



JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY of Southern Alberta

JHSSA 23rd Annual General Meeting

Monday, October 21, 2013 at 7:30 pm in the Calgary JCC auditorium

Small Town Snapshots:

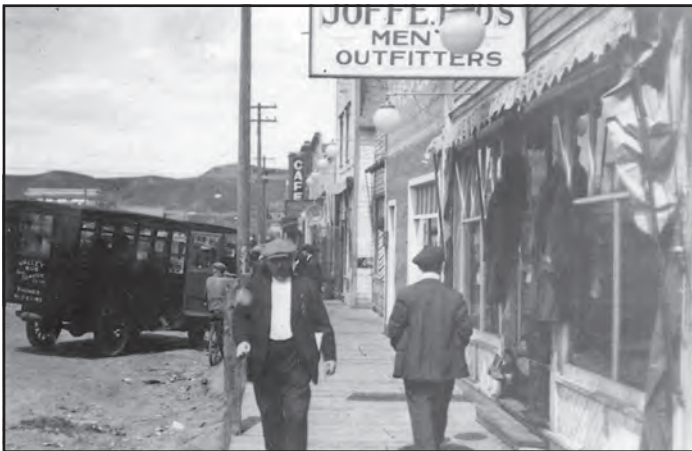
Jewish Life in Small Towns in Southern Alberta

According to the Canadian census of 1931, approximately 500 Jewish people lived in over 70 small towns spread throughout Alberta. This compares to over 1600 living in Calgary at the time. From Alliance to Wetaskiwin, from Aisenstat to Zack, Jewish settlers fulfilled important roles in their communities.

Many of these people experienced life in more than one small town and as times and their fortunes changed, most migrated to the larger centres. But in those earlier days Jewish townfolk were grocers, hotel keepers, fur traders, machinists, physicians, teachers, travelling salesmen and welders. Some held public office and many were involved as volunteers in community activities. Hearing their stories of coping with the climate, practising Judaism, interacting with their neighbours and making ends meet through Depression and wartime will increase your admiration for their courage.

Naturally, many amazing and amusing incidents have been recorded and we will share a sampling of such stories and photos during our AGM program.

The AGM will include the election of a new JHSSA Board of Directors and the presentation of certificates to those in our community who have celebrated their 80th birthday this past year. The evening will conclude with refreshments.



Outside Joffe Bros. store on Main Street Drumheller, c. 1918. Source: Jay Joffe. JHSSA #372

President's Message

By Betty Sherwood



Although we have concluded a busy and productive 5773, the coming season is promising to be equally fulfilling and eventful.

Our database of Southern Alberta Jewish Veterans of World Wars I and II, which provides information on about 500 veterans, will be launched on Monday, November 4th at 7:30 pm. Those in attendance will receive a brief orientation to the database, as well as meet the researchers and sponsor behind this wonderful project.

Each November we honour the memory of our founding president Jay Joffe by sponsoring an history-themed movie at the Beth Tzedec Jewish Film Festival. This year we will present *Broadway Musicals: A Jewish Legacy*, as well as a live interlude of Broadway songs. Please check for details in the Film Festival Brochure.

Many organizations rely on the JHSSA when researching their own history. Unfortunately, we are not able to store all the files relating to the Jewish community. Continuing our partnership with the Glenbow Archives, we are hosting a workshop for the leadership and staff of all of our communal organizations with archivist Doug Cass on Monday, November 25th at the JCC on organizing and preserving organizational records and documents. Please contact our office for information or to register.

Almost two years ago Reva Faber accepted our invitation to prepare an educational kit that would demonstrate to teachers and students that there is more to Judaism and the Jews of southern Alberta than merely Chanukah! Reva's unit for grade two, centred on the story of the Montefiore colony and synagogue, will be available

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Southern Alberta Jewish Veterans of World War I & II Database Launch

Monday, November 4, 2013, 7:30 pm at the JCC

By R. Kerr

JHSSA is pleased to announce the launch of our *Southern Alberta Jewish Veterans of World War I & II* database. Dedicated to Val Rimer with the support of the Ghert Family Foundation, this project grew out of our 2011 AGM program honouring our living veterans. We are grateful to Val Rimer, Commander of Jewish War Veterans of Canada, Post #2 for the time and effort he took to provide us with information and to Bernard Ghert who graciously offered to fund the project; both Mr. Rimer and Mr. Ghert will be part of the November launch. Keith Hann, JHSSA's main researcher for the project, will introduce the key features of the database and explain how to conduct searches, both for general information about our Jewish servicemen, and for individual veterans. This database aims to include all Jewish veterans of the two World Wars who spent a part of their lives in Southern Alberta.

