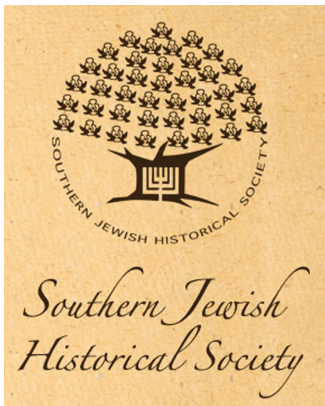




**MOUNTAIN JEWS:  
CREATING COMMUNITY  
IN APPALACHIA**

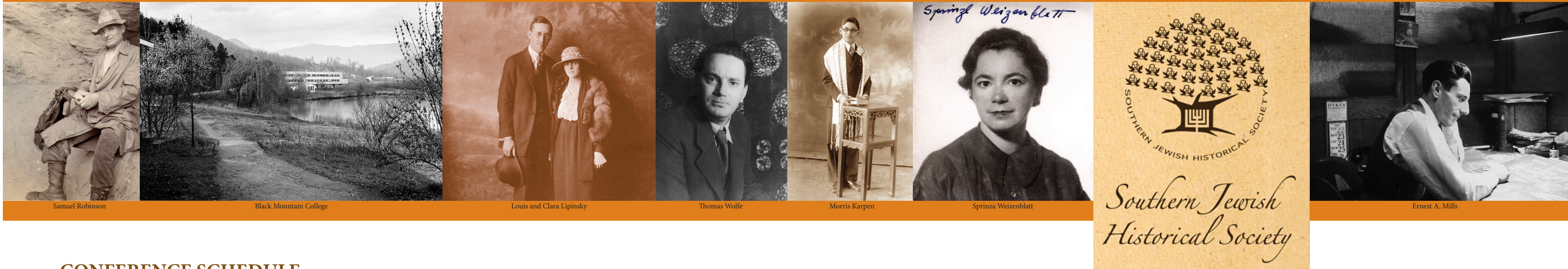


**37<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
SOUTHERN JEWISH  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
CONFERENCE**

**ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA  
OCTOBER 19-21**



# MOUNTAIN JEWS: CREATING COMMUNITY IN APPALACHIA



## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

### Thursday, October 18th

- 4:00-6:00 pm Arrivals/Registration—Four Points by Sheraton Asheville Downtown 22 Woodfin Street • Asheville, North Carolina 28801 (828) 253-1851
- 6:30 pm SJHS Board—Dinner at Four Points by Sheraton followed by meeting at the hotel

### Friday, October 19th

- 8:30 am-6:00 pm Arrivals/Registration—Four Points by Sheraton Asheville Downtown
- Breakfast at Four Points by Sheraton (included in room rate)
- 9:00 am Participants are encouraged to visit the Thomas Wolfe House and/or Black Mountain College Museum and/or go on a 10 AM short walking tour of downtown Jewish Asheville. (Sign up for the walk will be at the registration table.)
- 12:15 pm Optional lunch with informal panel of area rabbis at Olive or Twist restaurant followed by Trolley Tour of “Asheville’s Jewish Museum Without Walls,” including University of North Carolina Asheville’s Jewish Archives (you need to register in advance for \$35)
- 6:30 pm Dinner and camp-style Kabbalat Shabbat service at Asheville’s Jewish Community Center led by Rabbi Philip Bentley followed by panel discussion: “Our Southern Catskills: Camps and Resorts,” moderated by Tom Rosenberg, Executive Director of Camp Judaea, featuring former area campers and Stuart Rubin of Rubin’s Osceola Lake Inn.

