



DISCOVERY

The Journal of the

תגלית

# JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY of Southern Alberta

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SPRING 2012

## Celebrating 100 Years of the Calgary Stampede

The following story first appeared in *I Remember: Reminiscences by Jewish Seniors*, Seniors Department, Calgary Jewish Centre, 1991. More Stampede Memories appear on p. 2 and p.6.

### The Parade

By Helen Goldenberg

Slowly I opened my sleepy eyes as I heard my mother gently waking us. It was very early but before closing my eyes to return to slumber I remembered! This morning we were driving to Calgary to the big Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Parade. Further persuasion to wake up was not necessary. By 5:30 am my sister and I, Mother and Father were seated in our truck ready for the big trip.

We lived in the small town of Royalties located in the oil and gas district of Turner Valley. Royalties was only 40 miles from Calgary, but in the late thirties the drive took about two hours. The narrow winding roads were covered with numerous pot holes of various sizes.

My father owned a cartage truck suitable for his furniture business but very unsuitable for travelling with a family. My younger sister sat on Mother's lap and I was in the centre between Mother and Father. When Dad shifted gears, I shifted positions. We didn't mind the discomfort; we were on our way to the Calgary Parade!

During the long drive my sister and I would sing songs. The heavy roar of the motor, together with the vibrations of the truck travelling on the bumpy, graveled highway added to the quality of our singing. When we tired of singing, to the relief of our parents, we would count

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Percy, Molly, Helen and Sophie Fishman, Little Chicago (Royalties), c. 1945.  
Source: Helen Fishman Goldenberg. JHSSA #1563

## President's Message

Betty Sherwood

Since the late 1940s, the white hat has come to symbolize Calgary-style hospitality and spirit. Thousands of celebrities and dignitaries have been "white-hatted" for their accomplishments. Upon their arrival in the city, newcomers have been thrilled to be gifted with white hats and the White Hat Awards, recognizing outstanding employees in the service industry, are celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. The iconic white cowboy hat was first manufactured by Morris Shumiatcher, who established the Smithbilt Hat Co. after the First World War. **During Historic Calgary Week, please join the JHSSA on Monday July 30, 2012 at 2:00 pm in the unveiling of an historic plaque commemorating the Smithbilt Hat Co. at Hotel Arts, 119 - 12<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW.**

We are so fortunate to have in our midst Alexander Sharon, editor of *Jewish Genealogy Family Finder* and co-author of *Where Once We Walked: A Guide to the Jewish Communities Destroyed in the Holocaust*. By profession an engineer, Alex continues to share his love of and expertise in Jewish genealogy with all those interested, novices or experts. In the fall, we hope he will continue his series for us, focusing on the specific regions or countries of origin of the participants. And by the way, Alex's books and many other genealogy resources can be found in the JHSSA library.

Although we are sharing many Stampede moments and memories in this issue of *Discovery* and in our July photo display at the JCC, we know there are many more Stampede stories and pictures to be found and added to our collections. It's never too late to comb through your family albums and archives and bring your items to us. We can scan photos and documents and return the originals to you. Of course this applies to any and all treasures you may have that record the story of Jewish settlement in Southern Alberta. We want to continue bringing our history to you and your descendants for many years to come.



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## The Parade

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telephone poles. Then all the family participated in a game of 'I spy'.

Sighting the grain elevators at Midnapore signified nearness to the big city. A few miles ahead stood a sign reading, "You are now entering the city of Calgary", but we had no need to read the sign. My sister and I closed our eyes to wait with anticipation for the vibrations of the truck to cease; when the paved road was under us we knew we had arrived; we were in Calgary. Excitement mounted. All around were cars and trucks, and riders on horseback travelling in the same direction; to the centre of the city and towards the parade route.

Because the hour was early my father found parking on the intersection of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street East, an ideal location. He backed up the truck and we climbed into the rear of the vehicle, able to have a clear view of the oncoming event.

Quickly the truck filled with children who asked permission to join us at our choice site. Sidewalks filled with spectators, and finally the sound of drums was heard. The Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Parade had begun. Applause greeted the marchers, the bands, the beautifully decorated floats; the cowboys and cowgirls, the pioneers and chuckwagons.

