

Bess Gold Crane and David Crane Ethel Stein Gold

Bess and David Crane were beloved and active members of Congregation B'nai Israel. David Crane was President of the Congregation from 1967-1970. They came to Jackson in 1952 and operated Kisber's Shoe Circle in Kisber's Department Store.



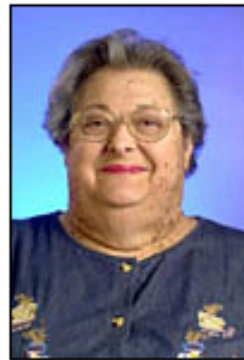
White store owners supported movement

Bess and David Crane, then a young Jewish couple in Jackson, met with black leaders in the 1960s to offer support to the civil rights movement.

"We met without fanfare," Bess Crane said. "It was a dialogue group between blacks and whites."

The racially mixed group that formed to improve race relations later became known as the Jackson Civic Action Council.

The Cranes operated a shoe store, known as the Shoe Circle, in Kisber's Department Store.



Bess Crane



David Crane

"It was always first come, first served," Crane said. No "black only" and "white only" signs, she said. "In fact, I think we had the first black sales associate" in a downtown Jackson store.

Jonas Kisber Sr., the store's owner, "was very civic-minded," she said

The Cranes, who are both 75 and retired, said being part of a racially mixed dialogue during the '60s was one of the best things they could've done.

"To me, it was very important" for white people and black people to talk about tensions, Mrs. Crane said. "It's when you can't talk you have problems."

- Wendy Isom



Ethel Stein Gold, Bess Crane's mother, moved with them to Jackson. Bess grew up on her grandparents' 378 acre plantation (Little Hope) in Washington County, Mississippi. Her father, Harry Gold, died when Bess was a child.

Ethel Stein Gold's parents, V.A. Stein and Sarah Byall Stein, bought Little Hope Plantation in 1904. (According to Rabbi Fred Victor Davidow, Avigdor Segal changed his name to Stein in Lithuania—taking the surname of a deceased man in order to avoid conscription into the Russian army. In the United States, he altered his given name to Victor Abe.)



Left: Window at Congregation B'nai Israel – In Memory of Harry & Ethel Gold

Right: David & Bess Crane



David Crane (October 7, 1924 – February 25, 2008)

Bess Crane (April 14, 1925 – May 6, 2006)

Ethel Stein Gold (April 15, 1896 – June 16, 1975)

זְכוֹרָנוּם לְבְרָכָה.

Zichronam liv'rachah.

May their memories be for blessing.