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COVER PICTURE: Max and Trude Heller announcing Max's candidacy for mayor of Greenville, South Carolina, 1971. Heller's life and career are documented in the article by Andrew Harrison Baker in this issue. (Courtesy of Special Collections and Archives, Furman University.)

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PERMISSION STATEMENT

Max Moses Heller: Jewish Mayor in the Sunbelt South

by

Andrew Harrison Baker*

In October 1973, Greenville, a textile manufacturing center in upstate South Carolina, held a "homecoming" for the city's most prominent native. The Reverend Jesse Jackson's homecoming weekend drew extensive coverage in local publications and the *Chicago Daily News*. Receptions, a parade, and the opportunity to preach a sermon before thousands at the Greenville Memorial Auditorium welcomed him home. The television show *Soul Train* broadcast live from Greenville in honor of Jackson. Atlanta Braves outfielder Hank Aaron and Michigan congressman John Conyers travelled to the city to participate in the weekend. The event gave city leaders an opportunity to promote Greenville as a tolerant city open to new business opportunities. Conversely, Jackson pressed for greater economic opportunity and political representation for Greenville's Black residents.[1]

Business and civic leaders turned out in force to welcome Jackson, but Greenville's mayor played only a small role during the event. Max Moses Heller's absence did not stem from antipathy to the civil rights movement nor to Jackson. At a reception he proclaimed, "Jesse Jackson is good for America" and labelled Greenville "a town that's too busy to hate." The mayor carefully explained that his observance of the Day of Atonement on Saturday, October 6, precluded him from attending other events honoring Jackson.[2]

Heller's seemingly unusual place as a Jewish mayor in a southern city did not escape Jackson's notice. He praised Heller for his "openness

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to use his political position to help the poor" and used the mayor's election as a symbol of Greenville's progress as well as a call for further change. "If it is possible for Max Heller, a Jew, to be mayor of Greenville, then it is possible for Greenville to have a black mayor," Jackson reasoned. The statement echoed the perception that the election of Jews as mayors of southern towns and cities marked progress in a region whose history had been marked by racial hierarchy and prejudice. Yet numerous Jews have served as mayors of southern towns including major regional centers such as Atlanta.[3]

Heller followed in the footsteps of reform-minded southern Jewish mayors such as Durham, North Carolina's Emmanuel "Mutt" Evans, and his political career overlapped with Atlanta's Sam Massell, Dallas's Adlene Harrison, and other Jewish mayors of southern cities. Although scholars and journalists have addressed the remarkable life and career of Max Moses Heller, this article's focus on his role as a Jewish mayor in a midsized city in the Sunbelt South offers a unique perspective. Heller's political career coincided with what historian Clive Webb describes as the "increased assertiveness of southern Jews" after the end of Jim Crow segregation, as well as the beginnings of the Sunbelt South. A moderate Democrat in a conservative city, Heller's political career also contributes to our understanding of urban politics in the Sunbelt South, which has often been overshadowed by scholars' focus on conservatism and suburban politics.[4]

Placing Heller's years as mayor in the context of the Sunbelt South, I argue that Heller's success in a former textile manufacturing center and bastion of evangelical and fundamentalist Christianity, demonstrates that a Jewish politician could serve as a symbol of progress in seemingly unlikely settings like Greenville. As mayor, Heller enjoyed the support of influential local business leaders eager to project a positive image of Greenville, advance downtown revitalization, and secure outside investment. Heller also earned support from the African American community, which valued his responsiveness to their concerns. Unlike Atlanta's Sam Massell, Heller proved acceptable to both groups.

As Greenville moved away from its textile-centered economy, Heller also symbolized a more international outlook and continued to serve as a corrective for outsiders quick to judge the city by the moniker "the Buckle of the Bible Belt" long after he departed electoral politics. This is not to say

that all groups accepted Heller and his leadership of Greenville. Heller faced overt antisemitism in some instances and earned the enmity of some supporters of Bob Jones University (BJU), a prominent local fundamentalist institution of higher education, over his decision to hold an ecumenical prayer breakfast. This article discusses the circumstances that brought Heller to Greenville and his decision to seek public office after retiring from a successful business career.

Escape to South Carolina

Born in Vienna in 1919, Max Heller grew up as a child of the European depression of the 1920s in what he described as "an extremely religious atmosphere." His parents conducted no business on the Sabbath, refusing to handle money. They dreamed of their son becoming a doctor, but his interest lay in business. After his graduation from gymnasium at age fourteen, Heller obtained a job as an apprentice sweeping floors, making fires, and cleaning. He excelled at the business school that he attended after work. Heller's entrance into the workforce coincided with the rise of the Nazi Party in Germany and attuned him to Austria's changing politics. He noticed the political turmoil leading up to the Anschluss, the 1938 Nazi annexation of Austria, and the rising antisemitism that followed.[5]

As a child and young adult, Heller experienced regular antisemitic incidents such as notes in the gymnasium reading "Jew go back to Palestine" and fights in the street that sometimes left him and/or his opponents

Max Heller at ten years old in Vienna, 1929. (Courtesy of Susan Heller Moses.)

bloodied. Heller viewed these incidents through the prism of his mother's experience in Poland and his education in Jewish history, recalling that "this was the history of the Jews and I accepted that." The Anschluss, however, unleashed a new level of antisemitism and violence. In Heller's memory, police took "swastika armbands" from their pockets within minutes of the announcement of the Nazi takeover of Austria. When his family tried to withdraw money from the bank, they learned that their "bank account was confiscated." Gentile friends stopped associating with him, and one former sport club friend forced him to clean the street while calling him a "pig Jew."[6]

On the Monday following the Anschluss, a Nazi partner took control of the business where Heller worked and fired most of the Jewish employees except for Heller and several others needed to train the new owner and workers. Heller recalled that he "realized that particular day there was no way to stay in Austria."[7] The unusual circumstance that allowed Heller to escape Austria was set in motion the previous summer when he met two young women over the course of several days in August 1937: his future wife, Trude Schönthal, and a southern girl from Greenville, Mary Mills.

Heller met Trude Schönthal during a vacation at a summer resort outside of Vienna. He first noticed Schönthal, who was four years his junior, during the resort's *dirndl* competition (a type of German dress) and asked her to dance at dinner. "I'm going to marry you," he declared. "At fourteen, I thought he was crazy," she remembered. Heller briefly left the resort to return with his father to Vienna, where he accompanied a friend to an outdoor café. They noticed a group of American girls from Greenville who were on a European tour, and Heller asked one of them to dance. He and Mary Mills danced for two hours and walked together in the park on the following day conversing with the help of a German-English dictionary.[8]

Heller kept Mills's address in his wallet, and when Germany seized Austria in March 1938, he once more referred to a German-English dictionary to compose a letter to her in which he attempted to explain the new situation in Austria and his desire to emigrate to the United States. His family doubted that anything would come of his attempt. A few weeks later, he received a call from his father while visiting Trude Schönthal's home. "A registered letter from the United States" had arrived. In the

letter, Mary Mills wrote that she had visited Shepard Saltzman, a Jewish businessman from Greenville, and Saltzman agreed to provide Heller with employment and the necessary paperwork to emigrate. Saltzman followed through with the promised employment offer.[9]

In his retellings of the story, Heller emphasized that Saltzman felt compelled to help a fellow Jew when asked by a Christian. Heller recalled that Saltzman said "how wonderful is it that this young lady, who was not Jewish, had so much compassion and wanted to help me. How could he do less?" Saltzman offered to try to assist Heller's older sister, Paula, and their parents emigrate as well. The Hellers hesitated to ask for additional help and felt it "wouldn't be fair to this man" to find employment for the entire family. They prioritized the children. Consequently, Saltzman provided an employment affidavit for Max and Paula.[10]

On July 26, 1938, the Heller children reached New York and stayed with "a long-lost aunt" who lived in Newark, New Jersey. Their distant relative believed she could secure employment for Max in Newark through "a rich cousin" and tried to dissuade him from moving to Greenville. Her negative view of the South apparently did not faze Max. He recalled in a later interview that he felt a loyalty to the "people who brought me here" and found his relatives' "impression of the South was so different from what I found it to be."[11]

When Heller arrived in Greenville in August, he stepped into a very different setting from Vienna or Newark. Segregation made an early impression on him. At his new workplace, Piedmont Shirt Company, Black and White workers labored in different spaces and performed separate jobs. The heaviest work fell on African American employees. The practice of Jim Crow initially confused him. He tried to drink from the water fountain labelled "colored." Sunday blue laws were also a new feature of life for Heller. He discovered that movie theaters and other forms of entertainment were shuttered on Sundays, and restaurants were not allowed to serve alcohol.[12]

At the close of 1941, Trude Schönthal and her mother visited Greenville. Their journey to the United States had been even more arduous and included surviving Kristallnacht and time as refugees in Belgium. On her first visit, Max picked them up from the train station and tried to conceal Greenville's small size by taking a circuitous route. She remembered the return trip to the train station "took like two minutes." After the couple

Max Heller and Trude Schönthal, Greenville, 1941. (Courtesy of Susan Heller Moses.)

married in August 1942, Trude took a job working at the window of Piedmont Shirt Company and initially found it difficult to understand southern accents. Greenville also lacked theatre and the live music that characterized life in Vienna. She recalled immediately buying tickets when the first theatre opened.[13] These reflections suggest that the Hellers brought their cosmopolitanism from Vienna to a relatively provincial environment, a contrast of which they were most conscious.

