



JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

of Southern Alberta

VOLUME 17, No. 3

OCTOBER 2007

Morris Shumiatcher: Creator of a Calgary Icon

By Harry Sanders

On August 30, 2007, the Glenbow Museum opened the Morris Shumiatcher Activity Room adjacent to the new Mavericks permanent gallery. This article by Glenbow archivist Harry Sanders was prepared for the Glenbow and is printed here with their permission. Paragraphs in brackets were added by the editors.

In the late 1940s, a series of events – the Leduc oil discovery, the Calgary Stampede's first Grey Cup victory, and the election of tireless promoter Don Mackay as mayor – signalled that Calgary had arrived on the national stage. That shining moment also produced a lasting symbol of Calgary's newfound confidence and the epitome of its western hospitality – the white cowboy hat. And it took a Jewish immigrant from eastern Europe to make it possible.

Morris Shumiatcher was born in 1893 in Gomel, Byelorussia, at that time part of the Russian Empire (now Belarus). He was the third of Judah and Chasia Shumiatcher's eleven children. Their district formed part of the "Pale of Settlement" in which the empire's millions of Jews were confined to live. Official anti-Semitism under the rule of Czar Alexander III (from 1882-1894) and his son, Nicholas II (from 1894-1917), drove hundreds of thousands of Jews to emigrate. In 1909, Judah and Morris departed for Canada, leaving the other children to the care of Chasia and eldest son Abraham. Father and son homesteaded at a Jewish bloc set-



Morris and Ette Shumiatcher, c. 1923. Photo courtesy of Morris Sanders.

tlement near Rumsey, Alberta. They regarded the move as a year-long experiment, after which they would send for the rest of the family or return to Gomel. When the year was up, Judah and Morris abandoned the farm and moved to nearby Calgary, where the rest of the family joined them in 1911. According to that year's census, Calgary's small Jewish community of 604 comprised about one-and-a-half per cent of the city's 43,704 inhabitants.

Despite the nondescript family name most of them adopted – Smith – the Shumiatchers made a lasting mark in Calgary. Judah served as a pioneer

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Annual General Meeting to feature Wartime Memories

Monday, October 29, 2007
7:30 pm, Calgary JCC Auditorium

Bittersweet Memories:

The War Years

A new film produced by the
Jewish Archives and Historical
Society of Edmonton and Northern
Alberta (JAHSENA)

The 17th Annual General Meeting of the Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta (JHSSA) will feature the Calgary premiere of the new production of its sister historical society in Edmonton. The film, *Bittersweet Memories*, will premiere in Edmonton the previous evening. It is the work of the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton (JAHSENA) president Dan Kauffman and comes to Calgary by special arrangement with that organization.

The film's focus is on the contribution made by members of Edmonton's Jewish community to World War II and to Israel's 1948 War of Independence. It reflects the words on the certificates honouring the 1948 Mahal volunteers: "They came to us when we needed them most, during those hard and uncertain days of our War of

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This issue is sponsored by B'nai Brith Lodge #816, Calgary. Their support is greatly appreciated.

Morris Shumiatcher

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teacher at the Calgary Hebrew School. Abraham (1890-1974), who went by his initials, A.I., became a prominent lawyer known widely as "A-#1 Shumiatcher." Harry Smith (1894-1979) took over the Boston Hat Works and News Company in 1916 and built it into Harry's News, a landmark Eighth Avenue newsstand. The youngest brother, Billy Smith (1908-1967), followed Harry's lead and founded Billy's News, which still operates in downtown Calgary.

Morris toiled at a sawmill but longed for something more dramatic. Perhaps he was inspired by his brother Harry, who operated two movie theatres at Sarcee City, the tent encampment at Calgary's military training grounds during the First World War. Morris trekked to Hollywood, where he found work as an extra in silent films but failed to establish an acting career. He returned to Calgary, and in early 1918 he was conscripted into the Canadian army. Like the majority of draftees, Morris was not sent overseas.

