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Na'amat Pioneer Women CIRCA 1963



Na'amat Pioneer Women, circa 1963. JAHSENA Archives, McDermid studios, Edmonton, donated by Paula Weil. Left to Right, Back to Front: Mrs. Koliger, unknown, Anne Nelson, Lil Woodrow; Mrs. Podolsky, Rose Milner, Rose Weil, Mrs. Sorokin, Goldie Mickelson, Bessie Brown, Mrs. Kushner, Mrs. Tapper; Beryl Nahornick, Rebecca Goorevitch, Faye Goorevitch, Thelma Rollingher, Mrs. Kachuk, Mrs. Kagan; Mrs. Averbach, Florence Levine, Mrs. Furman; Mrs. Weitz, Mrs. Rosenberg, Mrs. Feldman, Mrs. Leibovitch, Lil Pakes, Sarah Zipperstein, Dorothy Feldman; Mrs. Rabinovitch, unknown, unknown, unknown, Mrs. Superstein, Rose Dolgoy, Mrs. Grabow.

AGM
November 23,
JCC
7:30 pm
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Peter Owen Story Added to Online Exhibit



Peter Owen., waiting to leave Germany. JAHSENA Archives photo.

Archives in the Classroom: Letters from the Trunk is a unique online learning object designed by archivists and teachers to meet their shared goal of bringing primary sources to the classroom. Recognizing that students know more about museums and libraries than archives, the Archives Society of Alberta used federal funding to work with teachers to create a compelling learning object that met archival as well as pedagogical goals.

As a result, compelling personal histories of Canadian immigrants have been brought to life through an interactive, online project that combines technology and primary source materials through an innovative partnership between educators, historians and archivists. The resulting content-rich learning object develops critical thinking and research skills, describes the principles of archival processes through an in-depth online tour of an archival facility, and opens the vaults of Canadian archives to a new audience.

The Archives Society of Alberta launched its online learning object, "Archives in the Classroom" in the fall of 2004. Created in conjunction with the Alberta Online Consortium, "Archives in the Classroom" uses digitized archival documents, photographs, and sound recordings to engage students and develop critical thinking skills.

Through these sources, students experienced the unique stories of three Canadian immigrants: Dr. Mary Percy Jackson, a pioneering Peace River physician; Antonio Rebaudengo, an Italian-Canadian interned in World War II; and Armand Trochu, an early

French settler in Central Alberta. Students also learn about the archival institutions that preserve the original records and contributed to the project.

Now, a new suitcase has been added to the on-line train station. Thanks to an additional grant from the ASA, a competition was held, and the story of Peter Owen was chosen to be added to this virtual, on-line learning tool. Mr. Owen, a former Board Member of JAHSENA, was the only child to be let into Canada alone immediately prior to or during World War II.

Thanks to the efforts of local lawyer H.A. Friedman, Peter was let out of Germany shortly after Kristallnacht, 1938. While his parents and brother obtained visas for South America, Peter was allowed into Canada alone through a special Order-in-Council, thanks to the efforts of Mr. Friedman, who sponsored him. A long series of correspondence between the firm of Friedman, Lieberman, and the Canadian government has been preserved, as well as a scrapbook and narrative depicting Peter's life in Germany, his journey to Canada, and his family's journey to South America and later to Edmonton, where they were reunited, are featured in this exhibit.

In addition, an oral history interview with Peter in his later years is included. Peter's granddaughter, Tess Owen, a teacher at Talmud Torah, has prepared the study guides to go along with this exhibit.

We encourage you to take a look when it goes up in a couple of weeks at www.archive-salberta.org.

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JAHSENA AGM Features “Little Synagogue on the Prairie”

This year's JAHSENA AGM will take place November 23rd, at 7:30 pm at the JCC. It will feature Trudy Cowan, Vice-president of the Little Synagogue on the Prairie Project from Calgary. Trudy will speak about how a group was formed in Calgary to purchase, move and restore the old Montefiore Synagogue from its location in Hanna, Alberta, to the Calgary Heritage Park. The building was moved from Hanna to a storage facility in Calgary in July of this year, where it will be kept until it is placed on new foundations in the Park next summer.

The Little Synagogue on the Prairie is the Montefiore Institute, which was built about 1915 by the Jewish farmers of the Montefiore block settlement to serve as their synagogue, Hebrew school, library and community centre.

Settlement at the colony, a few miles north of Sibbald, Alberta, mid-way between Calgary and Saskatoon, began in 1910, when several Jewish families began homesteading on the arid land of the Palliser Triangle. About 25 families, or 85 people, made up the colony in its heyday.



Moving the synagogue to Calgary. JHSSA photo.

