



# JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY of Southern Alberta

## Yiddishkeit and Music: Edythe Pearlman's Ninety Years in Calgary

*Edythe Pearlman lived in Calgary for almost ninety years—from 1914 until her death in 2003. This is longer, to date, than any other Jewish resident. Her life story was marked by her continuous service to the Jewish community, most notably to the Peretz School and its Yiddish cultural programs, and to the city's Jewish musical scene.*

*Edythe Pearlman was interviewed for the JHSSA by Trudy Cowan in 1989. Here are excerpts from that interview, in Edythe's words:*

I was born in New York City in 1907, June 15th. My parents were Gittel and David Rosen. When we came to Calgary I was about six or seven years old. I remember I went right into grade two.

Why did we move from New York to Calgary? I'm not sure. I think my father was always interested in the fur business. He

didn't know anything about Canada, and he went first to Saskatoon. He wasn't very happy there, so he went on to Calgary. And that's when my mother and I came to join him.

He got us a place to stay in a private home, with a lady named Mrs. Guttman. Her niece, Ida Pepper was there then, and she became my life-long friend.

My father used to go out to the trappers and buy furs from them, and re-sell them to Simpson & Lea, a company that's still in existence. Then there was a period when my parents had a small Jewish restaurant, on Eighth Avenue East. My mother was a fabulous cook. She could do amazing things with a little piece of meat: thirteen varieties we used to call it.

My parents spoke Yiddish at home, but not exclusively. In fact, my father was quite a linguist. He was fluent in a number of languages, and was sometimes asked to act as a court interpreter. He knew Yiddish, Hebrew, English, German, Russian, Ukrainian, some Polish, and of course Romanian, his native language. Both my parents came from Romania—my father from Chernovitz and my mother from Jassi.

Ida and I went to Alexandra School, on Ninth Avenue East, over the bridge on the way to what became the zoo. After school, I went to a private Jewish school that we had here, a *cheder*. There was a rabbi who was teaching. The boys were learning *chumash* (Torah) and I was just learning to read and write Yiddish.

After I finished grade four, our family moved to the Victoria district, south of the tracks, and I went to Victoria School until the end of grade eight. I then went to Crescent Heights High School, as did all the other Jewish kids. Crescent Heights was then on Sixteenth Avenue North (now Balmoral School). High school was a very nice four years.

Then my father got sick and had to spend a whole year in he hospital. He had

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## Great Memories & Momentos Featured at Annual Meeting

Monday, September 27, 2004

7:30 pm, Calgary JCC

The Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta would like to invite everyone to our 2004 AGM which will feature momentos from the past and the stories they tell. We have gathered several items that are near and dear to the hearts of a number of Calgary families and we will present these items and the stories they tell us about the history of our community. Sheldon Smithens will be on hand to comment on the value of some of these items in the world of collectibles.

President Jay Joffe will give a report on the society's activities in the past year and on its exciting plans for the coming year. A new slate will be presented for the board of directors.

We will also present certificates to those members of our community who have turned eighty in 2004. This year we will be honouring the following people: Ethel Allman, Harold Barsky, Murray Brenner, Clara Bronstein, Frankie Cohen, Sid Cyngiser, Art Fishman, Benny Freitag, Bertha Gold, Mali Hersh, Sylvia Hochman, Sol Nelson, Phil Pomerance, Azriel

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*Wedding of Lou Pearlman and Edythe Rosen, September 14, 1930. The wedding took place in the home of Abe and Sophie Pearlman. JHSSA Archives. Photo courtesy of Edythe Pearlman.*

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## Yiddishkeit and Music

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diabetes, and they didn't know how to treat it then—it was before insulin. It was terrible—a whole year in the hospital. He had gangrene in one toe.

So I had to take a business course, and then I went to work. No university for me. I went to Henderson's Business College. I remember I won a silver cup for speed typing. A lot of Jewish girls took business courses in those days. Very few girls went on to university.

As teens we used to play baseball and basketball. Then after I was a little older and working, we had a club called the *Literatur Farein* (literature club). I had aspirations for more cultural things. We used to put on plays—four-act plays—in Yiddish. The sets were very primitive. We didn't have money for anything very fancy. So we did the best we could, and tried to keep the people happy.

