



**DISCOVERY**

The Journal of the

תגלית

# JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY of Southern Alberta

VOLUME 16, No. 1

JANUARY 2006



Jay and Barbara Joffe escorting Their Honours Norman and Mary Kwong through *A Joyful Harvest* at the gala opening on November 14, 2005. Photo: Impressions by Switzer.

## *A Joyful Harvest: Celebrating the Past and Educating for the Future*

by Maxine Fischbein for *Discovery*

A glance at the guest book says it all.

"This is a treasure," writes one visitor. "What an impressive tribute to Jewish life in southern Alberta," says another.

These two comments and many others sum up the atmosphere of celebration that has greeted the Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta's labour of love, *A Joyful Harvest: A Centennial Exhibit Celebrating the Jewish Contribution to Southern Alberta life*.

Setting the tone for the initial showing of our once-in-a-century exhibition was the gala opening on November 14th. The ceremonies at the Beth Tzedec Synagogue had a regal air about them due to the

enthusiastic participation of the Honourable Norman L. Kwong, Lieutenant Governor of Alberta. Together with the Honourable Ralph Klein, Premier of Alberta, and His Worship Dave Bronconnier, Mayor of Calgary, Kwong served as an honorary patron of the exhibit.

The opening Gala was filled with highlights including moving tributes to the JHSSA's founding and long-serving president, Jay Joffe.

Doug Cass, the Director of Library and Archives at the Glenbow Museum, brought greetings, telling a very pleased audience that *A Joyful Harvest* will appear at the Glenbow early in 2007 as an adjunct

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Don't Miss Our  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**Monday, February 6, 2006 7:30 pm**  
at the Calgary JCC  
featuring

### **More Memories and Mementos**

Our upcoming AGM will feature more interesting items and stories from the past. If you have an interesting item in your family that has a story to tell, please contact our office and we will try to feature it in our program.

Three of the stories from last year's successful program were featured in our March 2005 issue and three more are included in this issue of *Discovery*.



Emcee Sheldon Smithens questioning Naomi Kerr about her mother's childhood outfit at last year's AGM. For more stories from last year's **Memories and Mementos** program see page 4.

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## **JHSSA Alberta Centennial Exhibit Held Over**



*A Joyful Harvest* will remain open to the public at the Beth Tzedec Synagogue until the end of January, 2006. Public viewing hours are on Sundays from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

To book a group tour at a different time, contact the JHSSA office, 444-3171.

*Your membership and continuing support help us to publish Discovery. Thank you.*

## *A Joyful Harvest: Celebrating the Past*

*Continued from Page 1*

exhibit to the world-class museum's own much-anticipated centennial project titled *Mavericks: An Incurable History of Alberta*.

Also on hand to bring official greetings were the Honourable Ron Stevens, MLA for Calgary Glenmore, and Donna Riback, Chair of Calgary's United Jewish Appeal, who spoke on behalf of the Calgary Jewish Community Council.

The official opening ceremony generated much excitement. But the greatest measure of joy was found in the 100 museum panels devoted to the remarkable achievements of people and organizations that have defined Jewish life in southern Alberta since the arrival of Jacob and Rachel Diamond, this community's first permanent Jewish settlers, in 1889.

Many in the opening night crowd of nearly 400 could claim a direct connection to the project. Some appear in the exhibit. Others contributed some of the photographs and archival material that so beautifully illustrate 116 years of Jewish history. Some had worked on the exhibit, either as paid professionals or as volunteers. Many more were delighted to reminisce about the accomplishments of family members, forebears and friends who had made a difference in every imaginable endeavour within and often well beyond the Jewish community.

More than anything, the exhibit stands as a reminder that the concept of "six degrees of separation" does not apply in the Jewish community. The ink was barely dry on the harvest-coloured museum panels when visitors began connecting the oft invisible dots linking various individuals,

families and institutions who have joyfully given back to the province where the earliest Jewish pioneers were welcomed and given the freedom to flourish.