The glowing sun shone down with pleasure on the spectators and participants. By her wonderful warmth she acknowledged approval of this joyous occasion.

The Mounties rode by, majestic in their crimson uniforms, their horses trotting together in perfect step. Then passed the proud Indian chiefs in beaded leather apparel wearing beautifully colored feathered headdresses. The braves followed, riding bareback, in full native dress, their faces covered in war paint reminding all of days gone by. Behind them rode the Indian women carrying their papooses on their backs, and smiling quietly to the delighted crowd. The old timer's stagecoach approached, led by a team of energetic horses; the stomping noises of the oxen pulling Red River carts – part of our heritage – brought cheers from the entire audience. Clowns, clowning up and down the route creating humorous escapades, roused laughter from everyone.

The spectators cheered and applauded the heartiest at the members of the City of Calgary Sanitation Department. The men stood on the dashboards of city garbage trucks. With their shovels they inspected and cleaned the road so that the marchers could continue their footwork without interruption. With our continuous outbursts, hurrahings, and stomping, it's a wonder the wooden floor on the truck survived.

Soon, all too soon, the end of the parade was in sight. My father had a business to run and it was time to return to Royalties. It had been a wonderful day, one to be remembered.

Throughout the years the annual Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Parade has grown in stature and magnificence. Now due to traffic regulations trucks are not allowed parking privileges on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue on parade day. Thousands of visitors from all over the world, together with thousands of citizens observe the parade from crowded sidewalks or purchase seats from temporary bleachers.

The sun still smiles down with pleasant warmth on parade day. All anticipate the sounds of the first band. But I often wonder if our four youngsters enjoy the parade sitting in their reserved seats, unable to jump and cheer as enthusiastically as their mother once did, from the back of her father's truck almost 45 years ago.

## Stampede Memories

*Most of the following stories were gleaned from the JHSSA Oral History Collection. Others were sent to us in response to our request for Stampede memorabilia. Many more photographs and anecdotes will be featured in the JHSSA Stampede Display at the entrance of the JCC in July. We continue to collect these special memories.*

### Stampede Playgrounds, 1930s

*From Cecil Kline interview (from 2002)*

When I was six, in 1931, we moved to the Wallace Apts. on the corner of 15 Ave. and 2<sup>nd</sup> St. E. There were no open spaces [to play in] other than the fair grounds – the Stampede grounds across the street. As I got older I lived in the Stampede grounds – in the cow barns – everywhere we shouldn't be. Like all kids.

### The Shapiro Wedding, July 1940

*From Archie Shapiro interview (from 1997)*

Charna Manolson and Archie Shapiro had planned an August wedding and were having fun at the fair grounds when the rest of the family convened upon hearing the distressing news that all males who were single on July 15 would be drafted. The carefree couple returned from their Stampede fun to be greeted with the news that they must get married before that draft date. The family then swung into action to make that happen

### Rudy Berger's First Business Venture, Stampede 1944

Rudy Berger, pictured here at the Stampede in 1944, enjoyed a varied and successful career in the hospitality industry all across Canada but did you know that he got his start "flipping hamburgers" at the Stampede? He relates that the awning on his stand was made by Mr. Goldenberg whose daughter, Jeanette, became Rudy's wife many years later. The following year, upon graduation from grade 12, Rudy borrowed some money, built his own hamburger "joint" and after his Stampede stint, arranged to set up his business at exhibitions and fairs all across the Prairies, including serving hundreds of hungry celebrants on V-J Day in Winnipeg. Rudy was on his way!



*Rudy Berger working at the Calgary Stampede, 1944. Source: Rudy Berger via Emanuel Cohen. JHSSA #2575*

### Stampede Food Memories

Paul Finkleman has fond memories of the "elephant ears" and other treats sold at the Stampede by the Hanen family in the 1950s and 60s. Many recall first jobs at Jewish food booths, including the one operated by the Mendelman & Fishman families.

*Continued on Page 3*



## Stampede Memories

*Continued from Page 2*

### Every Calgarian a Cowboy?

*Anecdote from Agi Romer Segal*

This is probably a common experience for new Calgarians. We moved to Calgary after many years in Israel in early July, 1986. We had to stay in a hotel for a few days awaiting the arrival of our furniture. We came down to breakfast on our first morning to a lobby full of hay and hotel staff wearing cowboy gear and hats. I looked at my spouse in bewilderment asking where he had brought our little Jewish boys. He assured me that Calgary had seemed quite normal during his job interview in May. And sure enough, by the end of July all haystacks and western duds were stored away to make room for business suits.

