



JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY of Southern Alberta

VOLUME 24, NUMBER 3

FALL 2014

JHSSA 24th Annual General Meeting

Monday, October 27, 2014 at 7:30 pm
in the Calgary JCC Auditorium

Sacred Service:

The Volunteers of the Chevra Kadisha of Calgary

On Sunday, August 17, JHSSA was proud to acknowledge the 100-year anniversary of the incorporation of Chevra Kadisha of Calgary with the dedication of an interpretive plaque on the Erlton Jewish Cemetery main gates. Chevra Kadisha president Bill Aizanman spoke on behalf of the organization. The plaque text was read by Chevra Kadisha Ladies Auxiliary president Darlene Switzer-Foster. JHSSA president Betty Sherwood read a letter from Mayor Nenshi, which noted, "... a large part of [our story] remains with those who have gone before us. Within our cemeteries we honour their lives and the role they played ...". So it was fitting that following the program, JHSSA director Harry Sanders led a tour of the cemetery. Tour participants were encouraged to share their stories of loved ones buried there.

In October, our 2014 Annual General Meeting program will highlight the heart of the Chevra Kadisha of Calgary: the volunteers,

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Darlene Switzer-Foster of the Chevra Kadisha of Calgary Ladies Auxiliary and JHSSA president Betty Sherwood unveiling the interpretive plaque on the Erlton Jewish Cemetery gate, August 17, 2014. Photographer: Ron Baker. JHSSA #4000.9

President's Message

Some Parting Words

By Betty Sherwood



When I joined the JHSSA as an out-of-town member in 1999, little did I suspect that 15 years later I would be stepping down from its presidency. During my term I have come to see the JHSSA as a three-way partnership between its staff, board of directors and members, who all share the goal of preserving and sharing the stories, documents, photos and memories of the Jewish communities of southern Alberta.

Several new initiatives are bringing our stories to the attention of the community: the Southern Alberta Jewish Veterans of World War I and II database; our historic interpretive plaques honouring the first Congregation House of Jacob building, Smithbilt Hats and the Chevra Kadisha of Calgary; and our educational kit for grade two social studies. As well, we partnered with the Glenbow Library and Archives in offering a three-part series on using the holdings of the Archives for family research, which has encouraged participants to share their findings with us. When we learned that the Shaarey Tzedec Synagogue building was under immediate threat of demolition, we hastily joined forces with other community groups to open the building for all to revisit the shul and their memories; furthermore, we made its story the subject of our AGM program that year. This is a sign that the JHSSA is a nimble and lively organization!

As far back as high school, I was involved in working behind the scenes planning and presenting informative and innovative programming for a BBYO conclave here in Calgary. It seems that since then, both professionally and as a volunteer, this has been one of my preferred types of activity. Being back in Calgary 50 years later finds me enjoying getting behind the scenes of several ongoing facets

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**THIS ISSUE OF DISCOVERY IS SPONSORED BY CHEVRA KADISHA OF CALGARY,
IN HONOUR OF THE CENTENARY OF ITS INCORPORATION.**

Community Milestones 1914 and 1964

By Agi Romer Segal

1914

The most noteworthy event of 1914 was Canada's entry into WWI in August. The impact of this event is discussed in the article about the Great War in this issue.

By 1914, the Jewish community was well-established with prominent leaders and a variety of social and religious organizations. The continuing increase in the immigrant population is evident in the local press. The *Calgary News Telegram* reported on March 25 that "only 40 percent of the pupils in the Riverside school are of English-speaking parentage". Of the 516 pupils, the 94 Russian Jews comprised the second largest group, after the 207 Germans.

Elegant balls continued to serve as the major source of fundraising. These affairs were covered in the local press, including descriptions of gowns worn by the participants. The Purim Masquerade held by Agudas Zion on March 11 in the Al Azhar Temple was reported to have raised around \$150 towards the establishment of a Canadian colony in the Holy Land. The prize-winning costumes were "Dr. Hergel [sic] in the Land of Freedom", "Ivanhoe", "The Wandering Jew" and "Charles I". A week later, Dr. Shayne of Toronto, who had recently returned from the 11th Zionist Congress, presented a series of lectures which also received detailed attention in the local newspapers. During his stay in Calgary, Shayne helped establish B'nai and B'noth Zion of Calgary, with Max Kelemen as president. There is report of an August meeting of this so-

ciety in which concerns of the war were discussed, but there is no further news of its activities after 1914. A.I. Smith (Shumiatcher) was active in this and other Zionist activities.