I was sixteen when I started getting involved in these plays.

I started working when I was seventeen, at the Grand Theatre. It was the legitimate theatre in Calgary, and it had the most enormous stage. We used to have three days a week of these huge road shows that used to come from England, and three days a week of the Radio Keith Orpheum circuit.

Those were really very nice years. I loved being connected with the theatre. I also worked for a trust company for a number of years. They had a big staff, but I came in as secretary to the boss, Mr. Howard.

My next job was at Crane Limited, the plumbing supply wholesale, where, for \$65 a month, I did the following: I did the switchboard, I did letters for any of the eleven people in the office who needed letters done (I took them in shorthand, which I still know), I was the mail clerk, I was the go-fer, and more.

At the end of the day I was ready to cry for being so tired.

I met my husband, Lou Pearlman, when I was about 19, going on 20. His brothers Abe and Ben Pearlman were running Polar

Aerated Water Works, and they imported Lou right from university in Winnipeg to be the chemist in the plant. He met Ida Pepper through Ben, and he met me through Ida. It was practically love at first sight.

Lou was a terrific person—good looking, great personality, fantastic sense of humour, which suited me just fine. He was very knowledgeable, the type of person to whom you could give a topic and he could stand up give a very presentable speech, in English or in a very literary Yiddish.

He was born in Propoisk in Russia, and came with his family to Winnipeg when he was eight years old. His oldest brother Isaac Pearlman was a doctor in Winnipeg, a very loved and revered person. I think there are still people in Winnipeg who remember him, although he died in 1954.

When I was still living at home, my parents used to belong to the old House of Jacob synagogue, the orthodox *shul*. My mother sat upstairs with the ladies, my father was downstairs, and I was outside playing with the other children. We weren't one hundred per cent observant, but my mother kept kosher.

Even before the children came, I was a volunteer worker at the Peretz School. I was always either the president or the treasurer of the *Mooter Farein* (mothers' club), and was always involved in everything that was going on. I played piano for the Peretz School kids for 42 years—and I'm not that great on the piano—at all their concerts, graduations, and so on. I used to come to the school to teach the children Yiddish and Hebrew folk songs.

How did the Peretz School get started in Calgary? A Yiddish poet and writer came to lecture in Calgary and it was with his encouragement that we were able to get together and form a group that was interested in a certain type of Yiddish education. There were other Peretz schools across the country, and we had a large enough group interested in the same thing so we got started.

At first we were in rented quarters. The families used to bring their own children, and then the fathers would take turns and pick up other children as well. All our activities became centred at the school, all our social activities and money raisers. The women worked very hard putting on those large luncheons and dinners and teas and whatever it took.

In the Peretz School we had the *Mooter Farein*, and a smaller group, the *Leyen Kreiz*, or Reading Circle. This was a group of ladies who could not read Yiddish as flu-

ently as some, and two or three of the ladies would read aloud to the group. One of these readers was Mrs. Smehoff, and one was Mrs. Kredentser.

I didn't belong to this book group as I could do my own reading when I had time. We had many Yiddish books. I donated 250 of our Yiddish books to the Jewish Center, and I still have as many here at home.

There was also the Friendship Circle at the school, after some of our families got a lot older. That was taken over by the National Council of Jewish Women. I had joined the NCJW when I was 15 or so, and then of course, I have belonged to Council ever since. For a short time I was even president of an afternoon group of Council called the Bertha Segal Branch.

We had a group of ladies who wanted to sing, and wanted to learn Yiddish and Hebrew folk songs, so I started the Council Choir. I got this group together and we sang about 35 years under the aegis of the NCJW. That gave us a little status and we could get more choir members as a Council choir.

It was a wonderful group. They loved to sing and I loved to teach them.

We did a lot of singing for the "larger community", and somehow we became the representatives of the Jewish community and were asked to take part in many public functions, such as Brotherhood week. And of course we had many invitations to sing for Jewish organizations. We practiced at my house every Monday night, and if I may so myself, we sounded quite good.

We were very fortunate to have my daughter Eta Kerr as accompanist.