There were many touching moments as old friends or family members literally squealed in delight, a picture or photographic image having brought fond memories to the surface.

Those nearby won't soon forget the sight of individuals pausing before the words and photographs devoted to them. One junior high student was delighted when, stopping before the panel on Ted Riback, she actually met, in person, the man responsible for establishing and generously supporting the eponymous Jewish summer camp she enjoys every summer.

Meanwhile, a happy reunion was taking place in front of another panel when the Lieutenant Governor – a man with many friends in the Jewish community – was pleased to encounter another familiar face. As His Honour stood before the biography on Ayala Manolson, a Calgary-born world-renowned speech pathologist, he commented that he had known her as a student. Having traveled to Calgary from her home in Toronto for the opening, Manolson soon appeared beside him, live and in person, and a happy reunion took place between two old friends and schoolmates.

Quite a few out-of-towners have spent considerable time visiting and re-visiting the exhibit. His Excellency Alan Baker, Israel's Ambassador to Canada, is one distinguished guest who quickly discovered during a November visit to Calgary that he, too, has a connection to Jews in southern Alberta. As he viewed the panels from the 1950s, he was amazed to discover that an old friend – William Epstein – was born and raised in Calgary.

"We used to have lunch together at the United Nations," says Baker, fondly recalling his own posting in New York and his warm relationship with the man who once headed the Disarmament Division at the UN.

It is, indeed, a small world after all!

While *A Joyful Harvest* has attracted plenty of

## *A Handmade Gift: Gertie Belkin's Childhood Dress*

At our last AGM Naomi Kerr displayed a European-made suit worn by her mother, Gertrude Smalley Belkin, as a young girl. It is now over 90 years old.

Gertrude Smalley arrived as a young girl in Winnipeg from Miedzyrzec, Poland in about 1908. A few years later, older cousins from her hometown joined the family, and brought with



*Gertie Belkin, c. 1980. Photo: Naomi Kerr.*

them a precious gift for the young Gertie. It was a colourful hand-embroidered blouse and apron that they had made for her. They had planned to make a skirt for it, but had left for Canada before they had a chance to sew it. Gertie wore the outfit only for very special occasions.

Gertie married Dr. Alex Belkin and their family moved to Calgary in 1945. The embroidered outfit came with her and it was given to her daughter, Naomi Kerr when Naomi's daughters were born. Naomi, her sister Annette, and the granddaughters used the outfit for "dress up" until Naomi's daughter Roberta pointed out that perhaps such a unique handmade item had historical significance and should merit more delicate treatment.

The blouse and apron are embroidered with precise cross stitching. The outfit has indeed remained in excellent condition despite the many hours of pleasure it must have given Gertie and her descendants.



*School mates, His Honour Norman L. Kwong and Ayala Manolson reunite at A Joyful Harvest gala opening. Photo: Richard Bronstein.*

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# Calgary's Grand Story – The Jewish Connections

By Jack Switzer

*Calgary's Grand Story*, by Donald B. Smith, Calgary University of Calgary Press, 2005

Donald Smith, author of *Calgary's Grand Story*, was the featured speaker at our AGM in October 2000. He spoke about his research on the Grand Theatre and collected stories about the theatre from audience members. Both Jay Joffe and Jack Switzer are listed in the acknowledgements in the book. In the signed copy of his new book that is in the JHSSA library, Dr. Smith has written, "I'll never forget the wonderful response at my slide talk to your society several years ago".

*Calgary's Grand Story* is the story of the Lougheed Building and the adjoining Grand Theatre, which share a six-storey red-brick façade on the corner of Sixth Avenue and First Street South West. The book is the work of Donald B. Smith, a University of Calgary history professor.

Smith's book is both chronological and biographical. It interprets "the history of the city through the prism of a single building complex." The Lougheed/Grand story is a colorful tableau featuring many of Calgary's most important political, business, and social leaders. It also contains many references to members of Calgary's Jewish community.

