

ירשה

Heritage – Yerusha  
Fall 2010

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# HERITAGE

The Journal of THE JEWISH ARCHIVES & HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF EDMONTON & NORTHERN ALBERTA

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## Talmud Torah's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:

May, 2012



### Graduating Class of Edmonton Talmud Torah, ca. 1954

**Front Row:** Mrs. Goelman, Florie Rubin Axler, Doreen Pakes, Shanee Birenbaum, Sora Satanove, Esther Estrin Starkman, Mrs. Tova Yedlin.

**Back Row:** Mr. Moshe Goelman, Eli Shtabsky, Hershel Sorokin, Elliot Phillipson, Jack Chetner, David Lyons, Cyril Sapiro, Arnold Bernstein. Donated by Cyril Sapiro.

If you have any class or other Talmud Torah pictures, please bring them in to the JAHSENA office so that they can be included in the 100th Anniversary website. If you have any photos to donate, please phone or email the office at: 780-489-2809 or jahsena@shaw.ca.

## AGM

Sunday,

November 14th

7:30 pm

JCC



## From the President,

by JINI VOGEL

Fall, 2010

It has been a very busy and seemingly short summer. The kids went back to school and the High Holidays were upon us.

This year we kicked off our membership drive a bit early. It was a resounding success. Thank you to all of you who responded so generously and for those who increased your membership level. The additional funds will help to develop new programs/services. If you did not receive the notice please give our office a call. Remember we issue a Tax Receipt but the dues must be in to us by December 31<sup>st</sup>. We take charge cards, cheques and cash.

Our third **Family Writing Workshop** will be held Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup> at 1 pm, led by Lil Blume. We had an excellent turnout for the last session and the discussions and sharing of experiences was very special. Don't worry if you missed the first two parts you won't want to miss the third one. Call the office if you plan to attend.

Our office receives phone calls and inquiries from people who are doing family genealogical projects who often find themselves at a dead-end looking for information. We are delighted to tell you that Caroline Ullman, who has just returned from the International Jewish Genealogy Conference this summer in Los Angeles, and has been conducting a major project for her family, has agreed to chair a new Genealogy Subcommittee of the Board. Watch for more information later in the year as for

a few months she will be very busy with a new baby.

Please mark your calendar as Sunday November 14<sup>th</sup> is our **AGM**. We will have a very short business meeting and then a very special program. Ram Romanovsky will introduce and show the film "**Ochberg's Orphans**". His father was one of the orphans and his story is very compelling.

Over the past year, I have told you about how, via the internet, I found a huge family I never knew existed. We met again in LA this fall and we talked, cried and debated like any large family, truly a new experience for me. However, on the other side of the family I attended a family reunion that was highly computerized. A few cousins established a web site and through the site collected all kinds of materials and pictures, informed us regarding details of the reunion, made available a family chart and in conclusion posted pictures of the whole four days that each of us could download and print. Not a postage stamp was purchased! Quite amazing.

If you enjoyed reading this issue of "**Heritage/Yerusha**" please pass it on to somebody who perhaps is not a member. The more members we have the stronger our society family is. I'll talk to you later in the year when that white stuff is here.

*Shalom,  
Jini Vogel*

# ירשה HERITAGE

The Journal of the Jewish  
Archives & Historical Society  
of Edmonton and Northern  
Alberta

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## UPCOMING PROGRAM

### Writing Jewish Family Stories and Memoirs: Themes of Chanukah

Family Writing Workshop – Lil Blume is back! Please join her for another instalment of our Family Writing Workshop on October 31st at 1 PM. Register with the office. Fee is \$10 per person, including coffee break.

The story of Chanukah invites thoughts about darkness and light, rebellion and miracles. We light up our houses and sing songs of triumph over oppression.

Our family stories and personal memoirs also involve moving from darkness to light and triumphing over oppression through rebellion, faith, and miracles. This workshop hopes to uncover these stories.



## AGM

Our Annual General Meeting will take place Sunday, November 14th at 7:30 pm in the Coloniale Room of the JCC. Kosher refreshments will be served.

Our feature presentation will be **“Ochberg’s Orphans,”** a documentary film produced by Ram Romanovsky. It details the life of Samuel Ochberg, a South African Jewish businessman and philanthropist, who saved the lives of over 200 Jewish war orphans in post-World War I Europe by bringing them to South Africa and finding homes for them. Among those orphans was Ram’s father, who appears in the film. Ram will also offer a personal commentary on the story and making of the film.