As immigrants to Greenville and Jews, the Hellers represented a decided minority. In 1940 South Carolina had the smallest number of foreign-born residents of any American state, with fewer than five thousand. During the same era, the Greenville Chamber of Commerce boasted that "no more than one tenth of one percent [of residents] were of foreign birth." The majority of immigrants to South Carolina hailed from Greece, Germany, Russia, or Palestine-Syria. Greeks, the most prominent immigrant group, had arrived in Greenville in the last years of the nineteenth century and, by the early 1930s, established a Greek Orthodox Church.[14]

A small Jewish community also existed in Greenville County. In 1926, 195 Jews lived in the county. Jewish life centered on the Greenville, the county seat. As a textile city that benefited from the textile boom of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Greenville proved an attractive destination for Jewish merchants. Historian Diane Vecchio notes that "migrant Jews were welcomed by New South advocates of economic

development." In 1930, they operated nearly two dozen shops that sold dry goods, apparel, and other items.[15]

Jewish institutions also developed as a result of the growth of Greenville's Jewish population. In the 1910s, Greenville Jews organized both an Orthodox and a Reform synagogue. The former, that became known as Beth Israel, served as Heller's spiritual home following his arrival in the city. The synagogues provided a source of religious and cultural identity for Greenville's close-knit Jewish community. Jeff Zaglin, the grandson of Greenville's first rabbi, recalled growing up in "Hebrew School with the same 10 kids from kindergarten to 12th grade."[16]

Heller's employer, Piedmont Shirt Company, represented a substantial Jewish-operated business. In 1928, its founder, Shepard Saltzman, migrated to Greenville from New York City and started the company with the help of prominent local investors interested in bringing the apparel industry to the city. By 1946, Saltzman's firm employed one thousand workers and became the fourth largest menswear manufacturer in the United States and the largest south of Baltimore. Through his workplace, Heller developed friendships with Jewish employees such as Harry Abrams and Morris Leffert who were recruited from New York by Saltzman to serve in managerial roles.[17]

In the majority evangelical Protestant city, Jews faced some antisemitism. Prior to Heller's congressional campaign in 1978, he and his family most frequently experienced antisemitism through exclusion from prominent social clubs, even after he achieved a degree of wealth and social standing. In 1968, Heller declined the invitation to a dinner honoring South Carolina governor, Robert McNair, at Greenville's Poinsett Club. The club's membership policies precluded Jews from joining. Heller wrote McNair, "People of my faith are not welcome as members and because of this I have declined the invitations to any affairs taking place there."[18]

Almost a decade later, Heller penned a similar note to James B. Edwards, South Carolina's first Republican governor since Reconstruction, to explain why he declined an invitation to a reception honoring Edwards. "I have not gone to the Poinsett Club because of their admission practices which relate to ethnic and religious minorities. It is regrettable that such is the case and I hope that, in time, it will change." Heller may have felt uncomfortable at other social clubs as well. He is "rarely seen on the country-club circuit and refuses to attend at least two private clubs where he

realizes an anti-Semitic attitude exists," a columnist for *The State* newspaper wrote in 1971. The Hellers also recalled an instance when, as a young married couple, they were refused the rental of a home.[19]

In the workplace, Heller adapted quickly despite his lack of English language skills. He initially swept floors in the shipping department while learning how to correspond with clients by reading through old letters, then he received a promotion to internal sales manager. Max and Trude Heller further honed their English skills by reading and discussing the same books.[20]

By his mid-twenties, Heller had risen to the vice presidency of the Piedmont Shirt Company before he left to form his own company with a partner. After the partnership dissolved, he founded Maxon Shirts in 1948, which made children's clothing that sold across the United States and in foreign markets. An innovative businessman involved with even the minute details of his company, Heller instructed salespeople to give their retail clients "colorful balloons" to place around each store's Carnegie, Jr.,

Heller, front row center, with employees of Maxon Shirts, 1956.
(Courtesy of Special Collections and Archives, Furman University.)

line. "If the Mother should have her children with her and had not even intended to buy a shirt for her little boy; he will drag her over to that department because he will want to see the balloons," Heller explained in a letter to his sales staff. By the company's tenth year, it had "produced and marketed over 22 million Carnegie Shirts."[21]

In 1962, Heller sold Maxon to Oxford Industries but continued to run the company until his retirement in 1968 to pursue a second career in public service. He explained that he "had no desire to be the richest man in the cemetery" and felt a duty to "give back" to Greenville. His involvement in charitable organizations provided the bridge from business to politics. In this respect, Heller followed a similar path as other southern Jewish mayors. Durham's Evans chaired the city's community chest and headed a steering committee raising funds for a localAfrican American hospital before his election as mayor. Annette Greenfield Strauss, the first Jewish woman to be elected mayor of Dallas, built a reputation as a fundraiser for civic causes that started when she volunteered for the United Jewish Appeal.[22]

Heller served in a number of leadership positions in local organizations during his business career, including chairman of the board for the Roman Catholic St. Francis Hospital, and consequently housing issues in Greenville played a major role in motivating him to run for elective office. As Heller explained in a later interview, "In 1969, I became very much concerned about the housing situation in Greenville and got involved in a number of other organizations that concerned themselves with community work of that nature: like sub-standard housing, and so forth." The roots of Heller's concern dated back at least to the 1950s, when he sent letters to American political leaders urging policies promoting home ownership. "Let us create happy people in the world by giving them something they will own, and use, and perpetuate. I am speaking of a home of their own," Heller wrote to President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956.[23]

By one measure, in 1969 Greenville County contained twenty-two thousand houses classified as substandard. Heller served as housing committee chair for the Greenville Chamber of Commerce and headed a housing foundation formed by the chamber in 1969. Heller also credited his reform work with youthful offenders with inspiring his desire to run for elective office.[24]

Downtown Greenville, South Carolina, 1959.
(Courtesy of Greenville County Historical Society,
www.greenvillehistory.org.)

Greenville and the Sunbelt South

Max Heller's political career took place during a unique era in southern history. A confluence of events in the late 1960s and early 1970s led to an altered image of the South. The Sunbelt, a linkage of the South and West, became a popular way to refer to the southern half of the United States during the 1970s. This new image of the South emphasized improved race relations and regional prosperity amid the national struggles of the era. As one contemporary observer explained, the South became in the national mind "a region cleaner, less crowded, more open and honest, more genuinely religious and friendly, and suddenly more racially tolerant than any other American region."[25]

During the late 1960s and 1970s, Greenville benefited from the Sunbelt image. The narrative surrounding the community's response to

Construction on McAlister Square, Greenville, South Carolina, 1967.
(Courtesy of Greenville County Historical Society,
www.greenvillehistory.org.)

School busing ordered by the Supreme Court in 1970 and Heller's election as mayor in 1971 helped create a positive image of Greenville that maintained the area's attractiveness for industry.[26] Heller serves as an example of the "New South Democrats" or "Populist Moderates" of the early 1970s. Historian Numan V. Bartley explains that these politicians eschewed "racial demagoguery" and "sought to appeal to ordinary white and black voters by combining a common-folk campaign style with the advocacy of moderately progressive policies." In South Carolina, Democrats forged a coalition of moderate Whites and African American voters that held together at the state level until the mid-1980s.[27]

Before Heller entered politics, the city of Greenville experienced a sustained period of population decline and business losses. Between 1960 and 1970, the county added nearly thirty-one thousand residents, but the city's population declined from 66,188 to 61,208. Suburban and

formerly rural spaces in Greenville County absorbed former city residents and newcomers to the area. The percentage of county residents living in suburban areas increased from 26 to 33 percent, and the percentage of Black residents in the county fell from 13.8 to 10.5 percent. By the early 1970s, the inner-city portion of Greenville contained a Black majority.[28]

Job losses accompanied the decline in White population, and inner-city residents experienced slower income growth than the area as a whole. Between 1960 and 1970, the incomes of families in the Greenville area rose 84.6 percent, but families living near the city center only saw income growth of 69.1 percent. White suburbanites enjoyed the greatest income gains. The city also contained a substantial number of the county's twenty-two thousand units of substandard housing, and African Americans were more likely to occupy these dwellings. Black residents also occupied the majority of the city's rental housing. In 1975, only 21.7 percent of African American residents owned homes.[29]

The departure of downtown retailers for strip shopping centers and malls provided one of the most palpable manifestations of suburbanization. As historian Kenneth Jackson notes, the national origins of this change dated back to the interwar period when national retailer Sears began locating new stores in "low-density areas which would offer the advantages of lower rentals and yet, because of the automobile, be within reach of potential customers." Shopping centers and malls built on this idea in the postwar decades led to the departure of retail establishments from central business districts. By 1984, Americans conducted most of their retail trade in large shopping centers.[30]

Greenville followed the pattern. The area's first shopping center opened in 1948, and enclosed malls followed during the 1960s. As in other cities, the "once-mighty department stores that anchored many a Main Street" relocated to malls. In the mid-1960s, two downtown Greenville department stores, Ivey's and Meyers-Arnold, left for McAlister Square Mall. Some Jewish-owned businesses such as Cancellation Shoe Mart, which sold overruns of shoes, remained downtown in part because its owner judged his product as better suited to a working-class clientele than shoppers with more disposable income. The Greenville Army Store, founded by the son of Greenville's first kosher butcher, also remained downtown. Other Jewish-owned businesses, however, such as Horizon

Records, which opened in 1975, directly bypassed downtown Greenville for a more suburban setting.[31]

The exodus of businesses, whether large or small, was conspicuous. Greenville civic leader Minor Shaw noticed the change on her visits home from college. She recalled that by the late 1960s, downtown "started shriveling up with closed storefronts." A rising crime rate accompanied population and retail losses. In 1970, Greenville's murder rate ranked third nationally. Crime remained a problem throughout the decade. In 1974, crime increased in the city at a faster rate than in the region and nation. Merl Code, who moved to Greenville in late 1970 and later served as a municipal court judge, recalled, "downtown Greenville was quite an adventure . . . and the safety factor probably was an issue during those early 70s."[32]

According to local business leader Charles E. Daniel, a construction executive and political conservative who worked across party and ideological lines on local issues, Greenville's leadership had allowed the city's urban core to atrophy. In a 1957 address, Daniel accused Greenville of becoming "unclean and neither attractive nor competitive with comparable progressive cities," largely due to a leadership vacuum. In 1964, Daniel began construction of a downtown skyscraper to serve as his company's headquarters, tied to his vision for a revitalized and growing downtown. The Daniel Building rose as the tallest in South Carolina. "Charlie Daniel realized that when people came to town, Greenville needed to have a skyscraper," Minor Shaw recalled of her great uncle's purpose.[33]

Daniel passed away before the completion of his building, and his nephew, Buck Mickel, became one of Greenville's central figures and continued to press for downtown revitalization. In a 1966 speech to the Downtown Greenville Association, Mickel implored business leaders to contribute their time and effort to finding solutions for the flight of retail to shopping centers. He called for planning and concerted action to address traffic and parking problems and create a more appealing retail sector that could compete with shopping centers and malls. "Economic, traffic and parking, and design skills should be brought together to tackle problems and opportunities comprehensively," he argued.[34]

Economic development and civic pride drove the program. Mickel believed that Greenville could attract corporate headquarters to augment

the manufacturing sector. His plan relied on maintaining and improving the area's quality of life. "Adequate housing, fine highways, modern retail stores, splendid schools, recreation, culture and churches of all denominations" were necessary features for successful corporate recruitment.[35] Mickel and like-minded leaders sought local political talent that could help them achieve these goals for the city.