Compiling the database has been a fascinating process, with the information provided including much more than just 'Name', 'Rank' and 'Serial Number'. Militarily related fields range from 'Training Locations' to 'Battles Seen' and 'Date of Discharge'; thumbnail personal data such as 'Names of Parents' and 'Occupation at Time of Enlistment' helps to round out each individual veteran. The database has allowed us to pull all our pieces of information together, expanded and fleshed out by the diligent searching of other resources.

Some of these available resources have presented their own challenges, being lists that were compiled by various organizations from their own scattered, often hand-written records, containing typographical and other errors. These are sometimes very easy to spot, as in the case of Arnold Grobman from North Battleford, Saskatchewan, who in one list appears as "Groberman". Fortunately for us, the Jewish population of North Battleford was small at the time, and we were readily able to confirm through other sources that it was in fact Arnold whose name was simply mis-recorded. In other instances, however, it is much more difficult to be confident regarding the actual identity of a given entry, and there have been cases where we have been unable to come to any conclusions. We

feel confident, for example, that the "Grimstein"/"Grinstein" references in *Memories on the March* are both to the same man; as Morris Grinstein was a known member of the Calgary community. But we have no way of ascertaining whether or not the "Grimstein" in the *Canadian Jewish War Veterans Book of Remembrance* is simply a different typo or a completely different fellow, so a serial number has not been recorded in the database.

Also challenging are initial-only listings, such as "Silver, S.", who appears on the 1946 B'nai Brith Honour Roll as having served in the RCAF. The *Canadian Jewish War Memorial Book of Remembrance* has two listings for "Silver, S.", as well as Silver Sam, Saul and Sidney, but identifies them by rank and serial number, which we don't have (and cannot access, not being family members); *Canadian Jews in WWII* has no listing in either volume, which tells us only that the soldier in question was neither decorated nor a casualty. There is a card in our cemetery file indicating that a Sid Silver, son of Meir, is buried in the Erlton Cemetery, and his birth year would have made him the right age to have served. All we can do in this case is indicate, in the "Other Information" column of the database, that there is the possibility that he is the "Silver, S." referred to in the B'nai Brith Honour Roll.

With regard to our World War I veterans, there is an ever-increasing amount of information available through electronic channels. The Attestation Papers that have been scanned into the digital archives of Library and Archives Canada (LAC), for example, provide a wealth of information, though finding one piece of the puzzle often leads to another.

We have compiled the *Southern Alberta Jewish Veterans of World War I & II* database in order to bring together the many scattered resources that can help us tell the stories of our soldiers. We are proud of the information we have uncovered, and the individuals we have been able to add to our roster. And we are intrigued by the fact that even as we are answering questions, we are uncovering

more. There are so many soldiers of whom we still know so little; some lacking their military story, some their personal one. Working through the records, the search for their details becomes surprisingly personal. It is exciting when a piece of information unexpectedly fits, and disappointing when it proves, at best, inconclusive. One of the hopes for this database is that it will encourage future researchers to explore not just their own family histories, but some of these mysteries as well.

We also hope that those attending the launch on November 4th will be able to provide us with further information about our Jewish veterans.



RCAF #2 Equipment Depot in War Bonds Parade on Seventh Avenue, c. 1941. Source: David Spindel. JHSSA #453a

Report on the Boston 33rd International Conference on Jewish Genealogy

By Ken Drabinsky

The 33rd IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy was held this summer in the beautiful city of Boston, Massachusetts. This event was co-hosted by The International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies and the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston represented by co-hosts, Heidi Ulrich and Jay Sage.

The conference was a great success – covering pretty well every genealogy topic you would need in your search for ancestral family. Of the 1250 attendees, 40 were from Canada – with a large contingent from both Montreal and Toronto and a few from Western Canada. A total of 18 countries were represented, including as far afield as Japan and Brazil. Notable attendees/presenters included Stanley Diamond (Project Coordinator, JRI-Poland), Warren Blatt (Managing Director, JewishGen.org), Stephen Morse, Daniel Horowitz (MyHeritage.com/Geni) and Julian and Fay Bussgang (Book of Residence experts).