## 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: 780-489-2809. We have received the following donations:

### **SYMPATHY**

To Bernie, Gail and Ashley Estrin,  
in memory of Goldy Estrin, z'l,  
from Lewis and Freya Wasel.

## CORRECTIONS

Three Jewish dentists of note left out from the last issue of Heritage/Yerusha include Dr. Marty Zell, Dr. Barney Mass and Dr. David Mintz. Dr. Barney Mass practiced in the Tegler Building and served as the Cantor at Beth Shalom Synagogue.

## On Display

### At the JCC...

Currently on display at the JCC you will find an exhibit of items formerly belonging to Cecil “Tiger” Goldstick. 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 2010, titled “Growing Up Albertan”, at [www.archivesalberta.org](http://www.archivesalberta.org). You will find five photos from our collection, one of which, a photo of Mel Hurtig leading Junior Congregation at the old Talmud

Torah School, is featured in a new 2011 calendar. These calendars are available for purchase from our office for \$10. Also check out the Peter Owen exhibit online at the same website under “Letters from the Trunk.” Old issues of our newsletter, Heritage/Yerusha are available on our website, [www.jahsena.ca](http://www.jahsena.ca).

# Dr. Joel Wilbush: the Wandering Jewish Physician

By DEBBY SHOCTOR

Most Jewish Edmontonians have never heard of Dr. Joel Wilbush, but that is not the case in Israel. The Wilbush name is synonymous with the founding of the State and the family is one of the earliest pioneer families. He is also related on his mother's side to the Belkind and Feinberg families, other early pioneers in the land of Israel.

Nahum Wilbush, Joel's father, came to Israel from Grodno, Lithuania, where he was born in 1879. The youngest of nine children, his father Zéev Volf's estate included a flour mill on the river Niemen. This mill was important, as it inspired all of his children to be interested in technology.

Gedaliah (Grisha) Wilbushewitz, Joel's uncle, became a mechanical engineer, and went to Eretz Israel in 1892 to found a machine and metal-casting factory in Jaffa, the first Jewish enterprise of its kind in the country. During World War I Grisha served as chief engineer of Jamal Pasha's headquarters in Damascus.

Uncle Moshe Wilbushewitz, a chemical engineer and inventor, improved the margarine production process and invented a type of whole-meal bread. Moshe went to Palestine in 1919 and was one of a group of people who founded the Shemen edible-oil products factory in Haifa. He established a special laboratory bearing his name at the Hebrew University.

Nahum Wilbush attended Poly-

technion in Germany and qualified as a mechanical engineer, before making aliyah to Palestine in 1903. There, he started in the engineering and natural resources business. He and Mendele Hanke were the first engineers to survey the future State of Israel in order to map the watersheds, agricultural land and mineral deposits on behalf of a group of Russian investors from Minsk. As a result of this report, he was asked to join the commission of the Zionist Organization that was sending people to examine territory being offered by the British Government for Jewish settlement in Uganda, (former British East Africa).

The only Jewish member of this committee, Nahum wrote a report on the suitability of the Ugandan land as a temporary Jewish settlement. His conclusions were that the land was totally unsuitable for Jews, and his report was instrumental in the Zionists' ultimate decision to settle in Eretz Israel as opposed to Uganda, Madagascar or Grand Island in New York, which were some of the other temporary locations being touted by various Zionist factions.

Nachum returned to Israel to found factories and various business ventures. He founded Atid, the first edible-oil factory in the country, in Ben Shemen and at one time was the highest paid man in Israel. During WWI, he served as an engineer in the Turkish army and was responsible for supplying water to the forces stationed in the Damascus region. Nachum mended the Dome of the Rock



Dr. Joel Wilbush, ca. 1945, supplied photo.

with Bezalel Shatz when it was about to collapse and was the founder of the first art school in Jerusalem and the first Hebrew language school in Jaffa.

In 1906, Nahum married Shoshana Feinberg. Her uncle was Israel Belkind, leader of the Biluim, and founder of the first Hebrew school in Jaffa in 1889. On his way to Jaffa in 1903, Nahum had attended the 6<sup>th</sup> Zionist Congress in Basel, which had turned him into an ardent Zionist.