Many businessmen like Daniel and Mickel were political conservatives who consistently supported Republican presidential candidates. They identified with Republican economic policies and strongly opposed labor unions, but they also valued active leadership regardless of political party at the local level.[36] As former state legislator and South Carolina governor Richard W. "Dick" Riley recalled, Heller attracted support from business leaders who "were Democratic voters locally but voted Republican nationally and considered themselves Republicans."[37] Mickel became one of Heller's key supporters and allies.

Heller entered elective office in 1969 when he won a two-year term on Greenville's city council. Appointed chairman of the finance committee, Heller took charge of the city's budget and earned praise for his management skills. He crafted a budget for 1971 that raised employee salaries and formed a new department without increasing taxes. Heller also called for the elimination of excessive spending on the council chambers and mayor's office in a new city hall for Greenville while simultaneously advocating for a study of pensions for all city employees. According to Diane Vecchio, Heller's concern with these issues as well as "improving housing and race relations won him the support of both White and Black voters" and paved the way for his successful candidacy for mayor in 1971. Business leaders interested in downtown revitalization as a vehicle for economic development and civic purposes also lent their support to Heller's mayoral campaign.[38]

In 1971, Republican R. Cooper White, Jr., chose not to run for a second term as mayor, setting the stage for Heller's election. White argued that the demands of his full-time job in a stock brokerage firm led to his departure from office. A dispute within the South Carolina Republican Party may have also contributed to his exit.[39]

White represented the moderate or "cosmopolitan" faction of the party. Historian Bruce H. Kalk contends that "cosmopolitans" believed the Republican Party could construct "a coalition combining the business

Max Heller on the Greenville City Council, c. 1970.
(Courtesy of Special Collections and Archives, Furman University.)

and political classes with support in the African American community." In his 1969 mayoral campaign, White won in Greenville's Black majority precincts. As mayor, he helped build public support for comprehensive desegregation in February 1970 and worked to improve the relationship between city government and Black Greenvillians through improving city services and constructing "mini-parks" and community centers.[40]

White split with his party over the "southern strategy" of 1970 and refused to back Republican gubernatorial candidate Albert Watson, whose campaign appealed to White backlash against the civil rights movement. In 1971, White crossed party lines to support Heller's candidacy. Republicans failed to offer a challenger to Heller, who only faced former council member Gus Smith in the Democratic primary that Heller won by a three-to-one margin.[41]

During the primary campaign, Heller advocated for downtown revitalization, the elimination of substandard housing, the erection of new lighting to deter crime, and the construction of additional recreational facilities. He promised to bring the government closer to the people by creating a "citizens service and information desk" at city hall and by holding town hall meetings. In many respects, Heller built on Cooper White's programs. White had initiated a redevelopment program and employed planning professionals. Under his leadership, the city accepted federal grants, which earlier leaders refused to do.[42]

Heller's election as mayor, however, represented a different kind of change than White's election as Greenville's first Republican mayor. The city of Greenville already trended toward the Republican Party in national elections and began to move towards the Republican Party in state elections during the 1960s. Heller was not only Greenville's first Jewish mayor, but the last Democrat to be elected to the position.[43] Heller accelerated White's programs, and his election as mayor also represented progress for citizens seeking an active government built on the Sunbelt narrative of a more progressive and open South.

Nick Andrew Theodore, a state representative from Greenville County and the son of Greek immigrants, told Heller in a letter that Greenville was "long overdue, compared to Charleston and Columbia, in electing officials of ethnic background to lead in moving our city government forward." Reporter Dale Perry of the *Greenville News* shed his objectivity to tell Heller that his election restored his faith in Greenville.

Following graduation from Furman University, Perry decided to remain in Greenville even though he "was not quite so sure I had much of a future here." He retained hope, however, that South Carolinians would "cast off the kind of politicians who stand in the way of community progress." Moderate Democrat John C. West's victory over Republican gubernatorial candidate Albert Watson and Heller's election as mayor renewed his optimism. "Greenville has certainly come a long way in electing a man of your caliber to the office of mayor. I only hope the city can keep up with you."[44]

National publications and journalists from major newspapers who wrote on Greenville or Heller attached Heller to narratives of regional and local progress built on the Sunbelt image. During Heller's unsuccessful congressional run in 1978, syndicated columnist Neal R. Peirce prefaced Heller's story by asking, "How did a young Jewish immigrant wind up in deepest Dixie, in a town that likes to call itself 'the buckle of the Bible Belt?'" A 1974 profile of Greenville in *Money Magazine* emphasized the importance of conservative churches to Greenville's social life but reassured readers, "There is no overt prejudice toward Catholics or others who belong to a religious minority. In fact, Greenville's mayor Max Heller is an Austrian-born Jew." The decision of Furman University, then a Baptist institution, to award Heller an honorary doctorate led the *B'nai B'rith Messenger–Religious News Service Report* to tout, "Baptist Students Hail Jewish Mayor." In 1973, Delaware's U.S. senator, Joseph R. Biden, Jr., quipped while visiting Greenville for a South Carolina Democratic Party fundraising dinner that he expected to find "good old boys in South Carolina" rather than a Jewish mayor.[45]

A member of Greenville's Jewish community whose family enjoyed a friendship with the Hellers viewed it as a breakthrough moment for Greenville Jews, arguing that "whatever discrimination may have existed seemed to melt away" following Heller's election. Although the statement may contain some degree of exaggeration, it speaks to the importance of Heller's election to Greenville's Jewish community.[46]

Mayor Heller

In office, Heller proved remarkably active. He made the part-time position of mayor his full-time job and put in ten-hour days. Heller worked energetically to enact his vision of creating a "city of tranquility"

where residents would express "a pride in citizenship."[47] In more concrete terms, Heller envisioned redevelopment of the city's central business district to improve the area's quality of life and increase the tax base, as well as a more active role for city government in housing policy and greater responsiveness to citizens. Although the slow pace of government sometimes checked Heller's ambitions, he remained a very popular mayor throughout his two terms in office. His responsiveness to the needs of Black constituents earned support from the African American community.

Merl Code, who served as the first African American chairman of the Greater Greenville Chamber of Commerce, recalled that when he first moved to Greenville in the early 1970s it remained "very, very segregated." A graduate of North Carolina A&T University in Greensboro, Code spent his college years immersed in a city with a significant Black middle class. In contrast, Code recalled that Greenville "did not have a cadre of African Americans who were socially and economically at a higher level because of their education."[48]

Until the mid-1960s, Black residents were largely excluded from employment in higher-paying production positions in the textile mills that employed twenty-one thousand county residents in 1960.[49] Racial violence also remained within recent memory, including the 1947 lynching of Willie Earle by Greenville cabdrivers, which drew national attention to the city; tensions periodically flared in the 1950s and early 1960s. During the peak years of the civil rights movement, Greenville business and civic leaders worked to maintain the city's image by reducing violence and gradually desegregating Greenville institutions. Nevertheless, one historian of South Carolina contends that boosterish slogans such as "integration with dignity" and desegregation with "grace and style" often masked the underlying reality that the community only integrated due to pressure from African American activists and as a result of court orders.[50]

Heller's relationship with the Black community dated to his business days, and his response to segregation mirrored that of many other southern Jews. As historian Daniel Puckett has noted, "southern Jews supported, tacitly accepted, or quietly 'bent' the boundaries of Jim Crow racism." Heller appears to fall into the latter category. Although never a proponent of segregation, Heller initially acceded to local law and custom. His apparel firm employed hundreds of Black and White women who were legally required to work in separate spaces. Maxon Shirt Company

Heller with former U.S. Secretary of Commerce Juanita Kreps and members of the Greenville Urban League, 1983. (Courtesy of Special Collections and Archives, Furman University.)

held separate Christmas parties and company gatherings for Black and White employees and had separate drinking fountains and bathrooms. Vecchio notes that Jewish businessmen in upcountry South Carolina often followed racial custom to defend their status as White, but "many empathized with the plight of blacks in the segregated South" and "quietly challenged white racial etiquette in their business dealings with African Americans." In Heller's case, he ended the practice of having separate drinking fountains and bathrooms.[51]

As mayor, Heller took an active role in attempting to bridge the divide between the Black community and city government. This may reflect the thawing of tensions after segregation that helped to usher in the Sunbelt phenomenon and helped Jewish politicians such as Heller to assert

themselves more vigorously on racial issues without fear of violent reprisal.[52] His actions fell into three categories: increased access to local government and responsiveness to the concerns of Black Greenvillians; desegregating city government; and symbolic gestures.

