

# Nashville's Jewish Community (Images of America)

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Nashville's Jewish community traces its beginning to 1795 with the birth of Sarah Myers, the first Jewish child born here. Her parents, Benjamin and Hannah Hays Myers, were both from prominent pre-Revolutionary War families in New England and stayed in Nashville just one year before moving to Virginia. The next few settlers--Simon Pollock, a doctor, in 1843; the Frankland family in 1845; Andrew Smolniker and Dr. H. Fischel, a dentist, in 1848; and E. J. Lyons in 1849--stayed only a few years before moving on to Memphis, New Orleans, or elsewhere. The first to stay and achieve prominence was Isaac Gershon (later changed to Garritsen), who in 1849 opened his home on South Summer Street for High Holy Day services and in 1851 formed the Hebrew Benevolent Burial Association, purchasing land that still serves as Nashville's Jewish cemetery. The first Jewish congregation, Mogen David, followed in 1854. The Jewish population of Nashville, which began with five families and eight young men in 1852, today numbers about 7,500.

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