials. She also owned a succession of pet cats with names like “Macavity” and “Eliza Doolittle.” She thrived on new experiences. “I like to travel and prefer traveling alone, switching from tour to tour and going my own way...Traveling by myself means only that I do not travel with a friend, any friend. I make the friends as I go along.”

Stamped passports attest to her foreign travels, which included the Netherlands; Greece; Turkey; three trips to Israel; Panama and the Galapagos Isles; by freighter to Japan, the Philippines, and Hong Kong; and three times to Guam. In the United States, she visited Revolutionary War sites in Lexington and Concord; toured Valley Forge and Mount Vernon; walked the Freedom Trail; saw Poe’s homes in Philadelphia and Virginia; sailed the Inside Passage to reach Alaska; explored Charleston, Williamsburg and Charlottesville; journeyed along New England’s coast; and “steamboated” the Mississippi.

On a Lewis and Clark Expedition, sixty-seven-year-old Miriam followed the explorers’ trail from St. Louis to Astoria, Washington, part of which was a three-day float trip on the Missouri.

“It was a wild trip,” Miriam reported to Commercial Appeal columnist Alice Fulbright. “The river was low and we got stuck on a bar ten minutes out. Our float had a little motor but it often conked out. We cooked, ate and slept on the riverbanks. We lost our runabout with the sleeping equipment once—everything happened that could happen...I’m a city sparrow, but I enjoyed it, although it was the first time I’d ever slept out, and I almost froze to death. By the second day, I was wearing my footed flannel pajamas over my clothes. And I’d just fall in the sleeping bag the same way at night.”

Adventures beyond the perimeter of Memphis happened

mostly during summers because the rest of the year was filled with other responsibilities, among them teaching at the downtown Joint University Center. When Temple Israel moved to Massey Road, Miriam became “cicerone of the Shabbasmobile...a MATA bus which we rent on Saturdays to take midtown residents to Temple....The people who use the bus either have no transportation or are afraid to drive that far. I check them on and check them off, pick up, deliver to the pick-up point or wherever anyone decides to get off,

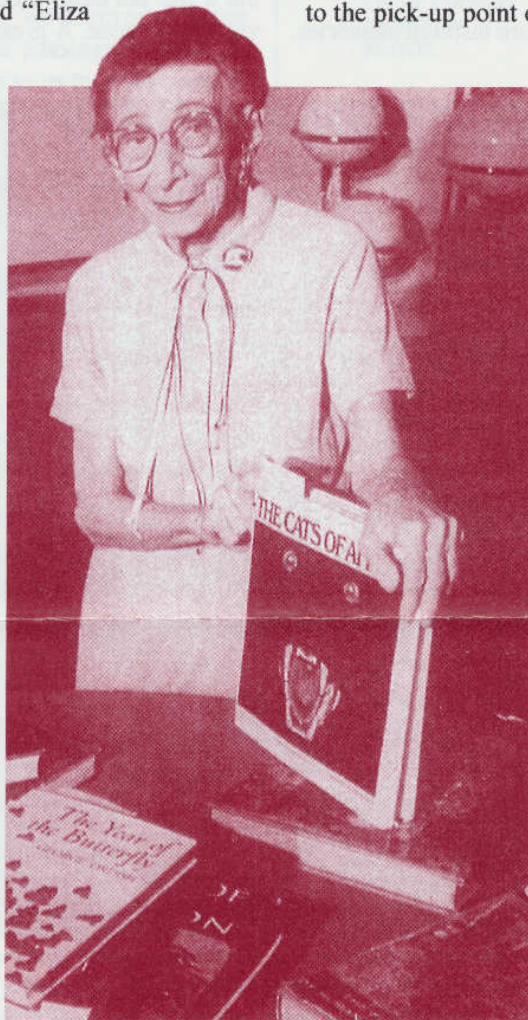
provided it is on the route, and generally nursemaid them...The bus holds 44...and nobody ever stops talking. I bought a battery megaphone, really a bull horn, to be able to communicate.”