One example of increased attention from local government is Heller's "hungry ear" telephone line for constituents, which allowed them to express grievances directly to city government. This proved particularly valuable to Black constituents given that prior administrations had sometimes greeted Black citizens by slamming the door. Holding town hall meetings in both Black and White neighborhoods also improved access to government for Black Greenvillians. At one such meeting held at the Birnie Street YWCA in 1973, Black residents expressed "complaints about substandard housing, sanitation problems and poor street conditions to Heller."[53]

Heller's administration proved responsive to these concerns as the city's sanitation department was reorganized and the frequency of trash collection increased. In 1974, the city also allocated funds to the Birnie Street YWCA for the renovation of a daycare facility. Additional money flowed into historically Black neighborhoods in the form of federal grants and revenue sharing. Community centers, playground equipment, and lighting for outdoor recreation facilities were added to communities such as Nicholtown, a Black neighborhood. Portable swimming pools were purchased for use in predominantly Black neighborhoods lacking community swimming pools.[54]

The mayor also created a new bus system when the previous operator withdrew from the Greenville market. Heller rounded up church buses and helped organize driver training. Black residents dependent on public transportation placed particular importance on the bus system. Although it was on a much smaller scale, Heller's effort to ensure that public transportation remained available to city residents resembled in some respects Mayor Sam Massell's successful campaign to create the MARTA bus system in Atlanta.[55]

During Heller's first term, he desegregated city government. As his daughter Susan Heller Moses recalls, her father "desegregated all city departments and commissions." This included the appointment of African Americans to white-collar jobs in city government. He hired city hall's first African American secretary and the first Black employee at the

administrative level.[56] Although Heller's actions represented progress for Greenville, the city lagged behind other southern cities like Atlanta and Durham that had Jewish mayors.

Durham's Evans desegregated his city's police and fire departments during the 1950s, hired African Americans to supervisory positions, and helped his city obtain federal money for housing. After the fracture of Atlanta's Black-White political coalition that dated to the 1940s, Sam Massell largely won election as mayor in 1969 through Black support and initially offered substantial attention to the concerns of the Black community. Massell appointed African Americans to administrative positions, and the overall number of Black city employees increased to 42 percent. In contrast to Greenville, Black Atlantans also held elected positions in city government, among them Vice Mayor Maynard Jackson.[57]

Symbolic gestures such as a proclamation honoring Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday and support for the formation of African American cultural organizations were other ways that Heller engaged with the Black community. Interfaith services organized by the Greenville Ministerial Alliance often brought together Black and White Greenvillians and featured Heller as a speaker. Heller's contemporaries such as Charleston mayor Joseph P. Riley pursued a similar course by honoring Denmark Vesey, the leader of a slave revolt in the 1820s, with a portrait and refusing to attend segregated events at social clubs just as Heller had done.[58]

African American political power in Greenville, however, continued to lag. In 1976, only 31 percent of eligible African Americans in Greenville County were registered to vote. Although the Reverend Jesse Jackson used Heller's election as a symbol of new possibilities in Greenville, his organization's filing of a voter registration complaint with the Justice Department in July 1976 testified to the continuing dearth of Black officeholders in the city. Although the Justice Department denied the call for federal registrars, Heller and other Democrats proved supportive of additional registration efforts. Nonetheless, Greenville remained behind other South Carolina cities such as Charleston in terms of Black elected officials at the local level. African Americans were not represented in city government until 1977 when minister Rayfield Metcalf won a council seat.[59]

Heller's emphasis on downtown development as a means of shoring up the area's tax base led to some criticism from Greenville's African American citizens. "Without a strong tax base, government can't fulfill all its good intentions," Heller explained. Critics noted that a greater share of development money flowed to large downtown projects rather than to impoverished neighborhoods. In the late 1980s, the *Greenville Piedmont* still reported that on the city's west side "the indications of a black middle class are almost nonexistent."[60]

Despite these criticisms, Heller maintained the support of many Black Greenvillians in contrast to Atlanta's Massell whose unsuccessful 1973 reelection campaign was marred by accusations of race-baiting when a controversial advertisement attempted to bring White voters into his flagging campaign. In his 1975 reelection campaign, Heller won handily in African American communities such as Nicholtown, which he carried 398 to 5 over his Republican opponent. Research commissioned by Heller's congressional campaign in 1978 found that 75 percent of all Black voters in the district supported him; 56 percent of Black voters in the district *strongly* supported him. This support proved lasting. Heller cochaired a task force on improving race relations in Greenville after his retirement from elective politics. "Max, more than anybody else in the community, is automatically acceptable to white people and black people," a local developer argued in a late 1990s profile of Heller.[61]

Heller's focus on downtown redevelopment and eventual success cemented his legacy as mayor. Neither of his Atlanta contemporaries, Sam Massell or Maynard Jackson, the city's first Black mayor, enjoyed the full support of the business community. Heller's close relationship with the business community bore greater resemblance to the seemingly unlikely alliance between Atlanta's business leaders and former civil rights movement activist Andrew Young. As Atlanta mayor, Young reduced property taxes and helped approve a record number of construction projects.[62] Yet given Heller's business background, his alliance with Greenville's business elite was hardly surprising.

However, the slow pace of redevelopment efforts almost led Heller to leave office rather than seek reelection in 1975. Heller recalled in a later interview, "There were broken sidewalks with grass growing out," and his plans to widen sidewalks and plant trees drew "objections from some of the merchants" who feared changes would increase crime. Progress

remained glacial in pace. A small group of business leaders persuaded Heller to run for reelection. In exchange, they raised money for downtown redevelopment. The local newspapers, the *Greenville News* and the *Greenville Piedmont*, both closely linked to the community's power structure, also supported Heller's candidacy. The *News* provided generally favorable coverage of Heller, and its sister paper the *Piedmont* endorsed his run.[63]

In April 1975, Heller defeated by a substantial margin a Democratic primary opponent running on an anticrime platform. In the general election he faced Jesse L. Helms, a conservative Republican businessman associated with BJU. (He should not be confused with North Carolina's longtime senator Jesse A. Helms.) The *Greenville Piedmont* cautioned readers that the "importance of who sits in Greenville's seats of power cannot be overemphasized" and praised Heller's achievements while noting that Helms's ideology favored "maintenance of the status quo." In the general election, Heller took 65 percent of the vote. In his second term, the tempo of redevelopment activities increased, sowing the seeds of downtown Greenville's later success.[64]

Heller rooted his vision for downtown Greenville in his experiences in Vienna. "He envisioned a Greenville that was more like a village, . . . a European village with people coming downtown," Greenville leader Minor Shaw remembered. On the advice of Halprin and Associates, a San Francisco–based urban design firm, the city government narrowed Main Street to two lanes, widened sidewalks, and planted trees. "[N]ew green spaces, flower planters, and areas for outdoor dining" accompanied these changes. Downtown merchants feared the changes would damage their ability to attract customers dependent on cars. Instead, innovations such as the city's development of a "People's Market" for the sale of artisan-made goods in a vacant building that formerly housed a department store brought more locals downtown, as did free parking and the construction of new parking garages.[65]

As mayor, Heller made use of private-public partnerships. He and his allies believed a hotel and convention center to be necessary for revitalization. Although several companies passed on building a hotel in Greenville, a connection between Greenville attorney Tommy Wyche and a member of Hyatt Hotel's management team led to a meeting between Heller and Hyatt CEO Jay Pritzker. Hyatt initially demurred on the

Greenville market because of its small size. Heller and Pritzker, however, shared connections: both were Jews, and Heller's parents and Pritzker's mother shared the same birthplace in Poland. Private and public funding underwrote the cost of the hotel and convention center: a 5.5 million dollar federal urban development action grant and contributions of four million dollars from local businesspeople. The Hyatt paved the way for the development of a burgeoning hotel industry in Greenville with over one thousand rooms in close proximity to the city center. A similar project, Charleston Place, pursued by Charlest mayor Joe Riley, used a hotel and convention center to propel downtown redevelopment.[66]

Improvements to downtown Greenville were also designed to help recruit new businesses and residents to the area by enhancing local quality of life. Heller, an amateur artist, proved a patron of the arts and attempted to enhance Greenville's entertainment options. The formation of the Metropolitan Arts Council and the opening of Greenville County Museum of Art in downtown during Heller's first term offer two examples. Trude Heller also served as a patron of the arts through her service on the boards of the Greenville Symphony Guild and the Metropolitan Arts Council. The Hellers' role in fostering a stronger arts scene in Greenville speaks to the idea of Jewish cosmopolitanism. It also mirrored efforts made on a larger scale by the city of Charleston under fellow Democratic mayor Joseph P. Riley, which included the development of the Spoleto Festival. As one study of Charleston in the Sunbelt era concludes, Riley "brought people into the city with arts and commerce."[67]

Heller actively recruited new companies to the area. During his time in office, French tire manufacturer Michelin built its first American manufacturing facility in Greenville, and Metropolitan Life Insurance Company located a computer center in the city. Heller traveled to France and New York to sell the companies on the area and undertook other travels in search of new business. Locals perceived Heller's European background as an asset in the recruitment of European companies. News reports explained that he surprised a group of visiting European newspaper executives by speaking German and that he "felt no anger" in a business recruiting trip to Germany during the latter years of his mayorship.[68] This coincided with the continued growth of western European capital investments in South Carolina that helped the state overcome the decline of the textile industry.

