

A BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE:

THE 2022 SAN DIEGO JEWISH COMMUNITY STUDY

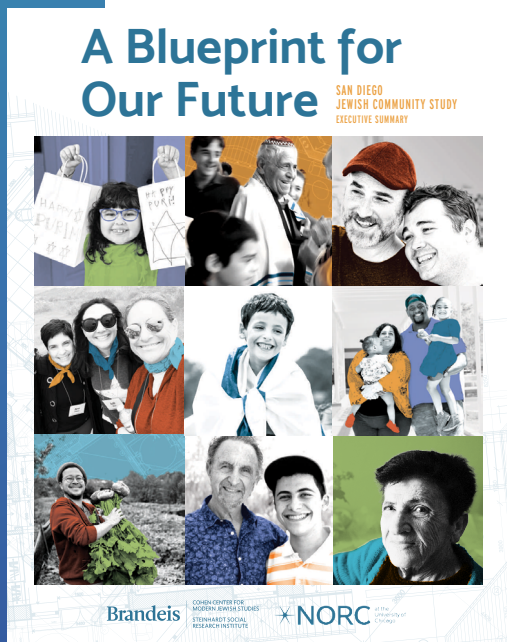
How many Jews live in San Diego? Where do they live? How do they engage with their religion? Their culture? Answers to these questions and more can be found in San Diego's new Jewish population study, the first in 20 years to measure the local Jewish community. Conducted by Brandeis University, in partnership with the University of Chicago, this study provides a snapshot of San Diego Jewry that helps us to better understand the present and plan for the future.

A few fun facts about our local Jewish community: San Diego is home to a growing and diverse Jewish community of 100,700 people, or 3% of the county's total population. Nearly 1 in 5 Jewish San Diegans identifies with a racial identity other than white or as Hispanic. 16% of adults in Jewish households identify as LGBTQ+.

A majority of San Diego Jews agree that leading a moral and ethical life is essential to being Jewish. To this end, local Jews are very active in philanthropy and volunteerism. What worries the local Jewish community? The majority are very concerned about antisemitism around the world and in the United States.

Read this study to learn more about San Diego's Jewish community. Read the study and learn more about San Diego's Jewish community:

[HTTPS://SCHOLARWORKS.BRANDEIS.EDU/ESPLORO/OUTPUTS/REPORT/9924300786601921](https://scholarworks.brandeis.edu/esploro/outputs/report/9924300786601921)



AJC San Diego

LOUIS ROSE

(1807-1888)

It's unfortunate that San Diego's first Jewish settler, Louis Rose, looks so grumpy in his best surviving portrait, when by all accounts he was a cheerful, generous person. He opened his pear orchards to picnickers, and had a pet tortoise named Chile that wandered around Old Town, much to the delight of local children.

A German Jewish immigrant, Rose tried his luck in New Orleans and Louisiana before riding to San Diego as part of a wagon train from Texas in 1850. He arrived here at the beginning of statehood, and helped to shape San Diego. Rose opened a store in Old Town and worked as a rancher. He also worked as a rancher and real estate developer. Today, you can hike in Rose Canyon, the site of his ranch and tannery.



A pioneer and city father, Rose held a variety of civic positions. He served as San Diego's Postmaster, a City Council Trustee, and a County Supervisor. Jews frequently held the position of Postmaster in the American West. Literate, often multilingual, shopkeepers with a fixed address, Jews made ideal mail men.

Rose also shaped the local Jewish community, purchasing and donating the land for San Diego's first Jewish cemetery in 1862, and spearheading the creation of the first Hebrew Benevolent Society here in 1871. Before there was a synagogue in San Diego, he hosted Jewish holiday services in his home. Rose was a founding member of San Diego's first Jewish congregation, Adath Yeshurun, in 1861.

LEARN MORE ABOUT LOUIS:

[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/](https://youtu.be/FDK303PNO1A?si=qz09wLFR-FHS8JQD)

[FDK303PNO1A?SI=QZ09WLFR-](https://youtu.be/FDK303PNO1A?si=qz09wLFR-FHS8JQD)

[FHS8JQD.](https://youtu.be/FDK303PNO1A?si=qz09wLFR-FHS8JQD)



ROSE SCHINDLER

(1929-2023)

Holocaust survivor Rose Schindler shared her wartime experiences with San Diego audiences for fifty years. Her testimony touched the hearts and minds of local schoolchildren, who understood that this grandmotherly figure had a tattoo not just on her arm, but also on her heart, that compelled her to remember and speak out about the consequences of hate and intolerance.

Born and raised in Czechoslovakia, Schindler and her family, including her seven siblings, were deported to Auschwitz in 1944. She was 14 years old. Rose remembers the advice of her father, “stay alive, so that you can tell the world what they are doing to us,” as crucial to navigating the death camp and her life afterward. The Nazis murdered Rose’s parents and five of her siblings.

Rose met and married her husband Max in a displaced persons camp in England in 1950. Together, they moved to Brooklyn in 1951, and then, on the advice of a friend in the military, to San Diego in 1956. Rose and Max Schindler raised their family in Del Cerro. When their son Steven was 13, he acted in a

school production of “The Diary of Anne Frank.” Upon learning that his mother was a survivor, his teacher asked if she would come to speak to the class. Rose, remembering the words of her father, started speaking about her experiences in the Holocaust then, and didn’t stop until just days before she died at age 93 in 2023.

