



STOCKTON UNIVERSITY

ALLIANCE HERITAGE CENTER

Preserving the History of Alliance and Telling its Stories

Director: Thomas Kinsella
Rudnick Research Fellow: Patricia Chappine

Alliance Public History: The Next Generation

Trusting that knowledge of the past is important to current and future generations, the Alliance Heritage Center has begun hosting tours to Alliance for regional high school students. In 2022, on a rainy, cold December day, 16 eager Vineland High students arrived at the Alliance Cemetery chapel to learn about the history of the colony and tour the cemetery, taking part in a moving discussion at the Holocaust memorial. Students then walked to the Bayuk house where Nate Kleinman and Nick Messiano introduced them to the efforts and goals of Alliance Colony Reboot (ACRe): sustainability, food justice and Jewish education. The tour concluded with a visit to the nearby Alliance Synagogue, where Howard Jaffee gave a wonderful presentation explaining its history and significance. A second tour, with high school students from Egg Harbor City, took place in April 2023.

At the university level, the Center began offering Alliance history internships in Spring 2022. Stockton University students, both undergraduate and graduate, have organized digital collections, completed research, documented the Alliance Cemetery and created stories for our digital museum.

Great news! The Center recently received a Mellon Foundation grant allowing us to launch a two-year initiative, starting in Fall 2023, that includes a lecture series on Alliance history and short courses on best practices for pertinent public history efforts, such as the digitization and preservation of family artifacts, the collection of oral histories and the development of digital exhibitions. The project will culminate in a refurbished permanent exhibition at the Alliance Cemetery chapel as well as a traveling exhibit, print catalog and interactive digital displays showcasing the history of Jewish farming in South Jersey.

Stockton students will assist in all aspects of this initiative, including public programming, curating physical and digital content, researching the narratives of underrepresented groups and developing insightful and engaging public humanities content. Look for more details to be shared soon!



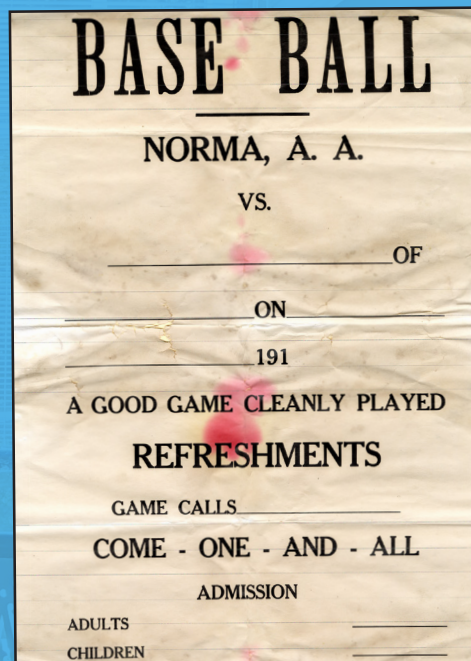
Thomas Kinsella, the Elizabeth and Samuel Levin director of the Alliance Heritage Center, introduces high school students to the history of Alliance in the Cemetery chapel.



High school students from Egg Harbor City at the Holocaust Memorial at the Alliance Cemetery.



Howard Jaffee explains the history and significance of the Alliance (Tiphereth) Synagogue to high school students.



Baseball broadside placed in the cornerstone of the Norma Athletic Association Hall, 1912.



Preserving the History

In April 2022, Dr. Patricia Chappine joined the Center as the inaugural Rudnick Research Fellow. A generous donation from an Alliance community member supports her work. Chappine works closely with Director Tom Kinsella and with Center interns as well as graduate assistants.

Chappine has brought significant grant writing skills to the Center. In January 2023, prior to the recently awarded Mellon Grant, AHC received a New Jersey Historical Commission Inclusive History Grant in support of Alliance historical preservation. The grant allows us to curate and upload Alliance digital assets to Stockton's Richard E. Bjork Library's new visual database. Chappine and American Studies graduate student Cynthia Anstey are currently heading up the project. See their ongoing work by visiting the Alliance Heritage Center digital museum: allianceheritagecenter.com

Professor Ellen Eisenberg, author of the important *Jewish Agricultural Colonies in New Jersey: 1882–1920* (Syracuse, 1995), has donated to the Center the research papers generated while writing her influential history. The collection, for which we are deeply grateful, includes working materials, notebooks of ideas and interviews and several audio cassette tapes of interviews made with Alliance community members in the 1980s. These tapes have been digitized for preservation and easy public access.

The Alliance Heritage Center collections, both physical and digital, are part of Stockton University's South Jersey Special Collections. Access to these materials allows students to use primary sources as they uncover and document the history of Jewish farming in South Jersey, developing their own thoughtful conclusions.



Asparagus knife used by Isaac Helig, the oldest son of Simcha Helig (a colony founder). It was passed to Isaac's son Jacob, and from Jacob to his son Nachum. Donated to the AHC by Nachum Helig.



Two views of the reception following the screening of Susan Donnelly's documentary *ALLIANCE* at Stockton University. Well over 200 attendees enjoyed the show, followed by a brief Q&A session, afternoon reception, visits to the Center archives, and entertainment provided by the Odessa Klezmer Band.