Another new group had a stronger start. The Young Men's Hebrew Association held its opening meeting in early January. It is not clear whether this was a revitalization of the earlier 1911 Young People's Hebrew Association in which the Allen family had been active. The 1914 directors included A. Bloom, A.L. Barron and J. Guttman. The YMHA's aim was "the promotion of the Jewish community and of the city". Members held a "smoker" on March 9 which featured a discussion on Zionism, their first annual ball at the Al Azhar Temple on April 2 and a concert in late April. Membership was about 100 and in 1914 the YMHA fielded a baseball team. It is not clear whether the outbreak of the war had anything to do with the demise of the YMHA, but we have no further news of its presence in the city beyond 1914.

Another short-lived but significant 1914 phenomenon was the first (and only) issue of *The Canadian Western Jewish Times* in April, with J.B. Barron as editor and A.L. Barron as business manager. This journal had its head office in the Thomson Block and claimed to be "A Jewish Monthly devoted to Jewish interests and Jewish advancement". J.B.'s editorial emphasizes that the situation of the Jews in the west is unique in that as immigrants "...we have been and are among the first, and the opportunity is ours to record upon history the first victory over prejudice and intolerance without a

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YMHA Baseball team, c. 1914. Among the identified members of the team are Ben Tipp, Max Stern, Joe Goldenberg, Harry Muscovitz, Percy Malkin, Sid Zemans, George Sereth and Phil Sorsky. Source: Glenbow Archives, NA-2034-2

Community Milestones 1914 and 1964

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Masthead of the *Canadian Western Jewish Times*, April 1914. The logo was designed by P. Waterman.

struggle". It is an impressive publication with wide-reaching interests. In addition to a children's page (Stella Sereth, editor) and local reports from all the major western Canadian centres, it featured articles entitled Lord Reading, Jewish Law in International Jurisprudence, Experience of Jews as Farmers in Alberta, A Century of Jewish History in England, Anti-Semitism in Germany, and Liberal Judaism. Calgary local news included descriptions of the February wedding of Cecyle Sereth to Harry Allen; the Grand Ball held by the Jewish Working Circle and Socialist Party of Canada; a literary evening and concert given by the Jewish Library. The journal included a number of advertisements and the annual subscription to the monthly was \$1.50. Unfortunately, no second issue is known. It is possible the editor did not have time to pursue this interest after he was called to the Alberta bar in 1915.

The activities of devoted Socialist, Sophie Mushkat, were widely reported in the press. She was valued as an English teacher to immigrants in evening classes. She lectured on various topics and also toured more remote areas of the province to spread the socialist message – sleeping at times in sod huts.

Once war broke out in Europe, local Jews organized to show support for their adopted land and its allies. They also expressed concern for their brethren in Russia and in Palestine. At a meeting held in the House of Jacob in mid-September, the Zionist groups of Calgary decided to take steps to support the Patriotic Fund. A sold-out concert in October at the Empress Theatre was chaired by J.B. Barron. Commissioner Samis addressed the crowd.

Before the start of the High Holydays, the *Calgary News Telegram* published the prayer that would be read at services at the House of Jacob for the royal family, for the wounded, for early peace and for the abolition of all war. Interestingly, the newspapers of that time offered detailed explanations of all the Jewish holidays.

At a memorial meeting in late October for renowned Zionist leader David Wolfsohn, pledges were made to raise funds for the Jews of Palestine.

The Calgary Jewish Dramatic Club staged Jacob Gordon's "The Wild Man" in Paget Hall on November 19, with all proceeds going to aid suffering Jews in Russia. At their annual banquet in December, Chevra Kadisha members agreed to organize fundraising events to help relieve Jewish suffering in Russia. A mass meeting was held on December 20 and a group of 18 men was appointed to establish a permanent committee. The local newspapers reported that 350,000 Jews served on the Russian Front and that 50,000 had been killed.

The social and cultural activities within the Jewish community were widely reported in the general press. As usual, a number of

Jewish names appear in the criminal cases reported. These mostly involved violations of the Sunday laws or business disputes, but in 1914 also included some cases of alleged bigamy.