### Saturday, October 20th

- 8:00-10:00 am Arrivals/Registration—Four Points by Sheraton Asheville Downtown
- Breakfast at Four Points by Sheraton (included in room rate)

#### PANEL SESSIONS at Four Points by Sheraton

- 9:00 am BLACK MOUNTAIN COLLEGE: A JEWISH AVANT-GARDE IN APPALACHIA  
Moderator: Ron Manheimer
- Catherine Haas Riley—Robert Haas: A Jewish Refugee’s Story in Photographs, Black Mountain College 1940
- Steve Whitfield—Black Mountain and Brandeis: Two Experiments in Higher Education
- Wendy Fergusson—Driven out of Europe and into North Carolina: Heinrich Jalowetz and Edward Lowinsky at Black Mountain College
- 10:30 am THOMAS WOLFE AND THE JEWS  
Moderator/Respondent: Ellen M. Umansky
- Jay Jacoby—What’s a Nice Jewish Boy Doing Reading *Look Homeward Angel?* Wolfe’s Real and Imagined Attitudes towards Jews
- Sharon Fahrer—Thomas Wolfe’s Asheville Jewish Connections
- 11:45 am Buffet Lunch at Sheraton Four Points with welcoming remarks by Esther Manheimer, Vice-Mayor of Asheville

#### PANEL SESSIONS at Four Points by Sheraton

- 1:00 pm JUDAISM IN APPALACHIA  
Moderator: Lee Shai Weissbach
- Deborah Weiner—A Child’s Hanukah in Appalachia: Growing Up Jewish in the Coalfields
- Seth Epstein—‘The Fair Sex and Your Guests Are Invited’: Jewish Identities at Asheville’s Congregation Beth Ha-Tephila’s Temple Club in the 1930s
- 2:30 pm JEWISH ARTISTS OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA  
Moderator: Dale Rosengarten
- Panel of local artists—featuring Rob Levin, contemporary glass artist and klezmer musician; Rick Chess, poet and essayist; and Lori Theriault, potter, on being a Jewish artist in Western North Carolina
- 4:00-5:30 pm Reception at Pisgah House on UNCA Campus with music by Bandana Klezmer Band
- Dinner on your own (Reservations highly recommended. A list of restaurants can be found at [www.exploreasheville.com/restaurants/by-neighborhood/downtown/](http://www.exploreasheville.com/restaurants/by-neighborhood/downtown/))
- 7:30 pm Participants are encouraged to attend reading and book-signing at Malaprop’s Bookstore (in downtown Asheville) featuring Rich Cohen, author of *The Fish that Ate the Whale: The Life and Times of America’s Banana King* or to view a screening of the film, *Songcatcher*, at Sheraton Four Points

### Sunday, October 21st

- Breakfast at Four Points by Sheraton (included in room rate)
- 8:00 am SJHS BUSINESS MEETING
- PANEL DISCUSSION at Four Points by Sheraton
- 9:00 am THE WALLACE BROTHERS OF STATESVILLE, NC  
Moderator: Leonard Rogoff
- Gary Freeze—The Wallace Brothers: Jewish Roots, Barks, and Berries
- 10:15 am MEET THE AUTHORS  
Moderator: Mark Bauman
- Panel discussion with authors who have had books published within the last year—Rich Cohen, Marni Davis, Judy Goldman, and Janice Rothschild Blumberg followed by book signings and sales of books on Southern Jewish history by many local and national authors.
- 12:00 pm Adjourn.

Participants are encouraged to attend the 10th annual HardLox (<http://www.hardloxjewishfestival.org/>), Asheville’s Jewish Food and Heritage Festival in Pack Square (lunch vouchers will be issued).

## CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

**Richard Chess** is the author of three books of poetry, *Third Temple* (2007), *Chair in the Desert* (2000), and *Tekiah* (1994). His poems have appeared in many journals as well as several anthologies. An award winning and much sought after teacher, he is the Roy Carroll Professor of Honors Arts and Sciences and Professor of Literature and Language at the University of North Carolina at Asheville. He directs UNCA's Center for Jewish Studies. He has been a member of the low-residency MFA faculties at Warren Wilson College and Queens College.