The Lougheeds – Senator James Lougheed and his wife Belle Hardisty Lougheed – get prime billing, but a full chapter, titled "The Barronial Era, 1937 – 1969", is devoted to the contributions of an industrious Calgary Jewish lawyer and impresario, Jacob Bell Barron.

Ontario-born James Lougheed came to Calgary as a young lawyer soon after the CPR reached the city in 1883. Active in local politics, he was named to the Senate of Canada in 1889. Calgary's post-1905 boom helped build his wealth, and the Lougheeds were the toast of the town when his building and its Grand Theatre opened in 1912.

The Sherman Grand Theatre, named for its first manager, Bill Sherman, opened in February 1912 with a popular British dramatic troupe playing to a full house of 1350 patrons. The main floor seated 810 patrons, the balcony another 540. The theatre, then one of the largest in Canada, featured a wide variety of plays, vaudeville and concerts, as well as silent movies.

But by the mid-1920s many of the Lougheed business assets were losing

money, and shortly after the Senator's death in 1925 his estate sold off its theatres to the growing Famous Players chain.

J.B. Barron was able to buy the Grand in 1937.

Jacob Bell Barron (J.B. or Jack) and his brother Abraham Lee Barron were raised in Winnipeg and spent two years (1903 – 1905) at Dawson, Yukon Territory, where their father ran a store catering to gold miners. (There were over 200 Jews in the Yukon goldfields in 1901.) The Barron brothers earned law degrees in Chicago, and moved to Calgary in 1911 at the invitation of their uncle, hotelier Charles Bell.

The Barron and Barron law firm, formed in 1912, did well. J.B. married Winnipegger Amelia Helman in 1914. They had three sons, William, Robert and Richard (better known as Bill, Bob and Dick). J.B.'s clients included the Allen family, whose nation-wide theatre chain was then run from Calgary.

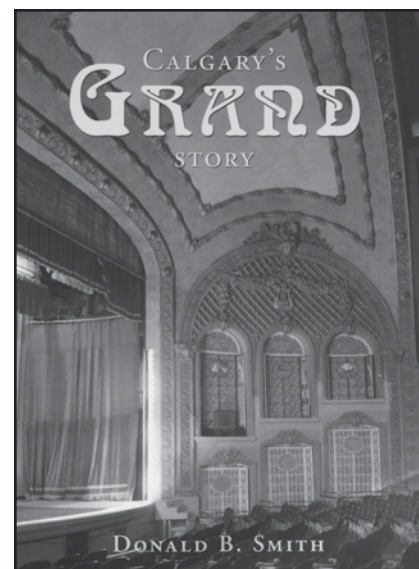
The Allens opened the huge (1,951 seats) Allen Palace Theatre on Eighth Avenue West in 1921. By 1923, however, the Allen chain was nearly bankrupt, and Jack Barron took over the Palace. He gave up law to book entertainers, schedule films and sell popcorn. Barron's Palace Theatre featured vaudeville and movies, of course, but he took great pride in bringing to Calgary world-famous musicians – Jascha Heifitz in 1924, and Sergei Rachmaninoff in 1925, for example.

Barron also persuaded popular radio preacher William Aberhart to move his weekly *Back to the Bible Hour* services from the Grand to the Palace Theatre. The Palace hosted the first of Aberhart's religious radio broadcasts in 1925.

In 1927 J.B. Barron hired a Russian Jewish émigré, Grigori Garbovitsky, to lead the Palace Theatre orchestra. (The group included musicians Leon and Mary Asper, who later became theater operators in Manitoba; their children included media giant Israel Asper.)

Garbovitsky revitalized the dormant Calgary Symphony Orchestra in 1929; they played at the Grand Theatre. The orchestra's concertmaster was another Russian Jewish immigrant, Jascha Galperin, who went on to head the music department at Mount Royal College.

