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HERITAGE

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

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An HRS Passover celebration, at the home of Shaindle & Chaim Satanove, 114th St., 1930.



JASENA Archives, McDermid photo, Edmonton, donated by Anita Satanove.

The HRS or Hardin-Rodnunsky-Satanove Society was formed in 1944 to find remaining family relatives in Europe and bring them over, and to provide assistance to relatives living elsewhere. Standing: Shaindle Satanove, Mr. Dolgoy, Mrs. Dolgoy, Mrs. Glaustein, Anne Rodnunsky, Sam Rodnunsky, Unknown, Mr. Blaustein, Tom Hardin, Sadie Rodnunsky, Freda Slutsky, Mrs. Art Boivert, Lucy Satanove, Max Satanove, Isaac Zaslow, Manya Rodnunsky, Pinya Rodnunsky, Ernie Panar. Seated Right: Joe Simberg, Rita Hardin, Jack Hardin, Malka Kimberg, Snyder Kimberg, Hodel Hardin, Kalman Hardin. Seated Left: Chaim Satanove, Leib Agranov, Esther Hardin, Chana Agranov, Rivka Hardin, Yitzach Simberg, Albert Rodnunsky, Harry Hardin, Harold Rodnunsky, Bert Hardin, Harold Slutsky, Esther Rodnunsky, Sarah Hardin, Jack Satanove.

"Bittersweet
Memories:
The War
Years",
available for \$18



From the Archivist's Desk...

by DEBBY SHOCTOR

January, 2008

With the premiere of our second documentary film, "Bittersweet Memories: The War Years" behind us, the Archives is setting its sights on other new projects. The film premiere, at the Royal Alberta Museum in October, was a great success, with over 250 people attending. As a result of the attendance, we also gained approximately 15 new members for the Society. Mazel Tov to Dan Kauffman on this great achievement. Copies of the film are for sale from the office for \$18 for those of you who were unable to attend.

Later in November, the Archives, along with the Beth Shalom Synagogue and the Chevra Kadisha, sponsored the opening of an exhibit celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Edmonton Chevra Kadisha. The synagogue hosted a reception in honour of the opening of the exhibit, and Rabbi Kunin, Harry Silverman, Rhoda Friedman, Mandel Nozick and I spoke to those assembled. It was nice to see a successful program held jointly by three of our city's Jewish organizations. Thanks especially to Rabbi Kunin for being the impetus behind this display and this event. You can read his article about the history of Chevra Kadishas and see some photos in this issue of Heritage/Yerusha.

This fall also marked the 100th anniversary of the Law Society of Alberta, and our own board member Barry Zalmanowitz gave a speech about early Jewish lawyers and judges in Edmonton to the interfaith breakfast, which is reproduced in this issue.

Other ongoing projects at the Archives include the arrangement and description of the B'nai Brith Youth Organization fonds, which is being carried out by volunteers Jini Vogel and Rebecca Killens and the transcription and summarization of Oral History tapes from our collection, which is being conducted by Helen Rosenberg.

We have just completed a project to re-format old ¾ inch video tapes and VHS tapes from our collection into DVDs, which will help to preserve

them and make them accessible for researchers. These tapes include interviews of Holocaust survivors and others, interviews from our documentary films and rare footage of our community organizations, and was made possible through a grant from the Government of Canada through the National Archives Development Program of Library and Archives Canada. These grants are administered here through the Archives Society of Alberta. They are now available in the Archives for research purposes.

I recently returned from the American Association for Jewish Studies Conference in Toronto. This was the first time this conference, the largest gathering of Jewish Studies academics, students and researchers in North America, was held in Canada. I had previously attended the Association for Canadian Jewish Studies annual conference in Winnipeg, but this was much larger and broader in scope. In addition to the conference sessions, there was a Jewish Film Festival, Book Fair and Poster Session, all of which were equally fascinating. There were sessions on Canadian issues, such as dual loyalty and demographics, with speakers such as Morton Weinfeld and Harold Troper, Randall Schnoor (President of ACJS), Ira Robinson and Ontario Jewish Archivist Dr. Ellen Sheinberg. Prof. Irwin Cotler was the keynote speaker at the Plenary Session. I attended sessions such as "Testimonies From and About the Experience of the Holocaust," and "Jewish Museums and Displays: New Directions, Obstacles and Opportunities." Other attendees from Edmonton included Rhoda Friedman and Prof. Frances Landy.

Coming up, look for announcements about our Spring program in the e-newsletters as well as in the mail, and keep searching for those precious papers in your basements and attics.

