



DISCOVERY

The Journal of the

תגלית

JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

of Southern Alberta

VOLUME 20, No. 3

FALL 2010

JHSSA 20th Annual General Meeting MONDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2010 Calgary JCC Auditorium – 7:30 pm



featuring

Big Shoes to Fill

Footprints of our Jewish Pioneers

With Special Guest
The Honourable Lindsay Blackett,
Minister of Culture and Community Spirit

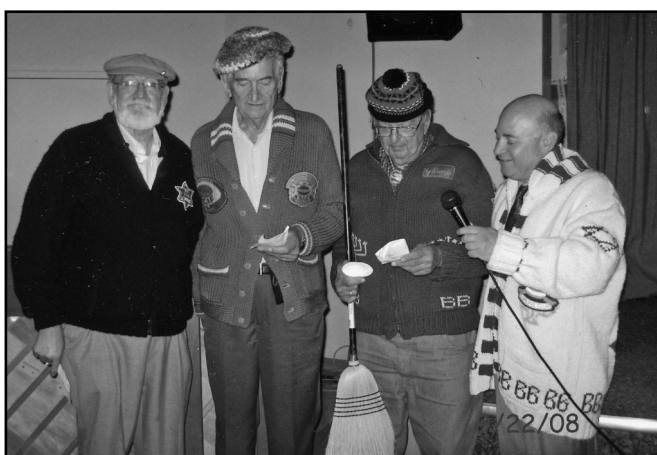
Twenty years is not considered a long time in the historical record, but for the Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta the past 20 years has been devoted to keeping our community's 120-year history in this region alive and accessible to all – so it feels like we are celebrating 120 years. We are proud to mark this special milestone in the presence of a representative of our provincial government, the Honourable Lindsay Blackett, Alberta's Minister of Culture and Community Spirit, MLA Calgary North-West. Minister Blackett has kindly accepted our invitation to speak at our AGM. The public is invited.

The evening's program will once again include the presentation of certificates to those members of the Jewish community who have celebrated their 80th birthday this past year. This year JHSSA would also like to publicly acknowledge the 90 year olds and also those who are 100 years or older. We will read out all the names of these seniors. Please contact the JHSSA office

(403-444-3171) with names of such worthy seniors for our list.

The evening will conclude with *Big Shoes to Fill*, a special audio-visual presentation which promises to be an entertaining retrospective of some of the highlights of the JHSSA's 20 years of recording and preserving the history of the Jewish communities of Southern Alberta. It will include snippets from past JHSSA programs incorporating oral histories, archival documents and historic photos.

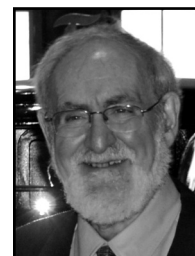
There will be time to mingle and to exchange fond memories of days past at the reception after the formal program.



Bringing History to Life: Jack Switzer, Rudy Berger, Emanuel Cohen and Sheldon Smithens re-enact the experiences of old-time curlers in historic curler garb at the 2008 JHSSA AGM program. Source: Rudy Berger. JHSSA #2494

President's Message

Jack Switzer



This is the 57th issue of *Discovery*. Twenty years ago, this historical journal was the society's major medium for telling the story of our community's important and inspiring past. It was begun by JHSSA founder Jay Joffe in September 1990, shortly after the organization was incorporated. Sid Macklin was the first editor – a position I took on in 1993.

This was shortly after the opening of our first major exhibit – *Land of Promise*. This was followed in 1996 by the fine *Land of Promise* book. In 2005, we celebrated our Alberta centennial exhibit, *A Joyful Harvest*, which has also appeared as a book.

Our work is now entering a new stage. We are planning to digitize our historic photos, and to make our collections searchable online. This will elevate the society's outreach to match and even exceed those of many other Alberta historical sources.

We hope to run bi-monthly programs; these will include lectures, notable films and entertainment events. We want the society to become a more important part of the Jewish community's cultural calendar.

Our collection and research mandate now includes the life stories of recent

Continued on Page 8

In this Issue:

20th Anniversary AGM	1
President's Message	1
Community Milestones.....	2
Lord Marley in Calgary	3
Alberta Jews of Trail, BC	4
Jay Joffe Memorial Program	6
<i>A Joyful Harvest</i> in Vancouver	6
JHSSA News.....	8

To sponsor an upcoming issue of *Discovery*, contact our office at 403-444-3171.

Community Milestones

120 years have passed since the arrival of Calgary's first permanent resident. This column takes a closer look of some of our community's milestones from 100 and from 50 years ago.

