

Maine Jewish Museum

Our doors may be closed.

Our work won't stop.

2026 Year-End Impact & Giving

Our address is not our mission.

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Friends!

The Maine Jewish Museum has temporarily closed its galleries so our historic building can undergo approximately six months of extensive security improvements—work that has become a sad reality for front-facing Jewish institutions across the country.

Thanks to significant federal security funding, our building will be better protected when we reopen. But those grants do not fund the work that makes the Maine Jewish Museum matter. While our galleries are closed, that work won't stop.

Delet, our free K–12 Jewish education program, will keep bringing students into meaningful contact with Judaism and Jewish life. We will continue transforming Documenting Maine Jewry, establishing the redesigned MaineJews.org as a digital home for Jewish life and history across the state. In spring 2027, with support from the Jewish Community Alliance of Southern Maine and Maine Humanities Council, *Faces & Facets of Jewish Life in Maine*—our bilingual English-Hebrew art book featuring Hedva Rokach's photographs of contemporary Jewish life in Maine—will reach every Maine high school, accompanied by curriculum. And we are actively finalizing temporary gallery space for our storied art exhibition series (stay tuned!). Even as our Congress Street galleries undergo security improvements, we will continue bringing art and audiences together.

2026 showed just how much an itty-bitty Museum in Maine can do. We reached more than **650 Maine students** through Delet, welcomed **215 people** to the largest exhibition opening in MJM history, featured **192 portraits** of Jewish Mainers in *There Is Always an &*, and built a growing oral-history collection that now includes more than **25 professional video interviews**.

Our work has always extended far beyond our walls. Now, we are expanding upon that foundation.

As 2026 winds down, I am asking you to make a year-end gift to the Maine Jewish Museum's Annual Fund. **Your support will keep this work moving during our closure and help us build what comes next,** including a completely reimagined Core Exhibition that will take shape floor by floor through 2027.

WHAT YOU MADE POSSIBLE

650+ MAINE STUDENTS REACHED	**192** PORTRAITS OF JEWISH MAINERS DISPLAYED
215 GUESTS AT OUR LARGEST OPENING	**25+** ORAL HISTORIES RECORDED

EVERY MAINE HIGH SCHOOL will receive *Faces & Facets* + curriculum in 2027

And thanks to Bob Hirshon and the Hirshon Family Foundation, the first **$25,000 in new and increased year-end gifts** will be matched dollar for dollar.

Our address is not our mission.
Thank you for helping us take that mission across Maine.

With gratitude,
Dawn LaRochelle
Executive Director

Opening the door *earlier.*

"Delet" means "door" in Hebrew. In 2026, that door opened wider than ever before.



MJM created Delet to build understanding of Jews and Judaism and combat antisemitism through education and human connection. In 2026, we expanded our offerings to elementary school students, building familiarity and connection earlier through stories, traditions, art, music, food, questions, and Jewish joy.

Click here to see Delet in action!

650+

Maine students reached

Now serving K–12

Through the Celebrating Rural Maine project, MJM spent the school year with 2025 Maine History Teacher of the Year Jamie Karaffa and her students at Bruce M. Whittier Middle School in Poland.



Whittier students connected Holocaust history with the stories of survivors who made Maine home, then brought that learning back to the Museum to share with the wider community.

Click here to check out their presentations!

Faces & Facets:

from abstraction to actual people.



Hedva Rokach and Itay Bahur's travels across Maine produced both *Faces & Facets of Jewish Life in Maine* and *There Is Always an &*, an exhibition of **192 portraits**. It opened alongside exhibitions by Maine artists Tamara Krendel and Ellen Golden, drawing **215 people—the largest exhibition opening in MJM history.**

One conversation at a time.

The Ampersand Project celebrates the many, sometimes contradictory, truths we all hold.

The Ampersand Project continued to expand: more than **100 portraits** became a second-floor installation at MJM, a satellite exhibition opened at the Holocaust & Human Rights Center of Maine, and the conversations behind the project became the foundation of our expanding video oral-history collection.



For many Maine students, Holocaust education may be their only formal introduction to Jews and Judaism. *Faces & Facets of Jewish Life in Maine* offers another perspective: contemporary Jewish Mainers, in all their diversity and complexity.

In 2027, this bilingual English-Hebrew art book, accompanied by educational curriculum, will reach every Maine high school, helping students discover Jewish life beyond the history books.

Colby College + MJM.