J.B. Barron had to give up the Palace Theatre in 1928, when the trust company administering the property sold it. He



returned to his law practice until 1937, when he negotiated with the Lougheed family to buy the Grand Theatre, then in a very distressed financial and physical condition. J.B. supervised the renovations personally. Sixteen-year-old Dick Barron helped install new stage lighting and an upgraded projection booth. Acoustics, both for stage performances and sound movies, got special attention.

Renowned American bandmaster Guiseppe Creatore – "The Great Creatore" – reopened the renovated "Barro-nial" Grand Theatre, and stayed for nearly a month. Operas, ballet and concerts, even a circus with animal acts, augmented popular film showings.

Paul Robeson sang to a sold-out Grand audience in 1946. The African-American activist was able to stay at the Palliser Hotel, but faced discrimination elsewhere in Calgary. He told Bob Barron that Canadian racial prejudice, while less pervasive, was in some ways worse than the American variety.

The Grand Theatre's last live theatre performance was in 1957, the year the Jubilee Auditorium opened to become the city's prime venue for music and theatre.

In 1951 J.B. opened another theatre, the Uptown, in the new Barron Building on Eighth Avenue West. The eleven-storey art-deco building provided modern office space for several oil companies; its availability near the beginning of the post-war Alberta oil boom helped cement Calgary's role as the nation's oil capital.

The Barron Building was followed by

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# Memories and Mementos

## Artzi Willheim, Champion Swimmer

Dina Evans came to Calgary from Israel in the 1970s. Among her prized possessions are the numerous medals her father, Artzi Willheim, won during his career as a competitive swimmer. She shared his story with us at our 2005 AGM.

Arnst Willheim was born in Brunn, Czechoslovakia in 1912. He joined the Jewish athletic club *HaKoach* as a teenager and won many local swimming competitions. He then went on to win medals in the Maccabi sports organization's games in Antwerp and in Zacopec, Poland in 1931 and in Prague in 1933.

Willheim was invited to the first Maccabia Games in Israel in 1932. He competed in a number of swimming events held in the Haifa Port; he won gold in the individual 200-metre breaststroke and in the 3x100 m and the 4x200 m relays.

The young athlete was so taken by Eretz Israel that when he visited again

in 1934, he decided to stay. He changed his name from Arnst to Artzi, Hebrew for "my country".

He joined the Haifa branch of the Maccabi sports club and represented his adoptive country at the 1935 Maccabia Games, again winning gold. He swam with the club from 1935 to 1941. His contribution to competitive swimming was recognized at the club's 50th anniversary celebrations in 1976. Artzi Willheim was to be an honoured guest at the 10th Maccabia Games in August 1977, but unfortunately he died in July of that year.

Among Willheim's memorabilia in his daughter's collection are a stopwatch bearing a special inscription from the first Maccabia, the early Maccabia medals and a medal from the 10th Maccabia. She also has his pin from the 18th Zionist Congress held in Prague in 1933, her father's last year in Czechoslovakia.

Artzi Willheim's story is a glorious



*Champion swimmer Artzi Willheim greets a young fan in Haifa, c. 1937. Photo: Dina Evans.*

chapter in the history of Jewish immigration to Palestine and of Jews in sport. We were glad to have learned it from his daughter.

## Rose Levitt: A Gown for the Belle of the Ball

Leona Bell's mother, Mrs. Rose (Freedman) Levitt was an accomplished seamstress. In fact, she made her own wedding gown for her 1925 marriage to Jack Levitt.

In the 1930s Rose would visit the Mirror Room of the Hudson Bay Company to

see the latest fashions and then copy her favorite styles, making patterns from brown wrapping paper.

The lovely dresses she sewed were worn on the most important social occasion of the year – at the community Yom Kippur Ball. As Leona recalls everyone would rush home from synagogue after the evening services and eat something to break the fast. Then all the women would put on their finery and the community would reassemble for a joyous evening of dancing.