Following his discharge, Morris might have taken another cue from Harry, whose business included a hat-cleaning operation. Morris wanted to buy the Calgary Hat Works, a manufacturing and repairing company that had been established in 1912. Since Morris had no collateral, Harry signed for the \$300 bank loan. Morris changed the identity of his business to the now-familiar Smithbilt Hats.* (He later changed his own name, repeatedly, alternating between Smith and Shumiatcher.) Around 1922, Morris married one of his employees, Rumanian Jewish immigrant Ette Spector (1903-1997). They had two children, Clara (born 1926) and Judah (born 1928).

(Clara, an accomplished pianist, married lawyer [later judge] Irwin Blackstone, and was a music teacher for many years. Judah became an architect in Vancouver; he and wife Barbara ran Smithbilt after Morris' death. Isaac Aptowitzer was the on-site manager.)

Smithbilt was the city's only manufacturing hat retailer, but its public profile was unremarkable. Tom Campbell remained Calgary's best-known hatter, and it was his Smile Hat Shop that famously "hatted" the Prince of Wales during his royal tour in 1919. Smithbilt's stock-in-trade was men's fedoras and women's dress hats. The Calgary Stampede created a seasonal market for cowboy hats, made famous by the style's American creator, hatmaker John B. Stetson. The world-famous rodeo began as a one-off event in 1912; it returned as the Victory Stampede in 1919, and became a permanent feature of the city's annual exhibition in 1923. George Webster, Calgary's "Cowboy Mayor" from 1923-26, set the example to "dress western" during Stampede week, and the tradition stuck. Eventually, as fedoras and ladies' hats declined in popularity, "Stetsons" became an increasing part of Smithbilt's trade.

After the Second World War a wealthy, colourful oilman named Bill Herron became active in organizing the Stampede parade. Each year he rode in the parade with his family, wearing western costumes designed by his artist wife, Marjorie. The 1947 parade was the first after the Leduc oil discovery that launched Alberta's sustained prosperity. It also marked the debut of a novelty that became an icon: Smithbilt's white hat.*

A snow white cowboy hat was unprecedented. Even in cowboy movies, the "good guys" wore a silver-grey or off-white hat. Only dark-coloured hats had been available during the war, but peace restored international trade and the importation of European rabbit fur needed to make brightly-coloured felt. Pastel-coloured cowboy hats suddenly became popular, but only Smithbilt took the next step and manufactured a white hat.

Sources differ on whether the concept was Herron's or Shumiatcher's. The idea was to create a hat that would match the Herrons' new

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Annual General Meeting

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Dave Panar and comrades, building a spitfire under camouflage in British Mandate Palestine during the Israeli War of Independence, 1948. Photo courtesy of JAHSENA Archives, donated by Dave Panar.

Independence." Calgary audiences will no doubt recognize many of the names mentioned and will certainly relate to the memories raised.

The JHSSA made some of its archival material available to the creators of the film. A small display of Calgary wartime memories will also be featured at the AGM.

The rest of the program will include the President's report on the past productive year, the election of the new board of directors and the annual presentation of certificates to those in the community marking their milestone eightieth birthday.

Copies of JHSSA's publication, *A Joyful Harvest*, and DVD copies of *Bittersweet Memories* will be available for purchase.

Please bring a non perishable item for the bins (Food Bank or Miriam's Well) in the JCC entrance way.

As always, the public is welcome to attend and refreshments will be served.

Textile Conservation – Caring for Your Heirloom Textiles

Gail Niinimaa, Textile Conservator

This article is an abbreviated version of the illustrated talk Ms. Niinimaa presented at the Judaic Textiles Workshop which the JHSSA co-sponsored this past July. The enthusiastic response of the participants of that Workshop has led to the founding of Rimon Calgary, a chapter of the Pomegranate Guild International. It is opened to anyone interested in creating and promoting Judaic needlework and textile arts.

Over time, your valued textiles may deteriorate, or accidents may happen, causing damage. Specialized treatment of historic textiles should be left for professionals as damage can occur by well meaning unskilled workers. However, there are many *preventive measures* that people can undertake to preserve the life of their heirlooms for future generations.

Remember, less is more. Conservation does not imply putting the object back into pristine condition. Respect the object's history. Distinguish conservation repairs from the original and use stable materials. Document any changes you have made to the original during your repairs.