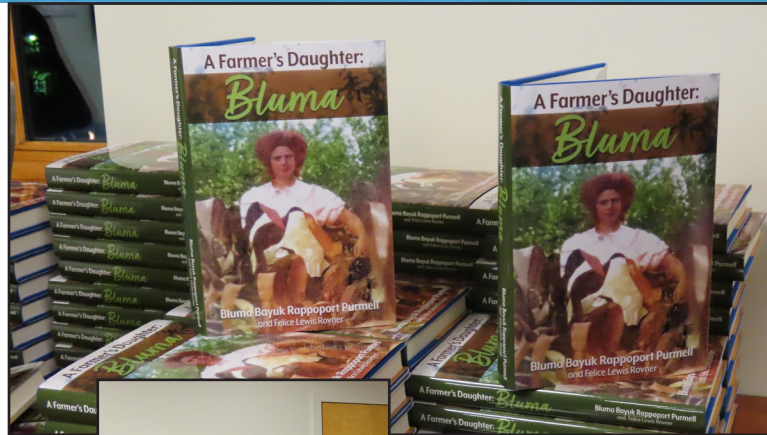
Honoring the Community

Since 2019, the Center has assisted Susan Donnelly, Film Director and direct descendent of one of the founding families of the Alliance colony, as she completed her wonderful documentary *ALLIANCE*. On April 16, 2023, the Center hosted a special partner screening of this 90-minute history of the Alliance Colony. In attendance were 225 community members who enjoyed the documentary, Q&A session, reception and an opening of the Alliance archives in Stockton's Special Collections. The following day, Director Kinsella and Donnelly led a day-long bus tour for attendees to Woodbine and Alliance Colony grounds.

Editing interns under Tom Kinsella's supervision completed the layout and proofreading for the beautiful second edition of Bluma Bayuk Rappoport Purnell's *A Farmer's Daughter: Bluma* (2022). Jennah Figueroa, a senior literature major (recently accepted into Emerson College's MFA program), assisted with final layout, design and proofreading.

In November 2022, we hosted a launch party for *A Farmer's Daughter: Bluma* at Stockton's Kramer Hall in Hammonton, New Jersey. Michele Rappoport and Alan Sorkowitz spoke of their grandmother Bluma, via Zoom, and Bill Rovner spoke movingly of his mother, Felice, Bluma's co-author. Bill also donated to the Center a painting that Bluma had given to Felice, and Jennah Figueroa delivered a stirring introduction to the impact that Bluma's book had upon her.

A Farmer's Daughter: Bluma is available through Amazon or directly from the Center.



Copies of *A Farmer's Daughter* on display at the launch party. Bill Rovner (middle left) and Jennah Figueroa (middle right) speaking to attendees. (Bottom) Tom Kinsella speaking with Aurora Rose Landman, one of the first Stockton students to work with Alliance Colony material before the Center had even come into being.



What Might You Have to Offer?

Please help enhance the museum through donations of family photographs, records, and histories. We are happy to digitize originals for preservation and academic study and then return them to you if you would like.

Your Donations Are Essential

Public history projects benefit from both public and private support. Your generous contributions allow us to document, preserve, disseminate, and celebrate the history and culture of the Alliance Colony and related Jewish farming communities in southern New Jersey.

To help the AHC provide robust opportunities to students, community members, and worldwide researchers, please consider making a gift in support of the Center; donations of all amounts are welcome. You also have the option to set up a recurring gift to the AHC. Perhaps, you may consider giving the “gift of chai” and setting up a recurring gift of \$18 per month. To make a gift, please visit stockton.edu/alliancegiving.

Your gift to any of these funds will allow us to continue our mission of preserving the history of Alliance and telling its stories:

Endowment Fund: Ensure the work of the Alliance Heritage Center will continue in perpetuity. This fund supports a wide variety of Center initiatives including the publication of works related to Alliance and other Jewish farming communities in South Jersey.

Community Outreach Fund: Used for community outreach and programming to support lectures, historical tours, exhibitions, oral history collection, and other forms of community programming related to Alliance and associated communities.

Alliance Heritage Center Research Fund: Research funds assist undergraduate, graduate students, and research fellows working on Alliance related projects; assist in mission centered projects, such as research in support of the Alliance digital museum; and support continuing research related to all aspects of the history of Jewish farming communities in Southern New Jersey.

The Mission of the Alliance Heritage Center

Preserving the history of Alliance and telling its stories: that, in a few words, is the mission of the Alliance Heritage Center at Stockton University.

Our digital museum, which came online in fall 2022, is our best vehicle for both preservation and outreach. The museum, an exploration of Alliance history, showcases documents donated by community members and includes curated photographs, artwork, essays, film clips, and illustrative documents. We are very proud of the museum and hope you will visit.

allianceheritagecenter.com

Family related to Bluma Bayuk Rappoport Purmell have generously donated many of Bluma’s memory paintings of Alliance. They are jointly held with Stockton’s Noyes Museum of Art and have become an important permanent collection, helping us to teach the community and students about Alliance.

For more information on supporting the Alliance Heritage Center with a charitable contribution:

[\(609\) 652-4753](tel:6096524753) • foundation@stockton.edu • stockton.edu/alliancegiving

All gifts in support of the Alliance Heritage Center through the Stockton University Foundation are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.
EIN 22-1957406.



ALLIANCE HERITAGE CENTER

stockton.edu/alliance-heritage

Stockton is an Equal Opportunity Institution.