



## Natchez Conference to Explore Jewish Life in Southern Hinterland

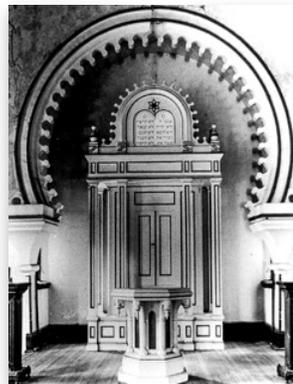
The 2016 SJHS conference in Natchez will be especially memorable. With the theme “Jews in the Southern Hinterland,” the conference will focus on the experience of Jews in the small towns and rural areas of the South. How appropriate that it will take place in the smallest city with the smallest Jewish community ever to host the SJHS. Natchez has a long and rich Jewish history and will provide the perfect venue to examine how Jews adapted to life and thrived in the small-town South. Natchez’s Temple B’nai Israel, our home congregation for the conference, is a testament to the resilience and commitment of small Jewish communities to survive amidst demographic changes.

The conference will begin on Friday morning with a special day of touring as we travel by bus from Jackson to Natchez, stopping along the way in the historic towns of Vicksburg and Port Gibson, home to once-thriving Jewish communities. Once we arrive in Natchez, we will hear presentations about the development of the Jewish community in this river town in the southwestern corner of Mississippi. After Friday night services in the historic and beautiful sanctuary of Temple B’nai Israel, journalist Robin Amer will present the SJHS Helen Stern Cultural Encounter, a multimedia performance based on her personal connection to the shrinking Natchez Jewish community.

cornerstone laying ceremonies and Purim balls. Our luncheon keynote speaker, Stephen Whitfield, will examine the dark side of Jewish-gentile relations by looking at how Jewish political and cultural leaders responded to the Ku Klux Klan. Saturday panels will also discuss the impact of natural disasters and disease outbreaks on small southern Jewish communities, and how individual family histories can shed light on the larger themes of southern Jewish history.

We especially want conference attendees to enjoy this jewel of a city, so we have set aside a block of time Saturday afternoon for you to visit Natchez landmarks. You can choose to participate in a special Jewish tour of Natchez or explore other sites related to the city’s antebellum history. That night, the city’s downtown is your playground with plenty of options for dinner and drinks. The conference concludes on Sunday with panels dealing with southern Jewish memoirs and southern Jewish congregations interacting with the non-Jewish world.

See pages 3 and 7 for a full conference schedule and answers to your transportation questions. The conference registration form is on page 8, or you can go to [jewishsouth.org](http://jewishsouth.org) and register online. We urge you to register by October 1 to enjoy the Early Bird rate.



Top: B’nai B’rith dance, Vicksburg, 1920s. Bottom left: Interior of Port Gibson’s Gemiluth Chassed synagogue, built in 1892. Bottom right: Robin Amer. *Courtesy of Institute of Southern Jewish Life*

Saturday’s events will kick off with a panel exploring public interactions between Jews and non-Jews, including synagogue

We hope you can join us in Natchez, November 4–6, for what promises to be an historic conference!

### Reserve Your SJHS Conference Hotel Rooms Now!

Thursday night in Jackson: We have reserved rooms at the Jackson Hilton for \$107 (plus taxes). Call 1-888-263-0524 to request reservations, or go online to [hiltonjackson.com](http://hiltonjackson.com) and place the group code where prompted. Group Code: ISJL11.

Friday and Saturday nights in Natchez: We have reserved rooms at the Natchez Grand Hotel for \$139 per night (plus taxes), including full breakfast and free parking. Call 1-866-488-0898 and mention the SJHS group rate.