One of the highlights was the opening keynote by Aaron Lansky, founder of the National Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, MA. In 1980

Mr. Lansky started his crusade to rescue tens of thousands of Yiddish books from obscurity and, in many cases, garbage bins. He has since established a major translation program to make these books available in English. Needless to say the ballroom was packed.

Another highlight was the award given to the Toronto chapter of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada for their recently published book: *Tracing Our Roots, Telling Our Stories*. Mazel Tov.

The days were loaded with interesting talks and several day trips around Jewish Boston for local sightseeing, historical tours and the opportunity to take in a Red Sox baseball game at the historic Fenway Park.

Natashia (Halikowski) and I attended our first two IAJGS conferences in L.A. (2011) and Washington, D.C. (2012); however, this conference was different. It was the inaugural meeting of the Kolo-Rypin-Plock Area Research Group (www.krparg.org) which I initiated this year. The southern boundary of the area is 75 km north of Lodz, Poland, extending as far north as Golub-Dobrzyn. My initial team, consisting of myself and two researchers from Sydney, Australia, Evelyn Frybort and Rieke Nash, exhibited the new group at a table in the SHARE Fair on Sunday and at a formal 75-minute presentation on Monday morning to 20 excited participants. Presently, we have signed up over 120 interested members and expect that figure to more than double in the coming year. If you have ancestral linkages in this area, please contact me directly for a map, additional information and/or a questionnaire. A website is under construction.

Next year the conference is in Salt Lake City, Utah July 27 – Aug. 1, 2014.

If you are interested in the Conference Program or more information on the KRPARG, drop into the JHSSA office or contact me directly at kenjdrngen@gmail.com or 403-815-1482.

Kolo-Rypin-Plock Area Research Group (KRPARG)



KRP regional base map provided by Ken Drabinsky.

President's Message

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to schools later this year.

The JHSSA has agreed to lend its support to two major events this year. We are looking forward to cooperating with the Calgary Jewish Federation on the Calgary showing of a national exhibit, *Jews: A Canadian Story*. Noted historian Professor Irving Abella will speak at the official opening on Sunday, January 19th, while we hope to play a role as providers of additional information and as docents. In the spring, the celebration of the centennial of the Chevra Kadisha will be enriched by documents and other materials from our collections. Please refer to their new website at www.chevraofcalgary.org for up to date information about that event. We have plans to place an historic plaque at the Erlton Jewish Cemetery in honour of this community milestone.

Please make every effort to join us for our first event of the year, our AGM on Monday, October 21st, when various members of the community will be sharing stories from their forebears' years in small towns.

Jewish Book Festival

Reel Time: The Jewish Community and Movie Exhibitors in Calgary

A Presentation by Robert and Tamara Seiler
Sunday, November 24, 2013, 2:00 pm
at the Calgary JCC

JHSSA is pleased to be able to participate in Jewish Book Fair. Drawing on their recently published book, *REEL TIME: Movie Exhibitors and Movie Audiences in Prairie Canada 1896 to 1986*, Robert and Tamara Seiler will discuss the history of movie exhibition in Calgary, focusing in particular on the central role played by members of Calgary's Jewish community in turning theatrical movie exhibition into a major commercial enterprise, thereby shaping the leisure time activities of generations of moviegoers, in Calgary and well beyond.



Community Milestones 1913 & 1963

1913

By 1913 Calgary was a city of over 60,000. A *Calgary News Telegram* April 25th headline states "Many races make up Calgary's population". It puts the Jewish population at 632 – slightly higher than the Italian population but lower than the Russian community of 849 members (although one wonders whether any of the Russians were actually also Jewish).

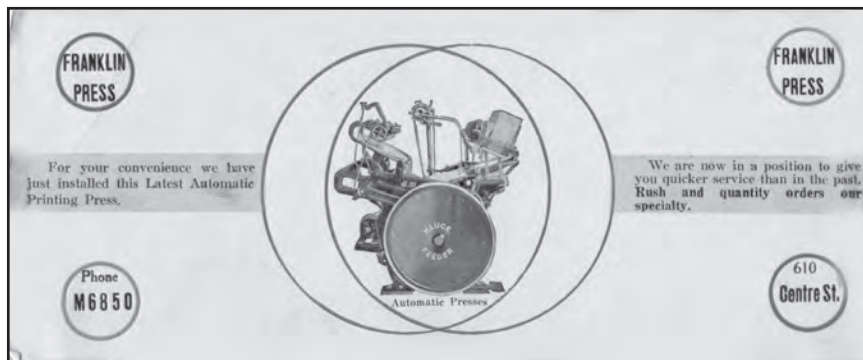
A premier event in Calgary in 1913 was the **Pal-estine Exhibition** held in March on the Stampede grounds (see *Discovery* Spring 2013). However, since this event was mounted by a missionary organization, it did not involve the local Jewish community.

