Preserving Jewish Heritage in Texas
Est. 1980

The Texas Jewish Historical Society Magazine

November 2026

Preserving Jewish History, One Story at a Time

by Marilyn Lippman



Big Spring 2026 group.

The Texas Jewish Historical Society gathered in Big Spring October 9–11 for a weekend of fellowship and reflection on the Jewish families who helped shape communities across Texas. Set against the wide-open skies of West Texas, the meeting brought together members to share memories, explore local history, and consider how the experiences of earlier generations continue to inform Jewish life today.

Friday evening began with Shabbat services beneath the pavilion at Big Spring State Park. Blue skies surrounded the gathering as TJHS Board Member Vickie Vogel led the service. In a particularly moving moment, Vickie recalled the society's previous meeting held in Big Spring in 2012 and named members who had attended that gathering but are no longer with us. Her remembrance connected the present gathering with those who had helped build the Society.

Following services, members enjoyed a barbecue dinner at the home of Susan and Bob Lewis, where conversation and camaraderie continued into the evening.

Saturday's program began at the Heritage Museum, where local history came alive through photographs, family heirlooms, and personal mementos. Among the items on display were a tablecloth crocheted by Susan Lewis's grandmother and Susan's own wedding dress. These objects offered a tangible reminder that history is preserved not only in archives and museums, but also in the treasured belongings families keep.

Members were welcomed to Big Spring by Bob "Tumbleweed Smith" Lewis, whose address drew on many of the recorded interviews featured in his radio program. The voices of local residents sharing their reminiscences of life in Big Spring were part of his presentation.

continued on page 4

© 1980-2026 Texas Jewish Historical Society, Inc. All rights reserved.

Content

Quarterly Magazine

The Texas Jewish Historical Society Magazine is published four times annually. Stories about Texas Jewish history, oral histories, and requests for assistance with research are welcome, as are photographs and historical documents. We recommend that you provide photocopies of all documents and photographs. Please provide color photocopies or scans at 300 dpi or greater in gif, tif, or jpg format, and send electronically to editor@txjhs.org or by mail to Texas Jewish Historical Society, P. O. Box 10193, Austin, Texas. Be sure to include your name and contact information.

Editor
Davie Lou Solka

Layout/Design Editor
Alexa Kirk

Proof Readers
Sally Drayer, Jan Hart, Kathy Hart, Joan Linares, L. David Vogel, Vickie Vogel

Note: The Texas Jewish Historical Society is unable to guarantee the safe receipt and/or return of documents and photographs. It is strongly recommended that you provide color photocopies of both color and black & white documents. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Preserving Jewish History, One Story at a Time 1
by Marilyn Lippman
Save the Date 2
Message from the President 3
Speaker's Bureau 3
From the Board Meeting 7
Letter to the Editor 7
Welcome New Members 7
Meet Your Board 8-9
Cyril Cohen Update 9
Mazel Tov 9
In Memoriam 9
From Our Archives: The Maas Family of Galveston 10
by Vickie Vogel
The 48th Annual Gathering to be Held in Fort Worth 14
Contributions 14
TJHS Supports Immigration Exhibit in Galveston 15
by Sheldon Lippman
TJHS Members and Grant Recipients in Atlanta at SJHS 15
Grant Application Form 16
Recognition Award Form 17
Rabbi Jimmy Kessler Educational Outreach Fund Donation Form 18
Officers and Board of Trustees 19
Past Presidents 19

Save the Date

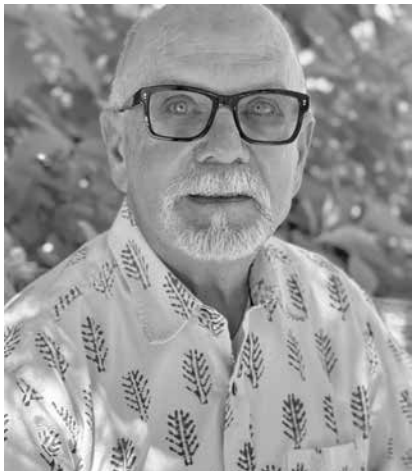
November 7, 2026 - January 31, 2027
"Port of Promise: The Jewish Pioneers of Texas" —an exhibit illuminating the Galveston Movement at the Bryan Museum, 1315 21st St., Galveston
info@thebryanmuseum.org · 409-632-7685
This is a TJHS-sponsored project

January 24, 2027
Zoom Board Meeting

April 2-4, 2027
Annual Gathering, Fort Worth

Message from the President

by Sheldon Lippman



In September 2026, Temple Israel, the little shul in Schulenburg, Texas, my hometown (2026 population: 2,880) celebrated 75 years in its 1951 building, designed by architect Lenard Gabert. Gabert also designed Temple Emanu El in Houston (population: 2.42 million) and Congregation K'Nesseth Israel in Baytown (population: 86,670).

Temple Israel is the only shul in a Texas town of this size still serving a Jewish congregation, albeit for High Holy Days, Chanukah parties, and community seders. With 35 dues-paying families, it is a unique piece of Texas Jewish history in rural, predominantly Christian, Fayette County. Of course, Schulenburg does not have the Jewish population today that it had in the 1950s and 1960s. At its peak, Temple Israel served a tri-county area of small towns with Main Streets teeming with dry goods stores and other thriving businesses and professional practices. Today's dues-paying congregants live in Houston, Austin, San Antonio, and other larger Texas cities and towns. Temple Israel is a destination house of prayer.

