

## St. Louis Jewish History Resources

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Below are a few of the key resources for Jewish records. This is not an exhaustive list, but these are a few of the St. Louis resources which our speaker and SIG leaders have found particularly helpful. These resources are chosen here primarily because they are **not** well known. Some are only available as hard copy and not online.

The St. Louis region covers two states, and several county and municipal jurisdictions. Significant Jewish communities, including Jewish businesses, have formed not only in the City of St. Louis, but in University City, Wellston (both in St. Louis County) East St. Louis (St. Clair County, Illinois) and the city of Alton (Madison County, Illinois). Where records are housed depends on their specific jurisdictional location. Because the St. Louis region straddles two states and because St. Louis city and St. Louis County have separate governing bodies, St. Louis researchers may need to research multiple local resources.

**The St. Louis Genealogical Society** website <https://stlgs.org> contains a comprehensive list of Jewish resources as well as a historical timeline, a list of synagogues and temples, cemeteries, newspapers, and extensive data from religious institutions. The *Generations* newsletters available on the site contain some valuable information, including maps of several Jewish cemeteries.

***Zion in the Valley, The Jewish Community of St. Louis* by Walter Ehrlich, Volumes 1 and 2**, are a key resource, especially if you are looking for detailed information on the history of the community and the evolution of key institutions used by the Jewish community. Many specific names are cited and their roles in the Jewish community are described.

***The Jewish Community of St. Louis, 1890–1929*** by Diane Everman, offers photographs of people, businesses, institutions, culture, and social activities of the period.

**The City of St. Louis Archives Department** contains early birth, death, and marriage records available only on microfiche at City Hall. **The City of St Louis Recorder of Deeds** retains many maps from this period.

**The St. Louis Public Library** and the **St. Louis County Library** both have extensive materials in their respective History and Genealogy Departments. The St. Louis County Library History and Genealogy Department also contains a large collection of Yizkor books as well as Jewish newspapers. The St. Louis Public Library's downtown location offers a wonderful collection of historical maps.

The **City of Wellston** had a vibrant Jewish community with an active central business district. The ***Wellston Journal***, a suburban newspaper, covers this time period; only hard copy is available at the Missouri History Museum's Library and Research Center.

Jewish businesses were also located in **Alton**, Illinois, in Madison County. The **Alton Library** is a very useful resource including photos of downtown Alton businesses. Communities far from the center of the City of St. Louis, such as Litchfield, Olney, and Benld, all in Illinois, were home to Jewish businesses.

The **St. Louis Jewish Community Archives (Brotsky Library)** is a source of valuable information. Contact the archivist:

Diane Everman, PhD  
St. Louis Jewish Community Archives  
The Holocaust Museum  
St. Louis MO 63146  
314-442-3722  
[deverman@stlholocaustmuseum.org](mailto:deverman@stlholocaustmuseum.org)

The **City of East St. Louis, Illinois**, was home to a large component of the Jewish community, including its own synagogue and business district. Hard copies of the **East St. Louis City Business Directories** for this period are available at the **St. Clair Library** in Belleville, Illinois.

As the Jewish community moved westward, the **City of University City** became home for a large Jewish population. The **University City Public Library** contains many useful volumes on the history of this community and its historic Jewish cemeteries. The **Historical Society of University City** offers materials and hosts events related to this community's unique history. This historical society has published a number of pamphlets, such as:

- ***The Cemeteries of University City*** by Esley Hamilton, Illustrations by Pat Hays Baer, 1998.
- ***Ames Place, A Brief History of its Planning and Development*** by Esley Hamilton.

The **Missouri Historical Society Library and Research Center** is a rich resource of archival materials on St. Louis, including documents, maps, directories, and much, much more.

**The Modern View: 25th anniversary deluxe edition** by A. Rosenthal. St. Louis, Mo., 1925 is a special edition of this magazine which contains a great deal of information on the synagogues, Jewish institutions and organizations, and other features of the St. Louis Jewish community of the time. The St. Louis Public Library and the Missouri Historical Society Library and Research Center are sources.

**Historical Societies:** Many communities within the St. Louis region have their own historical societies, independent of many other resources. These various societies may retain photographs and/or artifacts which may be pertinent to your research.

Individual synagogues and temples may retain their own archives and need to be contacted individually. One of the largest collections is the archival material held by United Hebrew Temple in St. Louis County. Histories of the individual institutions can be very helpful. Many of these are available through the St. Louis Jewish Community Archives.

*A Centennial History of Congregation Temple Israel, 1886–1986, 5647–5747*, edited by Samuel Rosenkranz, Creve Coeur, Missouri, Congregation Temple Israel, 1986.

*B'nai Amoona for All Generations*, by Rosalind Mail Bronson, St. Louis, Missouri, Congregation B'nai Amoona, 1982.

*Congregation Shaare Emeth: Sesquicentennial celebration 1867–2017*, by Rabbi Emeritus Jeffrey Stiffman.

*Faith. Family. Future. Shaare Zedek: the first hundred years 1905–2005* by Jody S. Feldman.

*The Philipsons: First Jewish St Louis Settlers in St. Louis, 1808–1858*, pamphlet by David Markovsky, St. Louis: St. Louis Rabbinical Association, 1958.

*The United Hebrew Congregation 1837–1963* by Jane Preiwer, St Louis: United Hebrew Congregation, 1963.