This small community of Jews had established an impressive network of communal organizations by this date. A synagogue had been built and a Zionist and a women's organization were active. Following the 1912 example of the Hebrew Ladies Aid, the **Agudas Zion** (later to become the Calgary Zionist Organization) held its first annual ball on February 18, 1913 at the Al Azhar Temple.

A **Jewish community council** (*va'ad ha'ir*) had been established in 1912 and its committee for Jewish education had restructured the delivery of afternoon classes that had been previously offered by Congregation House of Jacob. In the 1945 Calgary Hebrew High School Yearbook, Mr. Shaie Jaffe described the 1913 organization of the school in the following words: "In 1913, the 'vaad' moved the Talmud Torah to the synagogue where instruction was given to over 100 children by one teacher ... The year 1913 therefore saw the beginning of the movement to separate the school from the synagogue". This movement was directed by S. Jaffe, B. Margolus and M. Olin. It was this milestone that was celebrated at the school's 1963 Jubilee (see below) and at its centennial event this past June. Local press clippings from the summer of 1914 indicate that this was an ongoing process since there are reports of numerous meetings discussing establishing an education committee distinct from the Jewish Council. This version of the school was short lived and there followed a period of inactivity until the school was reorganized in 1916 and in 1920 a building was purchased for the school.

A Jewish presence was also evident in Calgary's business and professional community by this time. 1913 saw the arrival of Calgary's first Jewish lawyer, **Benjamin Ginsberg** (1884-1959), who was called to the Alberta bar in March. The *Calgary News Telegram*, announcing the opening of his practice in the New Burns block the following January, notes that he "is the only Jewish barrister in Calgary". He had come to North America from South Africa in 1910. Ginsberg was named King's Counsel in 1936 and served as president of the Calgary Bar Association. He quickly became prominent in the Jewish community serving as chairman of the Calgary Jewish Relief Fund for War sufferers in 1915 and becoming a founding president of B'nai Brith Lodge #816 in 1917. Ginsberg's name appears in the local press frequently over the following decades.

The involvement of Jews in the local economy was ever expanding. 1913 saw the establishment of the **Franklin Press** by Abraham Shnitka. This new venture, the first Jewish job print shop in Western Canada, was especially significant for the Jewish community



Franklin Press ad, n.d. Source: JAHSENA

because Shnitka offered Hebrew typesetting. From this date until Shnitka left for Edmonton to become King's printer in 1935, almost all Jewish organizations' promotional materials were printed by the Franklin Press. Much of this ephemeral material is preserved in the Shnitka collection at the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta (JAHSENA). It is an invaluable resource for our local history (see *Discovery* Winter 2010).



Hectors Ltd. ad in Calgary Jewish Directory, 1969.

A May 29, 1963 *Calgary Herald* feature on the 50th anniversary of Hectors Ltd. celebrates the 1913 "modest beginnings of a multi-million dollar structural steel complex". John Hector's **Hector Cycle Works** Fourth Street SE storefront from 1913 states he offers

general repairs, welding, skate sharpening and that he was a machinist and gun smith. The business expanded with the appearance of automobiles and flourished under the direction of John's three sons as they began to service the rising oil industry. John Hector (1878-1947) was involved in the Jewish community and served as president of Congregation House of Jacob.

A series of caricatures of prominent Calgarians published in the *Calgary News Telegram* in Spring/Summer of 1913 included four local Jews, attesting to the increasing involvement of Jews in the Calgary business life. Those featured – Charles Bell (April 26), Charles Benjamin (June 17), Joseph A. Guttman (June 25) and Jay Junior Allen (July 12) – truly made their mark in the growing city.