When my mother was living and active as the "shamas" of the shul, she often invited classes from Sacred Heart Catholic Elementary School to visit Temple Israel and sometimes served a "mock seder" to the young students. Several of these now-grown Schulenburg residents have told me that they learned about Judaism from those visits. On the other hand, at my 55th high school reunion, a non-Jewish classmate told me that she had wanted to attend my bar mitzvah in 1964, but her parents would not let her: "They were Old School." My mother had invited my entire class. I was the only Jew in my class throughout my elementary and high school years.

Several years ago, I was invited to speak to the Schulenburg Literary Club and at a Lunch and Learn Webinar for Winedale, a division of UT's Briscoe Center. My topic was "The Comings and Goings of the Jewish Community in Fayette County." Both audiences were non-Jewish.

In the 1970s, I brought a friend from UT Austin to Schulenburg for a weekend visit and gave him the full tour of this German-Czech community, with the final and most important stop at Temple Israel. He was impressed by the solemnity of the sanctuary; the Eternal Light; and the four ornately carved, high-backed chairs flanked by two seven-branched candelabras adorning the bimah. Eager to show off the sacred treasures of the temple, I opened the two wooden doors to the Ark, whose interior was lavishly lined with quilted golden satin fabric and adorned with thick ivory-colored silk cording and tassels.

With a great deal of pride, I said, "And this is the Torah." Wide-eyed, my friend exclaimed, "And you have it?"

These experiences at Temple Israel remind me that each time we open our doors and share our stories, we offer someone an opportunity to understand Jewish life a little better.



Restored rendering of Temple Israel, Schulenburg, TX

Big Spring, continued from page 1

Tammy Schrecengost, director of the Heritage Museum, presented the story of the Fisher family, among the early Jewish settlers in Big Spring. Her presentation traced the family's role in the growth of the community and the development of its commercial life.

Joseph Fisher arrived in the Big Spring area in the late 1870s, as the Texas and Pacific Railway was extending westward. In 1880, he opened a store in a tent, with the family living behind the business. His brother William later joined him, and the J. & W. Fisher store grew into an important source of goods and services for the developing town and surrounding region.

The store served a wide-ranging clientele, including cowhands, railroad workers, ranchers, and other residents who sometimes traveled great distances to shop there. Fisher provided a broad selection of merchandise and, when needed, credit to customers. The family earned a reputation for fair dealing and for helping people establish themselves in the area. As the business grew, the Fishers expanded into more substantial premises, eventually developing a prominent retail enterprise associated with the Albert Fisher Company.

Schrecengost's presentation illustrated how Jewish merchants helped connect small Texas towns to wider commercial networks while building relationships with customers and neighbors. The Fisher family's story is an important part of Big Spring's history, and the museum's photographs, records, and artifacts help preserve that legacy. Although the later Fisher store building was demolished in

continued on page 5



Watching the UT-OU Game. Front: Michael Furgatch, Lynda Furgatch, Joyce Davidson. Back: Rob Markman, Joan Linares, Denise Havenar, Sheldon Lippman, Marilyn Lippman, Mary Ann O'Loughlin, John Campbell, Gayle Cannon, Ruben Linares, David Beer, Bruce Kravitz, Kathy Kravitz, Edward Stone, Barbara Stone.



Vickie Vogel leading Shabbat Eve services at Big Spring State Park.





Above, left: Tumbleweed, aka Bob Lewis, welcoming TJHS to Big Spring. Above, right: Tammy Schrecengost, curator of the Heritage Museum of Big Spring.



Denise Havenar, Ruben Linares, Joan Linares, John Campbell enjoying Friday night dinner at Susan & Bob Lewis' house.

Big Spring, continued from page 4

2026, the family's place in the community's story remains part of the historical record.

The morning continued with a panel discussion titled "Three Texas Towns, Three Jewish Childhoods," featuring Susan Lewis who still lives in Big Spring, along with Jan Hart, who grew up in Dublin, and Lynda Furgatch, who grew up in Abilene. Through personal recollections, the panelists offered a glimpse into what it was like to grow up Jewish in Texas towns where Jewish families were few in number and established congregations were not always close at hand.

Their stories revealed both the distinctive character of each community and the experiences they shared. Family-owned businesses often placed Jewish families at the center of daily town life. Saturdays could mean time downtown, visits to the movies, and interactions with neighbors and customers. At the same time, Jewish families worked to maintain their traditions and identity in places where there were few opportunities for organized Jewish communal life.

Religious education and observance frequently depended on the initiative of parents and grandparents.

continued on page 6



Susan Zack Lewis with personal items on display at Heritage Museum.



Joan Linares, Paul Keeper, Barbara Stone, Edward Stone, Gayle Cannon, John Campbell.



Michael & Lynda Furgatch leading Havdalah services.



Panel "Three Texas Towns, Three Jewish Childhoods" Standing: Marilyn Llipman, Moderator. Seated: Linda Furgatch, Jan Hart, Susan Zack Lewis.

Big Spring, continued from page 5

Families taught children about Judaism at home, organized their own celebrations, and traveled to larger communities when they needed synagogue services or Sunday school. These efforts helped ensure that Jewish customs and values remained part of family life, even when the nearest established congregation was miles away.

The panelists also described the relationships their families developed with non-Jewish neighbors. Many recalled acceptance, friendship, and a strong sense of belonging in their hometowns. Others remembered some instances of antisemitism or exclusion that reminded them of their differences. Their candid reflections demonstrated that the experience of being Jewish in a small Texas town could include both deep community connections and challenges that shaped their understanding of identity.