I was also asked to lead the Beth Israel synagogue choir for the High Holy Days. My girls all came to be in the choir. We were at Beth Israel for five years.

My choir girls always carried their little black music books with them, and whenever even a few of them got together they sang. My favourite thank you note from them was "Thanks for the melodies".

When we were celebrating the 200th anniversary of Jews in Canada, at the Jubilee Auditorium, I got together a choir of men and women. Two fellows used to come in from Edmonton every week to rehearse and sing with us. We did one really gorgeous song, a very impressive one in four voices, in Yiddish.

I have also done a lot of work for Hadasah over the years. I was in many plays and concerts, and always worked at the Bazaar

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## Great Memories

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Presma, Harold Segall, Pat Smolensky, Coleman Staniloff, Joe Tucker and Jack Wise.

If you know an 80 year old whom we have missed here, or in past years, please call our office with the name.

Please join us in an enjoyable and informative evening. Refreshments will be served.

**Yiddishkeit and Music**

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or wherever they needed help.

For five years I was a volunteer "office manager" for the Jewish National Fund. I worked out of my home; that was my office. During the day I worked for Jewish Family Service, and in the evenings for the JNF. I had a very good committee to work with. We put on the Negev Dinner, and did all the JNF fund-raising. The JNF presented me with a plaque in appreciation for all my work.

B'nai Brith also gave me a plaque, as thank you for being an advisor to B'nai Brith Girls for over sixteen years. My oldest daughter, Noni, inveigled me into the job, after the first BBG advisor, Rose Guss, left the city. Our house was already the center of BBG activities—for meetings, parties and whatever.

It became a labour of love with the girls, and I was so proud of them as they learned

to accept the responsibilities that went with various positions. The skills they learned stood them in good stead when they went on as adults to lead various organizations in the community.

When Lou finally left Polar Aerated for a while, he took over the Calgary office of the Lee Oil & Gas Company, of Baltimore, which he did for eight years. I worked in the office with him.

My husband died in June of 1971 and I got a call from Sabine Joffe, who was the Executive Director of Jewish Family Service, who said she was desperate for someone to come and work there, and would I please consider it. I thought it would be better than moping at home, so I started there August 1, 1971.

I enjoyed my years there, and I feel I really accomplished something. My title was very fancy—I was executive assistant

to the Executive Director. I was there for eighteen years plus.

*Edythe Pearlman sums up her life as a busy working mother with the following words:*

The routine was hectic. I gave everyone breakfast, went to work with Lou at the office; dashed home to make lunch for some of the children, go back to work until about four; then make supper for all. The children did the dishes, then homework and so on. Then of course I was always due at some meeting or other. What a life. But I loved it all.

*The children of Edythe and Lou Pearlman are Naomi Shatz (1933 - 1994), Eta Kerr, Donna Cohen, Clarice Ondrack and Howard Pearlman. Edythe was a JHSSA Director in her later years, and donated many of her papers and photos to the JHSSA Archives.*



*B'nai Brith Girls, 1955-1956. Edythe Pearlman and Ruth Lockhart advisors. Photo: Sheila Gurevitch.*

# Calgary YMHA Idea Almost a Century Old

by Jack Switzer

Young Calgary Jews formed a local YMHA—Young Men's Hebrew Association—as early as 1911. It had a short life, as did another local YMHA organized in 1913. But both Y's were important milestones in our Jewish history.

The YMHA movement began in the United States in the mid-1800s. By the turn of the century there were several hundred Y's in Jewish communities around the world. They were the Jewish community centers of their time—non-religious venues where Jews, including the youth, could participate in athletic, social, and cultural programs. Many had Jewish libraries and educational components.

Early American Y's also ran programs to help speed the integration of European immigrants. In 1902 the Young Women's Hebrew Association began. In many ways the Jewish Y's tried to replicate the activities of the popular Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Association.

Early Jewish communities in Montreal and Toronto had many recreational and social groups, but were slow to create actual YMHA facilities. Winnipeg seems to have pioneered the Jewish Y movement in Canada. A young Hebrew Social Assembly was formed in 1895; it became the Winnipeg YMHA in 1899.