Some critics of Greenville's business leadership, however, argued that Heller's acceptance of low taxes and other concessions to attract industry undermined his credentials as "a man who serves the people's interest." These criticisms did little to dent Heller's popularity within the city, but his close ties to the city's business class may have harmed his 1978 congressional campaign as his Republican opponent employed a strategy that portrayed Heller as part of the urban elite.[69]

Trude Heller also played a pivotal role in her husband's successful political career. She became his most trusted advisor and served as a host for gatherings of supporters and business prospects for the area in their Greenville home. Their eldest daughter, Francie, recalled that her father "never went without [Trude] anywhere," and news reports noted Trude's presence at sparsely attended council meetings. "He used to tell me all the time what he was going to do and we used to discuss it and sometimes I said 'you can't do that' and he said 'you're right,'" Trude recalled.[70]

Gatherings at their home helped bring people together for Greenville and often included other prominent local Democratic politicians such as Dick Riley, a close friend of the Hellers and two-term governor of South Carolina, and Nick Theodore. Francie recalled her parents' home as being "always open" and her mother regularly preparing dinners for twenty to thirty people at a time.[71] One such occasion led a business leader to change his mind about not locating his company in Greenville. "She was a wonderful partner of Max. Really the leadership was the two of them," Riley recalled in 2021.[72]

The Mayor's Prayer Breakfast

Heller's second term also coincided with the start of a new stage in local and national politics. In the mid-1970s, Christian conservatives mobilized politically and became active in Republican Party politics. In Greenville, members of the BJU community were in the vanguard. A turning point in the political involvement of local evangelical and fundamentalist Christians came in 1976. In March, people affiliated with BJU took over the county Republican organization. As historian A. V. Huff, Jr., describes the coup, local evangelicals used "floor leaders, walkie-talkies, and rigid discipline" to gain control. Bob Jones III denied that his institution organized the takeover of the local GOP. Despite the institution's disavowals, Senator Strom Thurmond's longtime associate Harry

Dent told the senator in March 1976, "the Bob Jones people took over the Greenville County GOP precincts this past week" under the leadership of a faculty member and advised Thurmond to keep in touch with Dr. Bob Jones, III.[73]

During his campaign for reelection in 1975 and spring 1976, Heller faced two controversies centered on religion. The first related to the invocation to open city council meetings. In January 1975, a rumor alleged that Heller asked ministers offering the invocation to refrain from using the name of Christ. The rumor appears to have originated from a letter that Heller forwarded to city council members. As he explained to a local minister, "last May we received a letter from a resident expressing the thought that public prayer should be a common prayer in which members of all faiths could participate. I gave members of City Council a copy of the note, as I do on all correspondence addressed to this office concerning Council; and left it up to each individual as to how he or she wished to give the invocation. At no time were any orders issued to anyone." A Methodist minister directed the January 1975 invocation to "Almighty God" and made no references to Jesus Christ.[74]

Some members of the community believed that Heller issued instructions to the ministers delivering an invocation. Local ministers and concerned citizens wrote seeking clarification or leveling accusations. The matter became controversial enough for the president of the Greater Greenville Ministerial Alliance to address the rumor. "At no time has Mayor Heller tried to influence, counsel, or instruct any member as to how to pray at these meetings," Smith told the *Greenville Piedmont.* Nonetheless, in 1976, the Associated Press reprinted the false accusation and renewed the controversy.[75]

Other controversies centered on the religious and social mores of Greenville. In a campaign the *Greenville Piedmont* characterized as "against the City Government in general," a Democratic candidate for city council sent copies of receipts for the purchase of liquor by the city to the *Piedmont.* The controversy centered around the purchase of $216.82 of alcoholic beverages for the presentation of a report on downtown development by Lawrence Halprin Associates and a reception for officials of the Miss South Carolina pageant.[76]

Heller called the release of the receipts "dirty politics" and received "a heavy ovation from the Rotary Club." The issue did not appear to affect

Heller's support among his base but drew fire from members of the BJU community. WMUU, the BJU radio station, broadcast an editorial that attacked the city's purchase of liquor and Heller's characterization of the controversy as "the stinking part" of politics. Dayton Walker, the station's programming director and a future Republican city council member, noted Greenville's blue laws and WMUU's stance against the consumption of alcohol. "Liquor is wrong; its consumption is wrong; its sale is wrong; and the use of taxpayers to finance a private reception for guests of the city is just adding insult to injury," Walker argued.[77]

The contretemps between Heller and WMUU continued after the campaign. Letter writers faulted Heller for what they described as a failure to "extend congratulations to the W.M.U.U. upon their extended range of coverage." One even described Heller as "deliberately discourteous to Bob Jones University."[78] The tumultuous relationship between BJU and Max Heller became more contentious.

At the urging of the Greenville Ministerial Alliance, Heller organized a Mayor's Prayer Breakfast for Greenville to coincide with the World Day of Prayer and America's bicentennial. Hundreds of locals attended the

Mayor's Prayer Breakfast, March 5, 1976.
(Courtesy of Special Collections and Archives, Furman University.)

event in downtown Greenville on March 5, 1976. At the breakfast, a Black Baptist minister, a White Methodist minister, a priest, and a rabbi offered prayers. L. D. Johnson, Furman University's chaplain and the former pastor of First Baptist Greenville, offered opening remarks. A choir of Greenville County Schools students sang " America the Beautiful" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Dr. Bob Jones, III, declined an invitation to attend the breakfast. The Joneses opposed cooperation between people who shared different religious faiths. Their long-held stance against such ecumenicalism led to a break with the Reverend Billy Graham in the late 1950s and their opposition to an extremely popular 1966 crusade that Graham held in Greenville.[79]

In his response to Heller's invitation, Jones announced his institution's opposition to the prayer breakfast. "The lord calls on true believers to expose wolves in sheep's clothing who rend and tear the flock of God, we consider any preacher who participates in an unscriptural endeavor such as this to be a wolf in sheep's clothing." He added, "Bob Jones University wants no part in it, and we are actively opposing it." Dr. Gilbert Stenholm of BJU applied for and received a permit from the city to protest the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast.[80]

Outside of the gathering, "thirty-five blazer-clad" and "clean-cut ministerial students" carried signs protesting the breakfast. One of the students told a reporter that Dr. Bob Jones, III, had requested the protest. A protestor's sign repeated the rumor from 1975 asking, "How can Christians join in a prayer meeting with a man who objected to the city council praying in the name of Christ?" Although a *Greenville News* report following the protest noted that "no one officially connected with the BJU protest last Friday knows where erroneous information originated that appeared on one of the picket placards," Bob Jones, III, still gave the rumor official sanction months later. In a written statement, Jones placed fault for the protest with Heller: "The only religious issue that's been raised in this whole affair was raised by Max Heller himself when he made it quite clear at the Council meeting that he didn't want anybody praying in the name of Jesus."[81]

Many Greenvillians expressed support for Heller and opposed the protest. A local florist instructed Heller, "When you see the picketing tomorrow, please remember that there are many times more Christians

in Greenville who greatly admire and deeply love the Hellers." One Greenville resident wrote to Heller, "I'm daily more afraid that though your gracious comments to the press revealed no offense, you must surely have been sensitively afflicted." In seeking forgiveness for Greenville's Christian community, she explained her perspective on Judaism: "The Jewish people are the apple of God's eye, and His blessing will forever be with you."[82]

A local Protestant explained to Heller his view of the motives. "From what I can understand from the newspapers, and other reports, the objection seems to be that you as a Jew are sponsoring this breakfast to which will be invited ministers of all faiths, and some of another color besides whites." Victor Babb added that these distinctions mattered little to God. "Our God, when he welcomes us to that home in the sky, will not ask us whether we have been a Presbyterian, or a Methodist, or a Jew, or a Catholic."[83]

Some letters in the *Greenville News* and the *Greenville Piedmont* supported Bob Jones's position. Raymond A. Hefle called the prayer breakfast one of Satan's deceptions. "Somehow, the devil had tricked thousands of people in our city into thinking that anything labeled 'prayer' is honoring to God. Nothing could be further from the truth." Hefle affirmed the primacy of the Bible and salvation. In another letter to the editor, Gilbert Swift of Bob Jones University described the modern ecumenical movement as "a lie of Satan which gives a false sense of security to people." In Swift's estimation, "Hell will be full of religious people, but only those who have trusted Christ for their salvation will be in heaven." One local couple simply expressed their hope that Bob Jones, III, would "always stand true and not compromise his beliefs."[84]

Heller chose to focus on the positives of the prayer breakfast, later describing it as the "most touching event we ever had." The gathering continued in subsequent years, as did BJU's opposition to the ecumenical event.[85] In some ways, the two sides in the controversy reflected the binary reception Jews received in the South. They were looked down upon and criticized for their failure to accept Christ as their savior, but also respected as the people of the Bible. Although some of Heller's supporters rejected religious distinctions, the comments of others suggested that even they perceived Jews as different.

Conclusion

The prayer breakfast protest foreshadowed another religious controversy that helped bring a close to Heller's elected career. In 1978, Heller ran as the Democratic candidate for the seat of retiring Fourth Congressional District representative James R. Mann. Heller's Republican opponent, Carroll Campbell, Jr., won a tightly contested race and brought the seat under Republican control for the first time since Reconstruction. During the campaign, third-party candidate Don Sprouse argued that Heller's status as a Jew rendered him less qualified to represent the largely evangelical and fundamentalist Christian district. Many Heller supporters alleged that people associated with Campbell's campaign provided the impetus for Sprouse's criticism of Heller.[86]

*(*Greenville News*, March 12, 1978.*
Newspapers.com.)

Heller's loss in the congressional campaign meant that his legacy remained centered on his extraordinary story of escaping Nazi-occupied Austria and his business and civic achievements rather than on partisanship. After leaving elected office, Heller served as chairman of the State Development Board and recruited outside industry to South Carolina. He

also maintained involvement in downtown redevelopment efforts, improving public education and efforts to bridge the divide between Black and White Greenvillians.[87]

The success of downtown revitalization efforts particularly elevated Heller's legacy. As early as the 1980s and frequently in the 1990s and 2000s, local and outside publications awarded Heller credit for starting Greenville's downtown revitalization. Although begun under his predecessor, Heller's efforts pushed the movement substantially forward. In a 1994 article, a *Southern Living* magazine writer described Greenville's Main Street as "one of the liveliest prettiest streets in the South" and noted Heller's role in downtown revitalization. In 2001, the *Greenville News* observed that Heller is "widely credited with Greenville's downtown revitalization." Greenville and particularly its downtown have attracted positive attention from national publications including the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, and *Esquire*, as well as from media figures such as Oprah Winfrey and Ben Stein.[88]

Heller also provided a bridge between Greenville's old identity as a textile center and its new identity as an "international community" with manufacturers such as BMW, Hitachi, and Michelin operating in the area. By the mid-1990s, South Carolina and particularly the upstate were more strongly linked to foreign capital than any comparable area in the United States. As one outside observer noted about the area, foreign manufacturers "have built world class manufacturing skills and turned locals into cosmopolitans."[89] Heller provided a ready example of cosmopolitanism for local media.