### On With the Show

Many members of our community have been involved with the Stampede committees and the Grandstand Show. Joe Brager first joined the Grandstand Show Committee in 1976 and served as a stage manager. He had particular responsibilities for the Young Canadians outside performances. Harold Milavsky was named to the Stampede Board in May, 2005. Jackie Mills remembers countless rehearsals for her daughter Rosalind's part in the Young Canadians presentations.

### Documenting Stampede History, 2004

Jay Joffe, founding President of JHSSA, had a passion for local history. He sat on the Calgary Stampede Historical committee and was the driving force behind the 2004 "Parade of Posters" featuring all the past posters for this city's major attraction. Jay participated in the Stampede Parade on a number of occasions, both as President of the Southern Alberta Pioneers and their Descendants and, in 2005, as their Pioneer Gentleman of the year.



*Jay and Barbara Joffe and son Jonathan being driven in the Stampede parade, July 2005. Source: Barbara Joffe. JHSSA # 1921*

### New Rabbi Greeted with Western Hospitality, July 2009

Rabbi Yisroel and Rebbetzin Debby Miller did not have to wait long to be integrated into the unique culture that is Stampede Week. Upon landing in Calgary in July 2009, they were treated as dignitaries and were "White Hatted" in a special ceremony. They were then driven directly to Calgary's only Kosher Stampede Breakfast at Congregation House of Jacob-Mikveh Israel (HOJMI) where he was to assume the pulpit. A true Calgary welcome!

### Politicians Flip Kosher Flapjacks

*Anecdote from Marina Segal – Volunteer at the HOJMI Kosher Stampede Breakfast, 2011*

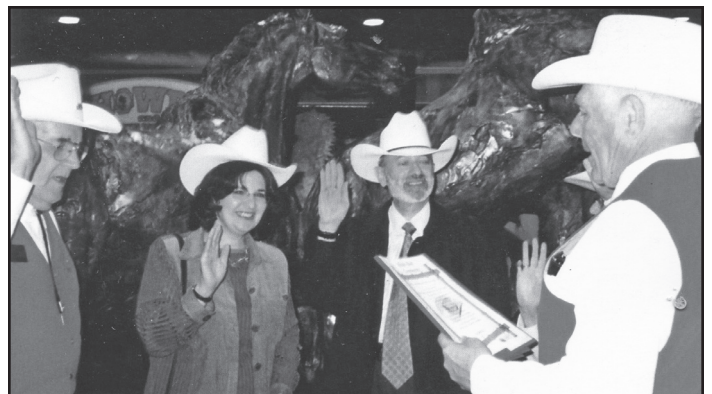
Local MLA Paul Hinman and Wildrose Party leader Danielle Smith both attended the HOJMI breakfast, still wearing Alberta Beef aprons from their previous breakfast event. They both got right into line to help flip pancakes. A HOJMI volunteer jokingly commented, "Wait, you can't wear those aprons here. This is a dairy breakfast!" Not sure whether he was joking, they became flustered and quickly offered to remove the offending aprons and don HOJMI ones instead.



*Line dancing at the first House of Jacob-Mikveh Israel Kosher Stampede Breakfast, July 1998. Source: HOJMI. JHSSA #2141.2*



*Mair Madorsky and his American Hide & Fur Stampede Parade float, n.d. Source: Brenna Perera. JHSSA #2627*

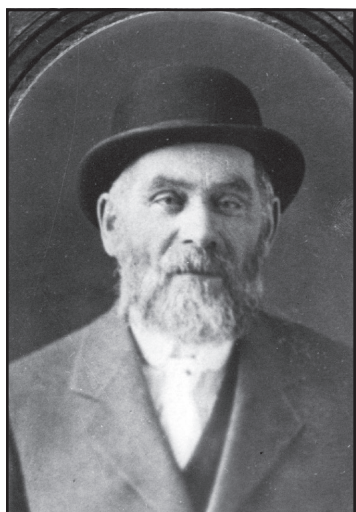


*Debby and Rabbi Yisroel Miller (centre) at their White Hat Ceremony at the Calgary International Airport, July 2009. Source: HOJMI. JHSSA #2141.42*