1964

The picture of the Jewish community that we can gain from the 1964 issues of *Calgary Jewish News (CJN)* does not vary too greatly from the community we know today. A number of the family names that recur in the descriptions of events and fundraising campaigns are still prominent. The progress of the United Jewish Appeal campaign features heavily in the pages of this monthly organ of the Calgary Jewish Community Council (CJCC). In November 1964, UJA chair Bill Belzberg reported at the CJCC annual meeting that 680 donors had contributed \$107,000 to UJA that year. The rabbis of the three local synagogues endorsed the concept of an inclusive campaign, noting "we cannot be cafeteria-style human beings, choosing some causes while neglecting the needs of others." (*CJN*, April, 1964). CJCC's focus for 1964 was to develop the Community Services Committee to work with organizations to extend cultural activities to the total community – especially for the youth. This was done under the chairmanship of Lou Faber. Key community events were the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising Memorial program and the Israel Independence Day celebrations held at the House of Israel community building in April. Renovations in the community building provided a gym for youth to participate in volleyball and basketball leagues.

The Kashrut committee continued to improve services to the community and firm rules were implemented with regard to the provision of kosher meat. The charge for slaughtering and plucking a chicken at the kosher poultry plant at 317 Third Avenue SE was 35 cents.

Mr. Sam 'Shika' Shlafmitz, "veteran communal worker", was the JNF Negev dinner honouree in 1964. The event program lists Sam's achievements from his days in the 1920s as president of the Jewish Literary Society to his leadership in the Zionist Organization, Canadian Jewish Congress, Joint Jewish Administration Office (a precursor to Federation), Sharon Zionist Club, B'nai Brith, and the Jewish Polish Loan Society. In 1964, Shlafmitz served as the Executive Director of Shaarey Tzedec. Premier Ernest Manning, freshly returned from his trip to Israel, was the guest speaker at the January event. Sadly, Sam Shlafmitz died at age 56 a few months after the JNF honour.



Sam "Shika" Shlafmitz, 1946. Shlafmitz was the JNF Negev dinner honouree for 1964. From JHSSA #605

The theme for the National Council of Jewish Women's fourth annual Angel's Ball in June was "Mythical Magic", featuring a décor suggestive of ancient Greece. An attendance of 326 brought in a cash profit of \$737. These proceeds were directed toward the "Higher and New Horizons" initiative which aimed to provide educational resources for children in low-income families.

Southern Alberta Jewish Soldiers of the Great War

By R. Kerr

Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta military files currently show over 30 local men who served with the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) during World War I.

Some have stories long familiar to us; some remain virtually unknown, surnames mentioned in a 100-year-old article. But whether our knowledge is full or sparse, we are proud to share their names with you, in tribute to their service.

London-born **Michael Aaron** enlisted as a draftee in April 1918. He was a Calgary music teacher who satisfied the CEF's minimum height regulation (5'2") by a mere $\frac{3}{4}$ ".

David Austin (Arenstein), Russian-born son of Calgary pioneers Sarah and Jacob Austin, was working as a merchant when he was called up in February 1918. He re-enlisted in 1940, serving in the Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps.

Polish-born **Morris Cohen** came to western Canada from London following a delinquent adolescence. He enlisted in Edmonton in 1916, was sent to Calgary's Sarcee Camp for training, and in Europe fought with the Canadian Railway Troops. After the war he served as bodyguard and aide to Chinese leader Sun Yat-sen, and became known as "Two-Gun" Cohen.

Simon Dagul was born in London, England, and enlisted in April 1915, age 31. The Calgary tailor was one of the few married Jewish recruits in our files.

Charles Davidson came from Chicago and was working as a clerk in Calgary. The 22-year-old enlisted in May 1917 at the Calgary Manning depot.



Louis Diamond, 1918. Louis was one of the seven children of Philip and Ruchel Diamond of Canmore. JHSSA #3145

Louis Diamond, son of Jewish pioneer Philip Diamond of Canmore, was conscripted in February 1918 but failed to show up for enlistment. A Banff magistrate's court confirmed his eligibility for service, and he was assigned to the Canadian Engineers. His cousin Joseph served with the American army.