In 1996, the Atlanta Olympic Committee selected Greenville as one of the sites for the Olympic torch to pass through on its way to the summer games in Atlanta. Heller was chosen as the final torchbearer in the city. In its coverage, the *Greenville News* credited him with helping Greenville to become an "international business community." He also offered a ready contrast between the city and Greenville County. A controversial resolution by the Greenville County Council that opponents labeled "anti-Gay" led to the Atlanta Olympic Committee's decision to bypass the county and only run the Olympic torch within Greenville's city limits. An area resident wrote to Heller to explain that she told Heller's story to two new residents who feared Greenville to be a "mean-spirited community" as an example of Greenville's openness. As the letter writer explained, one of

the new residents "seemed amazed and relieved" that a fellow Jew had served as the mayor of a midsized, Bible Belt city.[90]

Two years before Max Heller passed away in 2011, Greenville honored Max and Trude Heller's contributions to the city through a statue and panel display in Legacy Plaza across from the Greenville Hyatt.[91] The tribute to the Hellers signified their importance to the story of Greenville's downtown revitalization and spoke to the image that city leaders wished to project. Max Heller's election as mayor contributed to the Sunbelt narrative of southern progress, and through his civic service Heller played an important role in revitalizing the city of Greenville. His identity as a Jew in a Bible Belt city excited some opposition, but Max Heller remained a very popular figure in Greenville whose legacy is tied not only to his unique story and status in Greenville but to his achievements as an elected official and civic leader.

Jews have comprised a small minority throughout American history almost everywhere in the country. Yet their business achievements and civic contributions have placed them in positions to win elections and serve in public office. In politics they tend to be business progressives and infrastructure developers, reflective of their backgrounds, interests, and values. In these ways, the story of Max Heller serves as a case study of broader patterns and themes. Max Heller's service as Greenville mayor also illustrates the changing nature of southern politics in the Sunbelt era as mayors such as Heller, Sam Massell, and Joseph P. Riley entered office and demonstrated new concern for African American constituents in the post–civil rights movement South and aggressively pursued strategies to revitalize the urban core.

NOTES

The author expresses his appreciation to the anonymous peer reviewers.

[1] Miriam Goodspeed, "Jesse Jackson's Homecoming Attracts National Attention," *Greenville Piedmont,* October 4, 1973; Walter Morrison, "Jesse Jackson 'goes home' and Carolina town loves it," *Chicago Daily News,* October 6–7, 1973, box 10, folder 9, Max M. Heller Papers, James B. Duke Library, Special Collections and Archives, Furman University (hereafter cited as Heller Papers).

[2] Archie Vernon Huff, Jr., *Greenville: The History of the City and County in the South Carolina Piedmont* (Columbia, SC, 1995), 407; Morrison, "Jesse Jackson 'goes home.'"

[3] Dale Perry, "Jesse Jackson Blasts Thurmond; Parade Begins Weekend Activities," *Greenville News,* October 6, 1973; "Political Breakfast Held in Honor of Reverend Jesse Jackson," *Focus News,* October 12, 1973, box 10, folder 9, Heller Papers; Diane Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller: Patron Saint of Greenville's Renaissance," in *Doing Business in America: A Jewish History*, ed. Hasia R. Diner (West Lafayette, IN, 2018), 191.

[4] Clive Webb, *Fight Against Fear: Southern Jews and Black Civil Rights* (Athens, GA, 2001), 217–18; Steve Estes, *Charleston in Black and White: Race and Power in the South after the Civil Rights Movement* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2015), 36. For scholarship on Heller, see Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller"; Robert David Johnson, "Political Culture and the Legacies of Antisemitism: The Heller-Campbell Congressional Race in South Carolina 1978," *American Jewish History* 105 (January/April 2021): 49–75; and Jessica Foster, "Campbell vs. Heller: A New Analysis of the 1978 Election for South Carolina's Fourth District," *Furman Humanities Review* 31 (2020): 5-32, accessed May 18, 2021, https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/fhr/vol31/iss1/13.

[5] Abe Hardesty, "Greenville honors visionary behind downtown's rebirth," *Greenville News,* May 29, 2009, Max Heller file, Biographical Files, South Carolina Room, Greenville County Library (hereafter cited as Heller clipping file); Max Heller, interview conducted by Jim McAlister, 1972, box 7, folder 8, 1–5, Heller papers.

[6] Heller interview, 1972, 2, 6, 8–10; Max Heller, interview conducted by Randy M. Goldman, September 24, 1998, 9–10, Jeff and Toby Herr Oral History Archive, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, accessed January 6, 2021, https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn506450.

[7] Heller interview, 1972, 6–10. As Heller explained in a 1998 interview with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "the reason they didn't fire us is the people they put in charge had to learn something." Heller interview, September 24, 1998, 7.

[8] Trude Heller and Francie Heller, interview conducted by author, February 23, 2019; Max and Trude Heller, interview conducted by Dale Rosengarten and Sandra Rosenblum, February 28, 1997, Lowcountry Digital Library, College of Charleston Libraries, accessed January 31, 2022, https://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/lcdl/catalog/lcdl:11839, 3; Heller interview, 1972, 7, 10.

[9] Heller interview, 1972, 10; Max Moses Heller, interview conducted by Peggy Denny, October 2001, box 18, Heller papers.

[10] Heller interview, 1972, 13–14. Heller's parents were able to immigrate to the United States later. Dan J. Puckett documents how Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi-occupied Europe arrived in Alabama. See *In the Shadow of Hitler: Alabama's Jews, the Second World War, and the Holocaust* (Tuscaloosa, 2014).

[11] Heller interview, 1972, 14, 18, 19. As Heller explained to McAlister, "I had about $1.60 in my pocket. That was all the money that was left over. I was allowed to take $8.00, incidentally, with me leaving Europe. That was the only money we were allowed to take out." Heller did not specifically explain what his relatives believed about the region.

[12] Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 185; Max and Trude Heller, interview conducted by Courtney Tollison, August 10, 2004, Furman University, accessed February 18, 2019, https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1023&context=oral-histories; James Shannon, "Max Heller Remembers," *Creative Loafing,* October 6, 2001, Heller clipping file.

[13] Trude and Francie Heller interview, 2019; Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 186–87. Trude Heller's father arrived in the United States separately from her mother. He spent time in a concentration camp before escaping into the south of France and securing passage to the United States.

[14] Walter B. Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia, SC, 1998 [1992]), 513; Yancey Gilkerson, Paper Prepared for Club of 39 Meeting, October 15, 1987, Greenville 1920s-1940s file, Vertical Files, South Carolina Room, Greenville County Library; Huff, *Greenville*, 266–67. The chamber of commerce's boast is likely tied to the common idea among southern business and political leaders that immigrants, especially from eastern and southern Europe, were more likely to join labor unions than native-born workers. Nick Theodore, a descendant of early Greek immigrants to Greenville, noted in his memoirs, "For years, Charleston had South Carolina's largest Greek community, a distinction now held by Greenville." Nick Theodore, *Trials and Triumphs: South Carolina's Evolution 1962-2014* (Taylors, SC, 2014), 14.

[15] Huff, *Greenville*, 266–67; Johnson, "Political Culture and the Legacies of Antisemitism," 52–53; Diane Vecchio, "Making Their Way in the New South: Jewish Peddlers and Merchants in The South Carolina Up Country," *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 113 (April 2012): 102, 112–15.

[16] Huff, *Greenville,* 266–67; Anna B. Mitchell, "Times, They're still changing," *Greenville Journal,* April 10, 2009, Jewish Clipping File, South Carolina Room, Greenville County Library. Beth Israel began as an Orthodox synagogue but "transitioned from Orthodox to Conservative practices in the late 1940s." "Greenville, South Carolina," ISJL Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities, accessed January 3, 2022, https://www.isjl.org/south-carolina-greenville-encyclopedia.html.

[17] Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller" 184–86; David A. Tillinghast, "8,600 Dozen Garments Made Weekly by Piedmont Shirt," *Greenville Piedmont,* May 6, 1946, Heller clipping file.

[18] Max M. Heller to Robert McNair, March 19, 1968, box 3, folder 2, Heller Papers.

[19] Max M. Heller to James B. Edwards, January 26, 1977, box 3, folder 4, Heller Papers; Dave Partridge, "Max Heller: From Refugee to Mayor," *The State*, April 25, 1971, box 3, folder 1, Heller Papers; Max and Trude Heller interview, 2019.

[20] Heller interview, 1972, 20–21, 24–25; Trude and Francie Heller interview, 2019.

[21] Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 187–88; Trude and Francie Heller interview, 2019; Heller letter to salesmen carrying the Maxon Shirt Company product, box 8, folder 1, Heller Papers; Carnegie Shirts For Boys ad, box 8, folder 12, Heller Papers.

[22] Heller letter to employees, March 26, 1968, box 8, folder 12, Heller Papers; Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 189–90; Leonard Rogoff, "Divided Together: Jews and African Americans in Durham, North Carolina," in *The Quiet Voices: Southern Rabbis and Black Civil Rights, 1880s to 1990s*, ed. Mark K. Bauman and Berkley Kalin (Tuscaloosa, 1997), 130; Jane Bock Guzman, "Annette Greenfield Strauss," The Shalvi/Hyman Encyclopedia of Jewish Women, accessed March 6, 2022, https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/strauss-annette-greenfield.