# Sometimes “missing the boat” is a good thing: Celebrating the centenary of the arrival of Louis and Sarah Estrin to Calgary

By Sandra Lipton

In the spring of 1912 my maternal grandparents, Louis Estrin and Sarah Konikov, anxious to join their family in Canada, were booked to sail from Southampton on the Titanic. A failed medical exam forced them to delay their departure. Thanks to an eye infection, my grandparents missed the ill-fated voyage.



Solomon Estrin. c.1920. Source: Janet Sherman. JHSSA #2623

My grandfather's parents, Shlomo (Solomon) and Mariasha, had immigrated to Canada from Mogilev, Belarus the previous year. Life in Russia was difficult. Being Jewish meant not only suffering from physical persecutions, but also severe legal restrictions on every aspect of their lives. Russian Jews were even required to pay special taxes on religious customs; “the box tax” for the wearing of *kippahs* (5 silver rubles per year) as well as a “candle tax” for lighting of Sabbath candles.<sup>1</sup> Eager to escape the oppression in Russia, the

Estrins, like thousands of their fellow Russian Jews, immigrated to North America. On August 15, 1911, they boarded the Willehad with two of their five children, Berel (Benjamin) and Ciwie (Tsvia). The family arrived from Hamburg into Quebec City on the 10th of September 1911 and then traveled on to Calgary. The second son, Dov Ber (Harry), had been sent to Canada in advance of the family to make arrangements for the family's arrival, but ship delay (possibly due to a smallpox outbreak) resulted in Harry arriving in Canada after his parents. As the eldest, my grandfather, Yehuda Leib (Louis), stayed behind to look after his 15-year-old brother Abraham (Abe) who was prevented from travelling with the family due to an eye infection. Just prior to their planned departure, Louis made a trip to the neighbouring village to say goodbye to his 17-year-old cousin Sarah. When Sarah was quite young, her father had passed away. Her mother had remarried and Sarah was now living with her sister. Louis asked if she wanted to go to Canada with him and Abe and she quickly replied “yes”.

Abe, Louis and Sarah trekked from Belarus to Germany. At Bremen, Louis arranged for Abe to get a job on a boat going to America. Louis and Sarah then traveled from Bremen to England to board the Titanic, but Sarah was diagnosed with an eye infection and their plans to sail were delayed. In June 1912 they left Liverpool on the SS Canada, arriving in Quebec on June 25, 1912. During the several months they spent in England, Sarah and Louis were boarded with two different families. While some family lore notes that Louis and Sarah got married in England before the ship sailed, ship

passenger records support a shipboard marriage.

In Abe's biography (held by the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta) he comments that Louis did not have a passport. A possible explanation for Louis' lack of passport is that he gave it to Sarah to use. Louis had asked her to come to Canada with him just before he was due to leave so she did not have time to apply for her papers. It would also explain her ship registration as a single female under



Harry, Tsvia and Louis Estrin. Source: Janet Sherman. JHSSA #2624

the name of Sarah Estrin if they were not in fact married until after they boarded the ship. According to Abe's story, Louis took Abe's passport to use for himself and then traded it with another traveler who looked younger but was closer in age to Louis (there was a 10 years age difference between the brothers). An examination of the passenger log for SS Canada arriving into Quebec on June 24, 1912 identifies only one Estrin entry (for Sarah), which lends credence to Abe's story that Louis was traveling under another person's passport. A further study of the ship's passenger log for people travelling to Calgary retrieved only two records, thus revealing that my grandfather was travelling on the name of “Samuel Cosoi(?)” Later records from the Immigration and Naturalization Service confirm that Louis arrived into Canada in June, 1912 on the SS Canada.