Samuel Dworkin, a Calgary printer born in Gomel, Russia, tried to enlist in a Calgary regiment but was rejected due to poor eyesight. By late 1917 attrition forced the CEF to lower its requirements, and Dworkin was accepted as "Fit - A-2", a limited-service classification, at Vancouver in October 1917.

Russian-born tailor **Louis Ehrlick** joined Calgary's 50th Battalion, the Alberta Regiment, in August 1915. He was 26 when he was killed in action in 1917, shortly after the Canadian victory at Vimy Ridge.

Calgary-born **Samuel Fleishman** was living with his mother in Salt Lake City, Utah, but returned to Canada to enlist in August 1918. He was 20 and working as an "auto driver."

Glaswegian **Israel Florence** came to Calgary in 1913 and enlisted in 1915, age 19. Wounded in combat, he returned to the front and rose to the rank of sergeant major. Florence became a leader of Calgary's Great War veterans, formed a Jewish Boy Scout troop, and with his wife Sarah was the JNF Negev Dinner honouree in

1960. He led efforts to restore the white-rock battalion numbers on Calgary's Signal Hill, near the original Sarcee Camp site.

John Freedman of Medicine Hat was conscripted in 1918. British-born, he was working as a railway trainman in Manitoba when he was called up at age 28.

Sol Freedman was only 16 when he enlisted in Medicine Hat in January 1916. Born in London, he was one of 1300 "child soldiers" in the CEF, which sometimes turned a blind eye to its minimum enlistment age of 18. At 5', Freedman was a "bantam", i.e. under the minimum height regulation, relaxed to send more men to the front during a high casualty period.

Israel Joseph Friedman emigrated from Russia to New York in 1895, and came to Medicine Hat in 1914 to teach at a local school. He attended an officer training camp in Calgary soon after the war began, but was discharged as physically unfit and resumed teaching in Medicine Hat. He was conscripted in April 1918, age 29, and became an Engineering Corps sapper. Friedman was killed during the battle of Cambrai in October 1918, two weeks before Germany surrendered.

Sam Friedman, an 18-year-old farmer from the Jewish farm colony near Lipton, Saskatchewan, was living in Calgary when he enlisted in October 1917. Born in Kiev, his next-of-kin was a sister, Mrs. Polskin, in New York City.

Calgarian **Harry Goldstein**, age 23, appealed his conscription, telling a Calgary tribunal that he was a farmer. His mother appeared and testified her son was physically unfit. His appeal was dismissed and he reported for service in January 1918, stating that he was a druggist, had no religion, and his father lived in Camrose.

Leeds-born **Alfred Goodman** was working as a receiving clerk in Calgary when he was drafted in March 1918. His "Fit -A-2" (limited service) designation might have been due to his 5'2" stature.

Samuel Hackman, a Rumsey-area farmer born in Odessa who enlisted in the CEF in 1915, was killed in action in September 1916, likely during the Somme campaign.

Samuel Haimson, whose family farmed near Rumsey, enlisted at a Manitoba army base in 1915, claiming Church of England as his religion. He went overseas as a trooper with the Lord Strathcona's Horse, a cavalry regiment. Haimson was wounded twice during his three years on the front lines.

Samuel Haptov (aka Hapton, Goptov), an 18-year-old farmer formerly of Gomel, Russia, joined up at Calgary in 1915.

British-born steamfitter **William Henry Jacobs** enlisted at Valcartier, Quebec, in 1914, giving his religion as Church of England. Killed near Ypres in April 1915, Jacobs is listed in the *British Jewry Book of Honour*, which also states he was from Calgary.

American-born **David Levine**, working as a clerk in Medicine Hat when he was conscripted in April 1918, was immediately discharged to join England's Royal Flying Corps. His parents had been pioneers in a Jewish farm settlement in North Dakota.

Oscar Lion, born in London in 1898, was a farm worker near Brandon when he enlisted in 1915. After the war he settled in Lethbridge where he ran a confectionery, and during World War II he

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Southern Alberta Jewish Soldiers of the Great War

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was a sergeant in the Veterans' Guard of Canada.

Military doctors had classed **Nathan Lipetz**, a bookkeeper for a Calgary produce company, as "A-2", fit for limited service. He unsuccessfully appealed his call-up at a Calgary hearing, claiming he was lower than A-2.