The settlement was named for Sir Moses Montefiore (1784-1885), a London philanthropist. The Institute was located on the farm of Joseph and Fanny Chetner, ancestors of Jack Chetner.

The Montefiore Institute served as a venue for social events such as weddings and visiting speakers. The library held Yiddish, Hebrew and English books.

Support from the Jewish Colonization Association was too little too late, and did not save the Jewish farmers from the effects of poor crops and the hardships of prairie life. By the mid-1920s, many had left the area for better opportunities in the



Montefiore Synagogue.
JAHSENA Archives photo.

nearby towns, as well as Edmonton and Calgary. Many of their descendants live in Edmonton to day, including the Chetners and Ullmans.

Community use of the Montefiore Institute ended about 1927. The building was used as a granary until it was moved to Hanna in about 1940, where it became a family home until it was picked up and moved by the Society on June 11, 2008.

Information courtesy of “The Tumbleweed” July, 2008, a newsletter of the Little Synagogue on the Prairie Project. For more information, see www.littlesynagogue.ca.

JAHSENA Recent Acquisitions

These items have recently found their way into the archives, and are available for research purposes:

Approximately 2400 colour photographs and 10 data disks recovered from the former office of Edmonton Jewish Life.

Temple Beth Ora – 20 cm textual material, including newsletters and newspaper clippings, as well as circa 70 photographs.

Certificate of Naturalization, Canadian Immigration Cards, Talmud Torah Report Card

and High School Report Card, Commencement program, University of Alberta. Donated by Beryl Goorevitch Nahornick.

120 slides relating to Edmonton Hadassah-WIZO, donated by Cory Felber.

3 receipts from the Pechet store, circa 1912, donated by the Pechet family.

1 CD of photos of Edmonton Hadassah-WIZO, donated by Stephanie Hendin.

1 Architectural Drawing, large format, of the original Hillcrest Club, donated by Sue Lord.

13 bound volumes, 40 diskettes, 1 negative, 30 cm. text, concerning the history of the Edmonton Jewish Community, donated by Uri Rosenzweig.

BBYO records, approximately 20 cm. from the 1990s and Edmonton Jewish Hockey League trophies, approximately 15-20, donated by Steven Shafir.

Oversized documents and text, approximately 10 cm. formerly

belonging to Moe Lieberman, donated by Justice Samuel Lieberman.

The Jewish Archives & Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta is always looking for new donations. If you have any personal papers, photographs, negatives, books, audio-visual recordings or other items relating to the history of the Jewish community of Edmonton and Northern Alberta that you would like preserved for generations to come, please contact our office at (780) 489-2809.

Kosher Supervision in Edmonton

PAULA E. KIRMAN

The supervision of kashrut in Edmonton has a long, albeit somewhat spotty history. With a seemingly revolving door of rabbis, kosher butchers, and mashgiachs, consistency has been as much an issue as the availability of kosher products.

THE KASHRUT COMMITTEE

The main supervising body for kashrut in Edmonton was the Kashrut Committee of the Jewish Community Council, later the Jewish Federation of Edmonton. Dr. Joseph Kirman, Professor Emeritus at the University of Alberta, was involved with the committee for many years. The Kashrut Committee was in place when he



Rabbi Daniel Friedman. JAHSENA Archives.



Rabbi Hyman Goldstick. JAHSENA Archives.

came to Edmonton in 1968.

It was fully functioning with a mashgiach and shochet. I do not know when it was established, but given the importance of kosher meat to previous generations in Edmonton, it must have been established early in the community's history," says Kirman, who is originally from New York. "There certainly had to be some supervision for kosher meat in the early years given the lack of refrigeration to ship meat to the city and therefore the need to have a kosher kill in the community."

Rabbi Hyman Goldstick was in fact the first person hired to be Rabbi, Mohel, and Kosher Butcher for the community. When he left for Edson, Rabbi Pinsky was hired to take over this role. After that, Friedman's kosher grocery store and a subsequent series of stores opened up to fulfill this need – see *Heritage/Yerusha* Volume 8, Number 3, "Edmonton's Kosher Butchers."

Kirman became involved with the Kashrut Committee in the late '70s. "I volunteered as a member of the Kashrut Committee in the late 1970s when Dr. Joseph Bugis was Chair. One of my colleagues on the committee was a young lawyer, Ron Berger. He is now Mr. Justice Berger of the Court of Queen's Bench. I remained on the Committee through the chairmanships of Hymie Sorokin of Beth Israel and Al Rose of Beth Shalom. In the early '80s I became vice-chair and then



Nate Siegel. JAHSENA Archives

chair."