Calgary had no sizeable Jewish community until after 1905. By 1911 the city had a population of about 44,000, over 600 of whom were Jews. Most were recent arrivals from eastern Europe, but a core group of assimilated young Jews announced in mid-1911 the formation of a Young People's Hebrew Association (YPHA).

Among the leaders of the Calgary YPHA were American-born H.J. Allen, of the theatre-owning Allen family, and Cecyle Sereth, a daughter of the city's wealthiest Jew, lumber merchant H.N. Sereth (they were married in February, 1914). The group was formed after the visit of a Spokane YMHA stalwart, J. Appel, who "noted the absence of a club or social organization for the young Hebrews in the city, and immediately turned his attention to remedy this want".

We have no other data on this organization. We do know the founding members were part of an elite social group that was able to bring Jewish charity events to daily paper society pages. European "shtetl" culture was replaced by British/American afternoon teas, formal

balls, and leisure-based Y's.

The 1913 YMHA appears to be more male-oriented than its 1911 predecessor. It also had substantial facilities; three rooms in the Thomson Block at 112 Eighth Avenue East. By early 1914 membership had reached one hundred, a sizeable number in a Jewish community that then numbered about one thousand.

Founders of the 1913 YMHA were generally older than those involved in the earlier group. The YMHA directors included law student A.L. Barron, liquor dealer Joseph Guttman, film exchange employees Samuel Sternberg and Alfred Bloom, and Morris Marcus, a city hall official. Again, the founders were mainly an Anglicized, more-established group, somewhat removed socially and culturally from the Yiddish-based, hard-scrabble world of the "greenhorn" shoemakers and second-hand dealers down the street in east Calgary.

Their first major public event was a grand ball at the Al Azhar Temple.

Smokers—mainly stag parties—were popular YMHA events. An April 1914 smoker featured entertainment (an orchestra, soloists, elocutionist, comedian and recitations) by members and non-Jewish friends; wives were invited on this occasion.

The YMHA fielded a baseball team in 1914, equipped with natty uniforms and competing in a local men's league.

Despite its apparent popularity, Calgary's YMHA soon stopped operating. Some young Jews began to use the recently opened facilities of the public library, the YMCA, and the YWCA. New Jewish social and cultural organizations ran competing programs. Balls and other social events run by the Jewish Council, the Zionist organization, and the Hebrew Ladies' Aid group attracted large attendance.

A men's lodge, the Independent Western Star, Order of Hebrew Men, had been operating in 1911, and may still have still been meeting. The Calgary B'nai Brith

**Y. M. H. A.**

YOUNG MEN'S HEBREW ASSOCIATION  
announce their

**First Annual Ball**

to be held at the  
**AL AZHAR TEMPLE, CALGARY**  
On Thursday, the Second of April, 1914  
Dancing at 9.00 p.m.

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Tickets can be secured at the office of the Canadian Western Jewish Times, Thomson Block, Calgary, or from one of the Directors of the Association.

**Board of Directors:**

Mr. A. Bloom	Mr. S. Sternberg
Mr. J. E. Romanoff	Mr. M. Marcus
Mr. Z. D. Putzman	Mr. J. Guttman
Mr. A. I. Barron	

Everybody Welcome and a good time assured.

*Ad for YMHA Ball, reprinted from the Canadian Western Jewish Times, April 1914.*

Lodge began in 1917 and became the premier Jewish men's organization.

The beginning of The Great War in the summer of 1914 created many social and economic upheavals that affected all Canadians. War support and refugee relief dominated Jewish communal life; recreation and entertainment, the YMHA strengths, became secondary. As well, the war brought considerable internal migration; some of the YMHA's founders left Calgary.

Following the war many YMHA/YWHA facilities changed their names and expanded their activities as Jewish Community Centers. Some still use the Y name; a few use both.

Another short-lived "Y" was the Jewish Young Men's Club of Calgary, formed in 1920. Its objectives are typical of those found in early YMHA records: the JYMC would "look forward to the future of young Jewish people; to help to make them better citizens and loyal Canadians; and to look after their moral, physical, intellectual and social welfare".