Leona and her sister, Doreen Kline, have lovingly preserved their mother's wonderful creations through the



*Dresses sewn by Rose Levitt have been lovingly preserved by her family and were modeled at our AGM. In the photo are Barbara Joffe; Sheila Gurevitch; Maxine Fischbein, in Rose Levitt's 1925 bridal gown; Rose's daughter Leona Bell; and Avrona Gutman.*



*Wedding portrait of Jack Levitt and Rose Freedman, June 10, 1925. Rose is wearing the bridal gown that she sewed. Photo: Leona Bell.*

years. Anyone who is fortunate enough to get a close look at them can only marvel at the love and effort that was obviously invested in the detailing on each outfit.



## JHSSA as a Resource for Researchers:

# New Library Acquisitions

By Agi Romer Segal

The JHSSA has become a resource for researchers beyond the Calgary Jewish community. While many of our research inquiries involve questions about personal family history, we are increasingly asked to provide information for students and scholars researching various aspects of local history. Donald Smith's *Calgary's Grand Story* (see p.3), is just one example. Most of the recent acquisitions to our Harry & Martha Cohen Library are items that have a direct connection to the JHSSA, and many acknowledge the society for its help with the research. Here are some recent additions to our collection.

**Three Rivers Beckoned; Life & Times with Calgary Mayor Jack Leslie**, by Jean Leslie, Fay-Mar-K Publishing, 2004

This memoir, by the wife of former mayor Jack Leslie, contains a section about the couple's involvement in charitable causes which includes a tribute to Rabbi Lewis Ginsburg. Mrs. Leslie had consulted the JHSSA for some further information about Rabbi Ginsburg and kindly allowed us to print her memoir about him in *Discovery* (Vol. 12, No.1, Feb. 2002) before the publication of this book.

**Historic Walks of Calgary; Ten Walks to Points of Historical Architectural Interest**, by Harry Sanders, Red Deer Press, 2005

JHSSA director Harry Sanders has been instrumental in developing our archives, and his new book is an important source of information about the role members of our community have had in developing Calgary. This informative, richly illustrated book also contains many anecdotes. I have found at least 20 references to Jewish business connected with the buildings described in these historical walks.

**Remembering Chinook Country; Told and Untold Stories of our Past**, by the Chinook Country Historical Society, Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 2005

This centennial collection of essays of interest to local historians includes the opening essay on the history of the Chinook Country Historical Society by JHSSA director Harry Sanders and one on Calgary's Jewish community by

JHSSA director Jack Switzer. There is a description of the work of the Kahanoff Foundation in Faye Reineberg Holt's essay on philanthropy in Calgary.

**Alberta: A State of Mind**, edited by Sydney Sharpe, Roger Gibbins, James H. Marsh and Heather Bala Edwards, Key Porter Books, 2005

This wide-ranging collection of essays is a centennial project conceived by Sydney Sharpe. It includes two essays by JHSSA director Jack Switzer, entitled "Jewish Heritage" and "Good Works and Good Business: Alberta's Jews in the Community". Deborah Yedlin contributed the opening essay in the chapter on the Alberta economy.



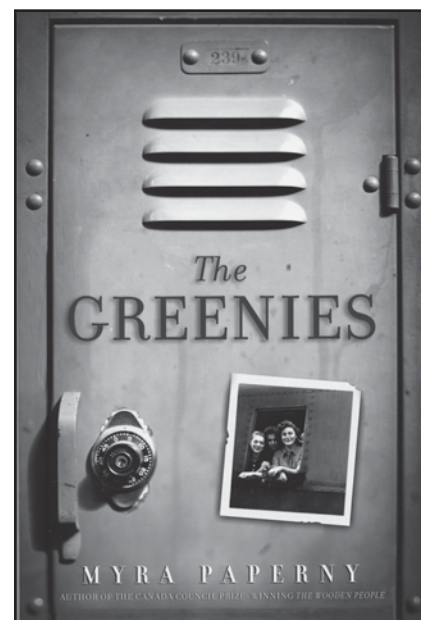
**Jewish People in Canada**, by Frances Purslow, Weigl Educational Publishers, 2006

This slim volume is part of the Special Canadian Communities series that celebrates the heritage of many cultures in Canada's multicultural society. This richly illustrated book deals with Jewish immigration to Canada, Jewish religion and culture. The JHSSA provided many of the photos and made some suggestions regarding its content. The JHSSA is acknowledged in the book.