Joel's mother Shoshana was a granddaughter of Meir Belkind, who was one of the first teachers of the modern Hebrew school system in Israel. Shoshana had been educated at the Alliance Israelit, a French school, and later at her Uncle Israel's Hebrew school in Jaffa. Her Aunt Alexandra (Sonia) Belkind was one of the first female doctors in Palestine, and played a large part in influencing her great-nephew Joel to go into medicine. Her parents Israel Feinberg and Fanny Belkind were some

of the first European Jews to settle with their families in Rishon LeTzion.

Joel Wilbush was born to Nachum & Shoshana in 1918 in Hadera, where the family ultimately settled. At the age of 17, he left to study medicine in Sheffield, England, and later at Oxford, where he trained as an Obstetrician and Gynecologist. He never returned to live permanently in Israel. On his departure, his mother gave him a Turkish carpet, which he still has, and a Tanach, which was lost. This was the beginning of a life of wandering and a fascination with other cultures that has marked his entire life.

Shortly after Dr. Wilbush graduated, World War II broke out, and he joined the 15<sup>th</sup> Scottish division of the British Army, and became MD to the Cameronians, then the Royal Scots Fusiliers. He went to Dieppe for D-Day and spent that winter in a Dutch hospital. After the war, he was sent to Africa. It was during his military service that he met his wife, Margaret (Peggy) Cox, a nurse and midwife.

Their skills seemed to compliment each other, and they left for Australia immediately after the war ended, and their daughter Heather (or Hadera), was born, stopping in Israel on the way to visit Wilbush's family in Israel. In Australia during the 1950s, the Wilbushes lived in Moe, in Eastern Victoria, where there are huge surface deposits of coal. Dr. Wilbush served as the OBGYN for the District.

In the early 1960s, the Wilbushes returned to Israel, where Dr. Wilbush opened the Gynecology Outpatient Department in Beersheva. He was then offered a job in Lagos, Nigeria, where he stayed for two years, putting Heather in a boarding school in Cardiff, Wales. While he was there, he and Peggy became enamoured of a calendar with pictures of the Canadian Rockies, and decided to come to North America for an extended vacation. As luck would

have it, he was eventually offered a temporary position in Edmonton in 1963, and took over the practice of a Dr. Hutton, establishing a somewhat permanent home in the city.

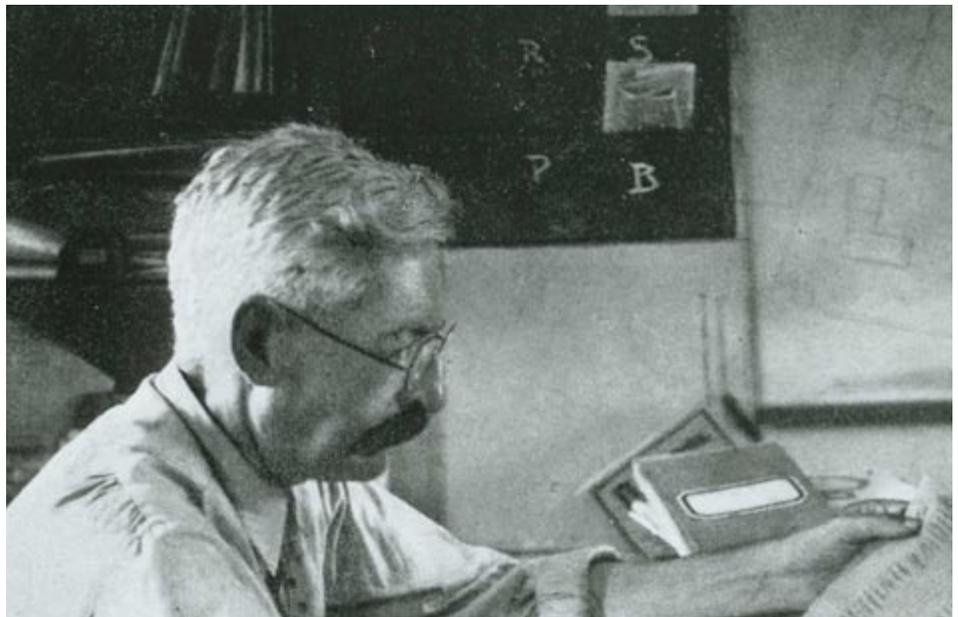
After the year was up, Dr. Wilbush had a radical idea: why not retire early, invest his money and travel for a decade or two while they were still young? And that is exactly what he did. He and Peggy traveled the world, including a long stint in the Canadian North, serving as doctor and midwife for the peoples living there. All that traveling instilled in Dr. Wilbush an interest in medical anthropology, a subject he had dabbled in during his undergraduate years in Sheffield. When he eventually returned "home" to Edmonton, he established the Dr. Joel Wilbush Ethnic Medicine Library at the University of Alberta, gave many lectures in various subjects at the university, and continued to fill in for vacationing OBGYN doctors here in the city and abroad.