Temple Israel remained a constant in Miriam’s life. She laughed at being “an honorary member of the Men’s Club, the only woman, because I bake the special challah for kiddush suppers on Friday nights” and at being “the token Old Lady for Religious School groups.” With a history of eleven years as receptionist on Wednesdays and eighteen years of teaching eighth graders, she commented from a wide perspective, “I was not quite seven on my first day in Religious School...Rabbi Samfield was there then, in February, 1912, and his assistant was Rabbi Fineshriber. There have, in all, been eight rabbis, of whom I have known six. I have attended Religious School or Temple at all three of the buildings which were erected by the congregation for their houses of worship...”

Other organizations were recipients of Miriam’s community

service. She was a district president of B’nai B’rith Women. She received the Max Samfield Memorial Award for her Salon Circle work; the Jewish National Fund honored her in 1985 as their Woman of Valour; and she was a member of Who’s Who of American Women, Who’s Who of the South and Southwest, and Who’s Who in American Jewry. She was named Woman of the Year by Memphis Friends of the Pink Palace in 1979. “I joined the Friends of the Pink Palace Museum the day it was organized and have been a docent ever since...the years having been devoted largely to presenting

*Please see Miriam, Page 5*



*Miriam Weiss donated several hundred books to the Pink Palace Museum library. At 78, she was their oldest living docent.*



lecture demonstrations on reptiles—turtles, lizards, a baby alligator, and snakes, all of which we show live.”

On her seventieth birthday, she became Bat Mitzvah, commenting at the time, “Once one climbs past three score and ten, then everything is gravy as long as one is well and running—which I am.” At seventy-four, after thirty-one years living in the same place, she moved to a new apartment. “I packed over 4000 books, 126 boxes, and unpacked them, thus saving over \$300...I lost ten pounds in the process...I am neither as tall nor as wide or thick as I was all of those years. At seventy-five, this indefatigable lady admonished a friend, “Do not worry about remaining young and spry. I am almost 75 and have found I can keep going where younger ones look in horror and when younger ones have fallen by the wayside. It is really more a matter of point of view...Never, never bother about aging. It will come, and there will be adjustments, but each age has its own compensations.” At seventy-seven, preparing for her third trip to Israel, she weighed 86 pounds, and still demonstrated energy and enthusiasm.

Preparing for her eightieth birthday (some 200 people attended the party which she hosted at Temple Israel), Miriam decided, “I plan to cut down my outside activities beginning

in May...I started working for pay when I was ten, putting up books at a branch library near where we lived. I also worked in our store in emergencies, which were frequent. So I am quite ready to do what I want and nothing else.” During her last years, that is exactly what she did.

Commenting on her advancing age, Miriam wrote, “It seems impossible that I am now crowding 81. People ask how it feels; and I have no answer, oddly enough. There appears to be no special feeling attached to growing a year older after one has passed a certain stage.”

Miriam died in 1989 at the age of 84. In her words: “No one person can change the world. So one does her best, always reserving a quiet corner of herself where she can retire from those stresses, where she can work out reasons for saying yes or saying no, adequate and sound reasons. And NO is a necessary word in any vocabulary.”

In the eyes of all those whose lives she touched, this very small lady with the very large hats did, indeed, change the world. ☆

*Harriet Krivcher Freiburger was born and grew up in Memphis. She has been a resident of northwest Colorado since 1982 and writes about the American West.*