The role of the Kashrut Committee was broad, and involved all major Jewish denominations. "The responsibility of the Kashrut Committee was to make sure that there was a supply of kosher meat in the community for all those who wanted it, and to provide supervision for the kosher butchers and community functions. The supervision of the shochet and mashgiach was part of this in conjunction with the community rabbis.

It should be noted that the Edmonton Kashrut Committee was unique in having representation from the Reform congregation as well as the Orthodox, Conservative, and Hasidic congregations," Kirman explains.

Supervising the kosher meat situation is the specific role of the mashgiach. During Kirman's time with the Kashrut Committee, Nate Siegel was the mashgiach. Another major mashgiach was Mr. Motkovitch, the gabbai at Beth Israel.

Despite its important work, the Kashrut Committee fell apart in the early 1990s. "By the early '90s there were no kosher butchers, no shochet, and no mashgiach," says Kirman. "A dispute ensued between the rabbis of Beth Shalom and Beth Israel over kosher supervision. Without rabbinical oversight, the Kashrut Committee

could not function. In a letter to the then-President of Federation, Marshall Shoctor, I noted that the Committee now had no function except as a policy board for Federation. There was nothing that couldn't be done by the Executive Director alone in consultation with the Federation Executive. Given the tentative circumstances of kashrut supervision and the paralysis of the Kashrut Committee, the Committee was redundant. If the matter with the rabbis was not resolved in thirty days I would tender my resignation and request that the Kashrut Committee be discharged. And that is what happened."

KOSHER SUPERVISION TODAY

Kosher supervision in Edmonton today is handled by a number of individuals in various locations. Planet Pareve is supervised by Elchanan Rotstain; Bliss Baked Goods is supervised by Rabbi Shalom Kaplan; Cafe Levi is supervised by Akiva Friedman, Moshe Robinson, and Rabbi Kaplan; and, Sobey's is supervised by Michael Kaganovsky and Rabbi Kaplan. Some kosher functions are noted as EK, standing for "Edmonton Kosher." EK is a joint supervisory program under Beth Israel Synagogue and the Edmonton Jewish General Education (EdJGE) Kollel.

Most people tend to make their own decisions concerning kosher observance in their own homes. For those wishing to keep a more kosher home, Rabbi Friedman (Beth Israel) and Rabbi Drelich (Chabad) are available to help people kasher their kitchens. "Michael Kaganovsky at Sobey's will give anyone who would like a personal tour of kosher products in the supermarket," adds Rabbi Friedman. "Since not only what we eat must be sanctified, but also our utensils (crockery, cutlery, pots and pans) must be sanctified -- dipped in the mikveh -- such a service is available both at Beth Israel and the Kollel. Additionally, annually before Pesach refresher courses on kashrut are held at Beth Israel and we have a kosher section in our English lending library."

See sidebar on page 7

Nate Siegel

Nate Siegel was Edmonton's longest-serving Mashgiach. A well-respected member of the community, he was also president of the Chevra Kadisha. "He was an outstanding mashgiach," recalls Kirman.

"I had the pleasure of knowing Nate as a friend and remember him with fondness. He could be counted on in all circumstances. Although he was entitled to an honorarium for his kashrut supervision, he did not keep it and always gave it to Federation. When the community went through a crisis because there was no kosher butcher shop in Edmonton, he and the Zalmanowitz brothers, Noach and Fievel, came out of retirement and opened one. Nate would deliver meat to those who could not travel to the store such as the infirm and elderly. If someone could not afford the meat, he would charge less or give it to them for nothing. He was a kind and friendly gentleman, very outspoken for Torah concerns and an active Beth Israel worker and minyan member, as were the Zalmanowitz brothers."

Nathan Siegel was born in 1909 and left Czshnov, Poland in 1929 for Montreal, and came to Alberta during the Depression. He was an active member of Beth Israel Synagogue and the Chevra Kadisha from 1934 until his death in 1994. He was the owner and general manger of Strathcona Furniture for 47 years prior to getting involved with the kosher meat business in Edmonton.



Nate Siegel, with his grandson, Max Cohen. JAHSENA Archives.

In particular, Kirman remembers Mr. Siegel's sense of humour. "When one of Beth Israel's rabbis came late to a few weekday morning minyans, Nate defended him from critics with the statement that if he had a young wife like the rabbi, he would come late to the minyan himself. He was a strong believer in charity and often said to me 'Joey, money is like horse manure. It doesn't do any good unless you spread it around.'

If he thought you could do something in a better way he would let you know, often prefacing it gently with a comment such as, 'Joey, you're a nice boy, but you're not too smart,' and then go on to explain how to better solve the problem. Indeed, if he thought something was important and foot dragging was going on, he would do it himself.