In his later years, he has become a major donor to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In 2009, he established the Wilbush Patient-Centered Medical Forum at the Hebrew University's

IMRIC and Medical School. The goal of the forum, says acting director Dr. Dorith Shaham, is to "train more empathetic, respectful physicians – doctors who are better prepared to create a sense of trust and intimacy with their patients, while utilizing the most advanced science and technology and the best medical decision-making tools available." These are the values that Dr. Wilbush learned in his travels as a wandering Jewish physician over nine decades on this earth.

Even though he never really made it back to his home in Hadera, Dr. Wilbush still feels strong ties to the land of his birth, as evidenced by his contributions to Hebrew University. The only two places Dr. Wilbush says he never made it to are Tibet and Saudi Arabia. He lives by the motto *Rarum Cognosce Causas*, or "Know the causes of things;" and by the Jewish principal, "Do justly, love charity, be humble when you worship your God."

Dr. Wilbush speaks English, Hebrew, Arabic, Spanish, French, Yiddish, German, Russian and Swahili. Now 92, he still lives in his adopted home of Edmonton, Alberta.



Nachum Wilbush, ca. 1930, supplied photo.

# More Edmonton Jewish Dentists

## DR. BARNEY MASS

Bernard (Barney) Mass began practicing dentistry in Edmonton in 1950 in what was then the Tegler Building. He was raised in Winnipeg and studied pre-dent at the University of Toronto, where



Barney Mass, supplied photo

he ultimately earned his dentistry degree in 1950 after a stint in the Canadian Air Force. While at U of T, Barney was a member of Alpha Omega fraternity and, for one year, he had his own radio show under the pseudonym Barry Marr.

While in Toronto, Barney met Florence Brody of Edmonton. He married her in 1948, and the couple subsequently moved to Florence's home city. They had two children, Philip in 1952 and Sherrill in 1955.

Barney was blessed with a magnificent baritone singing voice. He performed in many amateur and charity events in Edmonton and was for a time the acting

Cantor at Beth Shalom Synagogue.

Organizations that figured prominently among Barney's activities included the Dental Society, the Jewish Cubscouts (chairman of the fathers' group), the Menorah Curling Club (founding member), and the Kiwanis Club.

The trophy cabinet at the Edmonton Talmud Torah has a plaque honouring him. The President's plaque at the Beth Shalom Synagogue also honours him by name.

Barney practiced dentistry until the day of his untimely death in 1964.

## DR. DAVID MINTZ

Clara and David Mintz lived in Edmonton, Alberta and had two sons, Jack and Bruce.

Clara Mintz was born on April 16, 1917 to Abraham Abramovitch and Betty Ghitterman in Bethune, Saskatchewan. Abraham operated a general store and owned a farm outside of Bethune. She graduated from the Universities of Saskatchewan and Toronto with degrees in social work, and was a director of Edmonton Jewish Family Services in Edmonton, Alberta from 1957-1982. She was a founding member of the Alberta Association of Social Workers and the Edmonton Jewish Drop-In Centre, and a member of the Canadian Welfare Council, John Howard Society of Alberta, Camp B'nai B'rith (Pine Lake) and the Edmonton Talmud Torah School. She died on July 2, 2004, predeceased by her husband David,

who died in 2001.

David Mintz was a dentist in Edmonton, Alberta. He served as president of the Edmonton B'nai B'rith Lodge and on its executive for many years. Jack M. Mintz was born on March 6, 1951. He married Eleanor Schwartz and together they had two children, Avi and Gaela. Mintz received a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics from the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta in 1973, a Master of Arts in economics from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario in 1974, and a Doctorate of Philosophy from the University of Essex, in Colchester, England in 1980. Jack Mintz served as the Grand Aleph Gadol of Aleph Zadik Aleph (BBYO), the only boy from Edmonton to ever hold that position.