**Seth Epstein** is a Ph.D. candidate in the History Department at the University of Minnesota. His dissertation, *The Political Economy of Tolerance in the Jim Crow South: Asheville, North Carolina, 1876-1960*, examines changing practices of racial and religious tolerance in Asheville. His essay, *From Objects to Agents of Tolerance: Jews, Public Space, and Political Culture in Asheville, North Carolina, 1926-1950*, was awarded the 2012 Goldenberg Prize for Outstanding Essay in Jewish Studies from the University of Minnesota Center for Jewish Studies. His research focuses on the changing space, landscape, and significance of the central civic square in the city's downtown.

**Sharon Fahrner** is a recovering urban planner turned historian. She has done extensive research on the Asheville Jewish community and coauthored a book and exhibit: *The Family Store A History of Jewish Businesses in Downtown Asheville 1880-1990* as well as a book about Sol Schulman: *The Man who Lived on Main Street*. Sharon has also collected material for the Jewish Archives at UNC Asheville and created interpretive panels for "Asheville's Jewish Museum Without Walls".

**Wendy Fergusson** holds an MA in Anthropology and Museum Studies from George Washington University and other MAs from Brandeis University in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies and Women's and Gender Studies. She is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Public and Jewish History from Ohio State University. She has taught at a number of universities in the Midwest, curated several major exhibitions, and served as the director of the Ann Loeb Bronfman Gallery in Washington, D.C.

**Gary R. Freeze**, who holds a Ph.D. from UNC-Chapel Hill, is a Professor of American History at Catawba College in Salisbury, N.C. In 2009, he was named the Swink Professor for Excellence in Teaching, the highest honor for classroom teaching at Catawba, and has been awarded the Teacher of the Year Award by the student body on numerous occasions. Author of three books, Dr. Freeze has been honored to receive the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, one of the highest achievements for service given in the North Carolina.

**Jay Jacoby** is Professor Emeritus at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, where he also served as chair of the Departments of English and of Visual Arts. He is currently an Adjunct Professor at the University of North Carolina at Asheville. Most of Professor Jacoby's scholarly publication has been in the fields of composition studies and pedagogy, but he has taught courses in literature of the immigrant experience, Jewish American literature, and Hebrew Bible.

**Rob Levin** is an internationally known glass artist who lives and works near Burnsville in the mountains of Western North Carolina. Born and raised in Baltimore, MD, he received his BFA from Denison University and his MFA from Southern Illinois University. He was formerly the Resident Glass Artist at Penland School of Crafts, and has lectured, taught, and led workshops throughout the US, in Ireland, and in New Zealand. He has exhibited widely in the US, Europe, Japan, and the former Soviet Union. He also plays guitar for a local Eastern European Jewish music group, Bandana Klezmer.

**Lori Theriault** began her clay studies in Washington, D.C. in 2001 at Hincley Pottery Studios, and over about four years, she progressed from individual classes to working with and running the Studio Assistant Program. After seeing slides of Western North Carolina during a visiting artist workshop, she decided to relocate to Asheville in 2006. Lori creates functional pottery that wants to be touched and used. Her work is shown and sold at The Village Potters and in other fine galleries in the region, and she also creates work for individual and retail commission.

## MAP



**Deborah Weiner** received a Ph.D. from West Virginia University, where after many years in the community development field in Chicago, she pursued her career goal of combining community work with history. At WVU she became fascinated with Jewish Appalachian communities. Her book, *Coalfield Jews: An Appalachian History* was published by the University of Illinois Press in 2006. Since 2002, Deb has been Research Historian and Family History Coordinator at the Jewish Museum of Maryland.

**Stephen Whitfield** holds the Max Richter Chair in American Civilization at Brandeis University where, in 1993, he won the university's Louis D. Brandeis Prize for Excellence in Teaching. Professor Whitfield has served as visiting professor at several institutions and was awarded two Fulbright Fellowships. He is the author of eight books, including *Voices of Jacob*, *Hands of Esau: Jews in American Life and Thought*, *American Space*, *Jewish Time*, and *In Search of American Jewish Culture*.

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