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## President's Message By Ellen M. Umansky



I'm looking forward to the SJHS conference in Natchez this fall for a number of reasons. First, most of our recent conferences have been in large and medium-sized cities, while this year we will visit one of the South's smallest Jewish communities. Although most southern Jews today are city-dwellers, as Lee Shai Weissbach observed in his *Jewish Life in Small-Town America*, "it would be a mistake to think that the full story of the American Jewish experience can be told without considering the history of small-town Jewish life." Indeed, well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the great majority of Jewish communities in the U.S. were "smaller ones in less prominent cities and towns," including river ports of the South such as Vicksburg (which we'll visit by bus) and Natchez.

Second, although the Natchez Jewish community has undergone population decline (it's been decades since it was large enough to support a full-time rabbi), historically it is one of the most significant Jewish communities in the South as well as the oldest Jewish community in Mississippi. Although they first formally organized in the 1840s, Jews began to settle in the Natchez territory in the early 1700s when it was still under French rule. The community is notable not only for its early-18<sup>th</sup>-century origins, but also for its fierce support of the Confederacy, considerable economic growth after the Civil War, and early embrace of Reform Judaism, with Temple B'nai Israel becoming a charter member of the Union of American Hebrew Congregation (since renamed the Union of Reform Judaism) in 1873. Its 1905 neo-classical building is among the most beautiful structures in this jewel-like city, with soaring ceilings, stained-glass windows, an Italian marble ark, and a pipe organ dating back more than a century.

Third, 2016 is an especially opportune time to visit Natchez, as it is currently celebrating its 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary and has a wide range of special events taking place throughout the year. And finally, over 30 years ago, as a young academic teaching at Emory University, I got to know and write about Paula Ackerman, widow of Rabbi William Ackerman, who had been rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel in Meridian, Mississippi, and before that, of Temple B'nai Israel in Natchez. After her husband's death in 1950, Mrs. Ackerman accepted Beth Israel's request to become its spiritual leader, a position she held until 1953. As such, she became the first woman to assume religious leadership of a mainstream Jewish congregation. Though Meridian was Mrs. Ackerman's home, she always felt a special attachment to Natchez and a Jewish community that she remembered as one of the finest in the South. I've wanted to visit Natchez ever since.



Moses store, Natchez, 1880s. Courtesy of Institute of Southern Jewish Life

## Networking in New York

The College of Charleston's Pearlstine/Lipov Center for Southern Jewish Culture hosted an informal happy hour during the American Jewish Historical Society Biennial Scholars' Conference in New York in June.



Left: Colleagues gather for conversation. Right: CSJC Associate Director Shari Rabin, Anton Hieke (University of Halle-Wittenberg), and Cornelia Wilhelm (Emory and Ludwig-Maximilians University). Courtesy of Pearlstine/Lipov Center for Southern Jewish Culture

# Jews in the Southern Hinterland

Southern Jewish Historical Society 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference

Natchez, Mississippi, November 4–6, 2016

Stuart Rockoff and Michael Cohen, Conference Program Chairs

## Friday, November 4

### **9 am–3:15 pm – Bus tour from Jackson to Vicksburg, Port Gibson, Natchez**

Includes on-bus lectures on delta Jewish history

- ▶ 10:30–11:30 am – Visit Anshe Chesed and Cemetery, Vicksburg
- ▶ Noon–1 pm: Lunch at B'nai B'rith Club, Vicksburg
- ▶ 1:15–1:45 pm – Ride from Vicksburg to Port Gibson
- ▶ 1:45–2:15 pm – Visit Temple Gemiluth Chessed, Port Gibson
- ▶ 2:15–3:15 pm – Ride from Port Gibson to Natchez

### **1 pm – SJHS chartered bus departs Jackson airport for 2-hour direct trip to Natchez**

### **3:15–4:30 pm – Welcome to Natchez at Temple B'nai Israel**

- ▶ Teri Tillman, “B'nai Israel and Natchez Jewish History”
- ▶ Jennifer Stollman, “Natchez Jewish Women”