*Debby Shoctor,
Archivist*

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Recently Donated



Golden Age Club Purim Party, March, 1963. L-R: Sarah Milner, Lottie Landa, Mr & Mrs. S. Simovitch (Simons). JAHSENA Archives photo donated by Gary Woodrow.

NEW MEMBERS

JAHSENA would like to welcome the following new members:

Naomi Wolfman, Edmonton
 Gary & Reisa Segal, Edmonton
 David Kline, Vancouver, BC
 Caroline Ullman, Edmonton
 Clyde Hurtig & Karen Farkas, Sherwood Park
 Esther Miller, Edmonton
 Norman and Mona Witten, Edmonton
 Karen Hering, Edmonton
 Matt & Helen Muskal Cohen, Edmonton
 Howard & Leah Goldford, Edmonton
 Gary Woodrow, Edmonton
 Dr. Jerry & Miriam Katz, Edmonton
 Harry & Sveta Silverman, Edmonton
 Percy Lerner, Edmonton
 John & Shawna Goldberg, Vancouver, BC
 Gertrude Shane, Halifax, NS
 Ethel Levene, Edmonton
 Miriam Milavsky, Calgary

Letter to the Editor

Hi Debby,

I got the following information from my cousins after I sent the newsletter with the article about my uncle, Abe Fratkan. The picture of the Symphony at the Capitol Theatre cannot be 1918. It is most likely 1940s, as I remember going to rehearsals at the Capitol when I was very young. My mother, his sister and the rest of the family arrived in Canada in 1912. Abe and his brother, Max had been in Canada for two years. So, this makes their arrival into Canada 1910.

Abe's daughter, Sybil Golden, tells me that after he married, the family lived not in Winnipeg with the rest of the family, but in Brandon, Manitoba, where the first son, Leonard, was born, in 1917. They arrived in Edmonton in either 1918 or 1919. Altogether the family who came to live in Winnipeg from Vietke were: my grandfather, Moshe Hessel, my grandmother Hinda Gisa, my uncles, Berel, Harry, David, Max and Abe, my aunt, Sadie (Vinocur), and my mother, Rebecca (Goorevitch). One son, Shmuel was left in Russia. He went in 1912 to Harbin to be a conductor and arranger of an orchestra. He died young. I didn't get the story of what happened to him, but some

musicians who came to the U.S. and somehow got to know some of my cousins said that they had music composed and arranged by Shmuel.

My Uncles Abe and Max and their families established themselves in Edmonton opening the Art Music Store on Jasper Avenue between 99 St. and 100 St. (approximately where the old Steak Loft used to be).

My grandmother had 11 children, eight of whom survived childhood diseases. Seven came to Canada. David and Harry later left for the U.S. My parents also went to Detroit with two children. My father was an electrician, but fell off a ladder in 1929 and couldn't work. The walked away from their home and came to Edmonton because Abe & Max sent money for them. They helped Dad start a small business repairing radios, gramophones and other small electrical appliances. When he was healthier he returned to do electrical work and got his master license.

I found my mother's and her brother's inspection cards at the Port of Quebec, Canada dated Oct 14, 1912. I also found my father's (Ben Goorevitch's) Certificate of Naturalization which is dated March 18, 1914, in Winnipeg. I will try to bring these to you as soon as possible.

Beryl Nahornick

On Display

At the JCC...

Currently on display at the JCC you will find an exhibit of large format photographs from our collection. If you would like to donate a book, document or a piece of memorabilia to add to our collection, call 489-2809. Please stop by the JCC and view these items on display opposite the office in the glass display case.

At the Beth Israel...

Please check out the new permanent display at the Beth Israel Synagogue, "Beth Israel: 100 Years of Memories." This display was put together by the Beth Israel Historical Committee, with help from JAHSENA, and highlights the history of Edmonton's oldest Jewish Institution through 108 photographs, and a chronology. In addition, there is a temporary display of artifacts from the Beth Israel and its members.

At the Beth Shalom...

There is also a display in the Board Room of the Beth Shalom Synagogue, put together by Rabbi David Kunin with help from JAHSENA. This display chronicles the 75-year history of Beth Shalom Synagogue.

Also at the Beth Shalom Synagogue is an exhibit on the 100-year history of the Edmonton Chevra Kadisha, created by JAHSENA with the help of Rabbi Kunin for the Convention held by the Chevra Kadisha in June of this year.

On the Web...

Check out the new Archives Society of Alberta Exhibit prepared for Archives Week 2007 (October 1-7), titled "Animals in Archives", at www.archivesalberta.org. You will find five photos from our collection, one of which will also be featured in a 2008 calendar which will be coming out at the same time. A limited number will be available from the office on a first-come first-serve basis.

