

ירשה

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HERITAGE

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

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Sammies '55



JAHSENA Archives

The Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity Formal, 1955

Front row (l to r):

Morris Friedman; Manuel Friedman; Israel Switzer; Henry Gutman; Mort Libin; Dr. Morris Weinlos; Sam Weisz; David Panar; Burton Margolis; Walter Barron; Don Weidman; Hy Klein; Aubrey Levy

3rd Row:

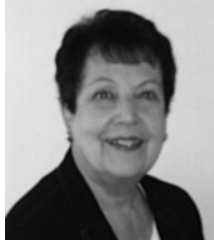
Saul Berman; David Cowan; Roy Shaw; Al Ragosin; Earl Hardin; Morris Katz; Sol Berg; Bernie Adler; Roy Chernoff; Ray Lieberman; Sid Simons

2nd Row:

Dennis Lerner; Terry Kline; Eli Adler; Ted Busheikin; Lorne Hock; George Goldsand; Dave Chetner; Manual Panar; Ed Wolfman; Sol Estrin; Marvin Mitchell; Saul Hoffman; Stan Hollenberg

4th Row:

Allan Rose; Raphael Engle; Ron Wolch; Larry Witten; Phil Mickelson; Tevvy Estrin; Arnold Conn; Larry Shapiro; Lou Faber



From the President,

by JUDY GOLDSAND

April 2016

We are excited that JAHSENA's new book will be published this month. Entitled *From Generation to Generation: Jewish Edmontonians as Heritage Builders*, the book highlights twenty-five historic Jewish Edmontonians who, in addition to their jobs or professional work, made outstanding contributions to enhance life in Edmonton and beyond. It will tell you about the first Jewish men to settle in Edmonton, Abe Cristall and Boss Diamond, and the rivalry between them; about the contributions of grass-roots volunteers such as Bessie Goldstick and Alfie Simons; about the volunteer efforts of people such as Abe Miller, Clara Mintz, Sam Lieberman, and Ethel Marliss to improve people's lives, and many other exemplary individuals from our Jewish community. We owe a big thank you to Paul Gifford, who undertook the majority of the research and writing for the book, as well as to members of the Editorial Board who joined me—Gillian Horwitz, Debby Shoctor, Anita Sky and Jini Vogel. Also, we express our appreciation to the Edmonton Heritage Council and to the Jewish Federation of Edmonton for their financial support, without which the book could not have been written.

Our sincere thanks also goes out to donors to our "book publishing campaign". JAHSENA appreciates your generosity.

All JAHSENA members ARE INVITED to a special event to introduce the book. It will take place SUNDAY, MAY 1, 2 pm, at AUDREYS BOOKS 10702 Jasper Avenue, downstairs. As space is limited, please RSVP by email to jahsena@shaw.ca or phone (780)489-2809 before Thursday, April 28.

(If this edition of Heritage reaches you after May 1, the book will be available for sale at Audreys Books or from the

JAHSENA office for \$18.95.)

JAHSENA is again sponsoring a film in the JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL that will be held during the last two weeks in May. The film we are sponsoring on Sunday, May 22 at 6 pm is *Before the Revolution*, the untold story of the Israeli paradise in Iran before the overthrow of the Shah in 1979. We urge all our members to support the Film Festival which offers many fascinating and thought-provoking films from a variety of genres.

Watch for more information about JAHSENA's event in OPEN DOORS EDMONTON, part of the annual city-wide Historic Festival held July 3–10, sponsored by the Edmonton and District Historical Society. During the past three years, JAHSENA has sponsored tours of the Edmonton Jewish Cemetery, Beth Shalom Synagogue, and, last year, Beth Israel Synagogue. For 2016 we are collaborating with the Chevra Kadisha and Temple Beth Ora and to feature a tour and program at their shared location, 12313–105 Avenue. It will take place Tuesday, July 5, from 7 to 8:30 pm. Kosher refreshments will be served. Everyone is welcome.

We regret that we have to say farewell to Paul Gifford, JAHSENA Archivist for almost the past two years. Paul has returned to the University of Alberta to take a Master's program in Library and Information Studies and will be taking some summer courses as well as working at the University. We thank Paul for his service to JAHSENA and wish him much success in his future endeavours. Colleen Paull, JAHSENA's Archival Assistant, will now be managing the office and will be happy to assist you.