Bruce Mintz is a lawyer in Edmonton, Alberta. He and his wife Susan, a teacher, have three daughters: Alicia, who married Matthew Singer in 2005, Rachel and Lezlie.



Dr. David and Clara Mintz, JAHSENA Archives photo, donated by Bruce Mintz.

## Ochberg's Orphans

A Film By Jon Blair

**1921** Before Hitler. Before Stalin. In Russia. A million children left for dead. In Africa, one man is determined to make a difference.

From the Academy Award winning director of *Anne Frank Remembered*, comes the amazing story of Isaac Ochberg, a South African business-

man who rescued hundreds of Jewish orphans across Eastern Europe in the brutal aftermath of the Russian Revolution.

Filmed in the original locations, and combined with unique archival footage, as well as moving testimony from the children he rescued, this vital documentary brings to light an often forgotten time in history – when anti-Semitism was rampant in Russia

and genocidal attacks on Jews, known as Pogroms, overtook the land – while revealing an unknown, yet extraordinary story of heroism.

Join JAHSENA at our AGM as Ram Romanovsky, whose father was one of Ochberg's Orphans, presents this extraordinary film. Sunday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at the JCC, 7: 30 pm. Admission is free and Kosher refreshments will be served.

# Shelley Switzer: “Juggling” Her Duties

## Artistic Producer of the Edmonton International Street Performers Festival

BY PAULA E. KIRMAN

More than 230,000 Edmontonians and visitors took in the Edmonton International Street Performers Festival that took place in our city in July. One of the most popular festivals of the summer, it includes a wide range of world class clowns, jugglers, contortionists, comedians, and other athletic and energetic performers who make a living by passing the hat.

Shelley Switzer is the Festival's Artistic Producer. She was born in Calgary, where the majority of the Switzer family resides. In fact, the Switzer family is one of the largest extended Jewish family units in Alberta, if not in Canada. Every five years, the family has a reunion in Calgary over the July long weekend. Shelley estimates that the current direct descendants number 1480 and encompass not only the Switzers themselves, but also the Singer, Aizenman, and Belzberg families.

Wolf Baer Switzer was the patriarch of the family, which originated in Radom, Poland. He had eleven children: nine with his first wife, Leeba, who died in 1884, and two with his second spouse, Miriam Aizenman, who died in 1930.

Seven of his sons and daughters moved to Calgary, as well as the children of two others. Only two families remained in Europe. Fifty-three of his grandchildren, many already married with families,



Shelley Switzer, supplied photo.

immigrated to Calgary. Wolf Baer died in 1924, shortly before he was scheduled to travel to Canada to join the children and grandchildren already here.

Bella Singer was the first Switzer progeny to come to Calgary. Her husband Abraham Singer came to Toronto in 1905, to Calgary in 1907, and was followed by Bella and son Hymie Singer 1910. Bella Singer brought two nephews to Calgary, Charlie Switzer and Saul Bleiviss, in 1912.

Bella was instrumental in bringing so many Switzers to the country. Each family member sponsored by her was expected in turn to bring over other relatives. And relatives were plentiful: 72 of Wolf Baer's grandchildren survived infancy. Seven sons and daughters and 53 grandchildren came to Calgary from Poland between 1910 and 1948 along with spouses and a host of in-laws, neighbours, and family friends.

Jacob Switzer was one of Wolf Baer's children. He and his wife Chaya Switzer had eight children, one of whom was Avrum (Abraham). Avrum married Sadie Morris in Calgary in 1932 and had one son named Bernard. Bernie married Hessie Brovender in Calgary, where he is still an insurance underwriter. Shelley is their second eldest daughter. She has one sister and two brothers.

Shelley is originally a Grade One teacher

with a Bachelor of Education from the University of Calgary. She taught for seven years but also worked in the local musical theatre scene. Then, it was off to Toronto for most of the '90s after she left teaching to pursue a career in professional theatre. She arrived in Edmonton permanently in 1999 to take over the reigns of the Festival as Artistic Producer.

"I started volunteering with the festival in 1989," she explains. She was the Stage Manager for the Late Night Madness, Vaudeville and Fire shows along with the Women in Comedy shows along with a number of other performances during the Festival. She negotiated her vacation time from the theatre company she was with in Toronto in order to head to the city for those two weeks when the Festival was held.