Preventive Conservation involves identifying, controlling or eliminating the underlying causes and agents of decay. By removing these risks you can greatly enhance the longevity of your textiles.

Insect Damage

Insect pests typically feed on wool or silk fibres or soiled textiles, and lay their eggs in dark corners or creases where they are often unnoticed. First, isolate insect infested textiles. Wrap the item in unbleached muslin or acid-free tissue paper and place in a polyethylene plastic bag. Rid the bag of excess air before taping shut (duct tape works well). Place in your freezer (at a constant temperature of -20°C) for a week and then

remove, allowing it to return to room temperature slowly. Do not open the bag. Repeat this procedure. Again, do not open the bag until the contents have thawed, then vacuum up the insect debris and dispose of the vacuum bag. The presence of spiders in a storage area is a warning to check more closely. While spiders do not damage fabric, they like to eat the insects that do. Regularly checking storage and display areas for evidence of insects is a simple preventive measure.



"Challah" Cover created by Ida Horwitz in 1988. Photo courtesy of Siona Horwitz.

Look for damage such as holes or grazed surfaces on wool fabrics, fecal pellets, cast larval skins, webbing, cases and live larvae. Good housekeeping will go a long way towards preventing insect infestations.

Moth Damage

Casemaking clothes moth is the most common and leaves small cocoons and frass which can be removed by surface vacuuming or with small tweezers.

Light Damage

Fading is due to a photochemical reaction involving UV and visible light. Light intensity and the length of exposure to light can cause cumulative and irreversible damage. Avoid displaying

textiles where there is bright natural or artificial light since these cause colours to fade and fibres to become brittle. Exposure to the ultraviolet component of light will cause many fibres to turn yellow.

Water damage

Humidity and temperature are inter-related. Both should be kept constant. Excess humidity will lead to mold and mildew and, if not remedied, may cause the textile to decompose. Stains caused by mold are difficult, if not impossible, to remove from fabric. Mold spores that are dormant do not pose an immediate risk to the artifact but may be a health risk to humans. Poor air circulation will make matters worse. Keep textiles away from sources of heat such as fireplaces, heating vents and bright lights.

Safety First! – Tips when working with a disaster involving textiles:

With any disaster there may be health risks. Wear plastic or rubber gloves during cleanup. If there is mold, wear protective gear – surgical mask or respirator, goggles and coveralls.

Prevent Mold. Mold can form within 48 hours so you will need to work fast. The goal is to reduce the humidity and

temperature around your treasures as you proceed to clean and dry them.

Air-Dry. Gentle air-drying is best – indoors, if possible. Hair dryers, irons, ovens and prolonged exposure to sunlight will do irreversible damage. Increase good indoor airflow with fans, open windows, air conditioners and dehumidifiers.

Handle with Care. Silk becomes more fragile when wet, while cotton becomes stronger.

Clean gently. Loosen dirt and debris on fragile objects gently with soft brushes and cloths. Avoid rubbing, which can grind in dirt.

You may not be able to save everything, so focus on what's most impor-

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Textile Conservation

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tant to you, whether for historic, monetary, or sentimental reasons. Damp objects and items that cannot be dealt with immediately should be put in open, unsealed boxes or bags. Photos, papers, books, and textiles should be frozen if you can't get them dry within 48 hours.

For helpful hints see:

<http://www.heritagepreservation.org/NEWS/SaveTreasRight.htm>

Pollutants

Keep cherished textiles away from pollutants such as cigarette smoke, perfume, perspiration and cosmetics. Keep them dust free and away from metals that can tarnish.

Careless handling

This is the greatest cause of damage and the easiest to prevent. Handle textiles with care and avoid over manipulation. Use cotton gloves. Remove jewelry. Use a solid support to transport your textile on. Always pre-plan your movement and prepare the surface where you want to move the textile to.

Storage

Polyethylene plastic and acid-free cardboard boxes are fine for storage. So is acid-free tissue paper or pre-washed unbleached cotton muslin when used as a box liner, packing material or dust cover. At all costs, avoid regular paper, cardboard, wood and wood products and adhesives such as urea-formaldehyde, which emit damaging acids. Also, do not use plastic garment bags (such as the ones provided by dry cleaners) because they provide no air circulation or protection from light.