Russian-born **Ben Novikoff**, a farmer from the Montefiore Jewish settlement, was 22 years old when drafted in May 1918. Farmers were no longer exempt from military service, but their F-2 (limited service) designation provided generous leaves to work their land.

Calgarian **Strul (Israel) Rabinovitz**, age 23, was in jail in Nelson, BC when he was called up in May 1918. A waiter by trade, Romanian-born Rabinovitz was shipped to England where he was sidelined with various illnesses, including tuberculosis. Returning to Canada in July 1919, Rabinovitz was in and out of TB sanitariums until his death in 1922. Officials considered him a war casualty (sickness contracted while on active duty) and gave his parents a survivor's pension.

Harry Reeve, born in Russia, enlisted in Winnipeg in 1916, age 18. An Engineering Battalion sapper (private), he was wounded in August 1917 but rejoined his unit after six months of convalescence. In 1922 Reeve moved to Calgary, where his active participation in Calgary Jewish life culminated in recognition as the JNF Negev Dinner Honouree in 1965.

Montreal-born **Benjamin Rose** lived in Calgary before moving to Vancouver as a telegraphist. He enlisted in September 1916, age 23, joining the Divisional Signal Company of an artillery battery.

Henry George Roubin (Rubin) was the Chicago-born son of Calgary rabbi Solomon Roubin. A lumber salesman, he was drafted in March 1918.

Louis Sair was a shoemaker whose family farmed near Limerick, Saskatchewan. Born in Russia, he was 24 when he was conscripted in June 1918. Sair later moved to Calgary where he died in 1971.

Morris Smith, part of the large Shumiatcher family from Gomel, Russia, was a film shipper when drafted in March 1918. Like many conscripts, Smith never got overseas, and soon after his discharge he opened a hat-making shop, later to become Smithbilt

Hats. During World War II he was a reservist with the Calgary Highlanders.

Morris Srolovitz (Sanders) was one of four brothers who emigrated from Romania about 1910 and filed for homesteads near Rumsey. Srolovitz was called up in November 1917, failed to show up at the Calgary CEF depot and was declared a defaulter. Apprehended at Rumsey, he signed his CEF papers in October 1918, less than two weeks before the war ended. Morris was later a fur trader and cattle buyer, and became a second-hand dealer in Calgary.



Harry Woolfe, upon his return from overseas to Yorkton, SK, 1919. From JHSSA #3146

Harry Woolfe was born in London, moved to Calgary in 1909, and joined the Royal North West Mounted Police at age 17. He went to the Western Front with the RNWMP Squadron, a cavalry unit, and his regiment later became part of the Canadian Cavalry Brigade. Woolfe returned to Calgary and later moved to Vancouver where he died at 95.

Dutch-born **Louis Zuidema** was 25 and working at the Burns meat-packing plant when he enlisted in September 1914. Wounded twice, he won a Distinguished Conduct Medal, awarded for bravery under fire during the second battle of Ypres in April 1915. The medal was first "pinned" on him in France, and two weeks later he was decorated again, by King George V, in London. Zuidema was later promoted to corporal.

Simon Zuidema, a Dutch-born butcher, was 37 when he joined up in Calgary in 1916. He was listed as "missing in action, presumed dead" during combat near St. Julienne in April 1917, and his name is inscribed on the Vimy Memorial in France.

Sources: Library and Archives Canada and JHSSA files which include past research and Discovery articles by Jack Switzer and others. The servicemen featured here are listed on our Southern Alberta Jewish Veterans of World War I & II database, available at www.jhssa.org

JHSSA 24th Annual General Meeting

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past and present, representing the full spectrum of the local Jewish community, who have provided devoted, quiet, anonymous service. The program will take place following the AGM business meeting and will focus on different aspects of the blessed work that the Chevra Kadisha has conducted in Calgary for over 100 years. We invite our readers to send the JHSSA office any memories they may have of serving as Chevra Kadisha volunteers.

At the AGM we will also honour community members who have celebrated their 80th birthday in the past year. Please contact the JHSSA office if you know of anyone for our list.