Jewish Scouting in Edmonton

PAULA E. KIRMAN

Of all of the Jewish day camps and various recreational groups and activities that are common in the community, scouting is generally not on the list. However, there has existed an order of Jewish boy scouts in Edmonton off and on since the 1930s.

Starting in 1931, the very first group of Jewish Boy Scouts met in the basement of Beth Israel, at the synagogue's original location on 95th street. The group was called the 35th Edmonton Hebrew Pioneer Troop.

"All the kids were joining," says Dr. Ted Aaron, an original member. "Our 'gang' joined, so to speak." The gang included Henry Hurtig (Butch), Leonard Fratkin, Arthur Samuels, and Sam Lieberman. The scout leaders were not Jewish.

"We all had a great time; we had a camp once in Seba Beach and tented out in a



L-R: Jeremy Glick, Murray Glick, Jonah Mozeson, David Burman JAHSENA Archives photo donated by Neil Loomer

bush behind the cottage owned by Boss (Bill) Diamond," says Dr. Ted Aaron. Boss Diamond was one of the major founders of Beth Israel and owned a men's clothing store.

"Learning about camping and earning different badges," Dr. Aaron says of what he enjoyed most about the scouting experience.

When they became too old to remain cub scouts, Dr. Aaron and another boy, Norman Samuels (Shimmy), joined the First Edmonton Rover Troop in 1934, which was a non-Jewish group that met at All Saints Cathedral, an Anglican church. "We did a lot of camping and spent a lot of time out at Blackmud Creek," says Dr. Aaron.

By the late 1930s, the Jewish number of scouts had dwindled to nothing, in large part due to young people's preferred involvement in groups such as BBYO and Young Judea.

Even with no specifically Jewish scouting group, various members of the Jewish community have been involved with Scouts as individuals. A notable Edmonton Jewish scout was George Levine (May 25, 1913 - August 8, 1998), a businessman who, amongst other occupations, was an owner of Teddy's restaurant on Jasper Avenue. Levine



L-R: Tom Hefner, Murray Glick, unknown, Tal Ceron, Keifer Mathewson, Darren Swersky, Jeremy Glick, Bob Paggee, Bruce Matheson.

was president of the Edmonton Region of the Boy Scout Association and also a member of the Canada Council. In 1961, he received the Silver Acorn, the second highest honour in Canadian Scouting, presented to him in Ottawa by then Governor General Georges Vanier. He remained an Honourary member of the Alberta Scouting Council for the rest of his life.

"He spent many years as a volunteer with the Scouts, which was one of his greatest loves outside the Jewish community," says his son David Levine. "I think he strongly believed in the movement, what it provided for young men. As a young man I remember him very much talking about his days at the YMCA as a youngster, and he talked about how he used to be involved in programs there. I guess just the whole idea of what these organizations did for the youth in general.

"He made some wonderful friendships that lasted many, many years. My dad always did a lot of volunteer work – he had a real sense of community that was his way of giving something back to the community and to the youth movement. He never looked for awards; it was his desire to work with the youth and provide leadership and active programming for youth."

Scouting was somewhat of a family activity for the Levines. George Levine's sister-in-law Bessie (the wife of his wife's brother, Louis Wiseman) was a Cub leader in the Jewish cub pack in the 60s. David himself was a Cub in a non-Jewish pack in the early 1950s, which met at Christ Church Anglican, then later was a member of a Scout group meeting at Robertson-Wesley United Church.

Harry Warhaft became involved with the Scouts when a volunteer was needed to lead the 18th Jewish Cub Pack. The pack existed in the 1960s through to the early 1970s and included Warhaft's own children, as well as several other seven and eight year olds who met in the gym of Beth Shalom every Monday. Leading the group of fifteen to twenty children was "a great experience for me," says Warhaft, a property manager.

"I didn't know anything about scouting, but they needed volunteers and help and I



Seba Beach Boy Scout camp, circa 1935. L-R: Henry "Butch" Hurtig, Leonard Fratkin, Ted Aaron. JAHSENA Archives photo donated by Dr. Ted Aaron.

became a leader," he explains. One common activity was playing educational games with the Cubs. Warhaft would also take the pack outside the synagogue to experience things they would not normally see. "I always tried to take the kids on interesting learning experiences. We visited a dairy farm and saw the procedure of cows being fed and milked. Another time, we went to a wooded area to teach them to recognize the different trees and leaves."

The group fell apart when no one else was able to volunteer with the group. However, to this day, several of the members of Warhaft's pack still call him "Akela" (the name used for a cub leader) when they see him.