1910

By the start of the second decade of the 20th century there were about 500 Jews in Calgary, which now boasted a population of 40,000. Jews had already also settled in Rumsey, Trochu, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat.

In 1910, 20 Jews filed for homesteads in the Sibbald area. This settlement became known as the Montefiore colony.

In Calgary, Congregation House of Jacob had already purchased land on Fifth Avenue SE and put up a small structure for services and for classes. High Holiday services in 1910 were held in a Burns Block room.

Judah Shumiatcher, who had recently come to Calgary, served as one of the first Hebrew teachers of the small House of Jacob afternoon school. The entire Shumiatcher family emigrated from Russia, and joined Judah in Calgary in 1910. The family became very active in communal and cultural affairs.

1960

By 1960, Calgary's Jewish population had grown to about 3,000. While the community had developed a strong infrastructure and a broad volunteer base, there was a need for professional social services. To respond to this need, the Calgary Jewish Family Service Bureau opened with one professional staff member, Martha Cohen. It was official-

ly incorporated a year later.

1960 was a banner year for Calgary Jewry. In February, The Jewish National Fund honoured Israel and Sarah Florence at its Negev Dinner at the House of Israel Jewish community centre. They were the first couple to be so honoured. The program for the evening emphasized that the couple had worked "in double harness". The honourees responded, "It will be a pleasure if our example will inspire young people to volunteer for community service. We can, from experience, assure them it will result in an enriched life and many pleasant memories ..."

May 1960 saw the Calgary **celebration of the Bicentenary of Canadian Jewry** in the Jubilee Auditorium. The actual 200th anniversary of Jewish settlement in Canada was in 1959, but the bicentenary was celebrated in Calgary on May 30, 1960. The program was opened with a prayer by Rabbi Joseph Wiesenberg and remarks by Irwin Blackstone. His Honour, J. Percy Page, Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta was presented with the proclamation by Jay Joffe. A number of local dignitaries, including His Worship Harry Veiner, Mayor of Medicine Hat, brought greetings. The musical and dramatic program was performed by a special Bicentenary Choir, directed Rowena Pearlman and conducted by Edith Pearlman. The guest speaker was Rabbi Reuben Slonim.

On June 5, 1960 a group of young Jews under the name **Star Players** held "The First Jewish Drama Festival in Canada". Over 400 attended the amateur theatre festival at the House of Israel. It featured three one-act

plays and was adjudicated by the well known Calgary theatre pioneer, Betty Mitchell. Star Players was organized by Bill Dean and Alan Kerr. Hilda Manolson and Aron Eichler also served on the executive. Prizes were awarded to actors Fern Hoffman, Murray Davis, Frances Horwitz and Sam Switzer and also to Hilda Manolson (best director). The best play overall was *She Was Only A Farmer's Daughter* and the prize for the best Jewish theme went to *The Youngest Shall Ask*, directed by Aron Eichler.

Zelda Haskovitch, who was props manager for the festival, later married Bill Dean. Together they were instrumental in founding the Beth Israel Players. They continued to be involved in numerous community dramatic productions after the Beth Israel Players disbanded. Many of the other actors continued their involvement in amateur theatre. The Calgary community reaped the fruits of that initial ambitious 1960 drama project for many years.

The **dedication of the Beth Israel synagogue** on September 11, 1960 was an important milestone for the congregation which had its beginnings in 1935 with A.S. Horwitz as founding president. Services were held in the House of Israel community building for over two decades. By 1957 plans were underway to build a synagogue closer to the south of the city where younger Jewish families were living. The impressive sod turning ceremony on May 7, 1959 was followed by an evening banquet and dance at the Palliser Hotel. 275 people were on hand to hear the inspirational address by Rabbi Stuart Rosenberg of Toronto. He returned in September 1960 for the dedication ceremony and banquet. The officiating clergy were Rabbi Joseph Wiesenberg and Cantor Nathaniel Halevy. Barnett Groberman was president at the time of the dedication. Cecil Horwitz served as the general Synagogue Campaign chairman and Ted Riback was the Building chairman.

Another important first for the community was the **Hadassah Bazaar** which was held for the first time on October 9, 1960. This major fundraiser brought together a wide range of volunteers. It provided an important service to Calgary and also many fond memories for all those involved throughout its 26 year history.

If you were involved with any of these key events, please help us by contacting the JHSSA with your stories, documents or photos.



Fay Mintz, Anne Harris, Suzette Segal, Leona Bell, and Marcia Century display Bazaar merchandise. c. 1960
Source: Anne Harris. JHSSA #2439

“They are championing the cause of the Jew” Lord and Lady Marley’s 1937 Visit to Calgary on behalf of ORT

By Jack Switzer

ORT in Calgary has been an active women’s service organization for over thirty years, and now focuses much of its work on training projects in Israel.

