



### UPCOMING EVENTS:

["The Haggadah: A Mirror of Jewish History, its Agony and Triumph," a talk by Herbert Wollowick, Judaica Suite, March 29, 2017, 3 pm.](#)

["Jews and their Neighbors in German-occupied Europe," a talk by Jan Gross \(Princeton\), Smathers Library Conference Room 100, April 2, 2017, 5 pm.](#)

### NEW IN THE LIBRARY:

The Alfred M. Silberfeld Genealogical Research Collection. A former journalist and businessman, Silberfeld retired to Florida where he became the founder of the Jewish Genealogical Society of West Palm Beach. The collection was donated by Heath Silberfeld. See the [Silberfeld Collection Finding Aid](#) for more information.

A rare Scroll of Esther created by the Bezalel School of Art in 1940s Palestine has been donated to the Library by Miriam Finegold Price in memory of her husband, Jack Price. Read about the scroll in our Judaica Library blog: [Ghosts in the Pages](#).

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**FLORIDA**

### E-Newsletter

We are pleased to present the first issue of our new quarterly newsletter, *Collectanea*. This Latin word reflects our Library's mission to gather together Judaic materials, either physical items or digital scans, for long-term preservation and widespread dissemination. The title also captures our newsletter's main aim, which is to share a *collectanea* or miscellany of news and stories from the Price Library of Judaica, including the history of its books and collections, features on newly acquired items and upcoming events.

## Rev. Benjamin Safer Alcove Dedication



**Dr. Edwin Safer (left) with Ilene Silverman (right)**

first Rabbi of Jacksonville), together with wonderful stories about family history. In attendance at the dedication was Gainesville's well-known TV show hostess, Ilene Silverman, herself a member of the Safer family. A special [Ilene Silverman Show](#) featuring the Judaica Suite and the Safer Dedication can now be viewed online.

The naming of the Hebrew Language Book Alcove represents the fifth naming of a space within the Judaica Suite. We are deeply grateful to all the wonderful individuals and families who have chosen to honor the Library in this way. The connection with the Safer family also shows that there are many ways to help the Judaica Library, including donating materials, offering funds to help broaden the collection with unique items (for example, the album featured on page two, which we discovered disowned in a British bookstore), or by lending your support to our special NEH initiative, described overleaf.

The Hebrew Language Book Alcove in the Judaica Suite has just been named in memory of the Rev. Benjamin Safer by Dr. Edwin Safer (his grandson) and Edwin's wife, Harriet. This naming comes after a long relationship with Dr. Safer and his family, which began with the donation of [The Reverend Benjamin Safer and Family Collection](#), and the creation of the [Reverend Benjamin Safer Digital Collection](#), followed by a subsequent exhibition entitled [Jewish Jacksonville](#).

More than 40 members of the Safer family and friends attended the Library on Sunday, February 19, 2017 for a special family dedication ceremony. Generations of Safers representing every branch of the family listened to Dr. Edwin Safer as he recounted memories of his grandfather (including his role as the

## Rare Immigrant Album



Original artwork in the album by F. Fortuny

Since the late nineteenth century, migration, voluntary and involuntary, became a necessary experience for large numbers of Jews all over the world. Generations were born in one country and died in another. With each move, these immigrants had to adapt their lives, their languages, and sometimes their religious practices, particularly in areas previously unaccustomed to Jewish life.

The Price Library of Judaica is a proud custodian of a unique album that offers a glimpse into the modern history of transatlantic Jewish immigration. It was prepared as a gift to the minister of immigration in Argentina, Juan Antonio Alsina (1852-1937) by the Argentine Jewish community on the occasion of his retirement in 1910.

On the album's cover is an elaborate chased brass floral ornament incorporating a shield engraved with the inscription "La Colectividad Israelita al Doctor Juan A. Alsina," while inside an original artwork by F. Fortuny depicts the symbolic female figure of Argentina as she receives newcomers in a harbor. The quote "*beneficios y libertad para todos los hombres del mundo que quieren habitar en el suelo argentino*" (rewards and freedom for all men of this world who want to live on Argentine soil) illustrates the young Argentine Republic's openness toward immigrants at that time.

Most importantly, however, the album includes 1052 signatures of the Jewish community members in Cyrillic, Hebrew and Latin script as a symbolic gesture of both appreciation and as an inducement to Alsina, who was known for his unfriendly attitude toward Jews, to continue to allow Jewish immigration. As such, the album opens windows for historians, ethnologists, genealogists, anthropologists, and art historians for new research fields. At the same time, the broader community can equally enjoy this unique artifact for its aesthetic appearance and the lessons it teaches about Jewish communal life and activism, as well as the wider immigrant experience.

See the full album in our [Jewish Diaspora Collection](#) online. Please let us know if you recognize any of the names or signatures within the album, we'd really love to find out more about the members of the Buenos Aires Jewish community who produced it!

## The People of the Books!

Any collection or library of Judaica refutes the oft-used phrase "The People of the Book" by actually proving that the Jews are a people of many books and many types of written text. The Price Library of Judaica holds a mirror to this history: with its own copies of *the Book* (the Torah) sitting alongside the many texts that grew out of it. Considered the first Jewish book, the Torah inspired and informed not only the teachings of the monotheistic religions, but also enriched other types of literature within and without Judaism and all around the world.

In addition to content, the original format of the Torah, the scroll, continues to play an important role in Jewish life as it takes center stage during the weekly Torah reading in the synagogue. Books all over the ancient world were produced in the form of a scroll. Originally, each of the five books of the Pentateuch were written on individual scrolls, which were much smaller than those read in synagogues today. Their mode of preparation, however, practically did not change: a Torah scroll is painstakingly hand-written by highly skilled scribes who endeavor to make sure that no errors creep into the text. A defunct scroll cannot be used and must be buried, usually in the tomb of a scholar or community leader.

Visitors to the Price Library of Judaica have the unique opportunity to study closely the centuries-long transformation of this first Jewish book. Thanks to the generous donation of the Price family, a Torah scroll, with its original cover, two *rimonim* (finials), and pointer, prepared in 1930s Russia, is part of the Judaica collection at UF. Alongside our scroll, patrons can read the Bible as it was printed in many different editions, formats and languages over time.

*Each issue of Collectanea will highlight some of the historical "firsts" found in our collection and available for our patrons.*

## NEH Challenge Grant



The Judaica Library's [NEH Challenge Grant](#) is now in its third year. To date we have raised over \$700,000 towards building our Endowment Fund to collect, preserve and provide open access to Jewish heritage materials from Florida, Latin America and the Caribbean. We wish to thank our many kind donors for their wonderful support. No gift is considered too small: for every \$3 you donate, we receive \$1 in matching funds from the federal government. Thanks to your help, we can provide the resources and knowledge for vital and groundbreaking scholarship into the global Jewish experience. Please see our [NEH Grant webpage](#) to learn more about this important initiative.

## Further Information

To inquire about the Judaica Library and how you can assist with the preservation and study of its materials, please contact Dr. Rebecca Jefferson, Head of the Isser and Rae Price Library of Judaica at [rjefferson@ufl.edu](mailto:rjefferson@ufl.edu) or Dr. Katalin Rac, Jewish Heritage Coordinator at [katalin.rac@ufl.edu](mailto:katalin.rac@ufl.edu).

To visit the Judaica Suite, please see our website at: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/judaica> for opening hours and visitor information. We look forward to giving you a tour!

Wherever you live in the world, you can explore our Library collections and those of our many partners through more than 180,000 pages of digital content in our Jewish Diaspora Collection (JDoC): <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/judaica>