Another group of Jewish scouts emerged in the 1990s, co-led by Murray Glick. The group was not exclusively Jewish, but had about 85 percent Jewish membership along with children of other faiths and cultures, including a Muslim child. Police officer Bob Pagee co-led the group along with Glick. Running from 1990 until 1997, the group eventually discontinued due to lack of adult volunteers.

"I was a cub as a boy in Yellowknife," says



Seba Beach Boy Scout camp, circa 1935. L-R: Art Samuels, Henry Hurtig, Norman Samuels, Ted Aaron, Leonard Fratkin. JAHSENA Archives photo donated by Dr. Ted Aaron.

Glick, "Then Army Cadets, and we were outside camping fishing, hunting, shooting, all the time. Doing anything outdoors is wonderful and the true beauty of the world is such a simple pleasure. I enjoyed the camaraderie of the boys and getting those badges was a real accomplishment."

"We found that we impacted the lives of these boys a lot. One child had a complete turnaround as a result of cubs. We were out on weekend campout at the end of the season. The boy was always getting in trouble. Good kid but angry? As we arrived at camp, he was told to stay in the vehicle and decide if he could toe the line, as we had ample leaders and cars to take him back now! He thought about it for a good half hour and came out, apologized and we gave him a squad to be in charge of. Unbelievable... went to the top of the class, his father kept thanking us and asking what we did. He couldn't believe the change."

Glick says that he believes that Scouting is something Jewish youth should be involved in for at least a short while. He testifies that the lessons and different perspective one gains is useful all through life.

Chevra Kadisha: Origins and History

AN EXHIBIT AT THE BETH SHALOM
SYNAGOGUE IN CELEBRATION OF THE
100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHEVRA
KADISHA IN EDMONTON

BY RABBI DAVID A. KUNIN

From Talmudic times until today members of the Jewish community have taken on the obligation to help others within their community in their times of need. Indeed, our tradition has always stressed that each of us is responsible one for another. The burial of the dead and the comforting of mourners have, therefore, been times when Jews, throughout the centuries, have organized themselves to reach out with aid and compassion.

Numerous rabbinic texts stress the importance of caring for people at the time of their death. The Talmud, Shabbat 127a, teaches us that attending the dead to burial is a deed



Opening of the "Chevra Kadisha: 100 Years" exhibit at the Beth Shalom Synagogue. Shoctor Photo.

which yields a reward both in this world and in the world to come. This sentiment is echoed also in Sotah 14a, which reminds us that our obligation to see to the burial of the dead stems from God's fulfilling this mitzvah on behalf of Moses.

The stress placed on this mitzvah in Talmudic times seems to have led to the creation of the first organizations which served in the same capacity as the modern

Chevra Kadisha. One such organization is described in the following text from the Talmud, Moed Katan 27b: "Rav Hamnuna arrived in Darumasa and heard the sound of a Shofar announcing the news of a death. Subsequently he saw townspeople engaged in work. He said to them, may you be excommunicated! Is there not a dead person in the town that needs to be buried? (In Talmudic times everyone in the town would be expected to take part in the burial.) They replied, "There are societies in town responsible for the burial of the dead. He therefore permitted them to continue with their work." There are also many other texts from the rabbinic period which also indicate the presence of special *havarot* (societies), organized for the burial of the dead.

By the 14th century special *havarot* which took on the obligations for the burial of the dead sprang up across Spain and Germany. Unlike, however, the modern Chevra Kadisha, these organizations did not extend the privilege of burial to the entire Jewish community. Rather, they contented themselves with the burial only of their members. It is to this type of chevra that the medieval commentator Rashi refers in his commentary on Moed Katan. "There were associations, each of which made itself responsible for the burial of its own members." Rashi describes the functioning of the *havarot* of his own time rather than those mentioned in the Talmudic text on which he was commenting.

The first Chevra Kadisha with an explicit mandate to provide for the entire community – whether a member of the Chevra Kadisha or not – was founded in Prague by Eliezer Ashkenazi in 1564. The Prague Chevra saw this role as a fulfillment of a sacred duty. The paintings which form part of the exhibition at the Beth Shalom, and which display the Chevra Kadisha fulfilling its sacred mission, were commissioned by the Prague Chevra in the late 18th century.

Because of the sacred tasks fulfilled by the Chevra, members were called *mitassekim*. This term, which derives from the Talmud, literally means "those who occupy them-



Members of the Prague Chevra Kadisha Society, late 18th Century. Collection of the State Museum, Prague.