Saturday afternoon offered members a choice: watch the University of Texas and University of Oklahoma face off in the annual Red River Rivalry at the hotel or join Susan Lewis for a tour of Big Spring. Those who



Standing: John Campbell, David Beer, Sheldon Lippman, Ruben Linares, Lynda Furgatch. Sitting: Marilyn Lippman, Gayle Cannon.



Vickie Vogel, Susan Lewis, Kathy Kravitz, Hollace Weiner, John Havenar, Bruce Kravitz.



Jan Hart, Barbara Stone saying blessings Friday night.

chose the tour explored landmarks that reflect the city's history and changing fortunes, including the Hotel Settles and the amphitheater in Comanche Trail Park.

The Hotel Settles, which opened in 1930, became a landmark of Big Spring's downtown. After years of changing uses and decline, the historic hotel was restored and reopened in 2012, bringing new life to an important piece of the city's architectural heritage. In Comanche Trail Park, the group saw the amphitheater built by the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression. Its scale and distinctive construction reflect the lasting impact of the federal work programs that provided employment while creating public spaces across the country.

The weekend concluded Sunday morning with the TJHS Board

continued on page 7

From the Board Meeting
Big Spring, October 11, 2026

- Nominations are now being accepted for the TJHS Outstanding Recognition Awards. The award will be presented at the Annual Gathering in April, 2027.
- The amendments to the By Laws were approved via an electronic vote.
- The Burial Committee has received ninety-two notifications of burials this quarter. There are now 344 sites where Jewish burial occurs. There were 132 corrections or additions made to the burial sites.
- There will be a Zoom Board Meeting January 24, 2027, and the Annual Gathering will be in Fort Worth April 2-4, 2027.
- The web site received 1,833 log-ins this past quarter.
- Barbara Rosenthal, TJHS grant recipient, announced that the documentary that TJHS helped fund, *Grit and Grace*, has been picked up by PBS and will be shown on KLRU/Austin and two other markets for now.
- A sponsorship of $10,000 was awarded to the Bryan Museum in Galveston for the exhibit, "Port of Promise: The Jewish Pioneers of Texas," which will run November 7, 2026 - January 31, 2027. TJHS' name will be used in signage and publications about the exhibit.
- The Rabbi Jimmy Kessler Educational Outreach Fund has reached the goal of $250,000.

Big Spring, continued from page 6

meeting, bringing members together to discuss Society business and its continuing work to document and share the history of Jewish life in Texas.

Throughout the gathering, the stories of Big Spring, Dublin, and Abilene underscored the value of preserving local Jewish history. From the Fisher family's commercial contributions to the panelists' memories of family, faith, and community, the weekend demonstrated that Texas Jewish history is not found only in large cities or major institutions. It also lives in small-town storefronts, family photographs, cherished heirlooms, and the recollections of those who came before us.

Welcome New Members!

Amelia Goldman
Bellaire, Texas

Whitney Fuessel
Magnolia, Texas

Sandy Cory
Gunnison, Colorado

Lidya Kusner
Houston, Texas

Alyce Glazer Levy
Dallas, Texas

Cheryl Melnick
Wimberley, Texas

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

In regard to the article in your last issue on the Cohen, Kirschbaum, Robinson Families, Philip Morris Cohen's mother Rachel was married to Ben Cohen, became a widow and married David Saffer. David Saffer had a shoe repair business at his home which was Phil's introduction to the shoe business, which he continued in for his career.

Phil married Florence and had my father, Cyril, in Waco where her family was located. They divorced and Florence stayed in Dallas with Cyril. The 1930 Census shows she was still here then with Cyril. He attended Forest Ave High School but went to Gulfport Military Academy for his final few years of high school, then on to LSU. From what I can figure out, Cyril was sent to Gulfport when Florence moved to DC. That is where she lived until her death in 1945.

Back to Rachel. Philip's mother. She immigrated from Romania with her mother Jennie, husband Ben and son, Isadore. Philip was born in Manhattan in 1903. She married David Saffer and had Will. Isadore died while on the business trip in Oklahoma and as a result Rachel died when she heard the news.

Florence Cohen: From what I have recently found, her family lived in Waco and she had several sisters. Right now I only know of Eva- who I remember visiting as a child. Eva was married to James Ingram where they owned rental properties and had several children.

My father had non-Jewish cousins- that we met decades later when one of them did a family history. Linda Ziegler from Tyler, (she taught journalism there) was married to John Ziegler. She had a sister, Kathy Kilgore from Lewisville. Both deceased, not sure about spouses.

Thank you.
Lori Droppo
Cyril Cohen's daughter

Meet Your Board

Gayle Feldman Cannon is a retired lawyer now living in Austin. She is a transplanted Dallasite and has three children, two stepchildren, sixteen grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. She is a widow and active in the Austin Jewish community and is a strong supporter of Congregation Beth Israel in Austin. Her interests include genealogy, bridge, reading, traveling and theater. Gayle serves as co-chair of the Speaker's Bureau.



Davie Lou Solka is a grandchild of Russian immigrants who were part of the Galveston movement. She was President of TJHS 2017-2019. She and her husband, Jack, *z"l*, moved to Austin in 2007 from Corpus Christi. Davie Lou was involved in the community in Corpus Christi and was elected President of several Jewish organizations, PTAs, and service clubs, including the first woman president of Temple Beth El. After her children left home, she began and taught a Jewish Holiday Program called *L'dor Vador* in the JCC Pre-school, which continues to this day. She retired from teaching after fourteen years just before moving to Austin. She was involved in activities in Austin pre-COVID and is a born and bred Texan. She graduated from the University of Texas before you had to add Austin. She loves keeping up with her children, six grandchildren and spouses, and four great-grandchildren. Davie Lou is editor of the *TJHS Magazine* and the liaison for the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History.