However, in the late 1920s and in the 1930s ORT was largely a men’s group, with a low profile in the Calgary Jewish community, and depended on visiting speakers for its relatively infrequent fundraising and educational programs. It was most visible in 1937, when Calgary ORT hosted the visit of an eminent non-Jewish British peer, Lord Marley.

ORT, the Organization for Rehabilitation through Training, was founded in Tsarist Russia in 1880 to help impoverished Jews train as farmers, artisans and mechanics. It responded to the needs of the many Jews caught in the aftermath of World War I and the Russian Revolution.

The 1930s brought fascism in Germany, economic restrictions in Poland, and continuing poverty to most east-European Jews. ORT stepped up its training and relief programs, mainly in Poland, Romania and Russia. ORT, then called “Peoples ORT Federation for Constructive Relief for the Jews of Eastern Europe”, boasted in 1935 that it supported “128 Trade Schools, 127 Agricultural Colonies, and 118 Factories, Artels and Workshops”.

The London-based group and its international branches were headed by distinguished Jewish personages, and it also enlisted sympathetic non-Jewish dignitaries to tell its story to governments and the public. In England, the Parliamentary Advisory Council of the ORT was headed by Lord Marley.

The Right Honourable Lord Marley, DSC, DP, JP, was born Dudley Leigh Aman in 1884. He served in World War I as a major in the Royal Marine Artillery, and was decorated for bravery in the second battle of Ypres in 1916. After the war he became active in Britain’s Labour Party, and ran unsuccessfully five times for a seat in the House of Commons. In 1930 Labour Prime Minister Ramsey MacDonald named Aman to the

House of Lords as the first Baron Marley. He became deputy speaker of the Lords, chief party whip, and served as a Lord in Waiting to King George V.

Lord Marley traveled widely, and was familiar with conditions in all parts of Europe. In 1933 he visited Birobidzan, a wilderness area in eastern Siberia set aside by Stalin in 1928 as a Jewish settlement area. (In 1934 it became the “Jewish Autonomous Region”.)



Lord Marley. Source: www.web.onetel.com/-pel-hamwest/westfamily

The same year Marley completed a 12-week tour of the United States on behalf of ORT. “He was greeted rapturously by the American communities that hosted him.”

The next year, 1934, he again toured the USA, this time in support of ICOR, the Association for Jewish Colonization in the Soviet Union. He spoke glowingly of Birobidzhan as a new garden of Eden for Europe’s Jews, especially those being victimized by the new Nazi government in Germany. Marley helped form a group supporting the Siberian Jewish colony; Ambijan – American Committee for the Settlement of Jews in Birobidzhan.

Marley’s Labour Party, although socialist in orientation, was then anxious to rid itself of any communist connections, and urged

him to disassociate himself from ICOR and Ambijan, both communist front organizations supported by Moscow’s propaganda ministry. (ORT’s humanitarian ideology was not an issue.) Marley rejected the advice, and in 1937, after his North American tour, he was fired as party whip and effectively lost any political influence he may have had.

Marley’s Birobidzhan interests and his party problems were not raised during his visit, accompanied by Lady Marley, to the Canadian west in June of 1937. Publicity and news reports discuss only his ORT activities.

The Calgary ORT committee announced Marley as “a distinguished leader of the British House of Lords, a noted military officer, a defender of minority rights, a fighter for peace, a progressive man of action, a gentleman.”

“World Jewry rejoices in the work of Lord and Lady Marley who are now touring America under the auspices of ORT, dedicating themselves to the building of a home for the declassed Jew of eastern Europe.”

Marley spoke to the Canadian Club at a Palliser Hotel luncheon, and to a Jewish audience at the House of Israel community centre. In a newspaper interview, he stressed the need to bring justice and equality to Europe’s minority groups, noting that Hitler had used minority-protection as an excuse for his incursions into neighbouring nations.

“The ladies group” had tea with Lady Marley.

The Marleys went on to Edmonton, Vancouver and Seattle, and planned to visit their son, Godfrey Aman, a film director in Los Angeles.

The Calgary ORT group that hosted the English couple were among the elite of Calgary’s Jewish community. It included lawyers Sam Helman, Ben Ginsberg, and Abraham Shumiatcher, Dr. J. Zimmerman, and businessmen Leo Paperny and A.S. Horwitz. Mayor Andrew Davidson greeted the Marleys on behalf of City Council.