"Nate Siegel set a high standard for our Jewish community that we should take note of and emulate."



Noach Zalmanowitz and Nate Siegel, 1981. JAHSENA Archives photo.

A Golden Discovery of Judaism in the North

A CENTURY-OLD JEWISH CEMETERY, UNCOVERED 10 YEARS AGO, IS ONE OF THE FEW REMINDERS OF THE JEWISH CONTRIBUTION TO THE GOLD RUSH.

BY GARY MASON

Dawson City, Yukon – It was a clear, hot June afternoon 10 years ago when Rick Karp and two friends crunched their way through a tangled, dense web of bushes and trees. But this is where their research indicated it was supposed to be, somewhere near what was now a horribly overgrown patch of land on the south slope of the hill that overlooked this historic Klondike town.

“And then one of us literally tripped over the old wooden arc that was once erected at its entrance.” Mr. Karp recalled recently in his office in Whitehorse. “It was lying on the ground. You could barely see it. It was like this amazing archeological find.”

What Mr. Karp and his friends had discovered were the remains of a long-forgotten, century-old Jewish cemetery, one that has a growing fascination among academics. Next week, a historian from Jerusalem’s Hebrew University will arrive to take a first-hand look while carrying out research on the Jewish role in the gold rush.

“It’s wonderful there is so much interest in this,” said Mr. Karp, president of the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, and point man for the Jewish community in the Yukon.

Mr. Karp had no idea the cemetery existed until alerted by a Jewish physician and amateur historian from Minnesota who had earlier vacationed in Dawson City. When Dr. Norman Kagan saw the overgrown condition of the area where the cemetery was supposed to be, he phoned Mr. Karp and suggested its cleanup and restoration would be a wonderful project to mark the 100th anniversary of the gold rush.

“How could we not?” Mr. Karp said.



With a grant, he and some others hired a university student to research the Jewish community in the Klondike at the time of the gold rush. The research indicated more precisely just where on the ridge overlooking the town the cemetery was said to exist.

On the day that Mr. Karp and his friends discovered the old entrance sign – the cemetery was called Bet Chaim, or House of Life, they also dug up the remains of an old picket fence that ringed the property. They found only one headstone: Abraham Packer’s, but mounds that indicated that at least four others had been buried there.

“I will never forget the moment as long as I live,” Mr. Karp said. “Arthur [Mitchell, a Jewish friend of Mr. Karp’s] said it best: He said he felt he wasn’t alone any more. We stood there in silence for a while and just thought about where we were and what we had stumbled upon.”

The Jewish population in Dawson City fluctuated from a high of about 200 at the height of the gold rush to about a dozen by 1931, the last year someone was buried at Bet Chaim. Lacking a rabbi or synagogue,



Gates of the Dawson Jewish Cemetery. Photo Courtesy Rick Karp.

Names of those buried in the Dawson Jewish Cemetery. Photo Courtesy Rick Karp.

worshippers gathered in homes, stores and meeting halls for Passover and other celebrations, according to historical records.

Known in the beginning as simply the “Hebrew Congregation,” members chose in 1910 to name their group in honour of Baron Hirsch auf Gereuth, the German-born philanthropist who had helped out fellow Jews throughout Europe.

The first person buried at Bet Chaim was Samuel Simon, a prospector who drowned in the Forty Mile River on September 1, 1902. Others later buried there include Jacob Klein, a clothier who died of suicide on July 9, 1903; Samuel Ross, a merchant who died in his home on July 28, 1911, of an unspecified illness; Abraham Packer, a seller of guns, knives and hardware, who suffered a heart attack on February 26, 1918; and Jacob Rosenfeldt, who died January 8, 1931, of unknown causes.

Today, Mr. Karp said, there is thought to be only one person of Jewish heritage living in Dawson. (There are about 20 in the Yukon capital of Whitehorse.)

After discovering Bet Chaim, Mr. Karp

Continued on page 7

Joe Bugis

Dr. Joseph Bugis was born in Russia, near Kiev. His family came to Canada in 1920 when he was one year old. The family came to own a dry goods store on Whyte Avenue, called P&B (Pollock & Bugis) where Joe worked until he went to university.

Bugis attended King Edward Public School to the eighth grade, and then attended Strathcona High School. He received his BA in 1939. Bugis joined the army (RMC) immediately after his graduation from medical school in 1942.

As a physician, Dr. Bugis worked for a number of years in rural areas such as Rimbey due to a shortage of doctors in those areas. He also practiced in Lethbridge, but managed to make it each year to Edmonton for the Jewish holidays.