Charles Bell was not new to the pages of the local press. He arrived in Calgary in 1903 and worked with his brother in the cigar business. He soon branched out into real estate, specializing in hotels. The opening of his "magnificent" King George Hotel in 1911 was widely covered in the local press. He is described as "approachable and friendly". Bell was also prominent in the Jewish community and his name appears on the original 1911 House of Jacob cornerstone. He made a donation of \$400 for that honour.

Charles Benjamin had been an associate of William Diamond

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Community Milestones

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Charles Bell caricature, *The Calgary News-Telegram*, April 26, 1913.



Charles Benjamin caricature, *The Calgary News-Telegram*, June 16, 1913.



Joseph Guttman caricature, *The Calgary News-Telegram*, June 25, 1913.



Jay "Junior" Allen caricature, *The Calgary News-Telegram*, July 12, 1913.

in Edmonton and moved to Calgary in 1905 to become the manager of W. Diamond Clothing, a "model of up-to-date men's apparel". He held that position until 1934 when he acquired ownership together with his son, Ray, and renamed it Charles Benjamin & Son. In 1912 there was talk of Charles becoming an aldermanic candidate in Ward 4. He decided not to run, claiming that he would not be able to devote his full attention to civic affairs due to his business commitments. Benjamin was a noted sports enthusiast. He had been a manager of the Wetaskiwin and the Calgary baseball teams. He was involved in Zionist groups and in B'nai Brith as well as in the Red Cross Society and the Kiwanis Club.

Joseph A. Guttman (1881-1957) came to Alberta in 1905, homesteading in Trochu with his extended family. He became prominent in public affairs there until his departure for Calgary in 1912. He opened Guttman's Liquor Store on Eighth Avenue East. He became very involved with local affairs, serving as chair of the newly established *vaad ha'ir*. He also owned the Grand Hotel in Okotoks. Shortly after the publication of the caricature, Guttman married Leontine Ghitler of Montreal.

Jay "Junior" Allen was the third child of Bernard Allen and an important partner in the Allen family theatre empire of the early 20th century. Jay was the first of the sons to arrive in Calgary in 1910. The family soon followed from Brantford, Ontario and opened the Canadian Film Exchange and later proceeded to build a chain of luxury theatres. In 1913 they built the ornate Allen Theatre at 119 Eighth Avenue E. The Allen brothers were active in the social life of the Jewish community. Jay married Cecilia, daughter of Henry Sereth, owner of Riverside Lumber. The Allens moved their headquarters to Toronto in 1915 but continued to develop theatres here into the 1920s.

There was not only positive coverage of the Jewish community in the local press. The papers report a number of minor criminal offences that year, but in September a scandal affected the entire community. Local Hebrew teacher, **Charles Smolenski** (probably not his real name and no relation to later local rabbi S. Smolensky; see *Discovery*, Spring 1993 for details) defrauded a number of merchants claiming to be collecting goods for a Jewish charity raffle and managed to abscond with the congregation's official stamp. *The*

Morning Albertan headline of September 25th screamed "Teacher of Talmud is a Swindler". Subsequent reports detailed the efforts the local Jews were making to apprehend the villain and to prevent further damage to other communities and it does not seem that there were negative repercussions for the Calgary Jewish community.

On Rosh Hashanah the following month, services were held not only at the House of Jacob but also by a congregation Tiffereth Israel at the Al Azahar temple, led by a visiting Rabbi Edelman of Chicago. The year ended with the expansion of Zionist activity when a Young Women's Zionist Society was formed with the immediate goal of raising funds for scholarships for the proposed Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

1963

Over the ensuing 50 years a wide array of Jewish organizations had developed in Calgary and a community council with the UJA fund raising arm was fully operational. The various community events are too numerous to list here. Some major community events were the JNF Negev Dinner in January which honoured **Jack Edelson**. Jack became involved in communal affairs soon after his army service and by 1963 had served as president of the community and had moved on to become chair of the Calgary Hebrew School board.

The **Calgary Hebrew School** celebrated its 50 year milestone. The school had an enrollment of 300 and a new east wing was completed for the May ceremonies. Former CHS principal Rabbi A. Horowitz, National Director of Keren Tarbut (Fund for Hebrew Culture) in 1963, was invited back to officiate at the unveiling of a new cornerstone by Charles Waterman. He was also the guest speaker. Festivities included the unveiling of Founders Plaques and the dedication of the library. A special booklet was published for the occasion.

A successful third annual National Council of Jewish Women's Angels Ball was held in June with the theme "Castles in the Clouds".