Norma Nozick, JAHSENA Board Member Judy Goldsand and JAHSENA Co-President Jini Vogel at the opening of Chevra Kadisha: 100 years. Shoctor Photo.



Miriam Katz, JAHSENA Board Member Dr. Manuel Friedman and Ladies' Chevra Kadisha President Rhoda Friedman. Shoctor Photo.

selves." Another title, gomelei hasadim is an indication of the importance of burying the dead – in some texts it was considered to be the only true act of gimilut hasadim. Among Sephardic Jews, members were called lavadores, meaning the washers of the dead.

Traditionally – across Europe – membership in the Chevra Kadisha was limited to males over the age of 13. Women had their own burial societies, called Nashim Zadkaniyyot (pious women). Membership came with privileges. Chevra families were buried in special sections of the cemeteries and funeral expenses were often reduced. It was considered to be a great honour to be a member of the Chevra Kadisha, and the right was often passed down from generation to generation. Sir Moses Montefiore expressed, for example, his pride at being elected a member of the Society of Lavadores in London. Indeed, for important families, even the age limitations were sometimes waved. In one case, Shneur Zalman of Ladi – later the founder of Chabad Hasidism – was welcomed as an assistant shamis in a Chevra Kadisha at the youthful age of five. Many wealthy children were even enrolled on the day of their brit milah.

In general, the board of a Chevra Kadisha was elected during Sukkot for yearly terms. Presidents, however, far from having long terms of office, only served for a month at a time. In many communities boards consisted

of 18 members – referring to life.

In addition to their holy activities the Chevra Kadisha fulfilled a fraternal role within the community. A yearly seudah was common, often celebrated on the 7th of Adar – the traditional anniversary of the death of Moses. Other communities celebrated in Kislev, when some chose Lag B'Omer. The Seudah would follow a day of fasting and the recitation of penitential prayers. It was not uncommon for synagogues to extend certain honours to the members of the Chevra Kadisha. The honours on Hoshanah Rabbah were traditionally distributed by the Chevra, and the President of the Chevra was often escorted into the synagogue under a tallit on Simchat Torah. In some communities, the haftarah on the intermediate Shabbat of Pesach – the vision of Ezekiel concerning the field of bones – was always read by a member of the Chevra Kadisha.

From Talmudic times to the present, members of Chevra Kadisha – in all its forms – have reached out as volunteers to help individuals and families in the most difficult of times. Our tradition teaches that burying the dead is the highest form of gimilut hasidim because it is an act of tzedakah where there is no expectation of reward. It is this selflessness and dedication to the community that we celebrate in this exhibit.



Rabbi David Kunin. Shoctor Photo.



Former JAHSENA Board members Joy-Ruth and Ed Mickelson at the exhibit opening. Shoctor Photo.

Jewish Lawyers and Justices in NORTHERN ALBERTA: A History

The following is adapted from JAHSENA Board Member Barry Zalmanowitz's speech to the Interfaith Service Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Court of Appeal and the Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta, Robertson-Wesley United Church September 26, 2007.



Associate Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench, Tevie Miller; Justice S.S. Lieberman of the Court of Appeal; and Justice Ronald L. Berger, of the Court of Appeal. JAHSENA Archives photo, donated by Ronald L. Berger, taken by Dan Rosenberg.

Friedman, Lieberman, established in 1917 by H.A. Friedman and Moses Lieberman, was the first Jewish Law firm in Alberta. H.A. Friedman, a graduate of Osgoode Hall law school, came to Edmonton in 1915 because Moe Lieberman, his close friend from Toronto, got a job as a mining engineer in Saskatchewan and urged H.A. to come west and set up a law practice.

H.A. agreed on condition that Moe would practice law with him. Moe Lieberman had a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in mining engineering and at the time there was no law school in Edmonton, but one could become a lawyer by clerking with a lawyer. H.A. came to Edmonton and Moe clerked for him and was called to the Bar in 1917. They established their practice from offices on 97th Street and Jasper Avenue. The firm eventually came to be known as Friedman, Lieberman Newson.

Moe was active in the community generally and in the Jewish community and the firm served as lawyers to most of the Jewish organizations. Moe was also a very good athlete, playing football for both the U. of A. Golden Bears (even though he was not a student at the U. of A.) and the Edmonton Eskimos. Moe served on the board of the Beth Shalom Synagogue.

Sam Lieberman, Moe's son, was born in Edmonton in 1922. In 1940, at age 18, Sam left the University of Alberta to enlist in the RCAF, motivated by his awareness of what Hitler was doing to the Jews and the obligation he felt as a Canadian to serve his country. He rose to the rank of squadron commander and remained in the service until 1945. After the war, he returned to the U of A, completing his BA in 1947, his LLB in 1948 and was called the bar in 1949. Sam articulated with his father's firm.