Once Sarah and Louis arrived in Calgary, they were welcomed and surrounded by family. Their Jewish wedding was a double *simcha* as they shared in a double ceremony with Louis' sister Tsvia and her groom Samuel Segal. While initially Louis and Sarah lived with Solomon and Mariasha and Louis' three brothers, in 1913 the two newly married couples shared a house and then lived in adjacent houses for a brief time. As a bachelor Samuel Segal had homesteaded near Drumheller, but once married he and Tsvia lived in the city, first Calgary, then Vegreville and later Vancouver. Through the 1910s and 1920s other members of Louis' family immigrated to Calgary, including initially two sons of Solomon's sister Bayla (Mordechai) Libin and then eventually Bayla and her whole family.

While the newlyweds settled in Calgary, Louis' parents and two of his brothers were looking for land to homestead on. In

<sup>1</sup> Russo-Jewish Committee of London. The Persecution of the Jews in Russia. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1891.



## Louis and Sarah Estrin

*Continued from Page 4*

1914, Solomon, Mariasha, Harry and Abe left Calgary to settle on a homestead with the assistance of the Jewish Colonization Association. The 1916 census lists the Estrine [sic] family (John, Mary, Harry and Abraham), all Jews from Russia, homesteading in Township 34, range 1 west of the 4th meridian. The location of the homestead was by Compeer, Alberta, a small hamlet near the Saskatchewan border. The Western Land Grants database confirms that Abe, Solomon and Harry were homesteading in this area in 1918, with Solomon and Abe farming section 2 (SW and SE) and Harry farming section 3 (NE). In 1916, there were at least seven other Jewish families farming in the Compeer area – Jack Greenberg, S. Libin (likely the son of Solomon's sister Bayla), David Pearlman, Mayer Pearlman, S. Belkin, Louis Bernstein and Morris Demsky. I am amazed at the number of Jewish families living in areas which even by today's standards are very remote! In the early part of the twentieth century transportation around Alberta was greatly facilitated by an extensive network of trains. In the 1910s there were more Jews living in rural Alberta than in the cities.

My great-grandparents and great-uncles had 640 acres of land. In 1916, only 50 acres were under cultivation, with crops of wheat, flax and oats. In addition, they owned two horses, eight oxen, seven cows and 10 young stock. This is quite impressive, as the report of the Jewish Colonization Association for 1916 indicates that the 10 Jewish farmers in the Compeer area had a total of 18 horses, eight cows and 10 young stock. Unfortunately the Estrins were only successful in bringing in a crop for that one year and in subsequent

years depended on trading cows and horses. The land was rocky and winters were cold and they had little farming experience. It was a hard life on the homestead, especially for my great grandmother Mariasha, as she was the only woman on the family homestead. In the winter of 1919, Mariasha became ill and later that year the family moved from Compeer to Edmonton. On December 22, 1920, Mariasha passed away in Edmonton. A few years later Solomon married Esther Gofsky. In Edmonton, my great-grandfather was fortunate in being hired to fill the job of *shamas* for the Beth Israel Synagogue, taking over for Mr. S. Nelson. In a 1973 interview, Abe Estrin indicates that Mr. Nelson had been fired due to a conviction for selling liquor, but I have yet to confirm this. Solomon served in this role (and later assistant Rabbi) from 1919 to his death during *Pesach* in 1932. It was the largest Jewish funeral seen in Edmonton. Jack Baltzan in his eulogy for Solomon notes that Reb Shlomo Estrin was "A Jew, a wise scholar, in him was embodied Torah, wisdom and the humility of Hillel – true humbleness."<sup>2</sup>

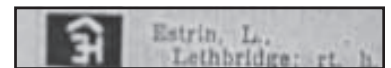
Louis and Sarah remained in Calgary for most of the years between 1912 and 1932. As new immigrants they both initially got jobs at P. Burns meatpacking plant. Louis also worked in the grocery business and as a cattle dealer and fur buyer. In 1932, they moved their family of eight children – Fanny (Fay), Morris, Harry, Hyman (Hy), Esther, Marjorie, Aaron and Janet to Lethbridge. In Lethbridge and later Edmonton, Louis continued working as a fur buyer and cattle dealer. He would combine cattle buying (spring, summer and fall) with work as a fur buyer during the winter months. In a 1937 article in the *Raymond Recorder*, Louis is referred to as a "well-known cattle buyer." Louis' brothers Benjamin and Harry also worked as cattle buyers. During his Lethbridge years, Louis had two brands, one of his own and one shared with his brother and A. Davids.