Avoid hanging fragile costumes, knit or bias cut garments, heavily beaded or decorated items or costumes that have weak shoulder seams. Do not use wire hangers and avoid scented, padded hangers that may attract pests. Wood hangers can be padded with polyester batting and then covered with washed, unbleached muslin. Support the interior of sleeves with crumpled acid-free tissue. Place a loose muslin bag over the garment and hang in a well-ventilated place with ample room for hanging.

Flat storage is recommended be-

cause it provides support for the entire textile. Use an acid-free or polyethylene box with a lid. Line the box or drawer with unbleached muslin. If folding is unavoidable, pad the creases with acid-free tissue paper or muslin. It is best not to stack several textiles on top of each other. If textiles must be layered, use acid-free paper in between, with the heaviest items at the bottom. Store in a dark place where there is stable heat and humidity and good air circulation.

Rolling textiles around a tube for storage works well for larger pieces (shawls, quilts) and for small textiles such as lengths of narrow lace. Acid-free cardboard tubes are available at archival supply shops, or cover a regular cardboard tube with a barrier of Mylar plastic sheeting, polyethylene plastic sheeting, Tyvek or heavy acid-free tissue. Be sure the tube is longer than the item itself so that there is no contact with the ends when hanging the tube.

Roll the textile face down on a flat, clean surface and smooth out bulges or creases and straighten the top and bottom as well as the edges. Place the tube parallel to either the warp or the weft threads.

Interleave rolled textiles with acid-free tissue paper or pre-washed cotton sheeting. If the textile has only one layer (a scarf or shawl), roll onto the tube with the right side inwards.

Roll pieces with a raised texture such as pile carpets, velvets, embroideries or quilts with more than one layer of fabric with the right side outwards.

For velvet and other fabrics with a pile, roll in the direction of the pile.

If there are fringes, cut acid-free tissue the width of the fringe and fold in half over the fringe.

Once rolled, cover with muslin, cotton sheeting or acid-free tissue and loosely secure with twill tapes. The roll should not support its own weight; rather, provide support for the ends of the roll by using a hanging system or polyethylene foam blocks.

Displaying Textiles

Keep the following considerations in mind before displaying textiles:

Textiles in poor condition will degrade quickly if on display. Taping, stapling or nailing textiles directly to the wall are inappropriate display methods. Protect textiles from dust and light by using display cases and dust covers. Use safe materials to construct mounts and display cases. Pad out folds and creases and re-fold periodically to avoid creasing. Small textiles, such as embroideries can be displayed on a flat, rigid support cut larger than the textile, covered with a padding layer and a pre-washed display fabric. Hand stitch the textile to the support at regular intervals to evenly spread the weight of the textile. Take care to stitch *between* the threads of the textile rather than piercing them. All materials used to mount or display textiles with should be pre-washed to remove excess dye and sizing. If the item is to be framed, use ultraviolet filtering glazing. The glazing should not be in contact with the mounted textile. If a wood molding is chosen, provide a barrier between it and the mount by covering the wood surfaces with Mylar.

Large flat textiles that are sound enough to support their own weight can be displayed with a Velcro support which distributes the weight evenly across the width of the textile. The Velcro should be machine stitched to a cotton sleeve first and then the cotton sleeve should be hand stitched to the back of the textile.

Surface Cleaning

Textiles in good condition can be surface cleaned by careful vacuuming, but damaged textiles should not be surface cleaned. To surface clean, place fibreglass screening over the item and then clean with a low-powered, hand-held vacuum. A soft artist's brush can be used to ease the removal of dirt from the textile. Lift the nozzle from place to place in the direction of the nap; do not rub back and forth.

Wet cleaning

Non-coloured textiles that are in good condition can be washed by hand. Washing softens creases, realigns textiles and removes dirt and musty

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Morris Shumiatcher

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parade costumes, which were black silk with white trim. Shumiatcher found a Russian supplier and imported enough white fur to make twelve dozen white hats; Herron promised to buy any that remained unsold. The Herrons won the parade's "best dressed" award, and the white Smithbilt hat suddenly became famous.