It was always a given that Sam would article at his father's firm which had a good insurance practice. In those days, Sam told me, it was difficult for a Jew to get an articling position with the other law firms, so many of the Jewish graduates articulated and got their start at Friedman Lieberman.

Sam developed a reputation as a leading lawyer and was active in the community. He held leadership positions with the Kiwanis Club, CNIB, Edmonton Symphony and the Edmonton Eskimos. In the Jewish community he was president of the B'nai Brith and served on the Board of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews. Sam also served on the Beth Shalom Synagogue Board. In 1966, Sam was appointed to the district court and in 1970 elevated to the Supreme Court Trial Division and in 1976 elevated to the Court of Appeal. Sam was involved in significant areas of legal reform including legal aid and

the treatment of those found not guilty or unfit to stand trial due to mental illness.

Sam retired in 1997 and became Counsel at Miller Thomson (and comes into the office every day).

Sam Lieberman was known as a top lawyer as well as being a well-respected Judge, and we in the Jewish community are proud of him. To prepare for this presentation I met with Sam. He told me more than once not to focus on him because there were many other Jewish lawyers who made significant contributions and urged me to mention them. I will: Max Wershof who became a respected diplomat, Abe Miller who was an MLA and founded what is now the Witten firm, Tevie Miller, the second Jewish Justice, who became Associate Chief Justice, Abe Bercov who was called to the bar in 1924 (probably the 3rd Jewish Lawyer, whose son Sid became a prominent lawyer and who had two children who are both lawyers), Ronald Berger, the third Jewish Justice, Peter Owen, who was rescued from Germany as a child by the Herculean efforts of H.A. Friedman, and who made many important contributions to our profession and community, and Sam Friedman, who in 1970 became the first

Jewish Deputy Attorney General of Alberta and then in 1974 became a Provincial Court Judge, also active generally in the community and in Jewish organizations. I am sure it was only an oversight that Sam Lieberman made no mention of the first Jewish managing partner of Fraser Milner Casgrain (myself) who some believe was also the first Jewish Lawyer to run a Marathon in Edmonton in under 5 hours. Or for that matter, my wife, June Ross, who is now the first female Jewish Court of Queen's Bench Justice in Edmonton.

While things are much different now, it was not too long ago when differences in religion, country of origin, skin colour or gender were obstacles to getting an articling position or becoming a judge. The appointment and elevation of Sam Lieberman was an important bench mark in the history of the courts and in the Jewish community in Alberta that probably turned some heads. I am sure that when Allan Wachowich, a Catholic of Polish heritage was appointed Chief Justice of the Court of Queens bench, it too must have turned some heads. However, what it really did was send a powerful message: anybody can be the Chief Justice.



Moe Lieberman. JAHSENA Archives photo, donated by Sam Lieberman.



H.A. Friedman.
JAHSENA Archives photo

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

A donation has been made to JAHSENA by George and Judy Goldsand in honour of Sarah Zipperstein's 99th birthday.

A donation has been made to JAHSENA by Dan and Esther Kauffman in honour of Dr. Robert Solomon's birthday.

A donation has been made to JAHSENA by Dan and Esther Kauffman in honour of David Levine's birthday.

A donation has been made to JAHSENA by Debby & Marshall Shoctor in honour of Moe and Sandy Litman's new grandson

REFUAH SHALEMAH

A donation has been made to JAHSENA by Dan & Esther Kauffman wishing Harry Nolan a speedy recovery.

SYMPATHY

A donation has been made to JAHSENA by Dan and Esther Kauffman in memory of Fay Wasel, z'l.

A donation has been made to JAHSENA by Roberta and Norman Hanson in memory of Dora Hering.

The Treasure Vault of the Jewish People

BY ANAT BANIN

Walking down Shazar Boulevard at the entrance to Jerusalem, one can easily recognize the massive building of Binyanei Haooama. But if you look further down the road, you will notice a path leading to a smaller building. Looking at the signpost you will read “The Central Zionist Archives” (known as the CZA). “We’ve walked past this building hundreds of times but never noticed it before,” remark some first-time visitors.

While visiting the CZA in 1996, former Israeli President, Ezer Weizmann, exclaimed in his very special style: “Listen, this is absolutely the treasure vault of the Jewish people”.

Indeed, it is a unique place. Built in 1987 to store the rapidly growing collections of the Zionist movement, the building’s apparent size is deceptive: in addition to the two floors visible from the outside, there are 4 more floors underground, containing vast store-rooms, specially designed to protect the collections from the vagaries of time.