### **4:30–5:30 pm – Check in at hotel**

### **5:30–6:45 pm – Dinner at Rolling River Bistro**

### **7–8:30 pm – Shabbat Services and Presentation, Temple B'nai Israel**

- ▶ Services led by ISJL Rabbi Jeremy Simons
- ▶ SJHS Helen Stern Cultural Encounter: Robin Amer, “Growing Up with the Last Jews of Natchez,” multimedia performance exploring what traditions, culinary and otherwise, might disappear when a community is gone

## Saturday, November 5

### **7:45 am – Shabbat Service**

### **9–10:15 am – Standing on Ceremony: Jews & Gentiles in the South**

Chair: TBD

- ▶ Sam Gruber, “Jews, Masons, and Cornerstone Laying Ceremonies for Synagogues in the South”
- ▶ Kay Goldman, “The Grandest Masquerade of the Season: Purim and Other Social Occasions as Opportunities for Jews and Non-Jews to Intermingle in 19th-Century Texas”

### **10:30 am–Noon – Acts of God: Responding to Epidemics & Disasters in Southern Jewish Communities**

Chair: TBD

- ▶ Anton Hieke, “Revisiting Yellow Fever in Southern Jewish Communities”
- ▶ Michael Cohen, “Lost in the Flood: The Story of Washing Away of Jewish Life in Bayou Sara, Louisiana”
- ▶ Marlene Trestman, “Jewish Orphans of the Southern Hinterland: The Geographic and Social Journeys of the Children Who Lived in New Orleans’s Jewish Orphans Home, 1856–1946”

### **12:30–1:30 pm – Luncheon at Carriage Hall**

- ▶ Speaker: Stephen Whitfield, “Jews against the Ku Klux Klan”  
Introduction by Macy Hart

### **1:45–3 pm – Panel Discussion: Family History & Jews in the South**

Moderator: Stuart Rockoff

- ▶ Sally Wolff King, “The Wolff Family: Two Generations of Jewish Life in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas”
- ▶ Clara Silverstein, “Bertha and Benjamin: A Love Story”
- ▶ Janice W. Fernheimer and Beth Goldstein, “Sharecropping Tobacco in Kentucky: A Narrative of ‘Jewgrass’ Identity”

### **3–3:45 pm – General Membership Meeting**

### **3:45–6 pm – Guided Natchez Outing Options**

- ▶ Jewish Natchez Tour (includes Natchez Jewish Cemetery, Under the Bluff, homes of former Jewish merchants). Led by Mimi Miller and Teri Tillman
- ▶ William Johnson House
- ▶ Grady Photography Collection at First Presbyterian Church
- ▶ Longwood Home
- ▶ Melrose Plantation

### **6 pm – Dinner on your own**

## Sunday, November 6

### **9 am – Early bus departs for 2-hour trip to Jackson airport**

### **9–10:15 am – Southern Synagogues & the Gentile World**

Chair: Ellen Umansky

- ▶ Shari Rabin, “Judge, Jury, Jews: Southern Synagogues in Postbellum Courts”
- ▶ Joshua J. Furman, “The Door is Always Open to Men and Women of Goodwill: Celebrating Brotherhood Week in the Bible Belt, 1945–1975”

### **10:30–11:30 am – Speak, Memory: Conversations with Our Grandparents**

Moderators: Dale Rosengarten and Adam Meyer

- ▶ Marcus D. Rosenbaum, *Heart of a Wife: The Diary of a Southern Jewish Woman*
- ▶ Henry M. Seiden, *Grandpa White’s Diary: A Jewish Immigrant in 19th-Century America*
- ▶ Bryan E. Stone, *Memories of Two Generations: A Yiddish Life in Russia and Texas*