Smithbilt made 2,000 hats for the 1948 Stampede, and that autumn, hundreds of Calgarians (including Herron) wore white Smithbilts to the Grey Cup game in Toronto. The underdog Calgary Stampeders won the game, and, for the first time, Canada's football championship trophy. Calgarians' antics in the Ontario capital, which included serving flapjacks in front of city hall, square dancing outside Union Station, and removing the goalposts to the Royal York Hotel after the game – became the stuff of legend. Calgary alderman Don Mackay presented a white hat to Toronto mayor Hiram E. McCallum.

(Judah Shumiatcher and his cousin, Maurice Paperny, then university students in eastern Canada, easily sold a supply of Smithbilt hats Morris had sent them.)

Many Calgary fans sold their white hats, and other hats were lost or stolen. Nonetheless, the team and fans returned triumphantly with their Smithbilts – thanks to Shumiatcher's son-in-law, Irwin Blackstone, who met their train outside Calgary with a fresh supply.

Smithbilt Hat Company Enters Thirty-First Year on Calgary's 75th Anniversary

IN 1919 OUR FOUNDER Morris Shumiatcher, commenced manufacturing hats in Calgary. From that time, each year has seen a steady growth of the Smithbilt Hat Company, which has in its way contributed to the success and development of the West.

AMID THE MANY HUMMING MACHINES and employees found in a modern hat plant, Mr. Shumiatcher now looks about with pardonable pride as he thinks back over three decades to modest beginnings.

TODAY THE SMITHBILT BRAND is recognized from Vancouver Island to Winnipeg and beyond as a western product par excellence. The Company has rendered continuous service to consumers over the years providing quality, style and value which are synonymous with the West.

IN THE EARLY days much of the production went into fine quality Western or "10 gallon" hats and the "know how" gained from this has stamped Smithbilt Westerns with a mark of distinction that is acknowledged from coast to coast. As times changed and the fedora or snap brim came into its own, our Smithbilt craftsmen developed and continue to produce style as fine as any in the entire nation.

"ON THE SPOT" PRODUCTION has proved a boon to merchants throughout the West and a real service to westerners.

We at Smithbilt Hats are pleased to take this opportunity to salute Calgary on its 75th Anniversary not only as the home of our "birt" but as the city which represents all that is fine about the West. MAY IT CONTINUE TO GROW AND PROSPER!



Smithbilt Hat ad, 1950; from The Story of Calgary, 1875–1950. Source: JHSA Archives.

Don Mackay won the mayoralty in 1949, and during his nine-year tenure, the former broadcaster gave hundreds of white Stetsons to visiting dignitaries. The Calgary Tourist and Convention Association (later renamed Tourism Calgary) established a White Hatter welcoming ceremony and annual White Hat awards for civic achievement. Smithbilt became the official supplier not only to the tourism authority, but to the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede itself. (And Smithbilt white hats were worn by Canadian athletes at the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary.)

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Music and Magazines, Hats and Law – the Shumiatcher Siblings

Our main article about Morris Shumiatcher also briefly notes the careers of his three brothers – lawyer Abraham and newsstand operators Harry and Billy. It does not mention his seven sisters, who are equally noteworthy.

Judah and Chasia's youngest daughter Esther (Ethel,) is the best known of the Shumiatcher sisters; at 18 she married the much older Peretz Hirshbein, a famous Yiddish playwright, and herself became a well-known Yiddish poet. The couple travelled the world, and settled in New York.

Three of the sisters married local businessmen and stayed in Calgary. Annie married Leo Paperny. Bessie married Morris Shapiro, and Eva wed Abe Busheikin. The three women were active in Calgary musical circles and Jewish communal life; their husbands became prosperous magazine and book wholesalers.

The three remaining women married American men, and pursued musical careers, begun in Calgary, in New York City. Fanny, a violinist with the Calgary Symphony Orchestra, married Henry Ziskin. Bella, a pianist and the wife of Hyman Abbey, attended the Juilliard School and opened the Shumiatcher School of Music in New York. Sarah, an accomplished violinist, wed concert pianist and composer Lazar Weiner, whom she had met at a Calgary performance.