Louis moved his family to Edmonton in the late 1930s where they lived for over 12 years. In Edmonton, Louis continued to work as a cattle and fur buyer, frequently traveling to many parts of western Canada and as well as the United States. Louis and Sarah later lived some time in Petaluma, California (where their daughters Fay, Esther and Marjorie had settled) and then moved to Vancouver to join their daughter Janet and son-in-law Harry Sherman. Louis passed away in Vancouver in 1968, but Sarah returned to Calgary with Janet and Harry in 1979 and passed away in Calgary in 1985. 100 years after Louis and Sarah's arrival in Calgary, Calgary remains home to their daughter and son-in-law Janet and Harry Sherman, four of their 21 grandchildren: Marc (Monique) Estrin, Sandra (Harold) Lipton, Barb (Ron) Krell and Gayle Sherman (Brian Shustack) and four of their 42 great-grandchildren (Tevie Lipton, Debra Lipton, Daniel Sheinfeld and Rachel Sheinfeld).

*Other sources for this article include: Ancestry.com; JHSSA files; Heritage, Winter 2005 (JAHSENA); Jewish Colonization Association Records; Library and Archives Canada Digital Collections; Stockmen's Memorial Foundation Archives & Library; Peel's Prairie Provinces Collections*



**Sarah & Louis Estrin Family with children Fay, Morris, Harry, Esther and Hyman, c. 1924. Source: Janet Sherman. JHSSA #2625**



**Brand registered to Louis Estrin. Source: Alberta Brand Book, 1937**

<sup>2</sup> Jacob Baltzan writes of his friend Shlomo Estrin. Estrin Family Fonds. Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta (JAHSENA).

# Memories of the Calgary Stampede: Business and Pleasure

By Lila Mydlarski

My very first attendance at the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede (as it was then called) was at the tender age of 14 months in July, 1941. My parents, Max Miller and Doris Miller, wheeled me in my carriage to the Stampede grounds and took a photo of me in front of one of the Indian teepees. We lived only about five blocks from the grounds.

My parents owned a second-hand store called Vancouver Clothing at 333 – 8th Ave SE. Stampede was a busy time for our family, as Dad would sew custom-made silk cowboy shirts with hand-made button holes sewn by Mom. These shirts would be displayed on hangers on the store-front windows so prospective buyers could admire them. I remember the beautiful feel of the silk shirts and their bright vibrant colours: red, green, blue and my favourite – purple. Most of the shirts had white piping on the collars and on the plackets. One of Dad's trademarks was a removable panel that snapped onto the shirtfront to add a different look to the shirt.

By the time I was eight, our family numbered three children – my sister, Reva, four years old and my brother Morrie, one year old – and we had moved to our house at 309 – 13th Ave SE. My dad outfitted our neighbourhood friends with cowboy shirts as well and took a photo of all of us decked out in our cowboy finery, wearing our coveted shirts and oversized cowboy hats.

From a very young age, I remember going to watch the Stampede parade on 9th Ave SE. As our store backed onto the parade route, we could just turn the corner and line up on the sidewalk to watch the floats, horses, bands and "Indians". This was one of the few times my dad would leave the store to come out and watch while Mom stayed back in the store to wait for potential customers. Most of the store owners were Jewish and like us, either the wife or husband would come out for a bit to watch the parade as well.

To supplement our "income" during Stampede, Mom would take in

out of town "guests" who would rent a room in our house (\$5.00 a night) for one or two nights or sometimes, for the whole week. The Noble Hotel, now the Hotel Arts, would often call Mom late at night when they were full-up and ask if she had any room for people needing a place to sleep. At times, when Mom didn't think anyone else would be coming, we got to sleep in our own room. But, when the phone call came, Mom would get us up, change the bedding and we would go back to sleep in the living room. It was almost like room and board for the guests. Mom would invariably offer tea, coffee and cake and cookies to her guests when they returned after a long day Stampeding.

How did Mom manage to put up so many people in our tiny house? Well, first of all, we had to give up our bedrooms and we all camped out on our living room floor. It was quite an adventure and at the time I didn't realize the work entailed in converting our home into a hotel. If the guests only stayed one night, Mom would wash the bedding in our old washing machine, hang out the sheets on the clothesline, and when they were dry, iron everything and be ready that night for the next guests.