During the long fund-raising phase of

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# More Newsboy Memories

In our February 2003 issue we featured some of Calgary's early Jewish newsboys and their memories. Since then, we have come across the following reminiscences from *Calgarian Max Switzer (1924-1998)*. They are part of his recollections which were printed in the collection *I Remember/ Ani Zocher; Reminiscences by Jewish Seniors compiled by editors Gayl Veinotte and Leonora Trifonov in 1991 as a project of the Seniors Department of the Calgary Jewish Centre*. He tells of moving back to the city from Forest Lawn after the flour mill had shut down there "due to the prevalent poverty in the area". He continues:

"Those of us who were older and could work, did. My two sisters clerked in corner stores and turned their earnings into the household budget fund, as I did when I started working at the age of nine. When my younger brother was old enough to go to work I showed him how to sell newspapers as I was doing at the time. If there were any profits left over after paying for the newspapers we sold on the downtown street corners after school and on Saturdays, they would also go into that fund. However, most of our meager coins went into buying chocolate bars to give us more energy to sell more papers. The more papers we sold the more Eatmores we consumed. We paid the *Calgary Herald* three cents per paper and then turned around and sold them to the people on the street for five cents a paper. The yummys were priced at five cents each, and they were big bars.

"The *Calgary Herald* was our afternoon and evening paper, while the *Albertan* was our morning tabloid. In today's world the *Albertan* doesn't exist any longer since the *Sun* stepped into the morning slot. A few years ago the *Herald* decided to become an early riser also, which is fine with me, since I now have all day to read the daily news. The need for hawkers in Calgary has been eliminated since the coin-operated newspaper stands were placed at a multitude of locations throughout the city. I realize now, that without us hawkers shouting, "EXTRA! EXTRA! Social Credit wins fifty-six seats", the blazing headlines, silently staring through the plastic window of the stand, have lost that electrifying effect. It's the human touch that's missing...

"My old stomping grounds, the *Herald Building*, is still there on 7th Avenue and 1st Street West. It now houses many businesses and professional offices. The newspaper plant moved to larger quarters out of the city core...

"The *Hudson's Bay Company*, as it was known in my younger day, is still on the corner of First Street West and Eighth Avenue. It was on this corner, while I was selling the *Calgary Herald*, that I shouted, nearly bursting my lungs, "EXTRA! EXTRA! World War II has broken out!" I never dreamt it would last long enough for me to reach the age of volunteering..."

*Max Switzer worked as an RCAF aircraft maintenance technician during the war. He ends his memoir with a*

*description of the Calgary Zoo and the beloved row of Russian poplar trees on Memorial that were so meaningful to him. Many more of those trees have been cut this past year, due to age and disease and there are plans underway to try to preserve some for the future as works of art. Mr. Switzer's words express how important those trees are for old-time Calgarians:*

"My fondest memories I've left for last.

"Memorial Drive, the long, winding road that had been planted with hundreds of trees in memory of our fallen comrades from World War I, is still here, but with a lot less trees skirting its southern shoulder. Due to the heavier traffic flow because of our larger population growth, the drive had to be widened and twinned, so down came many of those stately trees. That saddened me at the time. It's as though a part of my heritage had been chopped down. Many of those silent sentinels carried my mark on their knobby, weather beaten trunks. A name—M loves R—skillfully cut in a heart, over here, and here, and here; an arrow cleverly shaped through a name—M loves R—over there, and over there, and over there; a skull and crossbones deftly seared into each of two trees had been guarding an entrance to a forgotten pathway my siblings and I had been the first to tread on. I often heard my mother recite a poem as we ambled through the trees, "The best things in life are free, and the nicest friend in life a tree..."

## Calgary YMHA

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Calgary's House of Israel Jewish community center, beginning in 1926, the YMHA name was used to help explain the planned facility to donors. In 1929, when the building opened, a Calgary Hebrew Athletic Association was in place. Two hundred persons attended their "first annual dance," held to raise funds to build two tennis courts. The courts were in use that summer, presumably on land adjacent to the new community center.

During the late 1950's, when Calgary's House of Israel had low usage and poor finances, a few community leaders suggested the organization be disbanded and

replaced with a YMHA/YWHA, that would convert some existing space to athletic facilities. The Jewish group that ran the Meadowlark Curling Club also had plans to add an athletic/social wing to their rink and again raised the YMHA concept.