Previous meetings had featured a far less charismatic figure than the Baron

Continued on Page 7

Alberta Jews of Trail BC

By Jack Switzer

During the Depression years hard times hurt almost every community in western Canada. One exception was in Trail, British Columbia, where Canada's biggest metallurgical and mining complex provided hundreds of jobs and a steady payroll.

More than a few Jewish families took advantage of Trail's relative prosperity. They began a small but significant emigration to the busy town in the 1930s, continued to arrive during the 40s and 50s, but left, like most small-town Jews, for the more attractive Jewish life in the big cities.

At its height about 1950, over 20 families, some 50 persons, formed Trail's active Jewish community. About half had come from Alberta. By then Trail and its neighbouring town Rossland had a population of over 12,000.

Trail is on the Columbia River near the American border, halfway between Calgary and Vancouver. About 1890, prospectors found gold, silver, copper and other minerals near Rossland. A Montana copper tycoon, Frederick Augustus Heinze, who had a Jewish father, constructed a smelter at Trail and built a railway to link it with the Rossland mines.

In 1898 Heinze sold out to Canadian Pacific Railway. The Trail/Rossland works became the heart of CP subsidiary Consolidated Mining & Smelting – later Cominco. Trail's population, fueled by CM&S growth, tripled during the 1920s.

Only a handful of Jews lived in Nelson, Trail and other lower Kootenay towns before 1930. The Miller and Zagin families, who came in the late 20s, were among the area's Jewish pioneers.

Following is a roster of Trail Jews who originated in Alberta. Information comes mainly from family and community histories written by Leo Levey and Dinah Spindel.

Joe Woogman had a store in Black Diamond, near Calgary, before he moved to Rossland in 1931; he ran Famous Style Shop. He married **Rebecca Loeb**, part of the Miller family, in 1933. His brother **Max Woogman** joined him in 1936. Joe moved to Trail, opening his own general store; Max and Mary Woogman took over the Rossland store.

Leo Levey lived in Calgary for most of the years between 1916 and 1936. In 1925 he married Calgarian **Pearl Goldstein**, a legal

secretary to then-MP R. B. Bennett. Leo opened a ladies' wear store and soon prospered, becoming prominent in Trail's business and civic organizations. He was also the de facto head of the Jewish community. Leo and Pearl Levey were Trail's last Jewish family; they moved to Vancouver in 1968.

Max and Annette Goldstein: Max was the brother of Pearl Goldstein, and came to Trail about the same time as the Leveys, in 1936. He was in business with Max Woogman before opening his own business.

Morris and Bessie Goldstein, the parents of Pearl and Max, also settled in Trail in 1936. Morris ran a shoe store next door to son-in-law Joe Woogman's place in downtown Trail. Morris Goldstein is credited with organizing the first Jewish religious services in Trail; it was only with his clan's arrival that a *minyan* (quorum of ten men) could be formed.

Merchants and their families formed the bulk of Trail's Jews, but there was also a group of "scientists" – engineers, chemists and technicians that worked for CM&S. Most were recent university graduates, a younger group, mainly single when they arrived in town. Many stayed only a few years.

Dave Dolgoy of Edmonton was an exception. A chemical engineer, he joined CM&S in 1935, and retired, still single, 35 years later. He was Trail's longest Jewish resident. He lived in a company residence, but was always active in the local Jewish social scene. Dolgoy died in Edmonton in 1982.

Bessie and Sam Wise moved to Trail from Drumheller, Alberta in 1936, after several coal mines closed. Bessie was Mary Woogman's sister. They opened a grocery store in a part of town known as east Trail, and lived with their children behind the store. They retired to Victoria in 1965.

Charles (Chuck) Waldman, a chemical engineer, married the oldest Wise daughter, **Clare Wise**. Theirs was the first Jewish wedding in Trail; it was conducted by a Spokane rabbi. Waldman left CM&S; he and his father-in-law Sam Wise opened a hardware and appliance store in Rossland.

Noah (Nate) Joffe also

came from Drumheller. Noah, the father of Calgarians Sabine and Jay Joffe, moved to Trail in 1937 as a single man. He enjoyed his role as a *zaida* and uncle to the Trail Jewish community. Leo Levey recalls Joffe: "He was very well liked ... he was a regular dinner guest at many homes. A well-read person, he had strong convictions on many social problems of that time."

Noah ran a confectionery and coffee shop until he passed away in 1961. His was the only Jewish death in Trail. He is buried in Calgary.