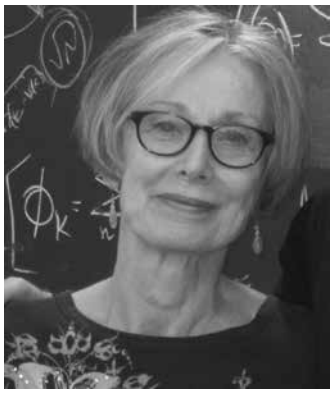
Lila Katz, from Tyler, graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a double major in Jewish Studies and Humanities with a focus on Jewish storytelling in the arts. She is currently attending rabbinical school in Jerusalem. Lila is interested in Jewish Storytelling, Jewish Arts, Novel & Playwriting, Producing, and Musical Theatre.



Kathy Hart is a second-generation TJHS board member, following in the footsteps of her parents, Charles z"l and Jan Hart and serves as a proofreader for the *TJHS Magazine*. Kathy's family goes back three generations in Texas, and she is proud to have one set of great-grandparents that immigrated through the Galveston Movement. Kathy is a graduate of Texas A&M and Louisiana State University (MUS). She retired from a career as a librarian/manager, specializing in historic and scientific maps, and scholarly research and publishing, after working at libraries at Texas A&M, Rice University and the Library of Congress. Kathy raised two children in College Station, and served many years on the Texas A&M Hillel Corporate Board. She lives in Maryland and enjoys traveling and researching and archiving her family's history.

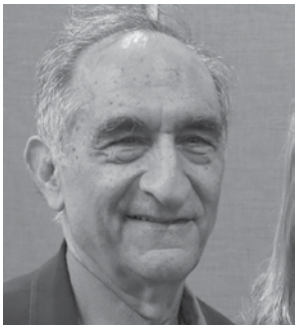


Kathy Cornelison Kravitz grew up in Oklahoma City, but now lives in Austin. After graduating from the University of Oklahoma, she taught high school biology and geometry. She did graduate work in botany, then was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Colombia. She met her husband, Bruce, while working for AT&T/Western Electric as a statistical quality control engineer. They moved to New Zealand, where she was the quality manager for Mitel Telecommunications NZ. Their son, Scott, was born there. In 1991, they moved to Austin, where she has worked a variety of jobs, including assistant librarian for AISD, and volunteering for numerous organizations. Kathy currently spends most of her days working on TJHS Cemetery Committee needs, although she continues to volunteer for other organizations and tries to find time to "play" in her garden, walk in nature and occasionally travel to new places. Kathy is Chair of the Cemetery Research Committee.



continued on page 9

Meet Your Board, continued from page 8

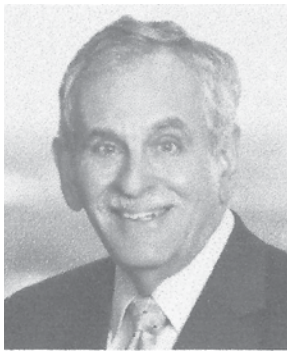


Jeff Aresty and his wife, Ellen, live in Waco. Jeff is the founder of a nonprofit board focusing on creating access to opportunity for youth. He is also an international lawyer. He worked on the film, The Jacob De Cordova Story.

Anita Feigenbaum grew up in Bastrop, Texas, graduated from the University of Texas and received a Master's Degree from Texas A&M University. She and her husband, Leslie, have been married forty-three years and have a daughter, Sarah, a son, Ryan, and a new daughter-in-law, Alexandra. They live in College Station, where Leslie is an Associate Dean in the College of Architecture at Texas A&M University. Anita became involved in TJHS years ago with her parents, Dr. Neil, z"l, and Betty Gurwitz. In her free time, she loves visiting with family, traveling, attending Aggie events, and entertaining her Maltipoo, Bella. She has been involved in retail and property management. Anita is one of the Chairs of the Meetings Committee.



Lionel "Lonnie" Schooler is one of the founding members of the Texas Jewish Historical Society. He served as President in 1984-1986, and has remained as the "official" legal counsel for the Society. He and his wife, Marsha, live in Houston.





Nelson Chafetz, Austin, is a lifelong Texas resident, who was born in San Antonio. He attended the University of Texas/Austin, where he received a B.S.E.E. degree. He is married to another native-born Texan, Mitzi Chafetz. Nelson works for the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts and is a competitive swimmer. He has two children, and two grandchildren. Nelson is a forty-four-year member of United States Masters Swimming Organization (usms.org), and in his spare time, is a party barge captain.



Sonny Gerber is married to Sharon, and they have been married forty-one years. They have six children and nine grandchildren. Sonny is retired and spends his time managing real estate investments, volunteering, and running errands. As he says, "If you're married, you understand."

Cyril Cohen Update

In the August, 2026 issue of The TJHS Magazine, there was an article on the Cohen, Kirschbaum, and Robinson families in which Cyril Cohen's mother was misidentified. The name listed in two places on findagrave.com is incorrect. The birth certificate for Cyril lists his mother as Florence Cohen. His father was Philip Cohen; Freda was Philip's second wife. We regret the error, and thank detectives Lori Droppo, Kathy Kravitz, and Marilyn Lippman.

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/8507271/florence-cohen.