Switzer took over the reigns from Dick Finkel for the 2000 Festival. Finkel had been the Producer since the Festival's beginning, 1985. She is the Festival's only year-round employee. As Artistic Producer, Shelley does everything from managing the budget and fundraising to booking acts to countless hours of traveling and networking. Then come the ten days of the festival where the fruit of her labours pays off.

"There is not a bad thing about the job I have. It's the best job on the planet. I have to say that quite accurately," she says with enthusiasm. "Almost 250,000 people came to the Festival this year. People come to have a great time with their family and friends."

Shelley has family connections with Edmonton's Smordins. However, she is more connected to Calgary's Jewish community since most of her family is there. "For the most part, because Calgary is so close and I am so close with my family I will more often than not go to Calgary for Yom Tovs and things like that. But I must say I do love Edmonton," she says, with affection.

*Thanks to the Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta for providing the family background on the Switzer family.*

# Finding your Jewish Roots

BY CAROLINE ULLMAN

I became interested in Jewish genealogy while researching the Jewish farm colony near Sibbald, Alberta, that was settled by my husband's ancestors in 1910. The synagogue from that site was moved to Calgary's Heritage Park last summer and in anticipation of that event, I was inspired to find out as much as I could about the Ullmans who left Moldova in 1906 and came to settle on the barren prairie of Alberta. In my efforts to trace the descendants of these settlers, I was able to discover and reconnect with long-lost relatives in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Boston, and Israel. Some of this newly re-discovered *mishpocha* came to Calgary for the Little Synagogue on the Prairie dedication, including an 88 year-old great-aunt who was born on the colony!

This little family project turned into a wonderful hobby; the late-night internet searches for records, the thrill of finding another tidbit of information, the e-mails from family around the world became quite addictive. I began to do small genealogy projects for friends: one wanted to obtain his father's birth certificate from post-war Hungary, another wanted to know the names of his father's sisters who perished in the Shoah, and another wanted to know what boat their relatives came to Canada on eighty years ago. Although my husband Mike would do little more than grunt and roll over when I would wake him up at three in the morning to tell him that I had found the record for his great-grandparents' marriage in Kishinev in 1909, he was more than happy to have me travel to Los Angeles for a week this July for the 30th annual International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. I joined over 1,050 attendees from 15 countries to share this common interest, to network, and to learn.

Seminars ran from 8 am to midnight and featured topics as varied as "Restitution of



Caroline Ullman, supplied photo.

Property of Holocaust Victims to Families in Israel and Genealogical Research" to "Family History in the Kitchen: Recipes as a Conduit to the Generations" to "Klezmers, Khazna, and Lautare: Ethnographic Music Research in Romania." Something for everyone! The Film Festival screened films throughout the week, and many filmmakers were present to introduce and discuss their work. Computer labs were set up with both Macs and PCs, and classes from beginner to advanced were available to participants wanting to learn how to organize their family trees and photographs using a variety of software programs. Tutorials were given on a wide variety of databases and special genealogical websites.

The Resource Room provided participants with a bank of computers with free access to the most popular genealogical databases. A select amount of microfilms from the Mormon Family History Library were made available for viewing and the shelves were stuffed with rare reference books. The room was staffed by representatives from the USC Shoah Foundation Institute, the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, Yad Vashem, the Museum of the Diaspora and archivists from Prague, Vilnius, and Vienna. Volunteers were on hand to help with translating documents from many languages including Russian, Hebrew, Yiddish, Polish, Romanian and German. As I speak and read Polish, I volunteered to translate Polish documents

and found this to be particularly meaningful. One woman was moved to tears after I translated her grandfather's birth certificate, giving her the name of the town in which he was born and the names of his parents. Armed with that new information, she was looking forward to learning more about him and about that branch of her family tree.

Indeed, conferences are just as much (if not more) about the people you meet than simply about what you learn. I met a lovely South African woman who is using genealogy and her contacts with genealogists around the world to research a rare Jewish genetic disorder that affects one of her grandchildren. I also met the dedicated pair of researchers who head the Jewish Genealogy and Family Heritage Center at the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, which connects the Jewish world to its vast repository of records on Jewish life in Poland and assists people researching their Jewish roots. Another couple in their seventies travelled from Florida; she is the genealogy buff and ran from session to session, while her husband interspersed a session or film here and there with a nap or a walk through downtown LA. Some came for the whole conference and others came just for the day. Everyone was very friendly and by the end of the week many of us knew each other without having to read each others' name tags!