We hope you had an enjoyable and meaningful Passover and wish you a happy Summer!

ירשה HERITAGE

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

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There But for the *Grace of God* Go I

BY DANIEL ERIN

It is very important, stresses Abner Rubin, to contribute to one's community in as many ways as one can. And at 92, Abner continues to dedicate his time, energy, and resources to Edmonton's inner city. "Although I'm getting older," Abner laughs, "I still love being involved." Indeed, volunteerism and philanthropy have played a central role in his life for well over half a century. When asked what compels his benevolence, Abner's response is simple and without hesitation: "kindness and compassion." And after a brief pause, he adds, "*there but for the grace of God go I.*"

This sagacious phrase undergirds Abner's sense of solicitude for those in need. "I have always wanted to help people relieve their suffering," Abner explains. So when meeting persons who were socially vulnerable, Abner would share a meal with them, welcome them into his home, take them on a trip, find ways to help them develop skills, and/or provide them with vocational opportunities. "They were all beautiful people," Abner remembers; "most of them had some pretty tough luck in life." According to Abner, bad luck and unjust circumstances can affect people from all nationalities, all races, and all spiritual backgrounds, so it's vital to

help everyone in a community.

Abner's desire to give back to his community and help those around him came from his father, Eser Rubin. Eser emigrated from Pinsk, Poland in 1927 and settled in Edmonton. After working and diligently saving, he brought his family—*including Abner*—over from Pinsk in July of 1928. One of Eser's primary goals was to save enough money so that he could afford to bring family members over to Canada from Europe every year. Abner recounts that his father did everything he could to help his family have the opportunity for a better life. This kindness and compassion left an indelible impression upon Abner, and he is profoundly happy to not only carry on his father's legacy but also convey its importance to his children and grandchildren.

After arriving in Canada, Abner's family put down roots in Edmonton, specifically the Boyle Street commu-



Rubin and Furman, 1943

nity, which is just east of the downtown core. He attended Alex Taylor and McCauley schools and fondly remembers growing up in the neighbourhood. It was, he warmly emphasizes, pleasant living in such a diverse community; people from different ethnicities and creeds all got along. To this day, Abner feels at home among the community members in Boyle. So, it should be no surprise that his philanthropy is also rooted in the Boyle Street area.

In the 1960s, Abner helped the provincial government provide sleep-

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In Perpetual Bloom

By DANIEL ERIN

When you look up the word *bloom* in a dictionary, you'll find a couple of meanings. The word can refer to a cultivated flower known for its beauty, vivid and bright music, as well as the peak of vitality in a person.

As we'll see, Hanna Pollack consistently finds a way to make life bloom for her loved ones and her communities.

Hanna was born on November 27, 1923 in Palestine. A middle child, she remains very close to her sisters, Malka and Shulamit. Despite being 93, Hanna still loves to travel the 10,119 km between Edmonton and Israel to see her family. In fact, she went back to Israel in 2015 to celebrate her great-niece's wedding and spend time with her loved ones. Having fun with her family—especially her sisters—is nothing new to Hanna. When they were growing up, all three did many things together. But they especially loved singing. Just like their mother, Hanna, Malka, and Shulamit have lovely singing voices. After hearing the girls sing, a close family friend

started calling them The Andrews Sisters. (The Andrews Sisters were a popular American vocal trio during the 1930s-1960s, who sang with Bing Crosby and the Glenn Miller Orchestra; they also entertained American troops overseas during the Second World War.)

Education was very important in Hanna's family. Her favourite subject was Geography because she always wanted to travel. As a young woman Hanna was an avid traveller. She once spent three weeks touring Egypt in 1951; Alexandria was her favourite stop during that trip. When she wasn't traveling, Hanna worked for The Israel Ministry of Trade and Tourism, which allowed her to save money for her adventures.