Mazel Tov

Jan Hart and Kathy Hart, on the marriage of Josh Weimer and Maddy Pollack. Jan is Josh's grandmother, and Kathy is his mother.

Steven Solka, who was selected as JWV Post Commander of the Year at the JWV Annual Convention.

In Memoriam



Condolences to Jane Manaster, TJHS Board Member, on the death of her son, **Rex Manaster**, in Dallas. He is survived by his mother, two children, and two sisters.

May his memory be a blessing.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

The Maas Family of Galveston

by Vickie Vogel

This column is based on information available in the TJHS archives, supplemented by some online research. If you have corrections or additions to this information, please submit them in writing to the TJHS editor at editor@txjhs.org. We want the TJHS archives to be as complete and accurate as possible.

Box 3Z290 in the TJHS Collection at the Briscoe Center for American History is full of old photographs, including some great shots of the 1929 Houston flood, but they are otherwise unlabeled and unattributed. Another photo in the box is labeled "my father," which reminds us to label each of our photos as if a stranger will look at it.

There are photos of the Maas family showing a dignified woman who has dressed up for the photographer, and a carefully groomed man with a steely gaze. The 1887 or 1888 group photo is of Isabella Maas and her fourteen grandchildren. It is labeled on the front, but not legibly enough to be helpful.[1] The man is her son Julius Maas, and the woman is his wife, "Mrs. D. H. Maas," as women were routinely described, also known as Daisy Harriet Jones Maas.

Julius' father, Samuel J. Maas, was born in Meinbeim, Baden, Germany in 1810 to a wealthy family who owned and operated a successful gold and silver business. Samuel received a formal education and was fluent in French and English. He emigrated to the United States in the 1830s, first to Pennsylvania and then to South Carolina where he had family.

Deciding to move to Texas, he loaded a ship with lumber to build his house, intending to head for Galveston, but a storm took his craft off the Florida Keys and he had to swim to shore. He made it to Nacogdoches County, Texas in 1836, where since 1826 a number of German Jews had gathered.[2] Having become fluent in Spanish as well, he found work translating Spanish land titles into English. The Texas Revolution

continued on page 11



Julius Maas, son of Samuel & Isabel Maas from box 3Z290 TJHS Collection.

Maas Family, continued from page 10



Daisy Harriet Jones Maas, wife of Julius Maas, from box 3Z290, TJHS Collection.

(1835-1836), and independence from Mexico, must have generated considerable title work.

Maas relocated to Houston for a short time, then moved on to Galveston in 1839 as a merchant and ship chandler.[3] Maas was one of the first known Jews in Galveston.[4] He traveled to Europe to purchase merchandise for his trade. A letter of recommendation from General Sam Houston refers to him as Captain Maas, presumably for seafaring rather than military service. The Captain traded with key colonizers and diplomats from England and France, as well as Houston. Maas was also involved in real estate investments, including with prominent Texas Jewish pioneer Adolphus Sterne.[5] Like other Texans and Galvestonians, Maas owned slaves - an older couple and a teenage girl.[6]

While on a buying trip to Germany in 1844, Maas met and married Isabella Offenbach (b. 1817) in her home town of Cologne, after seeing her perform at the cathedral in Cologne. Daughter of Rabbi Isaac Eberst (1779-1850) and Marianne Offenbach, and older sister of the composer Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880), Isabella was a celebrated opera singer, a soloist in the cathedral at Cologne who was "much admired and courted by nobility."[7] She toured with Jacques and another brother, Julius, giving operatic performances.

Eight days after arriving in Galveston, Isabella suffered an attack of yellow fever. Two hundred had already died of that epidemic, but she survived.

Samuel, Isabella, and Jacques arranged for an opera to be performed in Galveston and wrote reviews of musical performances for the newspapers. Isabella sang for family and friends, and occasionally for charity benefits.

continued on page 12

Maas Family, continued from page 11

An active participant in community affairs, she was a member of the Hebrew Ladies Association and a group founded by members of the Lutheran church to benefit women and children. She conducted concerts for the German Ladies Benevolent Society and the French Benevolent Society.[8]

Sam and Isabella had four children, but most of the childrearing was left to Isabella as Sam was often away. During the Mexican War, he was gone for an entire year. He also left during the Civil War, accused of "aiding the enemy" because he accrued business debts to New York merchants.

The Maas family children were Maxwell "Max" Maas (1845-1906), Julius (1846-1884), Isaac Alfred (1850-1851), and Rosa Offenbach Maas Redlich (1857-1938).[9]

Max was born in Galveston but died in Manhattan at the age of 61. He married Sarah Davis and they had at least eight children. He is listed as a 2nd Lieutenant, serving in Company B, 4th Battalion, Texas Infantry in the Confederate States of America.[10] That means he was a soldier at sixteen. Max built a special stage for Isabella in the attic of his home in Galveston.[11]

Max and Sarah's daughter Nettie was the mother of Galveston civic leader Harry Levy, Jr., who was president of the Galveston Chamber of Commerce in 1948, and a trustee on the Galveston Wharves Board from 1967-1977, among a host of other organizations. Levy received a plaque from US Representative Jack Brooks in praise of his lobbying skills. He was president of E. S. Levy & Co., a clothing store founded by his family in 1877.[12]

Julius married Daisy Harriet Jones in 1881. They had at least two children: Sam Jones (1881-1962) and Mary F. (1883-1913). Julius died in Galveston aged 37. Daisy died in Galveston in 1925 of heart disease, aged 70. Their daughter Mary died aged 30 of pulmonary tuberculosis. She was a graduate of the University of Texas.[13]

continued on page 13



Isabella Maas with grandchildren from box 3Z290 TJHS Collection.