Some interesting items in the 1963 *Calgary Jewish News* include the arrival of a modern plucking machine for the community kosher poultry plant, the monthly scores for the B'nai Brith bowling league (3 teams) and the new proposals for community calendar procedures (plus ça change...).

A Brush with Fame

Donna Riback's Photograph of John F. Kennedy, 1959

November 2013 marks the 50th anniversary of the Kennedy assassination. To mark that historic event, we are featuring Calgary native Donna Riback's unique photo of John Kennedy from a few years prior to that tragic event.

As the yearbook photography editor of Mills College in Oakland, California, Donna Riback was invited to the Q and A session given by then Senator Kennedy after his presentation to the Mills community on October 30, 1959. It was his sole address in the Bay area. She was the only female photographer at the session – a fact publically noted by the senator.

This photo is one of 14 Donna took that day. She remarks in her note to JHSSA that a similar photo was published by another photographer in the San Francisco Chronicle with a comment about "Mills girls swooning over Kennedy". Donna recalls how the ser-



Mills College students surround Senator John Kennedy, October 1959. Source: Photographer Donna Riback

ious students in her class of '61 took great exception to the implications of such comment.

If you have any photos or anecdotes of your connection to historic figures or events, please share them with JHSSA.

Finding My Prairie Roots:

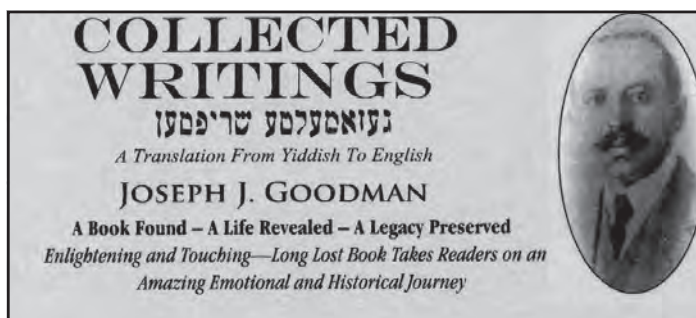
An evening with Harriet "Hart" Goodman Hoffman, August 19, 2013

By Ruth Ullman

"A Book Found, A Life Revealed, a Legacy Preserved". This was the theme of the very personal presentation by Harriet "Hart" Goodman Hoffman for the JHSSA to which interpreters of the Montefiore Institute of Heritage Park were also invited. Harriet's story began in 2003 when she and her cousin Leah Hammer were researching their family genealogy. Leah discovered a reference in an archived Canadian Yiddish newspaper, *Israelite Press*, about their grandfather, Joseph J. Goodman, having published a book in Yiddish called *Gezamelte Shriften* (Collected Writings) in 1919. This book was previously unknown to the family and so Leah set about locating a copy. Thanks to the amazing work of Aaron Lansky, who founded the National Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, Massachusetts, the cousins were able to locate the book in the Center's collection and to obtain a copy through the Steven Spielberg Digital Library.

With the book finally in hand, Hart and Leah realized the secrets of their grandfather's life were still hidden because neither could read Yiddish. By serendipity, Hart found a translator through jewishgen.org. Hannah Berliner Fischthal took on the task of translating their grandfather's work. Gradually a fascinating picture emerged of both their grandfather and of life among Jewish immigrants in the early years of the 20th century on the Canadian prairies.

Born Leyb Chernoff in a shtetl in Russia in the mid-1860s, Joseph Goodman changed his name, taking on the name of a neighbour's deceased son, and immigrated to the U.S.A. In 1895 he married Rebecca Garborvitch and soon moved west, winding up in Duluth, Minnesota. In the early 1900s he and his growing family moved to Winnipeg where he became an immigration inspector for the Canadian Pacific Railway. As the book recounts, "He traveled many miles and met many people." His son later wrote that his father did everything he could to ease the way of the Jewish immigrants to western Can-



ada and to get them "naturalized" as quickly as possible. During his time in Winnipeg, he was very involved in philanthropic causes for immigrants and was an active Zionist. In 1907 Joseph, along with his wife and five children, decided to try his hand at homesteading and acquired land in Cochrane, convincing his brother-in-law, Lazar Pogechevsky, to do the same. Three years later he filed to purchase the land but as time went by they soon realized that while Cochrane is beautiful, the land turned out to be "nothing but rocks" and they moved back to Winnipeg in 1911. By the 1920s he had moved to California, where he died in 1935.