Hanna moved from Israel to Edmonton when she married David Pollack in 1982, but the couple actually first met in Israel while David was attending his brother's wedding. After their first encounter, Hanna said to herself: "That is the guy I am going to marry." The young couple's



Hanna and David Pollack

budding romance came at the expense of enormous long-distance phone bills, but it was a cost both happily incurred. Eventually, Dave invited Hanna to come visit him in Edmonton, so she took a two-month leave from her job in Israel. As it would turn out, Hanna prolonged her stay in Edmonton to four months. The rest is, as they say, history. After settling in Edmonton, Hanna became a prominent volunteer with the Jewish Drop-In Centre when it's new building



Children at Israeli Daycare wearing Hanna's knitwear



David Pollack in pharmacy

opened in May of 1993.

From a young age Hanna learned the importance of volunteerism. Throughout her childhood, Hanna shared Tuesday lunches with her father because her mother was delivering food—that she had prepared the night before—to diabetics living in a geriatric ward. Indeed, she remembers being taught that one “*had to share, not always take, but to give as well.*” To this day, Hanna continues to give as much as she can to the community by volunteering at the Jewish Drop-In Centre on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays.

Brightening the days of those who attend the drop-in centre is incredibly important to Hanna. She has always loved flowers, and she shares this love with the community in a variety of ways. When the drop-in centre hosts a special event or a meal, Hanna enlivens the tables by decorating them with flowers. Hanna and Dave also beautified Beth Israel and planted the flowerbeds outside of the Synagogue; now generations can partake in Hanna’s love of flowers and enjoy their beauty. After Dave passed away on September 23, 1997, Hanna dedicated even more time to the drop-in centre. She currently lives

in a condo only a half-block away, so she can get there on a moment’s notice.

In addition to her volunteer work at the Jewish Drop-In Centre, Hanna has contributed to the work of Hadassah-WIZO—Canada’s leading Jewish women’s philanthropic organization. Hadassah-WIZO supports numerous programs and projects helping women and children in Canada and Israel. Specifically, Hanna helped this organization by knitting and crocheting hats as well as scarves for the children in one of its day care centres. It’s also worth noting that Hanna personally delivered these hats and scarves during one of her visits to Israel.

At 93, and having overcome a serious illness, Hanna still keeps active. According to Hanna, the recipe for a living a long and satisfying life is to keep busy, to plan each day so you have to go out, to be around people, and to enjoy all that life has to offer.

Whether assisting children in Israel, spending time with community members at the Jewish Drop-In Centre, singing songs, or beautifying shared community spaces, Hanna Pollack continues to help her communities stay in perpetual bloom.

JAHSENA Recent Acquisitions

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

An oral history interview, along with pictures and articles from Jane Karstaedt, Hanna Pollack, and Abner Rubin;

Various papers on the Talmud Torah and BBYO from Cheryl Slawsky;

Papers and phonograph records from Phyllis Nurgitz;

A wide array of textile and pictorial artifacts from Miriam Rabinovitch regarding the Jewish Seniors Drop-In Centre;

Two pieces of art from Orna Richter;

A major donation of materials and supplies from the Archives Society of Alberta;

A collection of old Jewish sheet music from the JDIC;

And as always, Sharon Abbott has kept a close eye on any articles about the community at large which might be of interest to us. She also found time to contribute an oral history recently! Thanks, Sharon!

Unfortunately, due to space issues, for the foreseeable future we will no longer be accepting donations to the Jewish Federation Library. Please contact Beth Shalom synagogue or the Jewish Drop In Centre if you’d like to donate collections relating to Jewish history or Judaism in general.

We are still accepting donations of books relevant to local family or organizational history. Should you have any questions about donations, please contact our office.

Myer Horowitz

My Installation was held, at Jubilee Auditorium, the evening of September 13, 1979. It was preceded by a dinner in Lister Hall. I wanted Essie and Rabbi Hyman to be comfortable at the dinner and so the senior chef assured me that the salmon meal would be prepared carefully and that the dietary requirements would be met to the extent possible. Rabbi Hyman said the grace before the meal. Both he and Essie seemed to enjoy themselves with others at the head table. In my brief closing remarks I indicated that if the people present didn't know what a kosher meal was like, they had just tasted the Lister Hall attempt to create one as close to the requirements as was possible.