This abbreviated review has focused on only one generation, the children of Judah and Chasia Shumiatcher. These eleven Calgarians, all accomplished in business, law, or music, have in turn nurtured new generations of musicians, managers, professionals and arts and culture personae. The careers and contributions of these children and grand-children are as compelling as that of their forebears, the senior Shumiatchers and their eleven offspring.

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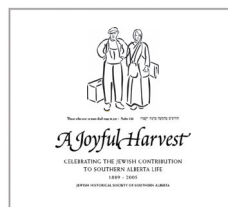
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British Jews Buy the Belgian Horse Ranch – 1911

By Jack Switzer

The Jews of Southern Alberta were joined early in the 1900s by two men who were remarkably different from most of that period's local Jewish immigrants. They were moneyed British "gentlemen," who became large-scale ranchers.

In 1911 the 2400-acre Belgian Horse Ranch just west of Calgary was purchased by three Englishmen: Cecil Cohen, A.H. Salaman, and R.N. Salaman, all of "Homestall, Barley, Royston, Herts, England." The price was \$100,000, a huge amount at a time when a laborer was lucky to earn 40 cents an hour and a large Calgary house could be bought for \$2,000.

The sale included all the existing buildings and stock, including cattle and several purebred Belgian horses, a draught breed in demand to pull wagons, carriages and farm implements. The land had been homesteaded in the 1890s, and then enlarged to ranch status by a polo-playing English immigrant. He soon sold the property to an Irish nobleman, who lived at the ranch only during the summer months, returning to the British Isles every year.

In 1903 two Belgian men, Baron Roels and Raoul Pirmez, bought the property. They began importing heavy horses and named the site the Belgian Horse Ranch. Their purebred Belgians won prizes at horse shows throughout Europe and North America, and the ranch became a local showpiece, as the following newspaper item asserts.

"The house is thoroughly modern, being equipped with the latest of domestic conveniences, including bath and toilet rooms, hot and cold water, an acetylene gas plant, etc. This ranch has been looked upon as the finest country home in Alberta."

The Belgian Horse Ranch flanked both sides of the Elbow River near what is now the junction of Highways 8 and 22, just a few miles west of the current Calgary city limits.

The news items announcing the sale to the Jewish men noted three names, but it appears that only two of them – Cecil Morris Cohen and Archibald

Herbert Salaman, actually came to Alberta. The third investor, R.N. Salaman, a British physician and plant scientist, was an absentee co-owner, although he may have visited Alberta. The two Salamans were likely brothers. (Some sources spell the family name as Salamen.)

The new owners built a large greenhouse, supplying them with cucumbers and other fresh vegetables. They erected a water tower and continued the established horse breeding program.

The 1911 Census of Canada lists both Cohen and Salaman as "Hebrew." Cohen was 38, Salaman 25; both were "farmers". The ranch had four resident employees. A married couple served as "labourer" and housekeeper. A single woman was described in the census as a milkmaid. Another single man was a labourer. We would know the owners as ranchmen and the labourers as cowboys.

Cohen became postmaster for Pirmez Creek, serving local ranchers and their cowhands from a post office at the ranch. We have no record of either Cohen or Salaman being involved with the Calgary Jewish community.

Ellis Island records show the two men arriving in New York in the summer of 1913, after a visit to Britain. Their address was given as Pirmez Creek, Calgary. Cecil Cohen was then listed as married.

It appears that Salaman and Cohen left Canada in 1915. World War I was underway, and many British-born immigrants returned to the mother country to help with the Empire's war effort. As well, the foothills ranching industry was in general decline. Another source says that Salaman left for England in the 1920s, while Cohen went to New York. They continued to own the ranch for several years, with tenants renting the land.

The Salaman family is well known among Jewish historians in England. R.N. Salaman was Dr. Redcliffe Nathan Salaman (1874–1955), one of fifteen children of a wealthy London family. He studied medicine, and practiced briefly in London before developing tuberculosis in 1905. He moved to a house in Barley, Hertfordshire, a largely rural area, and began studying plant genetics.