J.J. Goodman's book has now been published in Yiddish with English translation on the opposing pages. He was a talented and prolific journalist and writer of poetry, stories and essays. In particular his essays bring to light the settings and stories of Jewish pioneers in Western Canada. He writes accounts of celebrating Chanukah with a Jewish family in Weyburn, of feeling like part of the family in the farming colony of "Zonenfeld" (Sonnenfeld) in Saskatchewan and of his warm feelings for the Montefiore Colony near Sibbald in Alberta, where he met Sam Ullman. Readers will enjoy his

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Historic Calgary Week 2013: A Tour of Historic Jewish Calgary with Harry Sanders

By R. Kerr

The morning of Sunday, July 28th was grey and chilly, with the threat of rain hovering over downtown, but that didn't dampen the spirits of some 30 people who gathered at Olympic Plaza to join our own Harry Sanders for a walking tour of Jewish Calgary, as part of this year's JHSSA's participation in Historic Calgary Week.

It was a fitting place to begin, as so many Jewish families and businesses got their start in the area: second-hand dealers like Hyman Lipetz, the vendors in the Calgary Public Market, Nagler's Department Store where the Public Library now stands, and of course Jaffe's Book and Music Exchange. We were also reminded that it was Rudolf Engel, a Jewish watchmaker who worked for local jeweller D.E. Black, who installed the clock that still graces the top of the tower at City Hall.

The next leg of our walk began an education-based segment, as we headed north along Macleod Trail, then west on 6th Avenue to the site of the Talmud Torah hall, the first building to house a Calgary Jewish school. Turning north again on 1st Street took us to the Brotherhood of Man statues, which originally stood outside the offices of the Calgary Board of Education, and Harry told several stories about Jewish individuals who had made significant contributions to public education in the city. Education and religion came full circle when we went east on 5th Avenue to the site of the House of Jacob synagogue, now the location of Bow Valley College, and retraced our steps west back to Centre Street, talking about the Jewish connection to Central Public School. Walking south and again west, we reminisced about the Loughheed Building and the Grand Theatre, stopping at the 'Sadko' sculpture, by Romanian/Israeli artist Sorel Etrog, at the corner of 6th Avenue and 2nd Street SW.

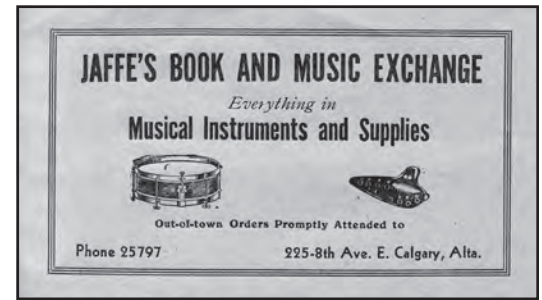
Finding My Prairie Roots

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take on the early days of Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat.

Joseph's granddaughter Hart has embarked on a very personal journey of exploration of her family's history and in the process has brought us another link to the stories of Jewish immigration to western Canada. Her visit to Calgary was inspired by an invitation from Betty Sherwood, who met her at the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) conference in Washington two years ago. In addition to visiting Calgary, Hart and her husband have travelled to many of the places her grandfather wrote about – Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and of course the "little shul" at Heritage Park. She also had the opportunity to connect with Reesa Girvitz whose great grandmother Dena was the sister of Joseph Goodman's wife, Rebecca. Hart kindly donated a copy of her book to the JHSSA collection. The book will also be featured and made available for purchase at the Jewish Book Festival during the week of November 17, 2013.

Walking past the Bay – which was built in 1913 on the site of the Masonic Hall where the 1894 High Holiday services were held



– we learned that the Marx Brothers were featured performers at the Empire Theatre in 1913 (though at that time they were still just Julius, Leonard, Adolph, Milton and Herbert). Our final stop was at the corner of 9th Avenue and 1st Street SW, to talk about the Grain Exchange building and the Palliser Hotel.

The allotted two hours had sped by, and while most of the group went on to other activities, a lucky half-dozen continued south with Harry to see the JHSSA plaque that marks the site of Smithbilt Hats, 1208 – 1st Street SW, now part of the Hotel Arts. Walking south and then east to Centre Street brought us to the original location of the I.L. Peretz School; further south and slightly west to the distinctive Shaarey Tzedec building and the House of Israel Community Hall (now condominiums); then north again up Macleod Trail, remembering Nate Sanofsky's Pleasant Confectionary, to say our final goodbyes at 13th Avenue.