Then at the Installation ceremony Rabbi Hyman gave the Invocation. Previously, at convocations, invocations had been given by Christian religious

leaders, mainly from St. Stephen's or St. Joseph's Colleges but at my Installation I wanted to involve my Rabbi. I acknowledged his presence on stage by referring to him after I greeted the Lieutenant-Governor and the Minister of Advanced Education and before I did so for Archbishop Joseph MacNeil, who is a personal friend of mine to this day.

In my remarks, immediately after thanking people for being at the event, including my mother and my three siblings, I found a way of mentioning Rabbi Hyman again. This is what I said:

"In response to a question from you, Mr. Schlosser, [the Chair of the Board] I said 'I do' a short while ago. The last time I uttered those words, and then also in the presence of a rabbi, was almost 23 years ago. 'I do' is an appropriate response because in a very real sense I have entered into a second marriage – this one with the

university. Few people have their bigamous relationships confirmed in such a public setting and in so regal a fashion – and with the blessing of clergy."



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:

MAZEL TOV

To Miriam Rabinovitch for a quick recovery from the hard work of moving and with wishes for many happy, healthy years in your new home, from the JAHSENA Board and Staff

To Ruth Nolan on the publication of her new children's book, from the JAHSENA Board and Staff

To the Wasserman family, on the birth of their new grandson Ze'ev, from the JAHSENA Board and Staff

To the Kayla Shoctor, on the birth of her granddaughter Aria, from the JAHSENA Board and Staff

To Dave and Robin Marcus, on the engagement of your daughter Annie, from the JAHSENA Board and Staff

To Larry Witten, on his special birthday, from Dan and Trudy Pekarsky

SYMPATHY

To Ron Wolch with warmest wishes for a speedy and complete recovery, from the JAHSENA Board and Staff

To Lawrence Rodnunsky with sympathy on the passing of your mother, from the JAHSENA Board and Staff

To Lawrence Rodnunsky with sympathy on the passing of your mother, from Valda Levin

To Jerrod Henoach, with sympathy on the

passing your mother from the JAHSENA Board and Staff

To Ellery Lew, with wishes for a speedy recovery, from the JAHSENA Board and Staff

To Rachel Garfunkel, with sympathy on the passing of her husband Fred, from the JAHSENA Board and Staff

To Kayla Shoctor, wishing a speedy recovery, from the JAHSENA Board and Staff

To Betty Kagna, with sympathy on the passing of her husband Leon, from the JAHSENA Board and Staff

To Cantor David Mannes, with wishes for a speedy recovery, from Mike and Colleen Paull

We would like to issue a correction to the last edition of Heritage: The sympathy cards issued to the Switzer and Milner/Levine families were sent by Linda Goody. Our apologies for the oversight.

THERE BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD GO I

Continued from page 3
ing shelters for impoverished men by providing and staffing three buildings to serve as overflow shelters. The men would check-in at the shelter around five in the evening and then sign-out at eight the next morning, so the staff could prepare for the following night's visitors. During the middle of the 1970s, Abner expanded his philanthropic efforts and co-founded the *Edmonton People in Need Shelter Society* with Dr. Amy Borkent and Reg Morris of the Rotary Club. This society's goal is to assist people living with severe and chronic mental illness improve their quality of life by providing accommodations, meals, and different supportive services. Abner is still an active member of the board.

In addition to his work at the Edmonton People in Need Shelter Society, Abner's volunteerism extends to various causes. He's a regular volunteer within Edmonton's Jewish community, he helps out at the Bissell Centre's annual Christmas Lunch, and he tries to find as much time as possible to comfort the infirm. Abner notes that it's quite satisfying reassuring people who are receiving medical and psychological care that they are not alone— that they are remembered, part of the community, and not forgotten. Moreover, Abner has travelled to Israel five times for various volunteer opportunities.

For his ongoing dedication and commitment to Edmonton's inner city, Abner has been awarded an Integrity Award from the downtown branch of the Edmonton Rotary Club. This award recognizes non-Rotarians who have made exceptional contributions to their community; Abner is honoured to be a recipient of such an honour. He will receive the Integrity Award at a Rotary banquet on Thursday, May 5 at the Nisku Inn.