**The Canadian Jewish Studies Reader**, edited by Richard Menkis and Norman Ravvin, Red Deer Press, 2004

This is a diverse collection of essays dealing with a wide range of topics in the relatively young field of Canadian

Jewish Studies. Calgary native Norman Ravvin's essay on Eli Mandel's poems about the Prairies includes the list of cattle brands owned by Alberta Jews that appeared in *Discovery*, Winter, 1997.



**The Greenies**, by Myra Paperny, Harper Trophy Canada, 2005

This new novel by award-winning local author Myra Paperny is based on the story of the Canadian Jewish community's efforts to save 1,000 Holocaust war orphans. It is a fictionalized account based on research and on the stories of individual survivors, mostly from Vancouver and Calgary. The author thanks the JHSSA in her acknowledgements for the use of the personal scrapbooks of Holocaust survivors in our collection.

**Wild Rose Country; A Spirit of Heritage**, produced by Douglas Hutton for King Motion Picture Corp., 2005

This video has already been broadcast on television. It is the story of the land and its people told lyrically. The producer of the film used some of the images from the JHSSA book *Land of Promise* for the short section on Jewish immigration.

All these items are available in our library.

Our collections were also used for student essays, by Jewish organizations and by individuals researching family history.

## *A Joyful Harvest: Celebrating the Past*

*Continued from Page 2*

media attention and a wide spectrum of visitors, its most important viewers may well be the children who have reaped the benefits of those Jewish pioneers who have gone before them.

Students and teachers from Akiva Academy and The Calgary Jewish Academy are excited about the opportunity *A Joyful Harvest* has given them to learn more about their community. As the old saying goes, it does take a village to raise a child, and Jewish students visiting the exhibit gain a keen understanding of how their "village", as they know it today, was born and then evolved.

As far as Shoshana Kirmayer is concerned, the exhibit offers students an educational opportunity like no other. In preparation for visiting the exhibit, CJA students discussed some of the people and places depicted in *A Joyful Harvest*, focusing on different aspects of the southern Alberta Jewish experience according to their grade level.

"It makes them understand their place within Calgary, within Alberta and within Canada," says Kirmayer, who heads Judaic Studies at CJA, adding that kids often take the Jewish infrastructure, from which they benefit, for granted. The historical view shows them that "their families haven't been here forever," says Kirmayer.

### Thanks to our Exhibit Docents

The Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta is grateful to everyone who helped bring *A Joyful Harvest* to fruition. Among them are the docents who have welcomed and led hundreds of individuals and a large number of groups through the exhibit.

Many thanks to the chair of the Docent committee, Zena Drabinsky, and her team: Joe Brager, Emanuel Cohen, Sara Drabinsky, Delsie Dworkin, Brenda Eisenberg, Maxine Fischbein, Bertha Gold, Sheila Gurevitch, Barb Joffe, Roberta Kerr, Reva Kislik, Harriet Libin, Betty Mayer, Sid Macklin, Therese Nagler, Jack Switzer and Agi Romer Segal.

This front-line team has brought a wealth of knowledge to the job, often sharing personal anecdotes that have enlivened and entertained.

"You can't teach any history or social studies classes without teaching about your own community first," she says.

"It is very nice for the kids to have the opportunity to see their own community as a whole...it promotes respect for one another."

The excitement of some young visitors is palpable. Some praise the exhibit with the time-honoured teen accolade, "Awesome".

Many enjoy bragging rights as they point to parents, grandparents or significant others whose stories are told in *A Joyful Harvest*. Others are thrilled to see their synagogues, schools and much-loved summer camp profiled.