It took until 1979 for any of these plans to materialize. That year the existing Calgary Jewish Community Centre (now the Calgary JCC) opened. The Calgary JCC roots, as we have noted, thus go back more than ninety years, to the YMHA, and even earlier.

*Sources: JHSSA Archives, Glenbow Alberta Library.*

### Yes, I would like to join the Jewish Historical Society

- Single – \$18
- Family – \$25
- Institution/Corporation – \$30
- Patron – \$50
- Benefactor – \$100
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of Southern Alberta**

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Calgary, AB T2V 4V7

*Do not send cash through the mail*

## Former Jewish Residents Active in Little Chicago Memorial Project

By Jack Switzer

Former Jewish residents of the oil-boom town of Little Chicago were prominent at the July 24th ceremony to unveil a historical cairn at the original town site. Little Chicago—Royalties was its formal name—was one of several boomtowns that flourished briefly in the Turner Valley oilfield area between the 1920s and the 1950s.

Helen Fishman Goldenberg headed the committee which planned the cairn, raised the necessary funds, and built the memorial. Committee member Judy Hector Parker painted an image of the cairn and its surroundings; the painting became the “logo” for the “Little Chicago Revisited” historical project. Limited edition prints are being used for area-history fund-raising.

Little Chicago was located just north of Longview (previously called Little New York) on what is now Highway 22. A major 1936 oil strike, Royalties #1, prompted more drilling and the arrival of hundreds of oil workers and their families.

Fimsy houses and stores were quickly erected on rented lots or moved from other sites. As many as 2500 persons lived in the hastily-developed town; by 1940 there were eleven working oil and gas wells



*The Fishman family, Little Chicago, c. 1945. L to R: Percy Fishman, Molly, Helen, Sophie Fishman. Source: Helen Goldenberg.*

in the town, with many more nearby.

One of the first merchants in Little Chicago was Percy Fishman, who owned the Variety Furniture Exchange (later Variety Furniture & Hardware). Daughters Helen and Molly were the only Jewish students at the local public school.

Leon Gutman ran Gutman's General Store and then the Royalties Friendly Store in the town from 1936 until the early 1940s, when he sold out to Marty Fine and Morris Belzberg. Marty and Sarah Fine stayed in the area well into the 1950s.

Other Jewish merchants in Little Chicago for varying periods included Dave Rosenthal, Sam Panar, Phil Silver and Frank Silver,

and Gershon Switzer, who took over Percy's Fishman's furniture business.

Jewish medical men served the community. Doctors David and Harry Lander, based in Black Diamond, had an office in Little Chicago. Calgary dentists Norman Moss and Mal Panar kept a chair in town and visited regularly.

Hector's Machine Shop, a major oilfield business, had a branch in Little Chicago, run by Sam Hector, Morris Hector and their cousin Charlie Krowitz. (Sam Hector and his family lived in the oilfield “capital” of Turner Valley until 1942.)

Judy Parker has discovered that her father, Sam Hector, built a dam across Tongue Creek to form a reservoir that supplied water to wells in the Little Chicago area. The reservoir, Hector's Lake, was called Jew's Lake by some locals.

All the Jewish families in Little Chicago returned to Calgary, to a much warmer and larger Jewish community. Percy Fishman's move included his house; it was trucked to Calgary in 1946 and remained the family home for 30 years.

The discovery of oil near Leduc in 1947 marked the transfer of petroleum activity away from the Turner Valley field. Oil workers followed the industry north. Little Chicago and its neighboring boomtowns were gradually abandoned. The Royalties post office closed in 1969; by then most of the town site had reverted to rangeland.

Plaques on the Little Chicago cairn include the names of its Jewish residents. Their life in Little Chicago was a brief but colorful episode in our area's Jewish history. Perhaps the many Jews who lived in other Alberta towns can be similarly memorialized.

Sources: JHSSA Archives.