What made the morning especially interesting was the wealth of anecdotes shared by Harry and various tour participants, often personal and familial, that conveyed a real sense of the nature of the Jewish community. Many thanks to Harry, and to all who participated.

JHSSA hopes to make this tour and its anecdotes available as a self-guided tour.

5th Annual Jay Joffe Program Sunday, November 17, 2013



*In Partnership with the
Beth Tzedec Jewish Film
Festival Presents*
**BROADWAY MUSICALS:
A JEWISH LEGACY**

This year's film for JHSSA's annual Jay Joffe program will have you singing and tapping your toes.

Broadway Musicals: A Jewish Legacy explores the unique and prominent role Jewish composers and lyricists played in the creation

of the modern American musical and many of the songs that comprise "The American Songbook." Through interviews with some of the Broadway stages' greatest composers and writers, the film mixes ethnic cultural history with entertaining insights on some of Broadway's famous moments. The screening will be followed by a performance in the lobby of some of the most beloved Broadway melodies by JHSSA's own Laura Shuler.

JHSSA NEWS:

Melvin Polsky^{z"1} – In Appreciation

JHSSA lost a good friend with the passing of Mel Polsky on July 9, 2013, just short of his 94th birthday. Mel arrived in Calgary with his family in his youth. He was among the first Jewish recruits in September 1939 and served overseas as a radio operator. Mel married his sweetheart Reata Fasman shortly after the war. They raised two sons, Steve and Jared, and operated Dollar Cleaners and cofounded Tyler Realty. Mel was also active in the Jewish community and he was especially proud of his association with Chevra Kadisha. The JHSSA photo collection has a number of photos of Mel in B'nai Brith skits – tutus and all.

Mel was a long serving JHSSA director. He never sought the limelight but his input was always welcome and helpful. Mel volunteered his expertise as JHSSA financial secretary. He took this task very seriously and for many years he was a regular and reassuring presence in the JHSSA office as he made sure that the bookkeeping was in ship shape. His hand written financial ledgers were a work of art.

Mel's contribution to JHSSA in our formative years will always be remembered and appreciated.



Organizing and Preserving Organizational Records Workshop with Glenbow Archivist Doug Cass Monday, November 25, 2013, 11:00 am at the JCC

All Jewish organizations are encouraged to send a representative and/or staff to this free workshop hosted by JHSSA. Mr. Cass will provide guidelines for maintaining important institutional records. To register, please contact the JHSSA at jhssa@shaw.ca or 403-444-3171 by November 18.

JHSSA Bar/Bat Mitzvah Presentations

This is the third year of the JHSSA's community wide bar/bat mitzvah project. With the co-operation of the city's congregations, each celebrant is presented with a copy of the JHSSA 2007 publication *A Joyful Harvest*. Our goal is to welcome these new committed members to our community and to show them that they can proudly take their place in our storied history. If you know of a local youth who will be celebrating a bar/bat mitzvah outside the framework of our synagogues (out of town, etc.), please inform our office so we can present them with a book.

Grants for Oral Histories

We would like to extend our gratitude to JCFC's Library Endowment Fund and Abe and Bertha Gold Endowment Fund, which have awarded the JHSSA with grants to digitize our oral history cassette tapes, and to create transcripts for interviews. Many thanks!

Bubbies and Zaidas Blogging: Gigabytes don't Bite!

This new program at the JCC was launched in September and has a limited number of spaces still available. This is an opportunity to record and to share family histories. The program cost is \$36. Laptop computers will be made available to the participants. The organizers are also looking for volunteers to help as facilitators. It is our hope that

the program will produce interesting material relating to local history and about the rich and varied backgrounds of our seniors. To register or to volunteer as a facilitator, please contact Shula Banchik at 403-537-8596.

Corrections to Discovery, Spring 2013

An incorrect name appeared in the Photo to Identify caption on page 6. The man seated on the left was incorrectly identified as Lucien Lieberman when of course, it is his father, Leo. Thanks to Norman Dvorkin, who has identified the man standing on the left as Harry Dvorkin.

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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.

Statements of fact or opinion appearing in *Discovery* are made on the responsibility of the authors alone, and do not imply the endorsement of the editors or the JHSSA.

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