But all the excitement isn't just for the kids, stresses Kirmayer, who came to Calgary from Israel just over 15 years ago.

"Until now I didn't know enough about the history of this place," says Kirmayer who thinks the same holds true for most members of the community.

"We know a little bit, but we don't know enough."

"Thanks to the work of the JHSSA, we are better equipped to teach our students," Kirmayer says, adding that when she sees the exhibit, the profound words of Akavia Ben Mahalalel in *Pirkei Avot* (Ethics of the Fathers) run through her head:

*"Know where you came from and where you are going..."*

*A Joyful Harvest* provides a sense of where the Jews of southern Alberta came from, as well as some tantalizing hints about the various directions we are headed. The exhibit itself is headed in a few exciting directions. In addition to its Glenbow date in 2007, *A Joyful Harvest* will be shown in Medicine Hat this summer. The Provincial Archives of Alberta has also expressed an interest in showing the exhibit in Edmonton.

In the meantime, due to ongoing local interest, *A Joyful Harvest*, originally scheduled for a one-month run at the Beth Tzedec, is being held over until the end of January.

A book based on the exhibit is currently in the works.

As always, the historical record remains a work in progress. The Jewish Historical Society urges all members of the community to continue sharing their family histories, photographs and archives. These are the seeds from which future displays, exhibits, articles and books will grow.

## *Calgary's Grand Story*

*Continued from Page 3*

other new office towers, and the Lougheed building became, after the 1950s, a secondary location.

The Grand Theatre and other movie houses suffered from declining attendance. J.B. Barron had continued to upgrade the property, but it was a losing battle.

Amelia Barron died in 1959 and Jack Barron lived out his last years in a penthouse atop the Barron Building. He died in 1965. In 1969 the Barron family sold the Grand to the Odeon chain.

The Lougheed Building had other Jewish connections, primarily ground-floor retail tenants. The first Jewish-owned shop, the Grand Cigar Store, opened in September 1912 when the office building was completed. It was run by Abraham Kadish, whose large inventory of tobacco products was advertised "to meet the requirements of those who indulge in the sweets of my lady nicotine."

A harness maker displayed his goods next door to Finch-Fashens, which specialized in ladies' corsets and other undergarments.

The Kadish smoke shop was later taken over by Harry Epstein, who turned it into the Grand Cigar Store and Tea Rooms about 1930. He had operated the Grand Confectionery in the building since 1925. Epstein came to Canada in 1907 and to Calgary in 1910. He was very active in the local Jewish community.

Harry and Marcia Geffen Epstein had four children – Rebecca, William, Solomon and Bessie. William Epstein worked in the cigar store as a teen; he was a brilliant scholar, and after World War II he became a high-ranking United Nations official, responsible for drafting and negotiating disarmament treaties.

Albert Calman ran a fur salon in the Lougheed Building in the 1930s. His son, Hy Calman, credits Edgar Lougheed (the senator's son and father of Peter Lougheed) with saving the fur business by often allowing the elder Calman extra time to pay his rent.

In the early 1940s the Grand Cigar Store was taken over by brothers Morris and Joe Smith. Morris' son, Dr. Stan Smith, recalls working as a cashier in the business, by then largely devoted to food service.

Fred Wolf and Nate Greenberg later bought the shop, and added a basement bakery. They changed the name to Grand

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## JHSSA News

### David Waterman, 1917 – 2005

JHSSA lost a good friend with the passing of Director David Waterman, of blessed memory. The society also benefited from Dave's well known generosity in his enthusiastic support of *A Joyful Harvest*. His donation funded the introductory video to the exhibit. He will be missed.

### Switzer Family Reunion

About 350 members of the extended Switzer family enjoyed three days of social activities, tours, and other events during their third family reunion in Calgary early last summer.