Before concluding, I would like to acknowledge Abner's military service. During our conversation, he mentioned that he volunteered for the Royal Canadian Air Force because of what he saw going on in Nazi Germany. He joined the RCAF in 1942 and became a bombardier navigator while earning his wings in Saint Jean, Québec; he also spent three months in Trois-Rivières doing commando training. Abner did not see combat, and he left the RCAF in October of 1945, but he got his pilot licence upon returning to Edmonton and continued to fly planes at the municipal airport.

Abner says that volunteering has helped him become a better person, and he thinks that people should giveback to the community in all aspects of life. At 92, Abner is still overjoyed to be involved in his community, and hopefully his story helps us find the joie de vivre accompanying volunteerism, philanthropy, and solicitude. For in these pursuits, we find the richness of life.



Abner & Hilda Rubin

On Display

At the JCC...

Currently on display at the new JCC you will find an exhibit of artifacts from our collections. Come visit us at 10220-156 St., Suite 200 to see the exhibit and our new offices. If you would like to donate a book, document or a piece of memorabilia to add to our collection, call 780-489-2809.

On the Web...

Check out the Archives Society of Alberta Exhibit prepared for Archives Week 2012, entitled "Looking Good, Alberta, Fashion in the Archives," at www.archivesalberta.org. 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. If you haven't done so yet, take a look at the Edmonton Jewish Cemetery website, www.edmontonjewishcemetery.ca, operated in partnership with the Chevra Kadisha.

From the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta:

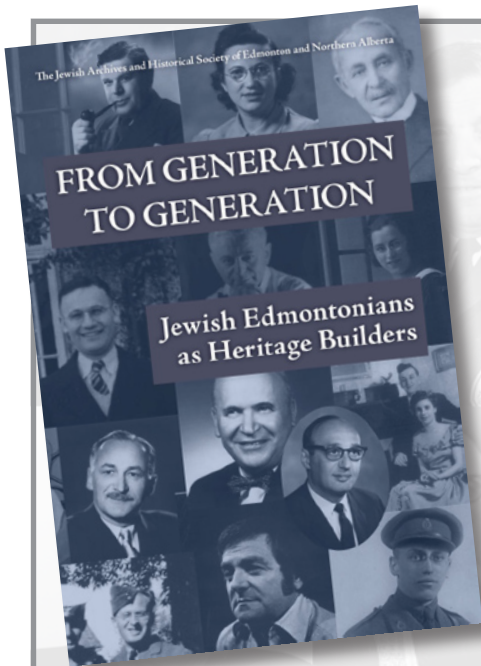
**"FROM PEDLARS TO PATRIARCHS:
A LEGACY REMEMBERED"**

and

**"BITTERSWEET MEMORIES:
THE WAR YEARS"**

These documentary films about the history of the Edmonton Jewish Community are available on DVD for \$18.

To order call the Archives office at 780-489-2809



New from the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta:

From Generation to Generation *Jewish Edmontonians as Heritage Builders*

A 136 page book featuring 25 historic Jewish Edmontonians who made outstanding contributions, in addition to their job or professional work, to enhance life in Edmonton and beyond.

Now available for \$18.95 at Audreys Books, the University of Alberta Bookstore or the JAHSENA office.

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

This book ... contains stories of hardship and perseverance ... featuring colourful sketches of the individuality and personalities of those celebrated.

Ken Tingley
Edmonton's first historian laureate

It's so important that we remember and honour Edmonton's Jewish roots, not just for the sake of the Jewish community, but so that all Edmontonians understand what a rich, diverse province we share. This book is a lovely introduction to some of the Jewish community's own diverse cast of colourful characters.

Paula Simons
Edmonton Journal columnist

A note from Paul



As Judy has said in her President's Report, my time as JAHSENA's Archivist is winding down, as I am departing to focus on the studies for

my Master's degree. I'd like to take a moment to thank everyone with whom I have worked over the past two years, especially our President and Executive for all of their assistance. I'd also like to thank the Editorial Board for JAHSENA's forthcoming book, *From Generation to Generation*, for their tireless support and enthusiasm for ensuring the completion of that project.

I'm sure the Archives will be in good hands.

Sincerely,
Paul Gifford

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
- Donor \$36
- I am interested in serving as a volunteer.
- I have historical material that I would like to donate. - Please call me.
- Benefactor \$50
- Individual \$25

Name: _____
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 Phone Number _____ Email: _____
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 Expiry Date: _____

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