A LITTLE HISTORY:

The Central Zionist Archives (CZA) was founded in Berlin in 1919 and moved to Jerusalem in 1933. When the storage rooms of the National Institutions Building in King George St. filled up, the material was dispersed to eight storage sites in Jerusalem. In those days, when a researcher asked to check a file, he would wait while an Archives worker took a bus to a storeroom in a nearby suburb, located the file and then returned by bus...

The Zionist Congresses determined that the Archives would collect all documentation of historical value regarding Zionism in all its forms and in all periods and countries, as well as the papers of persons and unofficial bodies. As stated by The Zionist Congresses “In this way they would be commemorated in the heart of future generations”.

Over the years the Archives collected and preserved the material created by the various offices of the World Zionist Organization, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish National

Fund, Keren Hayesod and other bodies related to the history of the Land of Israel and the Jewish people. The Archives’ efforts during the years have yielded an impressive collection: well over 80 million documents or “10 kilometers of Zionism” are kept at the Archives.

The material includes the archives of the “Founding Fathers” of Zionism, in particular, of course, that of Herzl, as well as 1,300 personal archives of others who contributed to Zionism and the up building of the Land of Israel in various fields such as journalism, economics, medicine, education, industry and so forth. The Archives holds the material of various Zionist Federations around the world, including the material of the Federations in England, Italy and more.

One can spend days indulging in some of the collections. The Photograph Collection comprises more than half a million photos and negatives portraying the great moments of Jewish history in the last 100 years as well as daily life in Eretz Israel and the Diaspora. Another unique source is our Poster and Ephemera Collection. Comprising tens of thousands of items, these collections are used daily by producers, curators, website designers and others. The CZA also houses a very important Map Collection, mainly containing land acquisition and settlement plans. These collections are being scanned and are constantly in use. A vast Newspaper Collection reflects aspects of the Zionist polemic in Palestine and in the Zionist Movement at large. Last but not least, the Archives holds Jewish National Fund stamp collections, which show the institutions, settlements and the great leaders of Zionism in a special way.

FINDING OUR ROOTS: GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH AT THE CZA

“I am writing to you from England in order to check whether you have any information on my uncle who immigrated to

Palestine from Rumania in the 1930’s, to live in Tel Aviv...”. Almost every day requests of this sort are received at the Archives. In the last decade we are witness to a growing interest in family research. Books, websites conferences – everyone, it would seem, are searching for resources that will assist in the building of the family tree. Large amounts of important genealogical material, especially pertaining to the British Mandate period in Palestine, can be found at the Archives. A few examples: the material of the Immigration Department of the Jewish Agency contains hundreds of thousands of general and personal files, card catalogues and name lists of immigrants. One can also find the files of Youth Aliyah, partial lists of illegal immigrant ships, lists of detainees in Cyprus, etc. Since the Jewish Agency was in charge of enlistment to the British Army during World War II, the Archives holds important material on this interesting chapter of Jewish history, including enlistment and discharging lists. Also kept in the Archives are population censuses and voter lists: of particular note is the 1939 Jerusalem census, which enables one to locate residents of Jerusalem on the eve of World War II.

The ship Exodus, 1947, carrying Jewish Holocaust survivors. The ship left France on July 1947 with the intent of taking its passengers to Palestine, was seized by the British navy, and all passengers were deported back to Europe.

These and other data sources have made the CZA one of the most important locations for family research. In light of the rising interest in this field, the Archives set up a special Department of Family Research. If you are interested in genealogical information, please check our websites for additional information.

Please check the website for additional information at: www.zionistarchives.org.il

From the December 2007 Chanukah Edition of the *Jewish Magazine*

Warsaw Jewish cemetery seeks to rebuild records torched by Nazis

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Canadian Press: Monika Scislowska,
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WARSAW, Poland - Cemetery director Przemyslaw Isroel Szpilman walks among the moss-covered and crumbling gravestones of the Warsaw Jewish cemetery, painstakingly jotting details in his notebook.

The Nazis burned the offices and files of the sprawling 19th century burial site in 1943 and now Szpilman is taking on the monu-

mental task of reconstructing the cemetery's records of its estimated 250,000 graves.

"When I became director ... many people from around the world would come every day and ask about the graves of their ancestors," said Szpilman, who has run the cemetery since 2002.

"Each time I had to explain why I cannot help them," he said. "I decided that as a director I must help them, so I started to make record(s) of the graves."

As of this week, Szpilman has completed some 60,000 records - about the quarter-way mark after five years of work.

