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Contact: Sue Hale
Historical Association of South Haven
PO Box 552
South Haven, MI 49090
Phone: 269-637-8456
Email: hales@lodisnet.com



Catskills of the Midwest – the Jewish Resort Era in South Haven

Work continues on the Historical Association of South Haven's upcoming exhibit, "CATSKILLS OF THE MIDWEST – The Jewish Resort Era in South Haven," which will open June 17 and run through July 31 at the South Haven Center for the Arts. The exhibit will focus on the community's bustling Jewish resort trade, how it evolved from the early farm resorts, and the subsequent contributions made to South Haven by these creative and determined entrepreneurs. This exhibit proves to be timely in that it will coincide with the 350th anniversary celebration of Jewish settlement in North America.

"CATSKILLS OF THE MIDWEST" will include photographs from the Appleyard collection as well as enlargements of vintage postcards from the collections of local and area residents. Artifacts, objects and memorabilia specific to these resorts are being assembled. In the search for related materials, the Exhibition Committee has made significant contacts with representatives of Jewish organizations at the state level, including the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan and the Michigan Jewish Conference.

The exhibit will open quietly on June 17, with the opening celebration scheduled for Sunday, June 26. The reception will be held outdoors adjacent to the First Hebrew Congregation from 11:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. and will include tours of the synagogue, a traditional Jewish brunch (\$8.00), entertainment by the "Klezmedics", a Klezmer band from the Chicago area and an opportunity to visit South Haven Center for the Arts (SHCA) to view the exhibit. Other associated programming scheduled during the exhibit will include:

- A slide presentation featuring resort photographs from the Appleyard collection narrated by former resort owner, Barry Fidelman. A question and answer period with Barry and Sheila Fidelman will be held after the presentation. Thursday, July 7 – 7:00 p.m. First Hebrew Congregation.
- A lecture and book signing by Bea Kraus, author of "A Time to Remember – A History of the Jewish Community in South Haven." Tuesday, July 19 – 7:00 p.m. First Hebrew Congregation.
- "Resort Memories" – a storytelling program with John Mooy and nationally known illustrator, Wendy Anderson Halperin. Thursday, July 28 – 7:00 p.m. First Hebrew Congregation.
- An ongoing and individualized driving tour – booklets available for \$5.00 at SHCA and other South Haven locations. This interesting and in-depth driving tour includes maps, photographs and text focusing on the location of 40 former resorts – a great way to spend a summer afternoon.

For questions, comments or further information concerning this exciting, upcoming exhibit, please contact Sue Hale at 269-637-8456 or Debbie Zuckerman at 269-637-7789.

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