### **12:30 pm – Bus departs for 2-hour trip to Jackson airport**

# Dallas Jewish Historical Society Receives War Letters

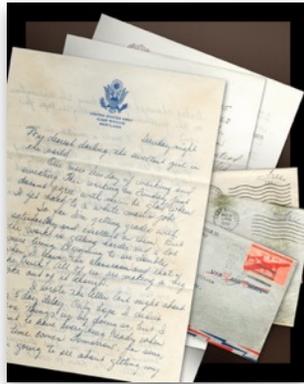
By Harriet P. Gross

Debra Polsky received a phone call in March from Patricia Titcher Harrel saying, “We have these letters...” Harrel wondered if the Dallas Jewish Historical Society’s executive director could recommend a good home for a cache of her parents’ wartime correspondence. Polsky was quick to reply, “Bring them right over!” The new acquisition arrived when Harrel and her husband made a recent visit to Dallas from their home in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The collection, a combination of history and romance, includes hundreds of letters exchanged by Sgt. Ellis Titcher and his wife, the former May Levy, throughout his stateside and overseas service during World War II, all meticulously arranged in chronological order.

Ellis and May (fondly called “Mike”) met after he was called to active duty at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, in October 1942. A Louisiana native, he wrote in his military memoir—which accompanies the correspondence—about the Army Specialized Training Program. “This was a wonderful opportunity for me to continue my education. So I signed up. Here . . . I was becoming a member of the ASTP at Texas A&M in College Station. Me—from LSU, becoming an Aggie?” The couple married on July 20, 1944, and he shipped out in November. Patricia was born on July 13, 1945.

Polsky says the letters provide excellent glimpses of everyday life during the war, both in Texas and in Europe, and “show how much the couple loved each other.” Notes DJHS archivist Alexis Joanna Ferguson, “Because wartime mail was delivered sporadically, Ellis



Courtesy of Dallas Jewish Historical Society

numbered every letter to make sure May got them all and read them in order. And she answered every one!” Ellis’s letters detail his experiences in England (where he was stationed during several bombings), France, Belgium, and Germany, where he walked on Adolph Hitler Street. In one letter, he reported that his wartime pay was \$20.70 per month, calling it “more than enough.” In addition to telling how she loved and missed her husband, May’s letters discuss everyday activities at home: playing bridge, shopping, even the bus schedules for getting around town.

The original Titches came to the United States from Germany (the last name is a form of “Deutsch”) and made their first home in Port Gibson, Mississippi, before moving to Texas. Although all Titches are

now gone from Dallas, its Titcher-Goettinger department store was once as well known to city residents as Neiman-Marcus, and is fondly recalled by old-timers. Ellis donated much store memorabilia to the DJHS before he and May moved to New Mexico after their long-time residence in Dallas. He passed away in 2015 at age 92.

DJHS hopes to have the entire collection digitized by Veterans Day of 2017. And it is offering this opportunity: Is there a *Rambler* reader interested in turning this collection into a book? If so, please send a brief proposal to the Dallas Jewish Historical Society, 7900 Northaven Road, Dallas, Texas 75230. For more information on DJHS and this collection, visit [djhs.org](http://djhs.org) or email [info@djhs.org](mailto:info@djhs.org).

*Harriet Gross is a Texas Jewish Post columnist and lifetime member of the Dallas Jewish Historical Society.*

## Mobile to Host Mémorial de la Shoah Exhibit and Activities



The History Museum of Mobile will offer the exhibit *Filming the Camps: From Hollywood to Nuremberg*, August 29, 2016–January 16, 2017. On loan from Mémorial de la Shoah, Paris, France, the exhibit features the stories of three film directors—John Ford, Samuel Fuller, and George Stevens—as they documented Nazi atrocities during WWII. The exhibit displays footage shot at the concentration camps, as well as vignettes with the filmmakers who struggled to cope with the impact and meaning of the horrific scenes they encountered.

Accompanying the exhibit, Mémorial de la Shoah will sponsor a workshop for educators on Saturday, September 24. The movie *Filming the Camps: John Ford, Samuel Fuller, George Stevens* will be screened that evening, followed by questions and answers with historian Christian Delage, film director and exhibit curator.