Edmonton's Kashrut Committee is just one of the many aspects of the Jewish community with which he was involved. A member of Beth Israel Synagogue, Bugis was President of the shul's Board of Trustees three times, 1965-1967, 1969-1971, and 1972-1973. In his younger days, he was involved with the Young Judeans and AZA. As an adult, he always contributed to Jewish causes and was involved in a number of organizations such as the Zionist Council, Histadruth, and Jewish Community Council.

Bugis was also involved in general Edmonton city life and ran unsuccessfully for Councillor of Ward 4 in the 1983 civic election. He was married to Frieda whom he met in Toronto, and had two children: Sam, and Linda Silverman.



Wedding of Dr. Joe & Frieda Bugis, 1952. JAHSENA Archives.



Dr. Joseph Bugis, 1934, Beth Israel Choir. JAHSENA Archives.

NORTHERN GOLD

Continued from page 6

and friends returned a few weeks later with chainsaws and pruning shears to begin restoration efforts. They had a new entrance sign built and a new white picket fence. When they were finished, they had a rededication ceremony.

"We flew in a rabbi and we had people from all over come in for it," Mr. Karp recalled. "We had a Torah flown in for the ceremony. It had to have its own season the plane. We had RCMP in red serge walk on the plane to get it. It was quite something."

The 10-year anniversary of that consecration is on August 22, and for Mr. Karp it has stirred up some old emotions. He is determined to establish the Jewish Historical Society of the Yukon in the hopes of stimulating fresh research into the community's roots in the Far North.

"It's a fascinating part of our heritage," he said.

And one that should never again be so hard to find.

This article appeared in the Globe and Mail on August 9, 2008, and is reprinted with permission from the author.

DONATION CARDS

JAHSENA now has donation cards with historic pictures on them available for purchase. Mark your special simchas by sending a donation to JAHSENA. Contact the office for more details at: 489-2809. We have received the following donations:

MAZEL TOV

To Esther Kauffman, from Myra Kacew

To Jeremy Shoctor, on his Bar Mitzvah, from David & Florie Axler

To Ron Wolch, on his special birthday, from Herb & Donna Freedman, Sue & Alvin Winestock

REFUAH SHALEMAH

To Norma Nozick, from Florie & David Axler

SYMPATHY

To the Bookhalter family, from Dan & Esther Kauffman

To the Nozick family, from the Jahsena Board

To the Nozick family, from Florie & David Axler

To the Nozick family, from George & Judy Goldsand

To the Nozick family, from Nat & Betty Starr

To the Pechet Family, from the Jahsena Board

To the Pechet Family, from Dan & Esther Kauffman

To the Baltzan Family, from Violet Owen

To Mirram Rabinovitch on the death of her aunt, Edith Kay, from Dan & Esther Kauffman

Leonard Bercuson – A Rich Life Cut Short

By JACK SWITZER

May of 1948 was a bittersweet month for many Alberta Jews. On Friday, May 14, the State of Israel came into being. Celebrations were held Saturday and Sunday in every Jewish community. In Edmonton on Sunday evening, at a rally attended by over 1000 persons, Leonard Bercuson, the Western Executive Director of the Canadian Zionist Organization, read the proclamation declaring Israel's independence.

But the very next day, May 17, Leonard Bercuson, an Edmonton resident who had been born and raised in Calgary, died of his chronic heart disease. He was only 33. The jubilation of Alberta's Jewry was tempered by sorrow.

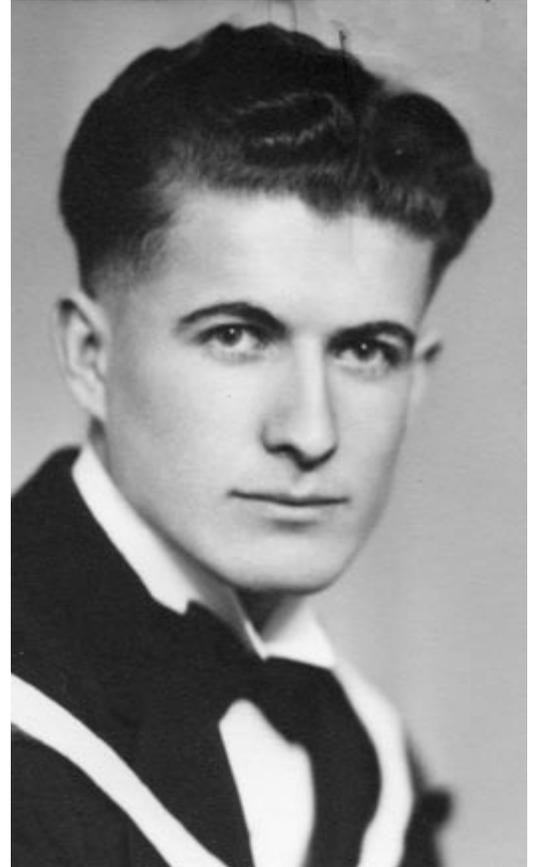
Leonard was the third of four children born in Calgary to Jewish pioneers Jack and Sarah Hart Bercuson. The elder Bercuson, a Romanian emigrant, came to Calgary about 1905, and became a men's clothier. Joseph was born in 1908, followed by Passie (Pat Hector) in 1909. Leonard Bercuson