Maas Family, continued from page 12

The third child of Samuel and Isabella, Isaac Alfred, was only six months old at his death. He is buried in Galveston's Old City Cemetery.[14]

Rosa, the youngest Maas child, lived to the age of 81. She married Nathan Redlich in 1879. She died and was buried in New York, as was Nathan (1851-1932).[15] His parents were Leon and Bertha Rosenthal Redlich.[16] Rosa and Nathan had two children: Samuel Julius (1881-1941) and Isabelle M. Redlich Strouss (1883-1978). Samuel and Isabelle were born in Texas but died in New York, aged 59 and 94 respectively.[17] Isabelle married an attorney, Eugene M. Strouss.[18]

In 1887, Samuel Maas built a Queen Anne mansion in Galveston at 1727 Sealy for Isabella, and put the property in her name. Isabella lived there with her daughter Rosa and son-in-law Nathan Redlich until her death. Samuel lived across the street, in seclusion, spending much of his time reading.[19] Isabella was known for her heroic nursing work during periodic smallpox and yellow fever epidemics. She died from exposure to inclement weather while taking food and Christmas gifts to the needy in 1891, survived by sixteen grandchildren.[20] An eternal lamp she donated to Temple B'nai Israel hangs in their chapel.[21]

Samuel Maas remained a prominent Galveston businessman until his death at age 86 in 1897. There were seventeen Maas grandchildren.[22] His tombstone reads, "A good name is better than precious ointment and the day of death than one's birth."



Maas home at 1727 Sealy, Galveston. Image available on internet included in accordance with Title 17, USC Section 107.

Endnotes

1 Box 3Z290, Texas Jewish Historical Society Collection, Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. Please label photos on the back or on a separate sheet.

2 Harriet and Fred Rochlin, *Pioneer Jews*, Houghton Mifflin, 1984, p. 10.

3 A ship chandler is a retail or wholesale dealer who specializes in supplying ships and their crews with necessary provisions, equipment, and maintenance parts while docked at a port, according to Google AI.

4 Ruthe Winegarten and Cathy Schechter, *Deep in the Heart: The Lives & Legends of Texas Jews*, Eakin Press, 1990, p. 18.

5 Hollace Ava Weiner, *Lone Stars of David*, Brandeis University Press, 2007, p. 22, citing Henry Cohen, "Settlement of the Jews in Texas," Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, 1894, p. 139; Winegarten, op cit, p. 9.

6 Winegarten, ibid, p. 23.

7 Ibid, p. 72; https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/154940473/isaac-offenbach

8 https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/40182100/isabella-maas

9 www.findagrave.com/memorial/40182069/samuel_j-maas

10 https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/129406559/maxwell-maas; email Herschel Sheiness, September 29, 2026.

11 *Handbook of Texas Music*, Edited Laurie E. Jasinski and Casey Monahan, Texas A & M University Press, 2012.

12 "Civic leader Harry Herbert Levy Jr. dies at 90," *Galveston Daily News*, February 26, 1995, p. 6, posted at https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/34803159/harry_herbert-levy by Kathy Cornelison Kravitz.

13 https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/112438980/mary_f-maas

14 https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/126186732/isaac_alfred-maas

15 https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/160813746/rosa_offenbach-redlich

16 https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/160813700/nathan-redlich

17 https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/188618826/samuel_julius-redlich

18 https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/160813562/eugene_m-strouss

19 Natalie Ornish, "Samuel Maas: Ship

continued on page 14

TJHS 48th Annual Gathering to be held in Fort Worth

by Hollace Weiner

The Texas Jewish Historical Society will hold its 48th Annual Gathering in "Where the West Begins"—Fort Worth on April 2-4, 2027. Come visit the city's two century-old congregations. Enjoy Friday evening services at Beth-El, a contemporary temple that received awards for preserving antique sculpture and stained glass in its limestone walls. Havdalah will be down the street at Ahavath Sholom, the first Jewish congregation west of the Trinity River. Outside the shul's entrance is a marble honor roll listing "Our Boys" – eighty-one local Jews who served in WWI. Fort Worth's Jewish history is enduring and inspiring.





Above: Ahavath Sholom with flag.

Above, right: Beth-El entry gate, motif derived from old Ark door.

Please Note:

If you are sending a check to the Texas Jewish Historical Society, please indicate the purpose of the check—dues, gift, contribution, etc.

Speaker's Bureau

With spring programs being planned, keep the Speakers Bureau in mind for your meetings this year. We can provide speakers on a wide variety of Jewish topics. Let's work together to let our communities know about the Texas Jewish Historical Society and the Speaker's Bureau. Send your request to tjhsspeakers@txjhs.org

If you have any changes in your information, please send them to admin@txjhs.org

Rabbi Jimmy Kessler Educational Outreach Fund Contributions

Gold

From Joan & Ruben Linares

Ruby

From Sandy & Carol Dochin

Diamond

In Memory of Rex Manaster
- Joan & Ruben Linares
- Davie Lou Solka
- Barbara & Edward Stone

In Honor of Jan Hart on her birthday
- Davie Lou Solka

Gift Membership to TJHS for
- Whitney Fuessel
- Anita & Leslie Feigenbaum

In Memory of Joni Freed Anderson
- Rusty Milstein

In Honor of Jeff & Ellen Aresty's 50th Wedding Anniversary
- Anonymous

Maas Family, continued from page 13

Chandler and Investor in 19th Century Texas," *Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association. Available at http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fmabx. Samuel Maas Papers are at the Briscoe Center for American History, and the Rosenberg Library in Galveston.