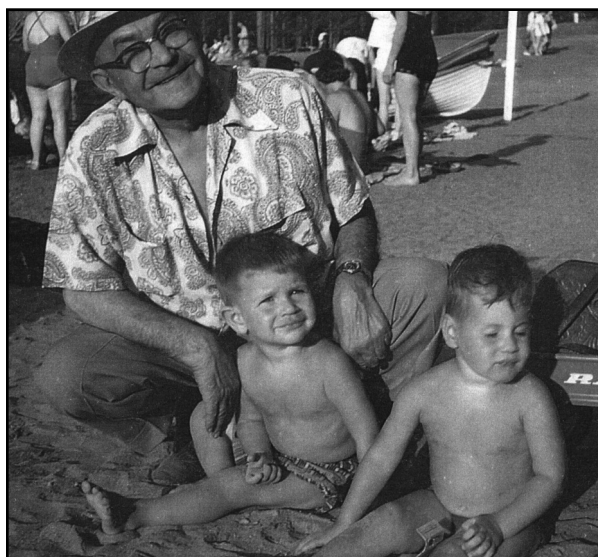
Irving Gurevitch of Edmonton married **Sonia Wener** of Vegreville and moved to Rossland in 1945. He worked for Max Woogman and bought the business when the Woogmans left for Vancouver. They returned to Edmonton after several years in Rossland.

Alex Rosenthal, Leo Levey's cousin from Rumsey, worked for the company in 1944-45. He then returned to Calgary and married and went on to become a professor of chemistry at UBC.

Leon and Mimi Slater moved from Calgary as newlyweds in 1947 and ran East Trail Grocery and Meat Market. The Slaters went to Vancouver in 1954 and returned to Calgary in the 60s.

Diane (Dinah) and Dave Spindel, an RCAF veteran, came to Trail in 1946. They bought the Zagin store and renamed it Capitol Furniture, the same name as Diane's father's (Meyer Switzer) store in Calgary.

Continued on Page 5



Noah Joffe with Herb Guttman's sons Mark and Morrey in Trail, B.C., late 1950s. Source: Herb Guttman. JHSSA #1149.

Alberta Jews of Trail, BC

Continued from Page 4

Both their daughters, Andrea and Deborah, were born in Trail. The family returned to Calgary in 1954.

Leo Levey writes: "Herb Guttman, Hymie Kredentser and Harold Segall, from Calgary, plus two men from Vancouver and one from Toronto were the last six Jewish scientists hired by Cominco. They brought a youthful zest to the community. Diane Spindel had known these young men since childhood. With Dave Dolgoy, they were at Dave and Diane's apartment every day for a meal or a *kibbitz*."

Hymie Kredentser, of Calgary, was in Trail only two years, 1946-47. He moved to Montreal.

Harold Segall, a long-time Calgary resident, says he worked only one summer for CM&S at Trail, while he was at university. His brother **Gordon Segall**, a McGill student, spent several summers at the Trail works.

Al Laven of Calgary worked for CM&S for a brief period. He played for the well-known Trail Smoke Eaters hockey team, largely made up of company employees hired for their hockey skills and allowed time to practice and play.

Herb Guttman, son of pioneer Trochu homesteaders (and later Calgary Jewish community leaders) Joseph A. Guttman and Leontina Ghitter Guttman, went to work for CM&S in 1945 as a chemical engineer. He married Sybil Caplan of North Battleford in 1950, and they raised three children in Trail. The Guttmans later moved to a company site near Toronto.

As noted above, most Jewish families left Trail/Rossland by the mid-1950s. The Leveys stayed well into the 60s, although their children had all moved to the Coast. Leo Levey was a member of several municipal and provincial boards, and enjoyed considerable local esteem.

Dinah Spindel summarized a common



Mimi Slater, Trail, B.C., 1948. Source: Spindel Photo collection. JHSSA #1341.37

situation faced by rural and small-town Jewish families. "We found a small town great for raising young children until more Jewish education was required. At that time most of the couples returned to their family environments."

She also found the medical facilities in the area inadequate. Dinah says that twice Jewish doctors tried to set up practices in Trail, but found themselves unable to get hospital privileges or good office space. Medicine in Trail/Rossland was a closed shop; Jews were unwelcome.

Leo Levey once considered running for Mayor, but he says he was actively discouraged by other civic leaders. They felt it more appropriate for the town's Jews to keep a low profile. Several Jewish women also report being socially snubbed by management wives; nor could their families join the local country club for many years.

Trail was not a pretty place before modern anti-pollution controls came into use. Smelter stacks rained smoke and dust down on the town every day; keeping a house clean was a major challenge.

In the late 1940s several Trail Jews traveled to a synagogue in Spokane for the High Holidays, but found the services unfamiliar and decided to run Yom Kippur services themselves, in a rented lodge hall. Leo Levey, Morris Goldstein and Sam Wise led services. These local High Holiday observances lasted for several years. Every Jewish business was closed for Yom Kippur.