*Royalties Friendly Store, Little Chicago, c. 1945; operated by Leon Gutman, followed by Marty Fine. Source: Henry Gutman.*



*Main Street, Little Chicago, c. 1937. Gutman's General Store is second from left. Source: Henry Gutman.*

# New Photo from our Archives



*Camp Bercuson, Alberta Young Judea Camp, 1949, Chestermere Lake. The following names are taken from the photo as supplied by the donor, Miriam Zysblat Creemer. Front row (left to right): Sora Satonove, Judy Phillipson, Jeanette Katz, Therise Groner, Jeanette de Levie, Doreen Gelfond, Sheila Gordon, Gary de Levie, Marcia Kalef, Gilbert Libin, Morley Kerr, Leon Cohen, Eli Grossman. Second row: Joe Goelman, Phillip Mickellson, Barry Smolkin, Alan Rose, Jerry Levy, Herby Shector, Eddy Pakes, Roslyn Slutker, Larry Witten, Jack Cohen, Hody Satanove, Phillip Libin, Kusiel Sheinin, Bobby Gliener. Third row: Miss Gowen, Clarisse Smolensky, Fay Smolensky, Mrs. Katz, Ida Zysblat, Sally Stern, Lynn Shapiro, Sheila Radis, Maureen Klinger, Ralph Prepes, Fay Gedeger, Aaron Shtabsky, Tevvy Estrin, Dave Pekarsky, Miriam Zysblat, Danny Pekarsky, Howard Starkman, Jack Switzer, Sharon Safran, Eta Safran, Nate Safran. Fourth row: Izzy Gliener, Morris Friedman, Bobby Levy, Irv Switzer, Eli Adler, Marjorie Smolensky, Sammy Belzberg, Mel Hurtig, Rebbeca Shtabsky, Tessie Sorokin, Ronny Hurov, Goldi Karsh, Naomi Barenholtz, Sol Estrin, Manual Pannar. Absent: Jack Switzer, Henry Switzer, Morris Davidman, Stanley Smith, Teddy Adler, Bernie Adler.*

## Exhibit Sponsorship Opportunities



We are pleased to report that our efforts to raise sponsorship for our 2005 *A Joyful Harvest* exhibit have met with great success. We would like to acknowledge those sponsors who have already pledged their support.

**Friend of the Exhibit:** Steven & Carol Dworkin; Marty Fine; Barbara Joffe – in honour of her birthday, by Hy & Jennie Belzberg; Alan & Naomi Kerr – in honour of their anniversary, by the Tuesday Bridge Group; memory of Dave Spindel – by Andria Spindel.

**Exhibit Feature Sponsor:** Lily Faider; Rae Smithens; Sheldon Smithens.

**Collector:** Martin & Gertrude Cohos; Morris & Ann Dancyger; Frank & Sophie Kettner.

**Decade Sponsor:** Hy & Jenny Belzberg; Jack & Rose Edelson; memory of Jack & Ruby Smolensky and Rabbi Simon Smolensky – by Jack & Brenda Eisenberg; Morris & Minnie Kowall; Philip & Harriet Libin; Norman & Beulah Martin; Phil & Judy Parker; Stan & Carey Smith; Norman & Rosslyn Steinberg; Chevra Kadisha of Calgary.

**Trustee:** The Martha and Harry Cohen Foundation; Jewish War Veterans of Canada, Post #2; David Waterman.

**Curator:** Memory of Bill Schwartz by Stuart & Elaine, Ian & Adam Myron.

**Archivist:** The Kahanoff Foundation; The Al & Mona Libin Foundation (towards the production of a publication based on the exhibit).

In addition we have received a donation from B'nai Brith Lodge #816 for a

digitization project. We are also awaiting a reply to our matching-grant application from the Community Initiatives Program of the Alberta Government.

**Sponsorship opportunities are still open. Send in your sponsorship donation today and assure yourself a place in history!**

### Sponsorship categories for A Joyful Harvest 2005 exhibit

Friend of the Exhibit	\$100	_____
Person, Place or Organization (100 feature sponsors available)	\$250	_____
Collector	\$500	_____
Decade Sponsor	\$1,000	_____
Other		_____

Please contact our office at 444-3171 for further details.