20 findagrave/40182100 op cit; Handbook of Texas Music, op cit

21 Winegarten, op cit, p. 72

22 Ornish, op cit

TJHS Supports Immigration Exhibit in Galveston

by Sheldon Lippman

The Texas Jewish Historical Society awarded a grant in support of the exhibit, "Port of Promise: The Jewish Pioneers of Texas." The exhibit is open from November 7, 2026, to January 31, 2027, at the Bryan Museum in Galveston, TX. TJHS board members were given an advance look of the exhibit during a Donors Reception on November 5, 2026.

"While the exhibit focuses on Galveston and many of its citizens, it tells a bigger story of the contributions of Jewish immigrants to Texas," said TJHS President Sheldon Lippman. "I was glad to hear that the exhibit will have a longer-lasting teaching component," added Past President Joan Linares. TJHS Board Member Melissa Cohen-Nickels served on the Exhibition Committee, along with TJHS member and native Galvestonian Shelley Kessler.



Top right: John Campbell, Sheldon Lippman, Melissa Cohen-Nickels, Joan Linares at Donor Reception, Bryan Museum.



Bottom right: Francine Nussenblatt Beckman and Shelley Nussenblatt Kessler flank the wedding dress worn by their grandmother as part of the Galveston story in the exhibit.



TJHS Members and Grant recipients in Atlanta at SJHS Annual Conference

Emily Williams, Tim Quevillon, Katie Webber, Bertha Miller, Sheldon Lippman, Hollace Weiner, Bryan Stone, Miranda Ruzinsky, John Campbell, Scott Langston.

The Texas Jewish Historical Society Grant Application

The mission of the Texas Jewish Historical Society is to expand and enhance the knowledge and understanding of the Jewish presence in Texas and the history of Jews from their first arrival in the State to the present.
We solicit applications for research projects that are in this spirit.
On the form below or online, please show how your project meets our mission.

Application Form

The Texas Jewish Historical Society will consider applications from individuals and non-profit organizations in any written or visual media. Attach additional sheets as necessary.

Contact Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ Cell: (_____) _____

Email: _____

Title and Description of project.

_____

_____

_____

Briefly outline personal and professional background information that support this application.

_____

_____

_____

What is the anticipated budget for the project? Are you seeking additional support from elsewhere?

_____

_____

_____

Please detail the timeline of your project.

_____

_____

_____

Completed project must acknowledge TJHS support. A copy or account of the completed project should be submitted to the Society's archive at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin.

Send applications to: TJHS Grant Committee: P.O. Box 10193, Austin TX 78766-0193, or email to grantchair@txjhs.org or go to www.txjhs.org and click on "Apply for a Grant" at the top of the page.

The TJHS is Accepting Nominations for Outstanding Recognition Awards for the Preservation of Texas Jewish History

Texas Jewish Historical Society (TJHS), founded in 1980, is seeking nominations for Outstanding Recognition Awards in multiple areas: The TJHS Award reflects the diverse ways Texans preserve and enrich Jewish heritage — not only through written or archival work but also through lived experience, cultural expression, and meaningful community engagement. The award categories include: community leadership, cultural heritage and education, social impact, bridge building, historic site preservation and historic project achievement. These categories will honor individuals, groups and organizations whose contributions strengthen Jewish life, and promote Jewish culture in creative ways.

TJHS now seeks your help to identify & honor those who have made a significant and lasting impact toward the Texas Jewish Experience. Two awards can be given yearly, but it is not mandated to be given yearly, as only outstanding accomplishment can merit this award. Applications must be received by July 30, and the awards will be presented at the Spring Gathering in April. Please mail the application and supporting paperwork to Awards Chair, Texas Jewish Historical Society, P. O. Box 10193, Austin, TX 78766-0193 or awardschair@txjhs.org.

Application Form

Date of Submission: _____

Name and Contact Information of Nominee(s): _____

_____

_____

Name and Contact Information of Person(s) Recommending Nominee(s) for Consideration: _____

_____

_____

Category of nomination:

- ❒ Significant Historic Preservation
- ❒ Cultural Heritage & Education
- ❒ Community Leadership & Engagement
- ❒ Major Project Achievement
- ❒ Living Legacy
- ❒ Social Impact & Bridge Building

Please return this sheet as cover page and include the following:

- Complete description of the accomplishment
- Reasons that you are submitting this nomination and how you became aware of this accomplishment
- Pictures and other documentation
- Impact of this accomplishment and how it has and will continue to make a difference now and in the future on the ongoing story of the Jews of Texas
- Short bio of nominee(s)

Thank you for helping us recognize deserving individuals!

Send applications to: Awards Chair, Texas Jewish Historical Society,
P. O. Box 10193, Austin, TX 78766-0193 or awardschair@txjhs.org. • txjhs.org

Rabbi Jimmy Kessler Educational Outreach Fund

Early in his rabbinical education and career, Rabbi Kessler lamented the absence of significant records of the Texas Jewish experience in local, state, and university libraries. His frustration turned to action when in 1980 in San Antonio he organized a meeting of like-minded Texans for what became the Texas Jewish Historical Society.

TJHS continues to expand and share the understanding of the Jewish presence in Texas through education and outreach.