Both Leo Levey and Diane Spindel report attempts to keep kosher homes, but meat and chicken shipments from Vancouver

and Calgary took two days to arrive. (The writer recalls his parents, kosher chicken processors, sending chickens, chilled by dry-ice, to the Spindel family by bus.) Both families gave up *kashrut* after two frustrating years.

Passover seders were prepared and enjoyed by all of Trail's Jews; bachelors were always included.

Zionism was strong in Trail/Rossland in the 40s. Almost every Jewish woman belonged to the local Lillian Frieman chapter of Hadassah. Older children belonged to an active Young Judean group. Jewish speakers from various Zionist and other national organizations visited the community. Levey recalls Al Gelmon, then a Vancouver Zionist leader, as a forceful speaker and good friend.

The men formed a Jewish Benevolent Society, intended to serve as the community's central council and general welfare body.

Jewish education was sporadic; volunteers gave after-school Hebrew lessons, basic religious instruction and Bar Mitzvah preparation when they were able.

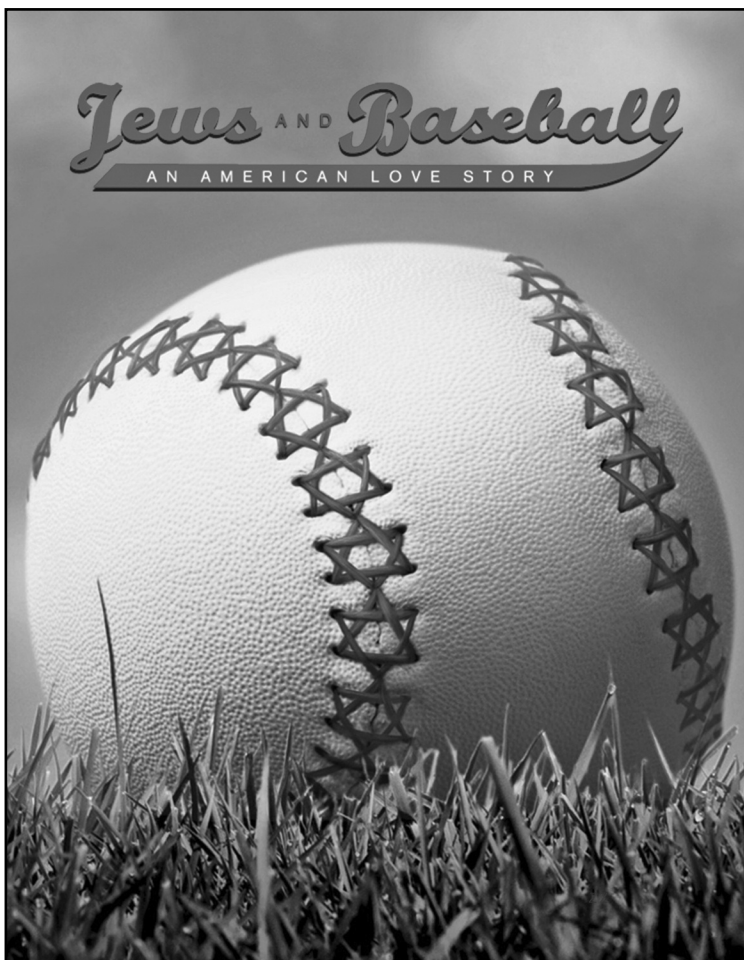
Trail is now a much cleaner place in which to live; the metal processors still operate. Trail would welcome back any Jewish families able to help the town to continue to prosper.

Sources: The Scribe Vol. XXIII, No.1, 2003, Jewish Historical Society of British Columbia; Leopold Levey, *Memories of Trail*, Glenbow Archives; Herb Guttman, Toronto; Dinah Spindel papers, JHSSA Archives; Cyril E. Leonoff, *Pioneers, Pedlars, and Prayer Shawls*, 1978.



Dinah Spindel, second from the left, with Annette and Lola Goldstein and 'Nana' (Bessie Goldstein?). Source: Spindel photo collection. JHSSA #1341.36

Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta
2010 Jay Joffe Memorial Program
in partnership with
Beth Tzedec Jewish Film Festival
presents



The mandate of the JHSSA's Jay Joffe Memorial Program is to present historical topics in an entertaining format to a wide audience. This year's choice of movie examines major trends in the North American Jewish community through the prism of a specific cultural activity. The film's synopsis explains this intersection of history and culture:

JEWS AND BASEBALL: AN AMERICAN LOVE STORY portrays the contributions of Jewish major leaguers and the special meaning that baseball has had in the lives of American Jews. More than a film about sports, this is a story of immigration, assimilation, bigotry, heroism, the passing on of traditions, and the shattering of stereotypes.