LEARN MORE ABOUT ROSE:

[HTTPS://STORYFILE.COM/GALLERY/
ROSE-SCHINDLER-STORYFILE/](https://storyfile.com/gallery/rose-schindler-storyfile/)

[HTTPS://SFI.USC.EDU/VIDEO/ROSE-AND-
MAX-SCHINDLER](https://sfi.usc.edu/video/rose-and-max-schindler)



VICTORIA JACOBS

(1838-1861)

What was it like to be a Jewish teen in Old Town in 1856? Victoria Jacobs recorded her thoughts about ironing (tricky!), toothaches (terrible!) and falling in love (thrilling!) in her diary, providing us with a rare view into local daily life through the eyes of a young Jewish woman.

Born in Manchester, England, Victoria came to the United States with her family in the late 1840s. They settled first in Baltimore, Maryland, but followed opportunity west to San Diego in 1851. The Jacobs family lived in Old Town and ran a general store there. Victoria and her 11 siblings led busy lives, attending picnics on the playa, theatrical performances at the Mission, and public balls. Being Jewish posed no barrier to entry for the Jacobs in San Diego society.

Victoria's diary records a year in her life during which she was courting her future husband, Maurice Franklin. She records her impatience at cleaning for Shabbat, her joy at celebrating holidays, and above all, her excitement in getting to know her future husband. Victoria and Maurice married in 1857, and moved to San Bernadino in 1859. She died in childbirth there in 1861. San Bernadino's Victoria Avenue is named in her honor.

WATCH A REENACTMENT REENACTMENT VIDEO BY THE HISTORY CENTER:
[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/SANDIEGOHISTORYCENTER/VIDEOS/VICTORIA-JACOBS-DIARY/10155287521880821/](https://www.facebook.com/sandiegohistorycenter/videos/victoria-jacobs-diary/10155287521880821/)



ISIDOR LOUIS

(1836-1895)

Prussian Jewish immigrant Isidor Louis was an innovative entrepreneur. Louis opened San Diego's first regular theater, the Louis Opera House, in 1887, and in the same year, he built the tallest building in town, the Bank of Commerce on Fifth Avenue, which stands as a beloved historic landmark in the Gaslamp District today. However, his most popular contribution to the city by far was his ice cream saloon.



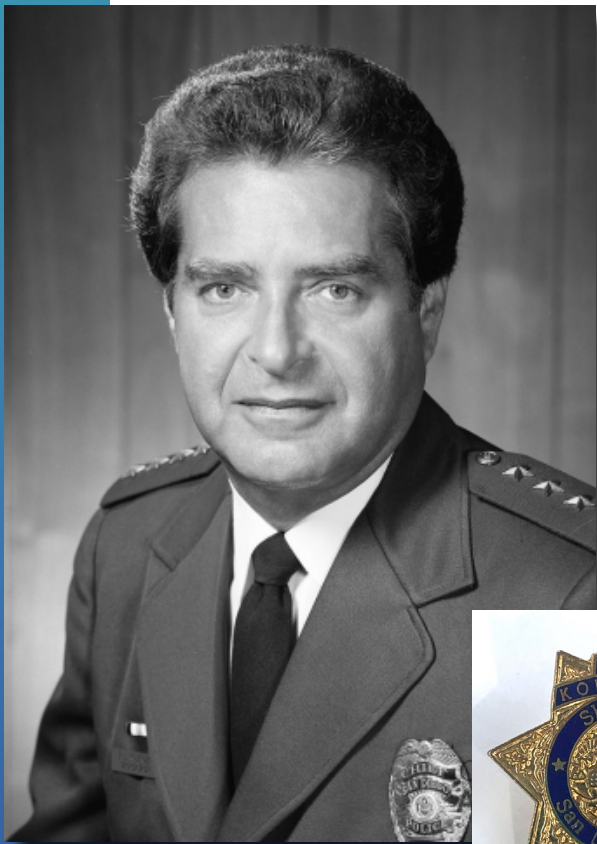
Isidor Louis introduced ice cream to San Diego in 1880. This was no small accomplishment in the American southwest before refrigeration. How did he do it? Louis paid for ice to be cut from Lake Tahoe and shipped by boat to San Diego, where he built an insulated warehouse to store it. He sold ice to bars to cool beer, to housewives to preserve food, and to everyone to enjoy as a sweet treat. His ice cream saloon, Maison Duree, eventually evolved into a restaurant featuring oysters, champagne and confectionary.

Louis funded his real estate and restaurant ventures with money saved from selling boots and shoes all over the west, from San Francisco to San Diego. He loved California. And California loved pioneers like Isidor Louis, innovators and risk-takers who possessed the spirit of adventure required to move to the far west and build cities at the "edge of the world" in the 19th century.

WILLIAM “BILL” KOLENDER

(1935-2015)

William “Bill” Kolender was a pioneer in local law enforcement. Kolender served as San Diego’s first Jewish police chief and first Jewish sheriff. He was also the city’s youngest police sergeant, and the nation’s youngest big-city chief, the driving force behind the creation of community-oriented policing, creation of a civilian police review board, and modernization of the Sheriff’s Department.



Kolender joked that his many achievements helped his parents accept his career choice: “My father went ballistic when I joined the cops,” Kolender told San Diego Magazine in 2006. “He says, ‘Bilvel, it’s a gentile’s job. Be somebody. I’m embarrassed. I can’t go outside.’” Kolender added with a laugh, “Later, of course, the family joke was when I was named chief of police, it was all okay.”

Admired for his wisdom, empathy and sense of humor, Kolender was more than ok. He was one of the most beloved public figures in recent San Diego history.