Right: Harry Sanders leading a tour of the Erlton Jewish Cemetery, August 17, 2014. Photographer: Ron Baker. JHSSA #4000.10



What To Do When Disaster Strikes: The Family Archives Edition

By R. Kerr

As last year's flood made all too clear, having our precious documents safely stored doesn't always mean they're safe. The items that reflect our history are often irreplaceable and we protect them as best we can, not storing precious photos in cardboard boxes under water pipes, putting the ship's passenger manifest in an archival quality sleeve. But since things still sometimes happen, here's the simplest, most important step we can take to prevent the loss of these treasures: ensure that someone else has copies. While we often take pride in having the only one of something, as anyone who has lost everything will tell you, an intact copy is absolutely better than an unsalvageable original.

On a practical level, keep in mind that most disasters at some point involve water damage. Before anything happens, make some notes. Do you have mostly paper documents? Photographs? Textiles? Carvings? Paintings? When the flood waters have receded or when the fire has been put out, all of these items may need to be handled differently, even to move them to where they can be assessed. The more you know about what you have, the more efficiently you'll be able to do what's needed.

Take into account the volume of material. Most of our own collections are on a personal scale and could likely be salvaged with the help of one or two others. But if you have a particularly large collection, or you have lots of paintings, or leather or natural history items, you may need professional help. Museums and art galleries are good sources of information regarding conservators. Do some re-

search beforehand so you'll know who to call should the need arise.

If you've had a pipe burst and need to do a small-scale rescue, here are some helpful hints. Most items, especially regular **paper**, can be left flat to dry in regular room air. Turn, very gently, to ensure even drying. (Very wet paper is extremely fragile and should be lifted only with great caution. If need be, gently cover the paper with a slightly larger piece of plastic. The paper will cling to the plastic, and can then be safely carried). Stand damp **books** on their spines; if thoroughly wet, lie flat with absorbent material every 20 or so pages, changing the material as needed. Remove wet **artwork** from frames when possible and let dry image-side up, out of direct sunlight. Some items, particularly **metal**, should be dried quickly to prevent rust. Blot gently and use a fan or blow-dryer. **Textiles**, too, do well with a fast drying process. **Hides, wood, and other organic materials** prefer slow drying. Cover them loosely with plastic sheeting so air can get at them – never use heat. Pad leather gently to help keep its shape. **Photographs** can be laid flat, image-side up, on absorbent paper or towels, or hung gently by their corners. But keep in mind they can be the last item you attend to, as they can be 'held' in one of two ways. If you'll be able to attend to them within 48 hours, leave them in a large container of clean water. If you need more time than that, just put them in the freezer, interlined with freezer or waxed paper.

Inventory your treasures with these tips in mind and consult an expert with any questions.

The October 2001 issue of Discovery features an article on textile preservation by conservator Gail Niinimaa.

6th Annual Jay Joffe Program

Sunday, November 16, 2014 – In Partnership with the Beth Tzedec Jewish Film Festival:
American Jerusalem: Jews and the Making of San Francisco

This year's Jay Joffe Program, honouring the memory of JHSSA founding president, will feature a film about a western Jewish community.

American Jerusalem tells the epic story of the pioneering Jews of San Francisco. Escaping persecution in Europe and drawn to San Francisco by the Gold Rush, these Jews played a central role in transforming San Francisco from sleepy village to thriving metropolis. In the process they reinvented themselves as well.

The film shows how the city and its Jewish community grew together, beginning during the Gold Rush and culminating in the devastating 1906 earthquake and with the city's revival on the world's stage at the 1915 World's Fair. The Jews of San Francisco thrived because San Francisco was a unique place – diverse, accepting, and open to innovation and change.

The legacy of this rich history lives on today. The San Francisco Bay Area Jewish community remains diverse, secular, and open. *American Jerusalem* unveils the long and largely unknown history of this singular community, as well as its significance and place in the fabric of not only California and the West, but of America.

Viewers are encouraged to wear Levi's jeans to the screening!



JHSSA Winter Program

**The Fairmont Palliser Hotel
and its Jewish History:
An illustrated talk by Harry Sanders**

**Sunday, January 22, 2015
at 2:00 pm at the JCC**

Local historian Harry Sanders will share some stories about the Jewish community's connections to the Palliser Hotel which he gleaned from his research for his forthcoming book, *The Castle by the Tracks: Calgary's Historic Fairmont Palliser Hotel*. The book is being prepared in celebration of the renowned hotel's centenary.