The movie is by award-winning filmmaker Peter Miller (*A Class Apart*, *Sacco and Vanzetti*) and is narrated by Dustin Hoffman.

This film will be of special interest to all those Calgarians who were involved in the local Jewish Men's Baseball League that was established in 1983. In preparation for the screening, JHSSA is very interested in hearing stories and seeing photos from the league's players and fans. Please contact our office (430-444-3171 or jhssa@shaw.ca) if you can provide us with information.

Watch for the Beth Tzedec Jewish Film Festival Brochure for further details about the November date and the exact time of the screening of *Jews and Baseball: An American Love Story*.

A Joyful Harvest in Vancouver

The pride of southern Alberta was the toast of Vancouver as the Jewish Museum and Archives of British Columbia welcomed approximately 100 people to the opening of *A Joyful Harvest: Celebrating the Jewish Contribution to Southern Alberta Life, 1889 - 2005* at the Sid and Gertrude Zack Gallery at the Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver on August 5, 2010.

Many of those on hand for the Vancouver debut of the exhibit were former Albertans or had a connection to one or more of the 100 people, places and institutions featured in the exhibit.

Also on hand were exhibit sponsor Art Smolensky and his brother Jason, who are grandsons of Calgary's first permanent Rabbi, Simon Smolensky, and nephews of oilman and philanthropist Sydney Kahanoff, both of whom are featured in the exhibit together with other members of their extended family.

Several Calgarians including Barbara Joffe and her son, Jonathan (great-grandson of Jacob and Rachel Diamond, Calgary's first permanent Jewish settlers) as well as Phil and Harriet Libin, and several of their family members were present at the gala opening. Kayla Joffe, now living in Vancouver, was pleased to see her grandfather Yale Joffe, father Hal and other relatives featured in the exhibit.

Other exhibit viewers, too numerous to mention, were sharing similar pride in family members, friends and former classmates whose stories are in *A Joyful Harvest*.

Maxine Fischbein, who edited the exhibit and the book that followed in 2007, represented the Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta at the opening.

"Members of the Jewish community in Vancouver will see their own spirit in the stories ... that have defined Jewish life on the other side of the Rockies," said Fischbein.

"Many stories begun in southern Alberta continue to be written in BC, and [their] sweeping saga is part of a larger story of rugged individualism ... the spirit that settled the west."

That spirit is captured movingly in the exhibit panel devoted to Lethbridge's Moscovitch family whose quintessential immigrant story was a favourite among

Continued on Page 7

Lord and Lady Marley's 1937 Visit to Calgary

Continued from Page 3

Marley. Dr. Boris Aiserowich, part of the ORT operations in Poland, had spoken in Calgary several times, likely in Yiddish. The 1936 campaign, with Aiserowich as keynote speaker, raised only \$450; Lord Marley's visit in 1937 brought in \$1,100.

Calgary ORT suspended its work in 1939, but other branches supported several Canadian refugee programs during World War II. An ORT school at Ile aux Noix in Quebec served German Jewish refugees who had been arrested in England as enemy aliens, and then shipped to internment camps in Canada.

Any sympathy that ORT members had had with the Soviet regime largely disappeared in 1938, when Stalin "expelled ORT from the country, confiscated its assets and

transported its leaders to the Gulag". ICOR carried on.

ORT's work in Europe was interrupted by the war, and the organization was unable to return to its east-European work during the Cold War era. Its attentions turned to Palestine and the new Jewish state of Israel, and it has been able to use its resources and skills in many international programs.

Lord Marley enjoyed no such rejuvenation. After 1937 he faded from view and died, in obscurity, in 1952. (ICOR also slipped from view; many of its supporters diverted their resources to the far-left United Jewish People's Order.) The Marley hereditary peerage was cancelled (along with many others) in the House of Lords reforms of 1990.

And the Birobidzhan Jewish region which he had avidly promoted was exposed as a massive propaganda project and ended as a failure. Few Jews settled there; many that did fell victim to Stalinist purges. Zionism and Israel, largely scorned by Marley, proved to be a much stronger, durable, and vibrant Jewish refuge than his (and ICOR's) Siberian dreamscape.

Sources: Calgary Herald; Jewish Post (Winnipeg); JHSSA Archives; Glenbow Archives; internet history of British ORT; Nicole Taylor, "The Mystery of Lord Marley" Jewish Quarterly, August 2005; articles on Birobidzhan by Henry Srebnik, author of Jerusalem on the Amur: Birobidzhan and the Canadian Jewish Communist Movement, 1924-1951.