Dad would also supplement our income by renting out our backyard for parking cars. He would charge \$5.00 for the whole day. People would drive their cars in and leave their keys with Dad. As Dad didn't drive, whoever wanted to leave and their car was blocked in, would cheerfully drive out the other cars to get to their own and then drive the others back. People were so helpful and honest in those days. We never had any trouble or complaints. It was a very special time.

For me, it was always exciting. I loved meeting new people from all different parts of the country and the US. We would often have customers who would return year after year, send us postcards and little gifts for Christmas and who seemed like family. I remember Bill from Montana who would always send us a package of Lifesavers at

*Continued on Page 8*



*Sisters Lila and Reva Miller in their front yard, sporting western shirts made by their father Max, July 1947. Source: Reva Faber. JHSSA #2630*

## From our Files

*These tidbits from our files were recently found by serendipity while researching for other information.*

## Close Calls – Titanic Stories

Raphael Gurevitch was a homesteader in Rumsey in 1912 when he decided to arrange for a bride to travel to Alberta. Sophie Lieberman's mother agreed to his proposal that Sophie come to see whether she was agreeable to the marriage and he would promise to pay for her return fare if she declined to marry. Sophie was on the ship Carpathian which picked up the survivors of the Titanic on that fateful day in April, 1912. She accepted Raphael's proposal and did not have to sail back to Europe.

Abe Hapton left Gomel for Calgary in April 1912. He made his way to Glasgow where he boarded a ship bound for Canada. His ship was 60 miles from the Titanic when it was hit. After landing in Halifax, he rode an immigrant train to Calgary, arriving on May 12, 1912.



*Doris Miller, right, with Stampede "hotel guest", July 1955. Source: Reva Faber. JHSSA #2631*



# New Photos from Our Archives

## *The Story of a Photo: Lubell Kosher Store in Calgary, c. 1908*

When this 100-year-old photo of a Calgary store with the conspicuous kosher symbol in the window arrived via email, it initially seemed implausible that it was actually taken in Calgary and at such an early date, but closer inspection and a bit of research do indicate that this is the case.

The photo came courtesy of Susan and Jan Lubell. In March, Susan had attended the JHSSA presentation on using gravestones as genealogical research tools. Her questions about sorting out conflicting dates and spellings led to a rich correspondence with her mother and yielded the accompanying family photos. A closer inspection of the posters on either side of the store front (by zooming in), revealed an ad for "Statue Special" drink of the Calgary Aerated Water Co. featuring an image of the Statue of Liberty. Henderson's City directory of 1910 (earliest available online) confirmed that the company operated in Calgary at that time. It also listed a Gertrude Lubell, widow of Morris, grocer and confectionery at 425 8 Ave. E. The couple and their three children moved to Calgary shortly before 1906, when they, along with Gertie's father, Joseph Greisman, are listed in that year's census. In 1908 Morris died in a tragic accident and is buried here. Gertie (born 1881) was remarried to Isaac Lederman and they moved to Port Alberni in 1912. As Susan's original question indicated, her great-grandfather's name appears in various records as Morris/Maurice Lubelski/ Lubelsky/Lubell and his birthdate as 1874, 1875 and 1876.

Jan has located marriage records from York county from c. 1897 for Morris Lubelski and Gertie indicating they were from Poland and

Austria respectively. The 1906 census lists Germany as his birthplace and 1894 as his immigration date. Family stories, mostly from his son Saul, recount that Morris had contracted TB as a young man and for health reasons had lived in Denver for a few years before moving to Calgary and opening a general store. He met his tragic end when he witnessed a horse-pulled buck-board run out of control so he ran into the road to push a child out of its path. He was killed when he tripped and hit his head. Gertie continued to run the store, often taking wares on horseback to sell in camps around Calgary. Isaac Lederman was a *landsman* who had been told that she could provide a suitable place to stay upon his arrival in Calgary. Gertie's father, Mr. Greisman, appears in the 1908 Congregation House of Jacob minutes as secretary and as a member of the committee charged with finding a suitable lot for the building of a synagogue.

One simple question led to a wealth of information about the early days of the Calgary Jewish community.