was born in 1914, youngest son Bernard in 1922. (Bernard Bercuson died in 1944 when his RCAF bomber was shot down over the North Sea.)

A rheumatic heart, diagnosed at an early age, did not keep Leonard from an active social and academic life in Calgary. He was best-known as a debater in Young Judea and AZA competitions, and he continued competitive debating at the University of Alberta.

During his university years in Edmonton (1932 – 1936) Leonard devoted his spare time to Jewish clubs on campus and Zionist groups in the city. It was at the U of A that he met fellow student Clarice Olyan, of Vegreville, who he would marry soon after he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree.

Between 1936 and 1942 Bercuson was a teacher at Smoky Lake, Alberta, becoming school principal during his later years there. He spent several summers at McGill University in Montreal, where he earned his Master of Arts degree in 1941.



Leonard Bercuson. JHSSA Archives photo.

His thesis, *Education in the Bloc Settlements of Western Canada*, suggested an expanded role for public schools as integration and acculturation agents in heavily-ethnic areas. He proposed a then-novel concept, the community school, which would provide a variety of cultural, vocational, and recreational programs for citizens of all ages. He had developed such a program in Smoky Lake, a heavily Ukrainian (80 per cent) area.

Bercuson's expertise in the building of community schools led to his appointment in 1942 as the Adult Education director for the Alberta Department of Education. Leonard Bercuson was back in Edmonton, and back in the thick of Alberta politics and Zionist activity.

Leonard Bercuson and Clarissa Olyan had a short but happy marriage. Their daughter Gail was born in 1945. Clarissa had apparently expressed some reservations about marrying the health-impaired activist,



Leonard Bercuson. JHSSA Archives photo.

but was told by their friend Dr. Morris Weinlos, that whatever time she shared with Leonard would be worthwhile and memorable.

During the World War II years Bercuson remained involved in Zionist causes, and also devoted himself to support for the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, (CCF, now the New Democratic Party) and its Alberta election battles against the ruling and very dominant Social Credit party.

He helped organize Jewish summer camps under the Young Judean banner, first at Gull Lake, and later at Sylvan Lake, which brought together Jewish children from across Alberta in the mid-1940s. A later Young Judean camp at Chestermere Lake near Calgary is called Camp Bercuson in some sources.

About 1946 Leonard Bercuson became the director of the Zionist Organization of Canada for the four western provinces. At the same time he continued a personally-satisfying sideline: he had a weekly radio show in Edmonton. Every Sunday night he would discuss current affairs on his CBC-radio program *Names in the News*. He was also a guest commentator on other programs.

Bercuson's Zionist duties expanded in 1947, when the United Nations voted for the partition of Palestine, and conflict between Jews, Arabs, and British soldiers intensified. And he took on another important assignment. The Canadian Jewish Congress asked him to work on the growing threat of anti-Semitism from an Alberta source, the Social Credit Party.

Several Social Credit MLAs, as well (after 1945) as Members of Parliament were openly anti-Jewish, following the party's philosophic founder C.H. Douglas' ideas that Jews controlled the world's finances and were synonymous with communism. These views were spread across Canada by the provincial party's educational arm, *The Social Credit Board*, and its official organ, *The Social Crediter*,

Congress wanted a public-relations, educational approach to counter Social Credit hate literature, and was mainly concerned

about the party's eleven-member presence in the House of Commons. Bercuson, supported by prominent Edmonton Zionists, told them the big problem was not in Parliament, but in the Alberta Legislature and local Social Credit offices, where the party and its intolerance had been nurtured and now resided.

He felt that the best way to silence the Alberta-based bigots was to support the CCF and replace Social Credit. In addition, he said that Congress branches in Calgary and Edmonton should have the authority to use local resources and solutions to address the problem.

Congress balked at open support of the CCF party, but did allow the local groups, notably the Edmonton branch, to undertake campaigns to lobby the Premier and educate the public about Jewish issues and So-cred tactics. Many of these campaigns used Bercuson's ideas and writings.