*Miriam designed a crest for the stationery which she used for her correspondence. In her own words, here is a description of the crest: “The heraldic animal is an alley cat - no implications, though I just happen to admire their independence of spirit and have always had them except when I was in school, ...Under the cat is a big hat, because I always wear them when I go out (being 4'11 3/4" tall). The upper left quadrant is a menorah, for B'nai B'rith Women, of which I was District President and Executive Secretary....Upper right, with shears and a slide rule is Sears, Roebuck and Company, where I worked for 32 years, the last 22 as a buyer in the Mail Order department, and most of the buying is done with scissors and a slide rule with a slight assist from whatever sense God has given one. Lower left - I went back to school, to Memphis State, in 1959, 33 years after my BA, for an MA in English. And I did very nicely, thank you....Lower right represents my work at Temple Israel where I am one of the elder stateswomen, which convulses me with internal laughter. I taught Religious School there for 18 years and am presently on three Temple committees and am an honorary member of the Men's Club, the only woman, because I bake the special challah for kiddush suppers on Friday nights. The lions are the lions of Judah, and the Hebrew, transliterated, 'Dayemu. It would have been enough,' referring to my several careers.”*

**“The Heraldic Animal is an Alley Cat...”**





# Archives Preserve History of Local Jewish Community

Consider yourself a historian if you are collecting family history. You may be saving some personal mementos strictly for their sentimental value. Some of these items, however, may have historical value. The best way to ensure that they will be safely preserved and thus be available to future generations for reference and research is to place them in an archive.

In the past thirty years at least sixty temples and synagogues throughout the United States have been developing private local and regional religious repositories or archives. In Memphis, Temple Israel has set up such a repository to serve the local Jewish community. It also houses the records of the Jewish Historical Society of Memphis and the Mid-South.

The Temple's Archive Department concentrates on gathering history of the entire Memphis Jewish community, its institutions, organizations, and families, plus life cycle and fund raising events. A few examples of the current holdings are: personal collections from the Peres family and the Sam Cooper family; an 1881 certificate of Confirmation from Jennie Wolf; the cornerstone from the Rex Club; recordings of Rabbi James A. Wax's radio show; documents from organizations including Hadassah, Salon Circle, and Pi Tau Pi Fraternity; the original manuscript of *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt* by Selma Lewis; negatives from the photographs taken by Barry Markowitz; back issues of *The Hebrew Watchman*, some of which are the only existing copies from the 1940's; scrapbooks; and numerous photos and news articles.

Starting in 1976, Shirley Feibelman began preserving memoirs of Temple Israel by rescuing the treasures she found collecting dust in the basement of the building at Poplar and Montgomery. She packed and moved these treasures to make sure they would serve as the core of a collection in the new building on Massey Road. She and Lil Cohen, the Temple librarian at that time, spent hours cataloging, identifying, and processing numerous boxes containing over a hundred years of Memphis Jewish history, and later, Ruth Kahn assisted in

making decisions on which documents would be saved. In 1987, the Temple Board of Directors created the Archival Committee to ensure that this work would be perpetuated. In July, 2002, Linde Feibelman (Shirley's daughter-in-law) took over the responsibility of managing the Archives, after attending four days of special training at the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati.

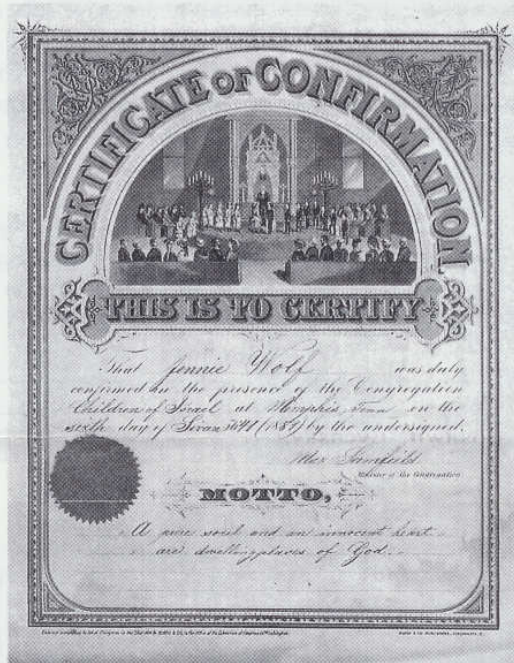
Some individuals may find it difficult to determine which family items might be suitable for donation to the Archives, and it may seem equally difficult to part with items of sentimental value.