*Left: Lubell storefront with Kosher symbol, 425 Eighth Avenue E., probably with owner Maurice Lubelsky in front, c. 1908. Source: Jan Lubell. JHSSA #2629*



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*Maurice and Gertie Lubelsky. Source: Jan Lubell. JHSSA #2617*

## JHSSA NEWS:

### JHSSA Sseeking Volunteers for August 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> Casino

We can still use some more volunteers for our upcoming Casino on Sunday, August 12<sup>th</sup> and Monday, August 13<sup>th</sup>. This Casino provides a significant portion of our operational budget. Please contact David Busheikin at david@busheikin.com, (h) 403-281-8235, or (w) 403-255-8643 to offer your help.

### JHSSA Collections Enhance Herzl Exhibit

A number of local Herzl-related items from the JHSSA were added to David Matlow's Herzl Exhibit at the JCC in April. Local items included a small Herzl bust, a certificate for the Herzl Club of Young Judea and posters for Herzl Memorial events.

### JHSSA Office Upgrade

The JHSSA office has purchased a new desktop computer and a laptop with the assistance of an Alberta Community Spirit Grant. The grant also got our new website design project started. The renewal of the grant for 2012 will help us complete the website redesign among other projects. Watch this space for updates.

### Stampede Memories

*Continued from Page 6*

Christmastime. And then there were the two Jewish salesmen from California, Rifkin and his buddy, who came to the Stampede "seeking their fortune", hoping to cash in by selling their wares at the grounds. Every year they had a new gimmick and we would often help them put together and package what they were selling. Though they never made it big, they kept coming back for many years. Rifkin would constantly moan "Oh, my aching back" and we would always crack up hearing him.

When I was about ten, I was allowed to go to Children's Day on my own. I'd always loved dogs and horses and would sign out every book from the library that had anything to do with them. When the Stampede began to give away ponies, puppies and bikes, I eagerly looked forward to winning at least one prize. Sadly, I never did win and left every time a little more dejected. The worst thing that ever happened to me though was the day my parents gave me five dollars (which to me seemed like a fortune) and I was going to buy a little souvenir for Reva and Morrie, who were still too young to attend the Stampede. I looked and looked for the perfect gifts and would keep taking out the \$5.00 to check and see if I still had it. When I'd finally decided on what I was going to purchase, I put my hand in my pocket – but the money was gone!

I had never felt so utterly heartbroken in my whole life. It began to rain and I felt that the falling raindrops were blending with my hot tears. I began to retrace my steps and searched and searched, but to no avail and I had to return home with empty hands.

As I grew older, I nevertheless retained my love and excitement for the Stampede.

When all stores used to close on Wednesday afternoons, that was the time to go down and enjoy the midway and the grandstand show – standing room only. One of the highlights many years later, our daughter Karen was a dancer with the Young Canadians and our whole family, sitting in the grandstand, got to watch her dance on stage.

This July, I'm looking forward to attending the centennial celebration of the Calgary Stampede, The Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth, and this time as a senior.



*From Smithbilt Hat Co. 1950 ad in E. & P.N.R. Morrison, Calgary, 1875-1950.*

### Historic Calgary Week Participation

#### Historic Plaque Unveiling Ceremony, Monday, July 30<sup>th</sup> at 2-4 pm

During Historic Calgary Week, the entire community is invited to the unveiling of a plaque commemorating the Shumiatcher family's Smithbilt hat factory at the original site which is now Hotel Arts. Smithbilt's white hat was popularized in the late 1940s and has become an icon of Calgary. Please join us at **2:00 pm on Monday, July 30, 2012, at Hotel Arts, 119 12th Avenue SW.**

#### JHSSA Directors Offer Programs for Historic Calgary Week

Harry Sanders will offer a presentation called *Calgary's Hotel Scene ca. 1912* at the Palliser Hotel on Tuesday, July 31, 2012 at 3:00 pm.

"Paulo" Finkleman will be performing at 7:30 pm on Thursday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Central (W.R. Castell) Library downtown. His concert is called *From the Hysterical to the Historical: Songs on Calgary's History*. Both events are open to the general public.

### DISCOVERY

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The editors welcome submissions for publication relating to areas of Calgary and Southern Alberta Jewish history. All articles should be typed, documented and sent for consideration.

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