[23] Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 189–90; Heller interview, 1972, 33; Max M. Heller to Dwight D. Eisenhower, December 13, 1956, box 2, folder 8, Heller Papers. See also Max M. Heller to Hubert H. Humphrey, April 30, 1968, box 2, folder 8, Heller Papers. In this letter, Heller explains that he also sent similar letters to John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson.

[24] "Greenville Citizens Urged to Join Fight Against Substandard Housing," *Greenville News,* December 16, 1969; "Housing Foundation Nearing Ready Stage," *Greenville News*, April 25, 1969; "Nonprofit Foundation Formed to Provide Adequate Housing for Slum Dwellers," *Greenville News,* May 30, 1969; Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 189–90.

[25] Numan V. Bartley, *The New South 1945–1980* (Baton Rouge, 1995), 431–32. Bartley quotes Fred Hobson, *Tell About the South: The Southern Rage to Explain* (Baton Rouge, 1983).

[26] In 1970, the city received positive publicity from a variety of outlets including the national media when its fifty-eight thousand student Greenville County school district integrated without major incident. Stephen O'Neill, "Memory, History, and the Desegregation of Greenville, South Carolina," in *Toward the Meeting of the Waters: Currents in the Civil Rights Movement of South Carolina During the Twentieth Century*, ed. Winfred B. Moore, Jr., and Orville Vernon Burton (Columbia, SC, 2008), 286–99. O'Neill argues that Greenville business and civic leaders desegregated reluctantly but attempted to maintain a progressive image for the city to maintain the area's growth.

[27] Bartley, *New South,* 431–32, 398–99; Alexander P. Lamis, *The Two-Party South* (New York, 1984), 63–64. For a longer discussion of the relationship between New South Democrats such as Jimmy Carter and the Sunbelt image, see Bartley, *New South*, 398–404.

[28] Huff, *Greenville*, 420; "Greenville Evolving into Pattern of Segregated Areas, Study Shows," *Greenville News*, June 20, 1973.

[29] "Greenville Evolving"; "Greenville Citizens Urged to Join Fight"; "Statistical Information Released," *Greenville News,* October 25, 1975, box 12, Heller Papers.

[30] Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York, 1985), 257, 258–59.

[31] Huff, *Greenville,* 395; Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 260; Paul Davidson, "Changing of The Guard: Downtown's Past Slowly Being Replaced," *Greenville News,* December 4, 1996, Cancellation Shoe Mart Clipping File, South Carolina Room, Greenville County Library; Vincent Harris, "Sounds Familiar," *Upstate Business Journal,* 2015, Horizon Records Clipping File, South Carolina Room, Greenville County Library.

[32] Minor M. Shaw, interview conducted by author, March 11, 2020; Cliff Sloan and Bob Hall, "It's Good To Be Home in Greenville, But It's Better If You Hate Unions," *Southern Exposure* 7 (Spring 1979): 92 ; "Greenville Crime Rate Is Rising," *Greenville News,* April 4, 1975, box 13, Heller Papers; Merl Code, interview conducted by author, March 9, 2020.

[33] Huff, *Greenville,* 395; Shaw interview, March 11, 2020.

[34] Huff, *Greenville,* 395; Buck Mickel, Speech to the Downtown Greenville Association, box 30, folder 3, MSS 298, Buck Mickel Papers, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries, Clemson, SC.

[35] Buck Mickel, Speech to the Downtown Greenville Association.

[36] For a good summary of Daniel's philosophy on organized labor and his politics, see James Arthur Dunlap, III, "Changing Symbols of Success: Economic Development in Twentieth Century Greenville, South Carolina" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1995), 168–80.

[37] Richard W. "Dick" Riley, interview conducted by author, January 25, 2019.

[38] "Budget Represents Good Planning," *Greenville News,* November 25, 1970; "City Agrees on Cost Figures For City Hall," *Greenville News,* April 7, 1971; Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 190.

[39] Jimmy Cornelison, "Ex-mayor prime player in school integration," *Greenville News,* June 7, 2000; Eric Connor, "Ex-mayor dies at 90; pushed for civil rights," *Greenville News,* April 25, 2017; Stuart Campbell, "No Retrogression Fears for Retiring Mayor," *Greenville News,* July 13, 1971, R. Cooper White, Jr., file, South Carolina Room, Greenville County Public Library (hereafter cited as Cooper White file). For the controversy over Albert Watson's campaign and R. Cooper White, Jr's role in the controversy, see Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton, 2006), 259–60.

[40] Bruce H. Kalk, *The Origins of the Southern Strategy: Two Party Competition in South Carolina: 1950–1972* (Idaho Falls, ID, 2001), 122–24; Lassiter, *Silent Majority,* 255; "A Short, But Historic Term," *Greenville News,* February 19, 1971, Cooper White file; Cornelison, "Ex-mayor prime player."

[41] Lassiter, *Silent Majority,* 254, 260–61; Stuart Campbell, "White Has Parting Pangs: No Retrogression Fears For Retiring Mayor," *Greenville Piedmont,* July 13, 1971, Cooper White file; J. Hunter Stokes, "Heller Wins Mayor's Race by Large Margin," *Greenville News,* April 14, 1971.

[42] Heller campaign advertisement, *Greenville News,* April 10, 1971; Knox H. White, interview conducted by author, April 8, 2020; Cornelison, "Ex-mayor prime player."

[43] Huff, *Greenville,* 407–409; "Baptist Students Hail Jewish Mayor," *B'nai B'rith Messenger-Religious News Service*, 1975, box 3, folder 4, Heller Papers. As of 2022, no other Jews have won election to the position of mayor of Greenville.

[44] Nick A. Theodore to Max Heller, April 21, 1971; Dale Perry to Max Heller, April 14, 1971, box 3, folder 1, Heller Papers.

[45] Neal R. Peirce, "A Different Sort of Mayor in the Buckle of the Bible Belt," *Boston Globe,* April 14, 1978, box 4, folder 4, Heller Papers; "Greenville, South Carolina," *Money Magazine,* August 1974, box 3, folder 6, Heller Papers; "Baptist Students Hail Jewish Mayor," *B'nai B'rith Messenger–Religious News Service*, 1975, box 3, folder 4, Heller Papers; Dale Perry, "Presidency A Kingly Title No One Questions—Biden," *Greenville News,* May 6, 1975. Heller and Biden exchanged letters in 1975 and 1978 that can be found in box 4, folder 3 of the Heller Papers and in the Max Heller clipping file in the South Carolina Room of the Greenville County Library.

[46] Phillip Rovner, "Growing Up Jewish in Greenville," *The Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina* 15 (2010): 10.

[47] Stuart Campbell, "Ayes and Nays," *Greenville Piedmont,* December 4, 1973, box 12, Heller Papers; "Mayor Heller's 'City of Tranquility,'" *Greenville News*, July 14, 1971.

[48] Merl Code interview, March 9, 2020; Cara Bonnett, "Merl Code," *Greenville News,* January 1, 2000.

[49] In 1915, South Carolina law prohibited African Americans from working in the same spaces as Whites within textile mills although, as the authors of *Like a Family* note, "By and large, occupational segregation was accomplished informally" prior to the passage of South Carolina's Segregation Act of 1915. See Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, et. al., eds., *Like a Family: The*

Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World (Chapel Hill, 2000 [1987]), 66; O'Neill, "Memory, History, and the Desegregation of Greenville," 286–89.

[50] Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 197–98; O'Neill, "Memory, History, and the Desegregation of Greenville," 286, 287–89, 295–96.

[51] Puckett, *In the Shadow of Hitler,* 7; Vecchio, "Making Their Way in the New South," 117; Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 188.

[52] Webb, *Fight Against Fear*, 217–18.

[53] Neal R. Peirce, "From poor refugee to mayor," *Boston Globe,* April 14, 1978, box 4, folder 4, Heller Papers; Dale Perry, "Housing, Sanitation Criticized at Meeting," *Greenville News,* October 12, 1973, box 12, Heller Papers.

[54] Stuart Campbell, "City Government Did More Listening, Brick and Mortar, Heightened Service Mark Year's Progress," *Greenville Piedmont,* December 27, 1973, box 13, Heller Papers; "City Council Accomplishments," box 3, folder 2, Heller Papers; "Federal Grants for Parks & Recreation Projects," box 3, folder 2, Heller Papers; Neal R. Peirce, "Greenville's Extraordinary Refugee-Businessman-Mayor," box 4, folder 4, Heller Papers. The Washington Post Publishing Group sent Heller a longer version of Peirce's column with additional details before it ran.

[55] Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 197; Trude and Francie Heller interview, 2019; Charles McNair, *Play It Again, Sam: The Notable Life of Sam Massell, Atlanta's First Minority Mayor* (Macon, GA, 2017), 129–36. MARTA initially only operated as a bus system; Atlanta's aboveground rail system only began operation after Massell left office.

[56] Susan Heller Moses, "Remembering My Dad, Max Heller," *Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina* 16 (2011): 14; Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 198; "Chronological Summary Evidence of Busy Year in Council Chambers," *Greenville News,* January 8, 1973, box 12, Heller Papers.

[57] Rogoff, "Divided Together," 133; Ronald H. Bayor, *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta* (Chapel Hill, 1996), 27, 43; McNair, *Play It Again, Sam,* 122–26; Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton, 2005), 240.

[58] Dale Perry, "Black Cultural Council Formed in Greenville," *Greenville News,* n.d., box 12, Heller Papers; "Mayor Issues Proclamation for Dr. Martin Luther King," *Greenville News,* January 9, 1975, box 13, Heller Papers; "A Thanksgiving Tradition," *Greenville News,* November 21, 1975; Estes, *Charleston in Black and White,* 55–57.

[59] Dale Perry, "Voter Registration Complaint Filed," *Greenville News,* July 30, 1975; Carey Hayes, "Jackson asks 'resurrection,'" *Greenville Piedmont*, August 6, 1976; "Call for Federal Registrars Denied," *Greenville Piedmont,* August 6, 1976, box 16, Heller Papers; Estes, *Charleston in Black and White*, 52; Sally Smith, "Race for council seat shows black voter split," *Greenville News,* March 10, 1979.