Please make cheques payable to: Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta  
Send payment to: JHSSA, 1607 - 90th Avenue SW, Calgary, AB T2V 4V7

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Additional Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

# Theodore Herzl Remembered

By Agi Romer Segal

July 3, 2004 was the 100th anniversary of the death of Theodore Herzl, founder of modern political Zionism. Herzl died at the young age of 44. He had convened the first Zionist Congress in 1897. Calgary's Agudas Zion (Calgary Zionist Association), founded in 1907, was one of the local Jewish community's earliest organizations and it marked the anniversary of Herzl's death (*yortzeit*) throughout the decades, until the establishment of the State of Israel. Here are some descriptions of Herzl commemorations gleaned from our archival holdings.

As early as 1911, *The Canadian Jewish Times* reported that a number of local Zionists had purchased a total of 14 trees for the Herzl Wald (Forest) at the Herzl memorial meeting held under the auspices of the Agudas Zion. The following year, "a memorial mass meeting" was held at the Monarch Theatre.

1914 was the 10th anniversary of Herzl's death and that year he figured even more prominently in Calgary Zionist activity. Agudas Zion held a Purim masquerade to raise funds towards the pledge of \$500 that had been made to support a Canadian "colony" in Palestine. The *Herald* reported that the first prize went to Mrs. Churgin for her costume of "Dr. Hergel {sic} in the Land of Freedom". Mr. Goss also won a prize for his costume of "the Wandering Jew".

An elaborate 10th anniversary commemoration was held in July and it received more attention in the local press. The meeting was held at the House of Jacob synagogue. The *Calgary News Telegram* (July 14) reported: "The meeting was of an impressive and solemn nature...He [Herzl] gave up his life and career for his people...and his sacrifice was not in vain. Everyone helped to increase the Herzl forest which is a large plantation of olive trees planted by the Jewish National Fund on the road from Jaffa to Jerusalem. This forest will yield an abundance of fruit, the proceeds of which will be applied to the education of Jewish children in Palestine."

Herzl was further honoured when a new, Herzl chapter of the Canadian Zionist Organization was formed in Calgary in July of 1918. (See illustration of the charter)

In 1927 Ida Pepper, the Calgary correspondent for the Winnipeg *Jewish Post* reported that at the 23rd Herzl memorial a moving picture film "called the 'Dreams of the Prophets' as foretold by Dr. Hertzl" was shown at the Palace Theatre.

After the Hebrew national poet Hayim Nachman Bialik died in 1934, his death was commemorated together with Herzl's. Their *yortzeit* was marked in 1942 with a literary evening involving Calgary's Zionist youth. *The Jewish Post* of Winnipeg described the evening. The event was chaired by William H. Epstein, president of the Sharon Zionist club. Author and journalist Elhanan Hanson from Edmonton delivered the memorial address on Herzl and Bialik. Senior Young Judea members staged a Hebrew one-act play. The Junior group enacted an English play "centred around the historic encounter between Herzl and the famous Jewish philanthropist, Baron de Hirsch", starring Laurie Levine and Bob Shnitka. Young Judean choir, directed by N. Safra, performed with "campfire singing of Hebrew melodies" accompanied by a Hora dance routine (directed by Betty Switzer). Proceeds of the event went to the Young Judea camp that was to be held at Gull Lake that August for Western Canadian youth.

In 1944, the Calgary memorial featured talks by Rabbi S. Smolensky and by Rabbi A. Horwitz and Dvorah Smolensky.

Once the state of Israel was established, the focus of community celebrations became Israel Independence Day—Yom Ha'Atzma'ut.

For additional information about early Zionist activity in Calgary, see *Discovery Volume 9, No.1, Winter 1999*.

## JHSSA News

### Upcoming Casino

The JHSSA will work a Casino on Wednesday and Thursday, October 13 & 14, 2004 at the Elbow River Inn Casino. We are still looking for volunteers. If you are available to help, please call Annette Kolin-sky at 251-0365 or our office at 444-3171.

### Mazal Tov

Congratulations go out to JHSSA board member Florence Elman, president of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Southern Alberta, who was elected to the board of the International Association of Genealogical Societies at their Annual General Meeting in Jerusalem in July.



Calgary Herzl Club organized July 17, 1918 – photo of charter in *Calgary Jewish News Centennial ed. 1975*.

## DISCOVERY

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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 444-3171  
Email: jhssa@shaw.ca