A Joyful Harvest in Vancouver

Continued from Page 6

exhibit viewers, including family member and Vancouverite Michael Moscovich who attended the exhibit together with his wife Phyllis, a board member of the Jewish Historical Society of Vancouver.

Others who spoke at the opening included Jewish Museum and Archives of British Columbia Executive Director Laura Moodie,

Jewish Historical Society of Vancouver President Gary Averbach, and board member Lola Pawer who paid tribute to her Calgary roots and the legacy of her grandmother, Bella (Switzer) Singer, the family matriarch whose inspiring story is featured in *A Joyful Harvest*.

British Columbia organizers were

thrilled with the enthusiastic response to the exhibit which remained on display at the Zack Gallery through the end of August.

Copies of A Joyful Harvest are available from the JHSSA office. The exhibit opening was also featured in an article by Olga Livshin, available at www.jewishindependent.ca.

Some Visitor Comments from the Guestbook for *A Joyful Harvest*, Vancouver 2010

"This display brings pride and honour to all."

"Thank you for telling the story."

"A great opportunity to share history with my father."

"Great exhibit. Brought back fond memories of growing up in Medicine Hat."

"I love all Jewish History!"

"Excellent exhibit with so many familiar faces."

"Thanks for the informative text."

"Beautiful Harvest! Well done!"



Sierra and Thea Libin proudly point to their grandfather Phil Libin's photo at the gala opening of A Joyful Harvest in Vancouver, August 5, 2010. Photographer: Ron Long. Source: Jewish Museum and Archives of British Columbia

JHSSA News

Voices of Soviet Immigrants Now Heard

We are pleased to inform our readers of the recent publication of *Voices of Resilience* by Jewish Family Service Calgary (JFSC). This compelling collection of interviews of Calgarians who experienced both the horrors of World War II and the trauma of the Soviet regime is edited by JHSSA Director Svetlana Shklarov, who also wrote the informative and helpful introduction. These bilingual, Russian/English memoirs provide a vital record of the experience of a significant segment of the local Jewish community. The book is available through JFSC. A copy has been donated to the JHSSA library.

JHSSA would like to undertake a project to interview immigrants from the former Soviet Union about their experiences after

their emigration and about their integration into our community. Please contact our office if you would like to be involved.

Membership corrections

Our apologies to those members who were omitted or incorrectly entered in the 2009-2010 membership list which appeared in our last issue.

The list should include Out of Town Members Stan Guttman and Roberta Sheps and Calgary Benefactors Ruth & Phil Ullman.

Thank you to those who have recently joined JHSSA. Your names will appear in the 2010-2011 list.

Please remember that all donations

exceeding \$36 can qualify for a matching Alberta Community Spirit grant.

Historic Citations for Two Winnipeg Jews

The Canadian Jewish News (CJN, Vol. XL, No. 28) reports that Abraham Albert Heaps and Rabbi Israel Isaac Kahanovitch were designated national historic persons in July by Environment Minister Jim Prentice, who oversees the Historic Sites and Monuments Board. Heaps was a Winnipeg city councilor and MP for 1925 to 1940 and a founding member of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. Rabbi Kahanovitch was the city's chief rabbi from 1906 to 1945.

President's Message

Continued from Page 1

Jewish immigrants, with emphasis on their integration to the existing community. Our oral history program is producing more and more important data.

The last year saw several new directors join our board. They are all well qualified, motivated, and anxious to help expand our activities. Some have undertaken research and writing projects; others are developing programs, and working with the business side of the organization – fund raising, administrative issues, and other committee work.

We are grateful to the Alberta Ministry of Culture and Community Spirit for financial assistance. In 2010 we received nearly \$8,000 from the Community Spirit grant program. This grant is a near-match for every dollar donated above our basic dues of \$36. So we ask you to consider becoming benefactors or patrons and making a special 20th Anniversary donation to JHSSA.

We also need your "old" documents and historically-important photos. Most of all, we need you – your membership and those of your friends, your cash donations, your active presence on our Board, or your volunteer assistance with our varied projects – you need not be a board member to help.

Please expect more historical work for your dollars. Please celebrate our twentieth anniversary with us at our annual general meeting on October 18th.



JHSSA exhibit, *A Joyful Harvest*, was enjoyed by many former Albertans in Vancouver on opening night, August 5, 2010. Photographer: Ron Long. Source: Jewish Museum and Archives of B.C.

DISCOVERY

Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta

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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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