Unfortunately, important pieces of history often have been lost through deterioration in hot attics or damp basements, through damage by insects, or by being discarded during a move to another residence. In some families, younger generations may not recognize the historical value of the mementos of parents and grandparents. Thus, contacting the Archives is an essential step in the process of preserving one's precious family artifacts.

Potential donors to the Archives will be asked to bring their items to Temple Israel in order to assess whether they are of historical significance and if so, where they should be placed. Items related to the Memphis community would belong in a local collection,

whereas an item of national interest might be suitable for the collection of the American Jewish Archives. In addition, some university collections specialize in certain items: the archival libraries at Louisiana State University and University of Southern Mississippi, for example, are interested in developing the history of southern businesses through receipts, purchase orders, advertisements and photographs.

An item to be accessioned by the Archives at Temple Israel is accepted in writing; the donor then signs a legal document called a gift deed. The item is catalogued, encapsulated in a mylar jacket as needed, and placed in a deacidified box. Everything possible is done to slow the process of deterioration. If a family chooses to retain their original documents, they will be given information on protection or restoration of their items and permission will be requested to digitally scan the item so



*Certificate of Confirmation of Jennie Wolf, 1881*





Framed picture of Michael Charles Costillo, Vice-Chairman of Democratic Committee in Memphis during Civil War. Died of Yellow Fever during Epidemic of 1878. (Photo from a painting)

that a copy can be kept on file for reference purposes.

Because Judaism emphasizes religion in the home, archivists can use parts of a family's private collection to exemplify traditional Jewish life over different generations. Sometimes treasures are loaned for a special display, such as the timeline created for Temple Israel's "Drama of the Past," the first of three-special events commemorating its 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Heirlooms from the Boshwit, Evensky, Goldsmith, Kaplan and Seessel families demonstrated both similarities to and differences from life today. Exhibits from the Archives included a copy of Rabbi Jacob Peres' 1864 Naturalization Certificate, Rabbi Max Samfield's Bible given to him by the Sunday School in 1873, the 1873 Deed of a Family Pew purchased, and invitations to three dedications of Temple Israel's buildings (1885, 1916, 1976).

Temple Israel's Archive Department receives thirty or more requests yearly. Items of interest that have led scholars to the Archives include the Temple pipe organs; Rabbi Samfield's letters, sermons, articles and activities related to Jewish-Christian relations in Memphis from about 1860-1915; and Jewish participation in women's suffrage in 1919. The Archives has received unique requests such as one from the San Francisco Thomashefsky Theater for any vintage posters and playbills.

Authors have requested data from Temple Israel's archives for their historical studies about Memphis Jewry and traditions. A notable example is Selma Lewis for her book, *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt*. Julian Preisler's book, *Pioneer American Synagogues: A State by State Guide* featured Temple Israel. Rabbi Gary Zola and Dr. Lance Sussman solicited pictures depicting everyday events for *Reform Judaism in American: A Pictorial History*.

Since the surge of interest in genealogy, the Archives has received many international letters, e-mails and phone calls.

On the Internet, an Israeli genealogist asked for a translation of the Hebrew on a tombstone in the Baron Hirsch Cemetery. A Temple Archives volunteer happened to read the request and called Baron Hirsch. Cantor Skopp went to the cemetery, translated the stone, and the information was relayed to the Israeli genealogist, who was overwhelmed at this success.

To learn more about archives, consult the Memphis/Shelby County Library for books and periodicals or search "archives" or "family collections" on the Internet. For information about donating your items, phone Temple Israel, 901-761-3130, and ask for the Archives; or contact Harvey Reisman, 901-767-1741, Archives Chairman of the Jewish Historical Society of Memphis and the Mid-South. ☆

Contributors to this article were Linde Feibelman, Lois Fingerett, Margery Kerstine, and Mary B. McArdle.