The Gulf Coast Center for Holocaust and Human Rights Education plans a number of educational activities in connection with the exhibit. The Center for War and Memory at the University of South Alabama will host a conference titled “The Holocaust in Memory and History” on September 7 featuring presentations by local scholars, a roundtable discussion, and keynote speaker Dr. Brad Prager. Other activities include a lecture by Dr. Dan Puckett, chair of the Alabama Holocaust Commission, on October 18; a Sunday afternoon film series at Spring Hill College; Roger Grunwald’s theater piece *The Mitzvah Project* on October 20; Matt Rozell’s presentation “Photographs from a Train Near Magdeburg” on October 24; and a lecture by Dr. Paul Bartrop on November 15.

The Center thanks SNCF America, Inc. (French National Railways), principal sponsor of these activities. Other sponsors include the History Museum of Mobile, Mémorial de la Shoah, Mobile Public Library, Mobile Jewish Film Festival, University of South Alabama, Spring Hill College, and University of Mobile. For more on the exhibit and related activities, contact the History Museum of Mobile at 251.208.7508. For museum information, visit [museumofmobile.com](http://museumofmobile.com).

*The exhibition, curated by historian and film director Christian Delage, was designed, created, and circulated by Mémorial de la Shoah (Paris, France) and made possible through the generous support of SNCF.*

# Life as the Only Jewish Family in an All-Black Town

By Jo Ivester

*"Did it hurt?" asked the boy standing in line behind me in the school lunchroom.*

*"Did what hurt?" I answered, somewhat confused.*

*"Your horns. When they sliced 'em off. What did it feel like?"*

I didn't know whether to laugh or get angry. We were only ten years old and my friend seemed genuinely interested, not like he was making fun of me. He'd never met anyone Jewish before and didn't know what to expect. Jews were few and far between in Mound Bayou, the small, all-black town in the Mississippi Delta where we lived back in 1967. My father moved us there from Boston when he became the medical director of a new clinic. My mother taught English at the local high school. I was the only white student at my junior high.

We were part of a tradition of Jewish civil rights workers heading south to register African American voters and to teach their children. Many of the college students and young adults who flocked to Mississippi during the Freedom Summer of 1964 were Jewish, as were the doctors and lawyers who supported their efforts. Even as a ten-year-old, I'd been told of this tradition in glowing terms, my parents proud of our heritage.

What we didn't discuss was what it would be like to leave our Jewish roots behind, for we were not a particularly religious household. Our menorah looked beautiful—against the background of our Christmas tree. We looked forward to Passover—primarily because we loved matzo. As the only Jewish family in Mound Bayou, however, those small traditions grew in importance. We missed our rye bread, especially my mother. Maybe she loved the way it tasted or maybe it represented the life she'd lost, but our meals were incomplete without it. When a friend sent us six loaves of bread, Mom's eyes teared up as she opened the box.

Given how much she loved her Jewish bread, it may seem strange that we didn't seek out the Jewish community in the next town over. Had we done so, we might have met some wonderful people and



Top: Author Jo Ivester with parents Aura and Leon Kruger, Mound Bayou, 1967. Middle: Aura Kruger teaching at Mound Bayou's JFK High. Bottom: Store on outskirts of Mound Bayou.

*From the Kruger family photo album*

found some delicious bread. But our isolation was intentional. The relationship between Jews and African Americans is long and complex, and my parents worried that our getting involved with a temple might offend our black neighbors. As a child, I found this quite confusing. Hadn't the Jews once been slaves? Weren't we still discriminated against and thus empathetic to the difficulties faced by African Americans? More than that, hadn't many of the civil rights workers been Jewish?