The Kessler Fund is an inducement to share the incredible history of Jews in Texas with a broader community through an ever-expanding scope of projects such as invitations to renowned speakers to the TJHS Annual Gatherings, research grants to university students in Jewish studies, partnering with other organizations to expand educational programs for young people, piquing the interests of people from all religions to the richness of Texas Jewish history, and more. This Fund is a long-term commitment to the legacy of Jimmy Kessler for which $250,000 has been set as a launch goal.

TJHS appreciates all donations, at any level, to honor the legacy of Jimmy Kessler. The Texas Jewish Historical Society, Inc., is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible within limits of the law.

Suggested donation levels:

$25,000 or above	Platinum
$10,000 - 24,999	Gold
$5,000 - 9,999	Silver
$2,500 - 4,999	Sapphire
$1,000 - 2,499	Ruby
$18 - 999	Diamond

Date: _____ Donation Amount: $ _____

Name of Donor(s): _____

❒ I give permission to use my name for publication in Kessler Fund Donor List.

❒ I prefer that my donation remains Anonymous.

Mailing Address of Donor(s): *(All contact information is required)*

_____

_____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Option to honor or memorialize family member or friend with your Kessler Fund donation:

In honor / In memory of (Name): _____

Mailing address to send acknowledgment: _____

_____

Please send this completed donation form, along with your bank check, to: Texas Jewish Historical Society, P. O. Box 10193, Austin, TX 78766-0193 or go to www.txjhs.org and click on "Give to Kessler Fund" to make your donation online with a credit card.

Texas Jewish Historical Society, Inc. is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Contributions to TJHS are tax deductible within the limits of the law.

TJHS Board of Trustees

Officers

President
Sheldon Lippman (Austin)

1st Vice President
Jeff Levine (Cedar Park)

2nd Vice President
Scott Langston (Weatherford)

3rd Vice President
Michael Furgatch (Brownsville)

Recording Secretary
John Campbell (Austin)

Corresponding Secretary
Susan Novick (El Paso)

Treasurer
Robert Markman (Houston)

Historian/Archivist
Sally Drayer (Dallas)

Parliamentarian
Vickie Vogel (Austin)

Board of Trustees 2025-2027

Melissa Cohen-Nickels (Houston)
Nelson Chafetz (Austin)
Kathy Hart (Columbia, MD)
Jules Frapart (Austin)
Paul Keeper (Austin)
Kathy Kravitz (Austin)
Gail LeVine (Cedar Park)
Amy Milstein (Frisco)
Barbara Green Stone (Dallas)
Emily Williams (Chapel Hill, NC)

Board of Trustees 2026-2028

Jeff Aresty (Waco)
Gayle Cannon (Austin)
Anita Feigenbaum (College Station)
Lynda Furgatch (Brownsville)
Sonny Gerber (Houston)
Jan Siegel Hart (Austin)
Lila Katz (Tyler)
Marilyn Lippman (Dallas)
Jane Manaster (Dallas)
Hy Penn (Houston)
Hollace Weiner (Fort Worth)
Joyce Wormser (Pearland)

Past Presidents

Living Past Presidents are members of the Board of Trustees per TJHS Bylaws.

*Rabbi James Kessler, Galveston (1980-1982)
*Frances Kallison, San Antonio (1982-1984)
Lionel Schooler, Houston (1984-1986)
*Ed Lax, Dallas (1986)
*Ginger Jacobs, Dallas (1986-1989)
*Milton Smith, Austin (1989-1991)
*Fay Brachman, Fort Worth (1991-1993)
*Don Teter, Baytown (1993-1995)
Barbara Rosenberg, Sugar Land (1995-1998)
*Helen Wilk, Corpus Christi/Houston (1998-2000)
*Jack Gerrick, Fort Worth (2000-2002)
*Charles B. Hart, Temple (2002-2004)
*Marvin Rich, Houston (2004-2006)
Vickie Vogel, LaGrange/Austin (2006-2008)
Sally Drayer, Dallas (2008-2010)
Rusty Milstein, Longview (2010-2012)
Marc Wormser, Corpus Christi/Pearland (2012-2014)
*Debra Winegarten, Austin (2014-2015)
David Beer, Dallas (2015-2017)
Davie Lou Solka, Corpus Christi/Austin (2017-2019)
Susan Zack Lewis, Big Spring (2019-2021)
Sheldon Lippman, Austin (2021-2023)
Joan Linares, Baytown (2023-2025)

**Deceased*

Texas Jewish
Historical Society
P. O. Box 10193
Austin, Texas 78766-0193
www.txjhs.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HOUSTON, TX
PERMIT NO. 1662

The Texas Jewish Historical Society

Mail-In Membership Form with check

Your annual membership renewal date will be the month/day of your check in the following year.

Date: _____

Your annual membership renewal date will be the month/day of your check in the following year.

Check the Appropriate Box

❍ New Member** ❍ Membership Renewal ❍ Gift* ❍ Information Update

Choose category of annual TJHS Membership

❍ $18 Student ❍ $50 Supporter ❍ $100 Advocate
❍ $250 Champion ❍ $500 Friend ❍ $1,000 Patron

Information below is required for correct entry in TJHS Membership Database and members-only website Directory.

Member #1 _____

Email #1: _____ Phone: _____

Member #2 (of couple/partnership) _____

Email #2: _____ Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____

**Name and address of person(s) giving the Gift Membership:* _____

***New member? How did you hear about TJHS? Who recommended joining?* _____

Please send this completed membership form along with a signed/dated bank check to

Texas Jewish Historical Society, P. O. Box 10193, Austin, TX 78766-0193.

Texas Jewish Historical Society, Inc. is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Contributions to TJHS are tax deductible within the limits of the law.