**The United States of America**  
Sixth Judicial Circuit

District Court of the United States  
Western District of Tennessee

I, A. G. MATHEWS, Clerk of the District Court of the United States, for the Western District of Tennessee, do hereby certify that the paper \_\_\_\_\_ hereto attached, is  
a full, true, perfect and correct copy of the original. Order of Court made and  
entered by the Circuit Court of the United States on September 13,  
1864. \_\_\_\_\_ in said Court  
as the same now appears of record and upon the files in my office, in the following cause, to-wit:

IN THE MATTER OF THE NATURALIZATION  
OF JACOB J. PERES.

In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto written my name and affixed the Seal of said Court,  
at my office in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ Memphis \_\_\_\_\_ Tennessee,  
this 14th \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ October \_\_\_\_\_ A. D. 1919, and of  
the Independence of the United States the 144th \_\_\_\_\_ Year.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk.

AUTHENTICATION

I, JOHN E. McCAILL, a Judge of said Court, do hereby certify that A. G. MATHEWS,  
whose genuine signature appears to the foregoing certificate is, and was at the date of the same  
Clerk of said Court and that his attestation is in due form.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Judge of the District Court of the United States  
for the District aforesaid.

Naturalization Papers of Jacob Peres  
(copy of 1864 original obtained in 1919)



## SJHS Conference in Memphis Was a Triumph!

The return of the Southern Jewish Historical Society to Memphis was certainly a triumph. In 1988 the conference was held in Memphis and it gave birth to the Jewish Historical Society of Memphis and the Mid-South. In 2003, the Memphis JHS was one of the sponsoring organizations for the conference. The delegates left with an overwhelming feeling of warmth and hospitality as well as pleasure in visiting many of the city's highlights, including a number of its synagogues. Our visitors were treated to some of the highlights of Memphis. They visited the National Civil Rights Museum, the Marilyn and Jack Belz Judaica and Oriental Museum at Peabody Place, Temple Israel for dinner, services, and a tour of the Adler Museum, Beth Shalom for a tour of the Blytheville windows and the colorful Klezmer band of Steve Wachtel, and Baron Hirsch for a magnificent banquet where they heard two of our famous three cantors (John Kaplan and Aryeh Samberg).

Although the weekend programs were planned primarily for out-of-town delegates, there were many, many Memphians who participated and enjoyed the varied panels, speakers and other activities. The co-mingling of our guests with our host city inhabitants was really a delight. Memphians thoroughly enjoyed listening to some of the local participants, such as Rabbis Harry Danziger, Joel Finkelstein, Micah Greenstein, Levi Klein, Peter Light, Nosson Schreiber, and Lawrence Zierler, Shelby County Library Memphis Room Curator, Patricia La Pointe, Bornblum Executive Director, David Patterson, Maestro David Loebel, former Blues Foundation President David Less and tours led by Commercial Appeal feature writer Perre Magness and Center of Southern Folklore Director, Judy Peiser

There were also people with Mid-South roots, such as Dr. Stewart Rockoff, History Director of the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, Gene Dattel, author, financier and educator from Ruleville, MS; Bill Ferris co-founder of Center for Southern Folklore; Marcie Cohen Ferris, previously at the University of Mississippi and now teaching with husband Bill at the University of North Carolina; and also formerly with University of Mississippi, Jennifer Ann Stollman. Along with these speakers who had local roots were such national figures as television cooking maven Joan Nathan; Ellen Frankel, CEO and Publisher of the Jewish Publication Society, International B'Nai Brith Executive vice-president Dan Mariaschin, historian Dr. Cornelia Wilhelm from Germany's University of Munich, Brandeis professor Stephen Whitfield, University of South Florida's Dr. Mark Greenberg and author Emily Bingham.

All of the above participants provided a memorable weekend for Memphis. It was a convention that was supported by the entire community. And the entire community enjoyed having the SJHS in our city. There has been a great deal of enthusiastic correspondence following the conference from the delegates expressing their appreciation for the ever present hospitality.



**SOUTHERN  
JEWISH HERITAGE**

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