If you have memorable stories about the Palliser – whether they are about family celebrations, chance meetings or organizing community events such as the Angel's Ball – please contact our office at jhssa@shaw.ca or 403-444-3171.

President's Message

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of our small but lively community, including the Beth Tzedec Jewish Film Festival, the Book Fair, the Shem Tov Awards and Historic Calgary Week. A number of unique events in the past few years have also benefited from the support and collections of the JHSSA, such as the exhibits and events surrounding the centennials of the Calgary Jewish Academy and the Chevra Kadisha. Other special projects that we have been involved in, with the JCC and Federation, were the Herzl Exhibit; The Jews: a Canadian Story Exhibit; as well as the Bubbies and Zaidas Blogging program. Needless to say most of the heavy lifting carried out on behalf of the JHSSA is performed by our talented and dedicated staff, but they are very inclusive and always ask for input!

Not to be missed in my review of all we've accomplished are the JHSSA programs and endeavours which are carried on year-round, such as our certificates honouring 80-year-olds, oral histories, library, tribute cards, *Discovery* (which is distributed community-wide three times a year), our website, photo collection, cemetery records and headstone photos, not to mention our public programming on such topics as weddings, genealogy, early Calgary and rural roots. I have little doubt that you and your family are part of these varied stories so as a vital part of the triangle I mentioned at the outset, please keep your stories and pictures coming!

I am extremely proud to have served as president of the JHSSA and my sincere appreciation goes out to the staff, members, and directors who have made my experience as president a joy every day.



Palliser Hotel from a promotional poster. Source: CP Archives NS20240

YES, I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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JHSSA NEWS:

Seeking New JHSSA Directors

If you have an interest in the history of our community, please consider joining the JHSSA board of directors. We are currently looking for volunteers with experience in finance, law, communications, writing or editing. Directors support JHSSA's mandate by helping with budgeting, governance, programming and publications. Please contact our office to add your name to the slate for our AGM on October 27, 2014.

Harry Sanders Talk about Calgary in 1914

1914 Calgary – What were your grandparents or great grandparents doing during WWI? Local historian Harry Sanders, aka “Harry the Historian”, presents a family-oriented talk about the role of Calgary families during WWI that includes a peek into what our city looked like 100 years ago. Sponsored by the Military Museums and Calgary Opera.

November 8, 3:00 pm, Arrata Opera Centre, 1315 - 7 Street SW.

Bubbies and Zaidas Blogging Continues

Graduates of last year's program are continuing to help guide seniors into the world of blogging. The blogging club, led by Bruce Eekema, meets on Mondays at 1:00 pm at the JCC starting September 29th.

Thank You to our Proofreader

Our appreciation goes out to Rona Fleising, who volunteered to proofread this issue of *Discovery*.

Photo to Identify

Can you help us identify these teens?



Dinah Switzer (left) and friends, c. 1941. Source: Sheldon Smithens. JHSSA #2787

Past Program:

On the Trail for Treasure with Sheldon Smithens

On September 15th, JHSSA members were treated to a delightful program with past president Sheldon Smithens. Sheldon gave an illustrated talk about his family background, starting with the immigration of the Shnitka family to Calgary in 1911, through to his father Robert's entry into the world of antiques and auctions, to Sheldon's own recent adventures as co-star of the TV show, *Canadian Pickers*, which is now seen around the globe. A wide variety of items were available for a silent auction – from an ancient clay oil lamp to modern Judaic art – all kindly donated by JHSSA supporters. The program closed with a live auction of *Canadian Pickers* memorabilia, including a bobble head doll.



Robert 'Bob' Smithens in front of Smithens Auction Galleries, 715 -11 Avenue SW, c. 1983. Source: Sheldon Smithens. JHSSA #2782

DISCOVERY

Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta

Founding President: **Jay Joffe**^{*1}

Past Presidents: **Sheldon Smithens, Jack Switzer**^{*1}

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Editors: **Katie Baker, Rona Fleising, Roberta Kerr, Agi Romer Segal, Betty Sherwood**

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Please address all communications on editorial and circulation matters to:

Discovery

c/o The Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta

1607 - 90th Avenue S.W., Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2V 4V7

Phone 403-444-3171

Email: jhssa@shaw.ca

Website: www.jhssa.org

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