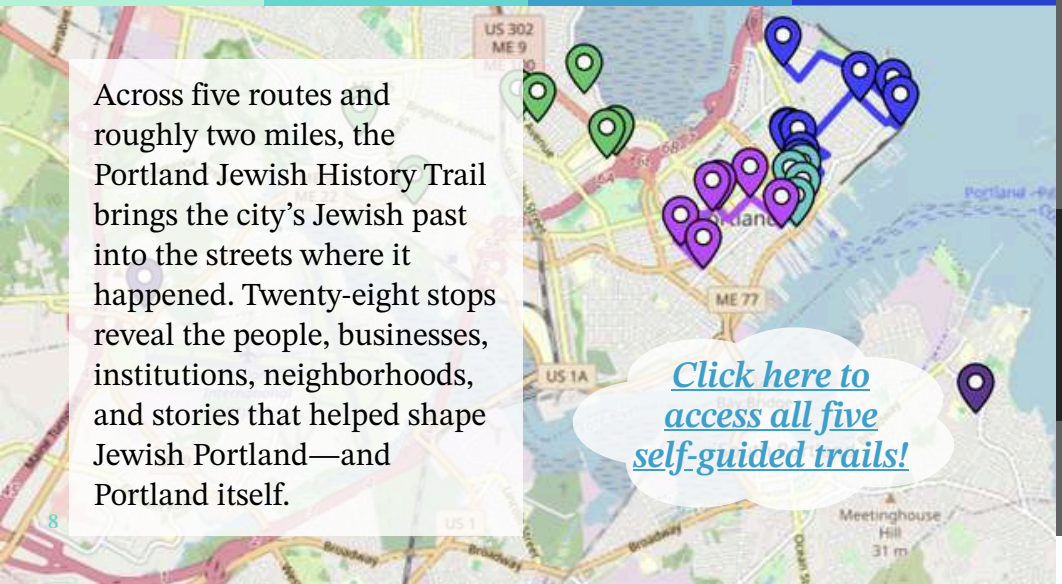
In 2026, MJM formalized a collaboration with Colby College centered on collecting, preserving, studying, and sharing the history of Jewish life in Maine, past and present. The partnership brings together MJM's collections and community connections with Colby's students, faculty, Special Collections & Archives, and academic resources.

Colby's Rabbi Dr. David Freidenreich joined Team MJM as Historian-in-Residence, and students in his Maine Jewish History course brought their research out of the classroom and into the Museum.



28 stops on the Portland Jewish History Trail.

History is hiding in plain sight.



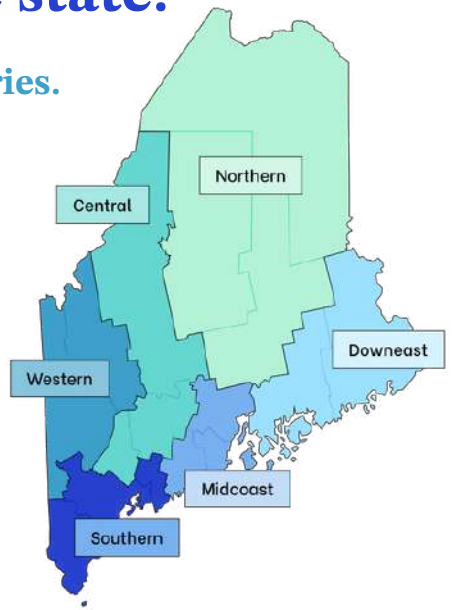
Across five routes and roughly two miles, the Portland Jewish History Trail brings the city's Jewish past into the streets where it happened. Twenty-eight stops reveal the people, businesses, institutions, neighborhoods, and stories that helped shape Jewish Portland—and Portland itself.

Click here to access all five self-guided trails!

MAINEJEWS.ORG

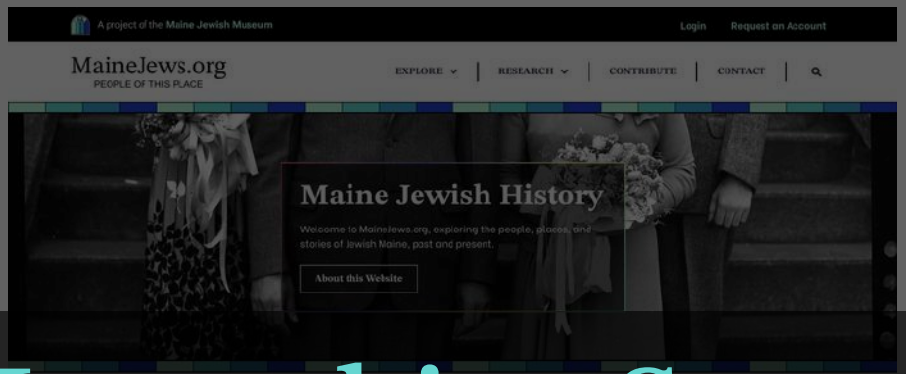
A new digital home for Jewish history across the state.

