



Winter, 2024:

Hi there, museum fans! It has been an amazingly busy tourist season this year. We welcomed visitors from Albuquerque to Baton Rouge; Staten Island to Brussels; Israel to Johannesburg; Philadelphia to Quebec; and Boston to Wollongong, NSW! Many are surprised to find out that there is not only a Jewish Museum in Alaska, but that the history of the Jewish people of Alaska goes back to at least the mid-1800's. Alaska Jewish Museum, or AJM, is a gathering place. Often, conversations take place between visitors that upon talking with each other, discover a shared ancestry. We have benches and chairs that can be brought out and placed in a circle for a group chat.

We want you to know that we have updated our "Eight Alaskans" cabinet to include newly acquired photos and postcards for the exhibit about the family of Beverly Churchill that feature her grandmother Rosa Senescu, violinist of the Senescu Family Orchestra of Romania. They tell the story of how this beautiful young woman ended up in Candle, Alaska, married to an Alaskan Jew! On our website in the "Conversations with the Curator" section, one can also watch a filmed interview with Beverly. In addition, we are hoping in 2025 to add to our Operation Magic Carpet exhibit, that tells the story of the airlift of Yemenite Jews to the new State of Israel, a Yemenite Jewish wedding headdress that dates back more than a thousand years! We will be working with an incredible team of cabinet fabricators and restoration experts on this project.

Here is an important final note. The entire Alaska museum community has been saddened by the passing of the Co-Curator of AJM's online exhibit, "From Purchase to Prosperity: The Jewish Founders of the Alaska Commercial Company:" the well-regarded Alaska maritime historian J. Pennelope Goforth. This project earned for AJM and the above exhibit's curators, Leslie Fried and Ms. Goforth, the Elva R. Scott Local Historical Society Award from the Alaska Historical Society.