I have returned informed and inspired, and am excited to announce the formation of the new genealogy branch of JAHSENA. In the coming year, we hope to develop instructional materials to guide those who want to learn how to research their family's roots, as well as offer seminars and invite guest speakers. Next year's IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy will be held August 14 to 19 in Washington, DC and it is my hope that, by then, Edmonton will have a contingent of budding Jewish genealogists attending!

If you are interested in being kept informed about this new initiative, please send an email to [carolineullman@yahoo.ca](mailto:carolineullman@yahoo.ca) or call the JAHSENA office at 780-489-2809.

# Edmonton's War Orphans

By MARNI DLIN

In October, 1948 the ship MB General Stewart docked at Pier 21 in Halifax, after a 2-week voyage from Hamburg, Germany. Aboard were 1100 war orphans destined for new homes in Canada and the United States. This journey was arranged through the Hebrew Immigrant Assistance Society (HIAS). Of that group of young men & women, five settled in Edmonton.

They were Abe Goldstein, who was 15 years old, Saul Glin, who was 16, Helen Simsoyics, 16, Fred Manus, 18, and Henry Bushinsky, 18. They had met and formed a bond in a children's camp, at Long Bilau, Germany, where they were sent after the war. The camp, run by HIAS, had a primary goal of sending young people to settle the new Jewish State, Israel. Thus, according to Abe Goldstein, it was run like a kibbutz. There was school and communal dining as well as other activities.

The common language in the camp was Yiddish, as the children came from different European countries. Abe came from Zetel, which was in Belarus. Saul was from Rudem, Poland, then the Luvom Ghetto, but had been in Auschwitz, Birkenau and Dachau death camps. Helen was originally from Bedevla, which was in the eastern part of Slovakia, near the Ukraine. She had been in Auschwitz. Fred was from White Russia, and Henry from Poland. They all had different histories and had endured many horrifying and almost unimaginable experiences.

Abe had become a member of the partisans at the age of 9, after he had escaped one of the concentration camps and spent most of his years in the forests. They would send him out to the towns to try to gather food and supplies. Saul was in the Luvom ghetto and was one of the children who would go out through tunnels for food to bring back to the starving populace. Fred and Henry had both hid in the forests and had been part of partisan groups too. Helen had suf-



Jewish War Orphans, Calgary, including those who came to Edmonton, 1946. JAHSENA Archives, photo donated by Eric Macklin.

fered the inhumanity of Auschwitz and had somehow survived along with her brother Paul Simsoyics, who immigrated to the US.

Abe was going to go to Israel but he was sick when the first two groups left and did not want to wait around for the next departure, so through bravado, he persuaded the woman who arranged voyages and who was known to sell identities of the children to older people, to let him go on the ship to North America.

Abe had family who had arranged for him to come to New York, but the line was so long he impulsively joined the Canadian line, which was shorter. One of Saul's brothers went to Israel and the other to New York but he, along with Abe, joined the line to Canada.

Abe had a friend in Calgary, who had been in the camp, and had written to him about what a good place it was and so he came to Edmonton, which was the closest location that had openings.

When they arrived in Edmonton, each child was placed with a welcoming family. The families knew that most, if not all, of their family members had been mercilessly slaughtered and that they had barely survived the horrors of the Holocaust. They were here now, and had to begin life again in a strange country, learn a different language and try to adjust to a completely different lifestyle. It is a testament to the strength and courage of these teenagers that they managed to build a future, without ever forgetting about the past.

Henry Bushinsky went to live with Mickey and Sybil Dlin. Saul Glin went to Sybil's parents, Michael and Fannie

Podolsky. Helen Simsoyics lived with Joe and Fanny Samuels, Fred Manus lived with Luba Panar; and Abe Goldstein started his Edmonton life with Mayer and Riva Comisarow. Henry decided to move on to Manitoba to work in the oil fields within the year, and Abe took up residence in the home of Mickey and Sybil Dlin.

Henry married and they moved to Salem, New Jersey, where his parents and brother, who had miraculously survived, had been found. He had one son. He later moved back to a town 50 miles outside Winnipeg, where he still lives.