One state. Thousands of stories.



We are rebuilding MaineJews.org as a new statewide digital home for Jewish Maine.

Photographs, documents, oral histories, family collections, and community stories will connect Maine's Jewish past to the people, places, and stories shaping Jewish life here today.



Launching Soon.

And that wasn't all.

A year of
art, music, scholarship, partnership, and Jewish public life
across Maine.

Art at MJM



More than a dozen exhibitions across a broad range of mediums brought diverse artistic talent into our galleries, garnering eight features in local, regional, and international media.

Keepers of the Flame



Maine creatives across generations collaborated and performed with world-renowned artists David Krakauer and Kathleen Tagg during our free-to-participate musical residency.

Shalom & Shamrocks



Sold out for the second year in a row, even after more than doubling capacity, this festive evening brought Jewish and Irish Mainers together in collaboration with the Maine Irish Heritage Center.

Afro-Semitic Experience



Black and Jewish professional musicians led a workshop for 50 Maine middle school students in our historic sanctuary, followed by a community concert featuring the students.

Aimee Ginsburg Bikel



Theodore Bikel's widow joined us for an event-filled weekend, supported by the Yiddish Book Center and culminating in a Yiddish party at the JCA, filled with music, culture, and Theo's incomparable Tevye legacy.

Ari'el Stachel



Tony, Grammy, and Emmy Award winner Ari'el Stachel brought his autobiographical performance *OTHER* to MJM, exploring identity, belonging, mental health, and the complexities of navigating multiple cultural worlds.

Our doors are closed.
The work keeps moving.

While 267 Congress Street undergoes security construction, MJM will continue teaching, collecting, exhibiting, preserving, and connecting throughout Maine.

And, behind temporarily closed gallery doors, we are preparing for the next chapter with a completely reimagined Core Exhibition, guided by a simple equation:







People + Place = Creativity







You make what comes next possible.

2027 will be a pivotal year for MJM, inside 267 Congress Street and throughout Maine.

MAKE YOUR 2026 YEAR-END GIFT

GIVE ONLINE
https://mainejewishmuseum.org/donate/

GIVE BY MAIL
Maine Jewish Museum
267 Congress Street
Portland, Maine 04101

MAKE IT MONTHLY
A recurring gift provides dependable support throughout the year

OTHER WAYS TO GIVE
Donor-Advised Fund • Tribute Gift
Stock • Planned or Legacy Gift

*Please note that our fiscal year ends **December 31.** To count toward the 2026 Annual Fund, gifts must be received by **December 31, 2026.***

DOUBLE YOUR YEAR-END GIFT

The first $25,000 in new and increased year-end gifts will be matched dollar for dollar thanks to Bob Hirshon and the Hirshon Family Foundation.

New donor?
Your entire gift is matched while funds remain.
Returning donor?
The amount above your 2025 gift is matched.



FOR ASSISTANCE WITH YOUR GIFT:
Dawn LaRochelle, Executive Director
dlarochelle@mainejewishmuseum.org • 207-253-3198

When our doors reopen, visitors will return to a more secure building.
Your support will help us transform what they find inside.

Thank you for being a part of our story.

We can't wait to show you what's next!



PHOTOGRAPH CREDITS

Front Johnny Mehler
p. 3 Background: Alaryx Tenzer
p. 4-5 Background: Johnny Mehler
Feature: Johnny Mehler
p. 6-7 Background: Brandon Blinderman
Feature: Hedva Rokach, *Selected works from "There is Always an &"* (detail collage), Maine Jewish Museum, 2026.
p. 8 Feature: Johnny Mehler
p. 10 Top: Sara Crisp, *Untitled (First one)*, 2025, wax, delphiniums, and mica, 6 x 6 in. Photograph courtesy of Bret Woodard.
Middle: Brandon Blinderman
Bottom: Brandon Blinderman
p. 11 Top: Niko Andreoli
Middle: Brandon Blinderman
Bottom: Johnny Mehler
p. 12-13 Background: Alaryx Tenzer
Top-left: Bret Woodard
Top-middle: Brandon Blinderman
Top-right: Johnny Mehler
Bottom-left: Brandon Blinderman
Bottom-middle: Niko Andreoli
Bottom-right: Alaryx Tenzer
Back Alaryx Tenzer

Layout design by Alaryx Tenzer.