For the black community in Mound Bayou, this history didn't matter. Our friends believed that because Jews were white, they were not to be trusted. Most of the folks in town didn't think about the Jewish shopkeepers who had opened their stores to the black population when nobody else would do so. What they remembered was that even in those stores that were open to them, they could only shop during limited hours and when they did, white customers would be waited on first. It didn't occur to our African American friends that the Jews were often scrambling to fit in, fearful lest they attract the attention of the KKK.

My mother helped her students recognize that just as they were the target of anti-black prejudice, so Jews were the target of antisemitism. Introducing Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice*, she shared the famous lines, "I am a Jew . . . If you prick us, do we not bleed?" Then, once her students were familiar with the speech, she had them substitute the words "I am black" for "I am a Jew."

My best friend once said to me, "Jo, I'm glad you moved here. Otherwise, I might never have met a Jew." We may never have stepped away from our Jewish heritage for a time, but in so doing, we helped our black community to understand it.

*Jo Ivester's award-winning memoir, The Outskirts of Hope, tells the story of her family's two years in Mound Bayou during the 1960s. She recently completed a national book tour and was featured on NPR's "Author's Corner." She is now working on a new book, focusing on her transgender son.*

## NEWS AND NOTES

### Congregation Mickve Israel in Savannah Wins Museum Award

The Coastal Museums Association of Savannah, Georgia, recently recognized exceptional achievement by local museums and cultural institutions during the past year. The Award of Excellence in Exhibition was presented to Congregation Mickve Israel for the Gutstein Museum Renovation Project, which modernized and updated the museum's display of the unique history of the oldest Jewish congregation in the South (see *The Rambler*, Spring 2015). The renovation included an improved and fully archival display for Mickve Israel's two 15<sup>th</sup>-century Torah scrolls, which are among the oldest in the United States. Located in Savannah's historic district on Monterey Square, Congregation Mickve Israel



welcomes visitors and offers tours Monday through Friday from 10 am–1 pm and 2–4 pm. For details, visit [mickveisrael.org](http://mickveisrael.org) or call 912.233.1547.

*Photo by Bill Raffel*

### Temple Emanuel and Polk County Team Up for Exhibit

"The Jewish Families of Polk County (1909–Present)," on view from May 17 to August 5, 2016, is the first foray into Jewish history for the Polk County History Center in Bartow, Florida. Ever since the first Jewish families came to Polk County, Jews have left their mark on the county's industries, commerce, agriculture, and politics. The exhibit provides timelines for eight extended families, offering slices of their rich lives and illustrating an intricate web of relations. For each family group, patrons can view images collected by the Temple Emanuel Archive. The pictures represent a range of subjects—from baby's first pictures to confirmations to picking first fruits. Also on display are cultural and religious artifacts with explanations of their usage and significance for Jews.

The exhibit kicked off with a well-attended lunch-and-learn event by curator Catherine Eskin. Student interns Mordechai Wellish

(photos, layouts) and Hannah Kirey (artifact displays, educational materials for Polk County Schools) assisted with the project.



*Photo by Catherine Eskin*

### Goldsmith Collection Now on Display at National Museum of American Jewish History



Margaret Anne Goldsmith with objects she donated to the NMAJH. *Courtesy of NMAJH*

In 2012, Margaret Anne Goldsmith, a descendant of the first four Jewish families to settle in Huntsville, Alabama, donated a large collection of family heirlooms to the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia. Recently the Museum placed many of the Goldsmith artifacts on view in its core exhibition.

The new installation focuses on the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Goldsmith-Schiffman-Herstein-

Bernstein family members and the beginnings of their lives in Huntsville. Organized by family unit, it includes artifacts and images, a family tree, and an explanatory text panel. The four families settled in Huntsville in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and subsequent generations united through marriage. Family members figured in every phase of Huntsville history both economically, from the agrarian 19<sup>th</sup> century through Huntsville's growth into "Rocket City" after World War II, and socially, from the time of slavery before the Civil War to segregation to the civil rights era.