Late in 1947 Premier Ernest Manning "purged" the most notorious anti-Semites from the party apparatus, and promised a new era of civility. The government repudiated "any statements or publications ...which endorse, excuse or incite anti-Semitism or racial or religious intolerance in any form."

Bercuson was no doubt pleased to see his attempts to muzzle Social Credit anti-Semitism succeed to some degree, but he also realized the Alberta clean-up had little effect on the federal party, and that So-cred leaders had a history of reversing their public utterances.

Leonard was also known to many as Lionel (his middle name); his close friends and relatives called him Liney. His nieces in Calgary (the daughters of Pat and Sam Hector) recall him as a playful, affectionate man, who showed them magic tricks and made up nonsense verses. He always carried a pipe, often unlit.

Poor health kept Bercuson out of wartime services and he was also unable, as a husband and father, to join his friends (including former campers) who traveled to Palestine as Mahalniks to fight in Israel's War of Independence.



Leonard Bercuson. JHSSA Archives photo.

But he was able to realize the fruition of his work as a Canadian Zionist leader – he saw Israel become a Jewish state, and celebrated its birth, if only for a few days.

Sources: Judy Hector Parker, Calgary; *Bercuson-Hart Genealogy*; Ellen Hector Barberie, Vancouver; JHSSA Archives; Glenbow Library and Archives, Calgary; Howard Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*; David Bercuson and Douglas Wertheimer, *A Trust Betrayed, The Keegstra Affair*; Janine Stingel, *Social Discredit; Anti-Semitism, Social Credit, and the Jewish Response*.

This article appeared originally in the journal of the Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta.

Mandle Nozick, z'l

The Board of the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta mourns the passing of Vice President Mandle Nozick, z'l. Mandle served on our Board faithfully for the past five years as Administrative Vice President, and he will be sorely missed. Our condolences go out to his wife Norma, his children and grandchildren, and his extended family.

The following is an excerpt from the Eulogy delivered by Neil Loomer at Mandle's funeral in August:

Mandle was born to Leo and Evelyn Nozick in Vegreville in 1922. Mandle developed an early love for the dream of a modern state of Israel from his father who served under Joseph Trumpeldor in a British Army unit formed to fight the Ottoman Empire in the battle for Palestine. Together with their relatives in the Shaw, Newhouse and Rudolph families they were among the pioneers of the Edmonton and Northern Alberta Jewish communities.

Together with his cousin, Mandel Bloomfield, of blessed memory, he attended Talmud Torah. Norma told Cantor David Mannes the story of how one of the teachers



Mandle Nozick at the JAHSENA film premiere, 2007. JAHSENA Archives



Mandle Nozick in uniform, ca. 1944. JAHSENA Archives.

punished Mandel Bloomfield by striking him with a ruler.

Mandle Nozick was so infuriated that he punched the teacher, getting himself expelled temporarily. Mandle always believed that his class at Talmud Torah was the worst behaved ever although I think that may be challenged by some of us who attended in more recent years. Maybe Harold Samuels can confirm this for us.

His early experiences didn't stop him from becoming an exemplary student and he was accepted to the pre-Med program at the University of Alberta. Unfortunately while in university it was discovered that he had eye problems that would get worse with the immense amount of reading necessary for his studies so his dream of being a doctor ended. While at university he was an officer in the ROTC and managed to get the plum job of teaching weaponry to the female cadets. Tragically his cousin Mandel, an air force pilot, was shot down and killed in action and Mandle's determination to fight on for his fallen friend and cousin overcame his vision problems and he enlisted.

During training he was seriously injured in a grenade explosion, enduring many operations which kept him in the hospital for months. After the war and his recovery he put off finishing school to work for the family business in Winnipeg. One hot summer weekend after work he and a friend drove to the resort of Clear Lake north of

the city. That's when he first laid eyes on Norma. She was walking along a road in the town with a friend who knew Mandle's buddy. Norma, who was well known in Manitoba as a singer and had spent the previous few years entertaining troops, wasn't too impressed with Mandle, who was covered in dust and tired after a full day of work and then the drive to Clear Lake. But Mandle told her later it was love at first sight.

Mandle cleaned himself up and proceeded to spend the next two weeks devoted to Norma. This culminated with a visit to the Winnipeg Public Library where Norma worked. Deep in the stacks amidst the encyclopedias and historical volumes Mandle presented her with a velvet box containing a wedding ring. Norma accepted and they were married in March 1947 at Shaarey Tzedec Synagogue in Winnipeg. 18 months later their daughter Merrilee was born and three years after that a second daughter, Hanita.