But he has had help for the past year, with four Jewish students supported by a philanthropist from Chicago taking notes and pictures, and setting up a website.

If all goes well, he hopes now to be done with the task by 2012.

The cemetery was founded by members of Warsaw's vibrant Jewish community in 1806 and the first burial took place in 1807.

During the Second World War, the Polish capital's Jewish community of some 350,000 was all but wiped out by the Nazis. The cemetery survived - minus the records.

The site fell into neglect during the postwar Communist era, as the few aging Holocaust survivors struggled to care for it.

Szpilman now has to fit in his chronicling with his other tasks at the cemetery, including some 20 burials a year and maintaining the site, where tree roots and falling branches crack and break the sandstone markers that

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Former RCAF members Sam Lieberman and Leon Kagna at the Remembrance Day Ceremonies, Edmonton Jewish Cemetery, Nov. 11, 2007. JAHSENA Archives, photo by Bernie Estrin.

Corrections

In the list of members of JAHSENA in the Fall issue of Yerusha/Heritage, the names of Abraham and Hanna Goldberg were inadvertently left out of the category of Donors for the 2006-2007 year.

The photo on the first page of the last issue of Heritage/Yerusha (September, 2007) of Abe Fratkin and his Capitoliens, is probably from the 1940s, not 1918.

JAHSENA Recent Acquisitions

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

Photo and newspaper clipping regarding Ben Woodrow from Gary Woodrow.

1 cm. text, 2 statues and 6 plaques belonging to Harold Fayerman, z'l, from Becky Fayerman, pertaining to Harold's work in the Jewish Community.

2 photos, donated by Nip Olyan, one of Young Judea, one of Pogrom relief meeting in Saskatchewan.

1 poster, donated by Ruth Pakes, regarding Agunot.

2 certificates from Emunah/Mizrachi, donated by Mel Wyne.

Seven Na'amat pins, 1 veteran's beret, two WWII medals and one pin, three bound volumes and 1 cm text, donated by Paula Weil, formerly belonging to her mother Rose Weil and stepfather J. Tabachnick.

Chevra Kadisha Convention T-shirt, donated by Mandle Nozick.

"For King and Country: Alberta in the Second World War," edited by Ken Tingley, c. 1995. Donated by Dan Kauffman.

30 pins and paper index, donated by Edmonton Hadassah-WIZO.

15 cm. text, mostly newspaper clippings, collected by former JAHSENA Board Member Sharon Abbott, about Edmontonians in the news.

3 family photos of the HRS Society at Pesach, 1930, 1937, 1938, donated by Anita (Chana) Satanove.

3 photos & 3 negatives of the Vegreville Synagogue, donated by L Kramer through Cyril Leonoff of the Jewish Historical Society of British Columbia.

Four photos and one newspaper clipping regarding Edmonton's Jewish Boy Scouts, donated by Dr. Ted Aaron.

Oral History interview with Dr. Ted Aaron, donated by Paula Kirman.

Three books donated by Jini Vogel: "Information Resource Management," "Records Management Handbook," and "Treasures of a People: The Synagogues of Canada."

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.

WARSAW

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have been weakened by wind, rain, moss and frost.

The job that Szpilman began in 2003 is incredibly labour intensive: He goes through the 34-hectare cemetery on Okopowa Street, gravestone by gravestone, and reads the Yiddish, Hebrew and Polish inscriptions.

He meticulously records the details in a notebook, including the deceased's full name, father's name and date of death - according to the Hebrew calendar.

Then there's the follow-up work of entering the data, and the grave's location, into his

computer.

"It is a very involving and fascinating job," he said. "You never know what beautiful gravestone you may find, or whose burial site."

Already he's found one important figure in Polish Jewish history - the 1823 tombstone of Tzvie Hirsh Dantziger, the grandfather of Jechiel Dantziger, who was the first tzadik, or spiritual leader, of the town of Aleksandrow Lodzki.

There is a personal motivation for the 36-year-old. His own great grandfather, Jankiel Szpilman, was buried somewhere in the cemetery in the 1930s, but has not yet been

located. His grandfather has a claim to fame as a distant relative of the late Wladyslaw Szpilman, whose story of survival was told in the Oscar-winning movie "The Pianist" by Roman Polanski.

Though the cemetery is a place of death, Szpilman also discovered that it was used to preserve life - uncovering a large hole in the ground, covered with gravestones, that he has learned was used as a hideout for Jews from the Nazis.

"This is history," Szpilman said. "This is the resting place for a community that has lived here for hundreds of years. Working here is an honour and a privilege."

"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 \$ _____
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- I have historical material that I would like to donate.
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