"We're excited to display artifacts from Margaret Anne's extraordinary collection," Associate Curator Ivy Weingram stated. "As the only museum in the country telling the national story of 360 years of Jewish life in America, we're proud to be the stewards of a collection that offers so many ways to explore the rich and meaningful experiences of southern Jews, from the 19<sup>th</sup> century through today."

### Avotaynu Seeks Genealogy Study Participants

The Avotaynu DNA Project seeks male participants for a study of Western Sephardi paternal DNA lineages. Eligible participants must be direct paternal line descendants of members of the historic Western Sephardi communities of Amsterdam, London, Livorno, Venice, Bordeaux, or Southwest France, or their New World offspring communities in Curaçao, Suriname, and North America.

The project aims to shed light on the origins of the Western Sephardim and to establish a strong dataset of DNA results, grounded in archival research, in order to stimulate further intensive studies. At least 50 men will be tested. Participants must supply an accurate paternal genealogy with as much information as possible. DNA testing kits will be provided at no cost. Individual privacy will be protected and the results of the study will be published.

If you are interested in participating or know someone who might be eligible, please contact Adam Brown at [avotaynudna@gmail.com](mailto:avotaynudna@gmail.com) for more information.

# A Vibrant Future for Natchez Temple B'nai Israel

In Natchez, Jewish life centers around Temple B'nai Israel. Built in 1904 after a fire destroyed the town's first synagogue, the building is part of the Natchez On-Top-of-the-Hill Historic District. The Jewish community grew and thrived here, and the Temple stands as a symbol of the commitment of Natchez Jews to their heritage and religion. Although their numbers have diminished over the years, congregants still meet regularly beneath the dome and also invite their friends and neighbors to partake in celebrations, cultural exhibits, and fellowship.

Like many Jewish communities throughout the South in the late 20th century, the aging congregation became concerned about the future. With a dwindling membership that could no longer support and maintain the grand building, the Temple was endangered—and with it, the Jewish legacy of Natchez. In 1992, Temple B'nai Israel signed a preservation agreement with the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience to preserve the building, deeding it to the Museum (now part of the Institute of Southern Jewish Life) to be used as a museum to ensure that Natchez Jewish history would be preserved even when Jews no longer reside in the city.

Temple B'nai Israel is one of the most historic symbols of Jewish life in Mississippi and one of the most beautiful public buildings in Natchez. The Institute of Southern Jewish Life (ISJL) has developed a strategic plan to make the building a central part of Natchez's heritage tourism. Its primary goal is to ensure that the Temple is safe, secure, and accessible for public use by the local community

and visitors, which will increase awareness and appreciation of 200 years of Jewish presence in the state.

During the November conference, participants will be invited to engage critically with the current exhibit (“Of Passover and Pilgrimage”), offer feedback on future exhibit prototypes, and help the ISJL and congregants prepare for the next phase of the building. We envision a visitor experience that will include an introduction to Jewish life and culture within the beautiful historic sanctuary, as well as a modern exhibition about the history of

Natchez's Jewish citizens and the influential role they have played in their city. The exhibition will be inclusive of many voices, featuring the community's involvement in social change movements and highlighting the value of cultural and ethnic diversity in Natchez.

Comprehensive preservation will require funding throughout the project's multiple phases. The ISJL and Temple B'nai Israel are embarking on a capital campaign to raise significant dollars to ensure the best future for the building. You can learn more about the campaign and contribute to the project at the website, [templebnaisraelnatchez.org](http://templebnaisraelnatchez.org).

The congregation very much looks forward to having the SJHS in Natchez to show its support and to help continue the traditions of vibrant Jewish life in a historic community. This building, and the legacy of Natchez's Jewish citizens which it so beautifully represents, is part of the Natchez landscape—and always will be.



Passover at Temple B'nai Israel, 2016.  
Courtesy of Institute of Southern Jewish Life

## Natchez Conference Transportation FAQ



Just as it wasn't easy for our ancestors to reach a town like Natchez, it's a little tricky today. Luckily, our partners at the Institute of Southern Jewish Life have smoothed the way.