Salaman became the world expert on potato diseases, developing plants resistant to blight, and later founded the Potato Virus Research Institute at Cambridge. His best-known publication is *The History and Social Influence of the Potato*.

His wife, Nina Davis Salaman, was the foremost English-language translator of Biblical and modern Hebrew poetry.

Dr. Redcliffe Nathan Salaman was an active Zionist, and was associated with many national and international refugee-aid and Jewish education groups, notably Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He served as president of the Jewish Health Organization of Great Britain.

He also had a brief connection, along with his brother and Cecil Cohen, with Southern Alberta's agricultural and Jewish history.

Sources: *Glenbow Library; Census of Canada, 1911; Chaps and Chinooks: A History West of Calgary; Nick Landau, British genealogist, personal communication.*

Other Early "Jewish" Ranchers

Cohen and Salaman may not have been the only British-born ranchers in the Alberta foothills to have Jewish roots.

A local history collection* from the High River area states that the owners of the 40,000-acre Bar XY Ranch near that town had Jewish backgrounds.

The ranchers were Herbert Samson and Ben Harford (sometimes spelled Hartford); their heyday was 1886 to 1899, an era when cattle barons rather than farmers ruled southern Alberta.

Samson was apparently driving a herd of cattle north from Wyoming in 1886 when he met Harford, a friend from their boyhood days in England. They joined their herds and formed a partnership that became the Bar XY Ranch near Little Bow, south and east of Calgary.

Samson and Harford were among the 1890 founders of "The Wolves' Den", a Calgary group that preceded the Ranchmen's Club. They are both listed in Ranchmen's Club histories as founders of the exclusive men's group in 1891/92.

Harford sold his share of the Bar XY

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Belgian Horse Ranch

Continued from Page 6

ranch to Samson in 1895 and returned to England, apparently at the urging of his aging father who wanted him to take over the family's banking business in Brighton.

In 1899 Herbert Samson sold the Bar XY ranch to George Lane (one of the Calgary Stampede's Big 4 founders) and joined the British army in the Boer War. The brief biographical notes say Samson stayed in South Africa and became governor of one of its states, and adds that he was killed in a London auto accident.

"Herbert Samson was Jewish but belonged to the English church." Both Samson and Harford noted their religion as Anglican in the 1891 census.

The same local history states that, "A well educated gentleman of Jewish extraction, Leslie Simons and his wife left their home in London ... and arrived on the Little Bow about 1890." Simons' brother and sister-in-law joined them, but "did not take kindly to life in the wild west and returned to England."

The Simons family sold out in 1910, moved to Vancouver Island, and finally settled in Ponoka, Alberta.

**Leaves From the Medicine Tree, High River Pioneers and Old Timers Association, 1960.*

Corrections – Discovery, May 2007

A few errors crept into our article on Ribtor and the Lipkind family during editing. Author Joel Lipkind has noted the following corrections.

Sol Lipkind's father was Joseph, not Jacob, and he never lived in Trochu. There were six and not five children in the family who were all born after the family left Canmore.

Some names were misspelled: In the family photo – Doreen Hentsell should be Henstell; on page 6: Keith Ochtab should be Keith Ochab.

Morris Shumiatcher

Continued from Page 5

Morris Shumiatcher died a wealthy man in 1958, his success built on a novelty item that came to embody his adopted city. Smithbilt stayed under family ownership until 2002, and it remains a vital Calgary enterprise.

**Editor's note – A directory search indicates that Morris Smith operated his hat-making business as Calgary Hat Works for many years after he purchased the shop, located at 1208 First St. SW. Smithbilt hats were his major product. About 1933, the business became Smithbilt Hat Co. Retail outlets bearing the Smithbilt name opened in downtown Edmonton and in Calgary. In 1947 Smithbilt moved to a much larger building at 1235 - 10th Avenue SW.*

**Sources vary when the Herrons first wore the white hats. Herron's biography quotes 1947, while the Shumiatcher family records indicate 1946.*

Within the Jewish community, Morris Shumiatcher's activities focused mainly on the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) during the late 1930s and the World War II years, a period when Congress was actively attempting to lower government barriers to the admission of Jewish refugees from Europe and, more locally, countering anti-Semitism emanating from some Social Credit party leaders and their publications.