In 1950 Mandle and Norma were among the thousands of people who were affected by the Great Winnipeg flood so they moved to Edmonton to work at the Edmonton branch of Nozick Wholesale. When circumstances saw the Edmonton operation close down, Mandle, now nearing 40, with a wife and two young children, faced the challenge of starting a new career. First he tried real estate but soon entered the insurance industry, taking a leap of faith by starting his own agency.

This proved to be the right decision for him as his strong set of values and ethical behaviour led to his success and the respect of his peers in his profession. Norma and Mandle quickly became involved in the growing Edmonton Jewish community. Both girls were enrolled in Talmud Torah. Mandle joined the board of the school as well as that of Beth Shalom where his uncle Harry Bloomfield was a president and later executive director. Mandle, who loved to play sports as a child joined the Menorah Curling Club, ultimately serving as its president.

He was also active with United Jewish Appeal and in recent years contributed his knowledge of our community as a Vice-President with the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta. He will also be missed by his colleagues at the Edmonton Chevra Kadisha.

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Membership donations are used for the operating costs of the Society, which is a self-sustaining organization. Membership fees include spouses except for individual membership. Members are eligible to vote at the annual general meetings of the society. Membership includes a subscription to our publication, Heritaga/Yerusha. Fees cover uniform membership year from September 1st to August 31st. Donations are tax deductible. We thank the above listed people for their support in the past year.

NEW MEMBERS

JAHSENA would like to welcome the following new members:

June & Hal Simons, Edmonton, Alberta
 Esther Bernstein, Victoria, B.C.
 Lorraine Giebelhaus, Vegreville, AB
 Barry Vogel, Victoria, BC
 Sharon Bookhalter & Jerry Glasser, Edmonton, AB

Overcoming Existing Barriers: Telling Stories of Interfaith Co-operation

The Phoenix Multi-faith Society for Harmony is looking for stories about co-operation between different faith groups. We are collecting stories which demonstrate that people of different faiths and backgrounds can work together to fight racial discrimination and can live harmoniously. This historical and anecdotal evidence is being gathered by the Society to demonstrate to school and community groups that interfaith cooperation and good will is possible, and has existed since the early days of Edmonton's history.

If you have a story about how someone from your faith or ethnic group helped someone from another group to start a business, get a job, find a home, raise funds, or in some other way, please contact your Phoenix Society member, Debby Shoctor at 780-489-2809, so that we may tell your inspirational story to others. Ultimately these stories will be compiled and published, either in book form or on the internet, so that they will help to inspire others to cooperate with one another and thereby create a better world for us all.

On Display

At the JCC...

Currently on display at the JCC you will find an exhibit of trophies of the Edmonton Jewish Hockey League, just donated by Steven Shafir. If you would like to donate a book, document or a piece of memorabilia to add to our collection, call 780-489-2809. Please stop by the JCC and view these items on display opposite the office in the glass display case.

On the Web...

Check out the Archives Society of Alberta Exhibit prepared for Archives Week 2008 (October 1-7), titled "*Historic Hi-Tech*", at www.archivesalberta.org. You will find five photos from our collection, one of which is featured in a new 2009 calendar. These calendars will be available for purchase from our office for \$18.

A new trunk about our own Peter Owen

has been added to the "Letters from the Trunk" portion of the Archives Society of Alberta website. This is a virtual, on-line learning tool which teaches children how to use archives. It features, letters, photographs, and the voice of Peter Owen, who was the only child allowed to immigrate alone to Canada during the Holocaust. Peter was a JAHSENA board member, and his granddaughter, Tess Owen, wrote the teacher's guide for this learning tool. ♦

"FROM PEDLARS TO PATRIARCHS:

A LEGACY REMEMBERED" and

"BITTERSWEET MEMORIES: THE WAR YEARS"

The Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta is taking orders for copies of "From Pedlars to Patriarchs: A Legacy Remembered," and its sequel: "Bittersweet Memories: The War Years" its documentary films about the history of the Edmonton Jewish Community. If you are interested in obtaining a copy of these films, they are available on DVD for \$18. Please contact the Archives office at 489-2809.



TO ORDER CALL
489-2809

Help Us Preserve Our Past for the Future!

I (we) would like to become part of the continuing quest into our historical past by joining the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta in the category marked. A charitable receipt will be issued. Membership for other than individuals includes spouses. Membership includes an annual subscription to *Heritage/Yerusha*, the Society's newsletter, published 3 times a year.

Enclosed is my cheque for \$ _____
Payable to the Jewish Archives and
Historical Society of Edmonton and
Northern Alberta (JAHSENA).

- Patron \$100
- Benefactor \$50
- Donor \$36
- Individual \$18
- I am interested in serving as a volunteer.
- I have historical material that I would like to donate.
Please call me.

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Please clip out and return to:
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