**We encourage conference attendees to arrive in Jackson on Thursday, November 3,** so they can take the bus tour to Natchez Friday morning.

**Q: Where should I stay in Jackson on Thursday night?**

A: We have reserved a block of rooms at the Jackson Hilton on County Line Road. See the Conference Hotel Info on page 1 for details.

**Q: How do I get to the Hilton from the Jackson airport?**

A: The Jackson Hilton has a free airport shuttle. When you make your reservation, ask the hotel about the shuttle.

**Q: I can't arrive on Thursday, so what should I do?**

A: There will be a second bus or shuttle that will take people directly from the Jackson airport to Natchez at 1 pm on Friday.

People on this later bus will not get the tour. Or, you can rent a car at the airport and drive yourself to Natchez. (Helpful hint: the Baton Rouge airport is actually a little closer.)

**Q: I plan to drive my own car, can I still take part in the Friday tour?**

A: Absolutely. You can follow the buses in your own car and make the same stops in Vicksburg and Port Gibson.

**Q: Will I need a car in Natchez?**

A: No. Most everything is walkable, and there will be a shuttle available for those who are unable to walk.

**Q: How do I get back to Jackson for my return flight?**

A: Two buses will leave Natchez for the Jackson airport on Sunday: one at 9 am, and another at 12:30 pm. The drive is about two hours, so ideally, you will schedule your return flight for 3:30 pm or later. But if you can't, you can take the early bus. The Jackson airport is small with short security lines. So one hour is more than enough time to arrive before your return flight.

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**Conference Registration Form**

**Jews in the Southern Hinterland**

41<sup>st</sup> Southern Jewish Historical Society Annual Conference  
 Natchez, Mississippi, November 4–6, 2016



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse/Companion \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration for full program:**\* Includes lunch/dinner Fri., lunch Sat., transport to all events. \$135/person (\$150 after Oct 1). \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Jackson-Natchez round trip bus fee** (See below for bus options) \$55/person. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*Full conference registrants must be members of SJHS. If you are not a member or wish to renew, include membership dues. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Daily options (local residents only)** \$50 Fri program, lunch, dinner \_\_\_\_ \$50 Sat program, lunch \_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Meals:** \_\_\_\_ Require vegetarian meals. (Kosher meals are not available.)

**Total Payment:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Bus options:** \_\_\_\_ Pick up at 9 am Fri, Nov 4, at Jackson Hilton for morning bus tour to Vicksburg, Port Gibson, & Natchez

\_\_\_\_ Pick up at 1 pm Fri, Nov 4, at Jackson-Evers International Airport for direct bus to Natchez

\_\_\_\_ Pick up at 9 am Sun, Nov 6, at Natchez Grand, drop off at Jackson airport, 11:15 am

\_\_\_\_ Pick up at 12:30 pm Sun, Nov 6, at Natchez Grand, drop off at Jackson airport, 2:45 pm

\_\_\_\_ I will arrange my own transportation to Natchez (See page 7 for more info on transportation to and from Natchez)

Register online at jewishsouth.org OR, submit this form with your check (made out to **Institute of Southern Jewish Life**) to: Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, P.O. Box 16528, Jackson, MS 39236.

**Early bird registration deadline is October 1 (postmarked).** Take advantage of the reduced rate and help your conference organizers by registering early. Registration must be cancelled by October 21 to receive a refund. Bus fee is non-refundable.

Questions? Contact Rachel Myers at rmyers@isjl.org or 601-362-6357.

**HOTEL MUST BE RESERVED SEPARATELY.** See front page for information.

**\*SJHS dues:** (circle appropriate level)

Student (individual only)	\$15
General member (individual or family)	\$36
Patron	\$50
Century	\$100
Cedar	\$500
Sycamore	\$1,000
Magnolia	\$2,500