Fred and Abe established a general store in Thorsby as their first venture. They later sold it and moved back to Edmonton. Fred went into the furniture business and Abe opened a few businesses. Saul and Abe became partners in City Coin and they continue to own the business to this day. Saul married Louise and moved to Calgary. They have two children. Abe, who remained in Edmonton, married Joan and they had three children. Helen married Jacob Melvin (Mel) Macklin and had three children. Fred also remained in Edmonton.

These young teens, who had arrived with nothing, but were welcomed with open arms by some Edmonton families, continue to contribute greatly to the Jewish and local communities. Helen, who passed away a few years ago, motivated her children to work hard to make the world a better place—they all became lawyers, one a judge. All of them remind us of the strength of character and resilience of the human spirit and they continue to inspire all who know them to be better and do better.



Jewish War Orphans, Calgary, including those who came to Edmonton, 1946. JAHSENA Archives, photo donated by Eric Macklin.

## The latest in Jewish Archives: The Blog

The Jewish Public Library and Archives is pleased to announce that our first blog is up and running! The blog is based on our work digitizing material for the “Jewish Montreal of Yesterday” digital access project, funded in part by the Canadian Council of Archives, Library and Archives Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage – Broadcasting and Digital Communications.

All summer, our students and archive staff have been hard at work digitizing and creating blog postings uncovering hidden gems in the JPL-A’s containers. Guest bloggers from other Montreal Jewish heritage organizations will be added over the next few months along with hun-

dreds of additional photographs, newspaper articles, selections from specific collections and much more!

We invite you to step back in time to Jewish Montreal of Yesterday at [www.jewishpubliclibrary.org/blog](http://www.jewishpubliclibrary.org/blog)

As we are testing the site and changing it as we go along, we would most sincerely appreciate any questions or comments. You may e-mail me directly or post a comment directly on the website.

We hope that you will all take some time to explore the site and please subscribe using the RSS tags!

*Yours in history,  
Shannon Hodge  
Montreal Jewish Public Library*

## Necrology 2010-11

The following individuals were lost to us this year. We offer our condolences to their families and friends, and hope that their memories will be blessings to us all.

Rebecca Abofsky, z’l  
Celia Baltzan, z’l  
Ronald Billig, z’l  
Elliot Dale Dlin, z’l  
Rosa Dogor, z’l  
Rachel Dolgoy, z’l  
Goldy Estrin, z’l  
Sylvia Green, z’l  
Belle Greene, z’l  
Carol Isaacson, z’l  
Joseph Katzin, z’l  
Ansel Mark, z’l  
Eduardo Kravets, z’l  
Solomon Markovich, z’l  
Leonid Meynin, z’l  
Leon Minsky, z’l  
Rose Mons, z’l  
Dr. Jeffrey Moss, z’l  
Jack Newhouse, z’l  
Sally Lyman-Raels Lesk, z’l  
Sara Ploit, z’l  
Sarah Reitzik, z’l  
Clara Riskin, z’l  
Harold Rodnunsky, z’l  
Ileen Rodnunsky, z’l  
Rose Rosenstein, z’l  
Lewis Roskin, z’l  
Pauline Sheckter, z’l  
Sophie Starkman, z’l  
Joe Tabachnick, z’l  
Bernice Tobias, z’l  
Sarah Zalik, z’l

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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:  
 Rose Marie Sokolov Glassman,  
 Vancouver, BC  
 Susan Schloss Lampert,  
 Vancouver, BC

## JAHSENA Recent Acquisitions

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

15 books donated to the JCC library by Sharon Marcus.

Photograph of the Talmud Torah Graduating Class, 1954, donated by Cyril Sapiro of Toronto.

Four photos, an oral history interview and a self-written biography of Nachum Wilbush by Dr. Joel Wilbush.

DVD of Dasha Zottenberg, singing at the Drop-in Centre, donated by Cory Felber.

5 cm. misc. text, donated by Stephanie Hendin.

Organizational charts of Dollar Cleaners and Western Linen Supply, donated by Cory Felber.

Bricks from Auschwitz, donated by Jim Farrell, via the JCC.

10 Plaques, 1 audiocassette (interview with Mohammed Ali), 1 engraved lighter,

14 bound volumes, donated by Matt Cohen, formerly belonging to Cecil "Tiger" Goldstick.

*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.*

*"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 780-489-2809.



TO ORDER CALL  
**780-489-2809**

## ✂ 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
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- 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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