[60] "Mayor says downtown is community's mirror," *Greenville News,* May 3, 1977, box 16, Heller Papers; Neal R. Peirce, "A Different Sort of Mayor"; James Eppes, "Marketer says where we live reveals much about how we live," *Greenville Piedmont,* January 24, 1989, Greenville Demographics 1980s file, Vertical files, South Carolina Room, Greenville County Library.

[61] Kruse, *White Flight,* 240; John Bolt, "Democrats come on strong," *Greenville Piedmont*, May 25, 1975, box 12, Heller Papers; "A Survey of the Political Climate in the Fourth

Congressional District of South Carolina," August 1978, Hart Research Associates Inc., 9, box 1, folder 1, Heller Papers; Jimmy Cornelison, "Partners in Romance, Service," *Greenville News*, May 26, 1999, Heller clipping file.

[62] Kevin Kruse, *White Flight,* 240–42; McNair, *Play It Again, Sam*, 111.

[63] Shannon, "Max Heller Remembers;" "Minitorial Notes on City Elections," *Greenville Piedmont,* April 11, 1975, box 13, Heller Papers.

[64] "Minitorial Notes on City Elections"; John Bolt, "Heller's gain is Jordan's loss," *Greenville Piedmont,* April 23, 1975, box 13, Heller Papers; Dale Perry, "Heller Easily Wins Reelection," *Greenville News,* May 21, 1975; Cornelison, "Partners in Romance, Service."

[65] Minor Shaw interview, March 11, 2020; John Boyanoski with Knox White, *Reimagining Greenville: Building the Best Downtown in America,* rev. ed. (Charleston, SC, 2017), 12–13; Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 192; "Downtown Move," *Greenville News-Piedmont,* July 26, 1975, box 4, folder 3, Heller Papers; "Fact Sheet on the First Term in Office of The Honorable Max M. Heller, Mayor of The City of Greenville," box 2, folder 2, Heller Papers.

[66] Boyanoski with White, *Reimagining Greenville*, 14; Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 193; "Greenville Commons groundbreaking set," *Greenville News*, December 24, 1978; "Facts and Figures," VisitGreenvilleSC, accessed April 6, 2022, https://www.visitgreenvillesc.com/about-greenville/all-about-greenville/facts-figures; Estes, *Charleston in Black and White,* 59–60.

[67] Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 193; Joan McKinney, "Heller's One-Man Show of Happiness Opens At Furman Saturday," *Greenville Piedmont,* September 9, 1970, Heller Clipping File; Marilyn Nelson, "Max Heller Revisited," *Greenville Magazine*, April 1982, 51, Heller Clipping File; Dale Perry, "New Art Museum is Open," *Greenville News*, March 10, 1974, box 12, Heller Papers; Nathaniel Cary, "Trude Heller, Holocaust Survivor who helped shape modern Greenville dies at 98," *The Post and Courier*, May 13, 2021, accessed May 13, 2021, https://www.postandcourier.com/greenville/news/trude-heller-holocaust-survivor-who-helped-shape-modern-greenville-dies-at-98/article_917e3b44-b384-11eb-ae54-1b75bf7e23a9.html; Estes, *Charleston in Black and White,* 58.

[68] Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 195; Adam Chanes, "When Greenville, South Carolina, Had a Jewish Mayor," *Forward*, September 15, 2014, accessed April 6, 2022, https://forward.com/culture/205485/when-greenville-south-carolina-had-a-jewish mayor/#:~:text=But%20for%20Max%20Heller%2C%20a,South%20Carolina's%20sixth%20largest%20city; Aubrey Bowie, "The Mayor Sprach Deutsch," *Greenville News,* March 12, 1973, box 12, Heller Papers; "Heller feels no anger in West Germany trip," *Greenville News-Piedmont*, April 24, 1977, Heller Clipping File.

[69] Sloan and Hall, "It's Good To Be Home in Greenville," 93; Johnson, "Political Culture and the Legacies of Antisemitism," 63–64.

[70] Trude and Francie Heller interview, 2019; "Attendance Is Sparse At Meeting," *Greenville News,* December 10, 1969.

[71] Ibid.; Dick Riley interview, January 25, 2019. Dick and Ann "Tunkey" Riley maintained a close friendship with the Hellers that continued after Heller's service as mayor.

[72] Trude Heller, e-mail to Judy Prince, January 12, 2012, box 1, folder 19, Heller Papers; Cary, "Trude Heller, Holocaust Survivor."

[73] "Jones: BJU Not Trying to Control County GOP," *Greenville News,* March 6, 1976; Bill Inman, "Students Protest Meeting," *Greenville Piedmont,* March 5, 1976, box 4, folder 2, Heller papers; Huff, *Greenville,* 409; Joseph Crespino, *Strom Thurmond's America* (New York, 2012), 267. "Jones: BJU Not Trying to Control County GOP" appeared in the *Greenville News* on the same page that carried stories on the prayer breakfast protest. The article carried Bob Jones III's denials that the institution orchestrated the election of twenty GOP committee people affiliated with the university. Jones also took a shot at the county's GOP leadership: "if old-time Republicans had power wrested away from them Thursday night, it is not Bob Jones University's fault."

[74] Max Heller to Carl R. Blair, February 27, 1975, box 4, folder 2, Heller Papers; G. Bryan Carroll, Invocation for the Greenville City Council, box 3, folder 2, Heller Papers.

[75] Lynn P. Smith to F. C. McConnell, III, March 9, 1976; "Baptist Students March to Protest Stand on Prayer," *News and Observer,* March 6, 1976, box 4, folder 2, Heller Papers.

[76] John A. Bolt, "Candidate Tells of City Liquor Bills," *Greenville Piedmont,* April 9, 1975, box 3, folder 2, Heller Papers.

[77] "Liquor Purchase Report Dirty Politics, Mayor Says," *Greenville News*, April 9, 1975, box 3, folder 2, Heller Papers; "Minitorial Notes on City Elections"; Dayton Walker, "WMUU Editorial," April 15, 1976, box 3, folder 2, Heller papers.

[78] H. R. Maurer to Max Heller, November 18, 1975; Mr. and Mrs. Steve McCrary to Max Heller, November 19, 1975, box 4, folder 2, Heller Papers.

[79] Cheryl Manning, "Prayer Breakfast Draws Crowd," *Greenville Piedmont*, March 3, 1976, box 4, folder 2, Heller Papers; Huff, *Greenville,* 412.

[80] Dr. Bob Jones, III, to Carolyn Stirm, February 5, 1976; John J. Dullea to Dr. Gilbert Stenholm, February 9, 1976, box 4, folder 2, Heller Papers.

[81] Inman, "Students Protest Meeting"; "Students Picket Prayer Breakfast," *Greenville News,* March 6, 1976; "Error's Origin Unknown to BJU," *Greenville News*, March 11, 1976; Statement by Dr. Bob Jones, May 20, 1975, box 4, folder 2, Heller Papers.

[82] Unknown sender to Max Heller, March 4, 1976; Paula Morris to Max Heller, March 8, 1976, box 4, folder 2, Heller Papers.

[83] Victor M. Babb to Max Heller, February 25, 1976, box 4, folder 2, Heller papers.

[84] Raymond A. Hefle, letter to the editor, *Greenville Piedmont*, March 15, 1976; Gilbert Swift, letter to the editor, unknown publication and date; C. G. Lollis, letter to the editor, *Greenville Piedmont,* March 15, 1976, box 4, folder 2, Heller papers.

[85] Shannon, "Max Heller Remembers"; Beth Padgett, "Helms has 'no apologies' despite BJU ouster move," *Greenville News,* March 26, 1980. Mayor Jesse L. Helms, a member of the Bob Jones University board of directors, continued the prayer breakfast during his term as mayor. He told the *Greenville News* that his participation in the ecumenical gathering cost him his seat on the university board.

[86] Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 199–201; Shannon, "Max Heller Remembers." Robert David Johnson argues that lingering fallout from the 1978 campaign may have damaged any hopes that Campbell held of a national political career. Campbell became South Carolina's first two-term Republican governor but was passed over as Bob Dole's running mate in 1996. Campbell passed away from complications related to Alzheimer's disease in 2005. See

Johnson, "Political Culture and the Legacies of Antisemitism," 49–75. Johnson graciously provided the author with a copy of the article before it was published.

[87] Aubrey Bowie, "Max Heller leaves his post on a tidy note," *Greenville News,* May 28, 1983, Heller clipping file; Cornelison, "Partners in Romance, Service"; Dale Perry, "Former mayor now focusing on improving education," *Greenville News,* January 1, 2002, Heller clipping file.

[88] Phillip Morris, "Remaking Main Street," *Southern Living*, August 1994, 67, 65–66, Counties—SC—Greenville—Articles from Other Publications file, South Carolina Room, Greenville County Library; Dale Perry, "Max Heller," *Greenville News,* January 1, 2001, Heller clipping file; Boyanoski with White, *Reimagining Greenville*, 16–17. See also Vecchio, "Max Moses Heller," 192–94.

[89] Andrew Harrison Baker, "From New South to Sunbelt: Greenville, South Carolina" (Ph.D. dissertation, Auburn University, 2020), 186; Lyn Riddle, "City still has a role to play in celebration," *Atlanta Constitution,* June 25, 1996; Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *World Class: Thriving Locally in the Global Economy* (New York, 1995), 248.

[90] Ron Barnett, "Rollicking crowd greets flame in downtown," *Greenville News,* June 26, 1996; Scott Wyman, "Greenville County's image tested by Olympic rebuke," *Greenville News,* June 26, 1996; Baker, "From New South to Sunbelt," 196–97. The original letter is in box 10, folder 20 of the Heller Papers.

[91] Hardesty, "Greenville honors visionary."