He served as president of Calgary's CJC branch, vice-president of the Western region, attended many conferences, and supervised important demographic and economic studies of the Calgary Jewish Community. Shumiatcher was also active in B'nai Brith and the Beth Israel Congregation.

Textile Conservation

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smells. Wash only textiles that are strong and able to withstand the process. Some stains or discoloration may remain after wet cleaning. Ironing historic fabrics is not recommended. Wash flat in a large wash basin. Use neutral water and non-ionic detergent such as Orvus paste (used to wash cattle). Rinse often to remove all of the soap and dirt. Dry carefully since this is often when colour transfer occurs. Consult a qualified textile conservator to wet clean special textiles.

Repairing textiles

Typically, minor repairs are carried out after the textile has been cleaned. Choose an appropriate thread and support fabric and use the correct sewing technique – always by hand. Stitches should be relaxed so no tension is created. Sew on a flat surface and whenever possible, stitch through existing holes and avoid piercing the threads of the artifact. Use as few stitches as possible.

Summary

Prevention is easier than the repair, remember the adage "A stitch in time – saves nine".

Careful handling and common sense are required. Textiles should never be subjected to "permanent" exhibition. By safeguarding your collection you can preserve it for the next generation.

Yes, I would like to join the Jewish Historical Society

- | | |
|---|--|
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JHSSA News

Looking for 80 year olds

We are still accepting names of community members who have turned 80 this year. We would like to be able to honour them at our upcoming AGM on October 29, 2007. Please call the office at 444-3171 with names.

JHSSA Casino – November 5 & 6, 2007

We are still looking for volunteers for our Casino dates of Monday and Tuesday, November 5th and 6th at the Stampede Casino. Please contact our office if you are available to help.

A Joyful Harvest Presented to Educational Institutions

The JHSSA has been able to present educational institutions and libraries in Calgary and across Canada with complimentary copies of our recent publication thanks to a grant from the Jewish War Veterans of Canada, Post #2. It was our aim to make the book available to as many students and scholars as possible. This gift has been greatly appreciated and we have received many messages of thanks.

The Calgary Public Library, Local History Collection librarian has invited the JHSSA to present a talk based on *A Joyful Harvest* for their lecture series. Contact the JHSSA office for further details on the upcoming talk.

JHSSA Members Glenbow Tour

Over 45 JHSSA members attend the August 30th tour of the Glenbow Museum's *Belonging: A Place for Everyone* exhibit. The evening opened with the dedication of the Morris Shumatcher Activity Room adjacent to the Glenbow's new Mavericks gallery on the 3rd floor. The JHSSA members had the privilege of being the first group to use the new room when refreshments were served there after the tours.

The tours were led by Glenbow cura-

tor Lorain Lounsberry and by *A Joyful Harvest* editor, Maxine Fischbein. The event was very well received and plans are already underway to provide more stimulating programs to our members for the upcoming year. To suggest possible future programs, please contact our office.

Earlier in the summer, participants of the JHSSA Co-sponsored Judaic Textile Workshop also spent an interesting evening at the *Belonging* exhibit.

In mid-August, JHSSA vice president, Jack Switzer, guided a group of visiting American seniors, led by former Calgarian Miriam Creemer, through the JHSSA's *A Joyful Harvest* exhibit at the Glenbow.

Trudy Cowan receives Lieutenant Governor's Award

JHSSA Director and current VP, Trudy Cowan, is the recipient of the 2007 Alberta Museums Association's Lieutenant Governor's Award for her work in area of museums and heritage preservation. Trudy has worked with the Glenbow Museum and on the restoration of the Lougheed House. She is currently on the Board of the JHSSA and the Little Synagogue on the Prairie Project.



Rosh HaShana postcard sent by Curly (Alan) Gurevitch to Belle Hapton when he was stationed in Utrecht, Holland during WWII. The card was distributed by the Jewish Hospitality Committee for British and Allied Forces, London. The inscription on the back reads, "May the Lord inscribe you in his books for the best New Year possible. These wishes are straight from Curly." JHSSA Archives: Acc. 2007-004. Donated by Leon Hapton.

DISCOVERY

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

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