The organizing committee has donated a full set of reunion mementos to the JHSSA library. Included are an updated Switzer family tree, a three-disc DVD set chronicling

the 2005 event and *The Big Book of Switzers*, a collection of family stories and Calgary Jewish history articles, most of them previously published in *Discovery*.

### Request for Information

JHSSA member Betty Sherwood has forwarded a request from the Beth Ezekiel Congregation of Owen Sound. They are preparing an exhibit and are looking for people who have had a connection to Grey County, Ontario. Please contact [kfoster@greycounty.on.ca](mailto:kfoster@greycounty.on.ca) if you have any information or artifacts.

### Casino Volunteers Needed

The JHSSA's next casino will be held on Wednesday and Thursday, June 28 and 29 at the Stampede Casino. If you are able to

help us by volunteering on either of these dates, please contact our office, 444-3171.

### 80 Year Olds to be Honoured

Once again the JHSSA will be recognizing the contributions of the 80-year-old members of our community at our AGM on February 6, 2006. If you, or someone you know, turned 80 in 2005, call our office so that we can present them with a certificate.

### Tribute Cards

Cards for all occasions can be ordered for a minimum of \$5. A book in our library can be dedicated for a donation of at least \$36 and a name can be inscribed on a certificate in our Book of Heritage for \$100. For information and orders contact Carey Smith 253-5152.

## Calgary's Grand Story

*Continued from Page 6*

Tobacco and Coffee Shop, a reflection of coffee's growing popularity. The café continued to be the social centre for the Lougheed Building workers. The Jewish owners recall providing free meals to needy users of the neighboring Christian Science Reading Room, with the religious group picking up the tab.

While Jews were welcome as main floor retail tenants, few made it upstairs to the office floors. The Lougheed Building's major tenants in its early decades – like Tregillus Building Products, United Farmers of Alberta, Home Oil, the Alberta Wheat Pool and prestigious law and chartered accountancy firms – had no Jewish employees. The only Jew we know of to have worked at any length in a Lougheed Building office before 1960 was Israel Florence, a Metropolitan Life agent, whose clientele was largely his co-religionists.

The Lougheeds sold their landmark building in 1973; there were four different owners in the 1970s. Architect Harold Hanen had his office in the Louheed Building's penthouse between 1975 and 1981. Hanen worked to have the property saved from demolition and made plans to restore the old building. Harold Hanen died in 2000, before his vision could be realized.

The Grand Theatre closed in 1999. By then it was a two-screen movie house. Attempts by heritage groups to have the property declared an important historic site were unsuccessful until 2003, when new owner Neil Richardson

announced that he wished to restore the building rather than re-develop the site. Theatre Junction took over the Grand Theatre in 2004, and immediately began renovations.

*Calgary's Grand Story* author Donald Smith was among the leaders of the "Save the Grand/Lougheed" movement.

The Lougheed House – Beaulieu, the mansion built by Senator Lougheed in 1891 on 13th Avenue West – was also saved from the wrecker's ball, and is now a major heritage site. Fully restored and open for public viewing, the

Lougheed House is an elegant and accessible piece of our past. Since 1995 Trudy Cowan led efforts to restore Beaulieu and later became the executive director of the Lougheed House Conservation Society.

*Calgary's Grand Story* is full of wonderful stories, connecting the Lougheed Building to significant aspects of Calgary's past. Donald Smith has mined local archives and listened to Calgarians talk about the building and its theater, and has woven these strands into a wonderful tapestry of history and biography.

**SPECIAL SHOWING!**

**"LAND of PROMISE"**

A Talking Picture Depicting the Growth and Achievements in PALESTINE  
UNDER THE BRITISH MANDATE

**GRAND THEATRE**

**SUNDAY NIGHT . . . APRIL 10th**

TWO CONTINUOUS SHOWINGS — COMMENCING AT 7:30 P.M.

**DON'T MISS IT! — SILVER COLLECTION**

*This 1938 ad publicized two Sunday showings of a movie sponsored by the Calgary Zionist Council. Alberta theatres were closed on Sundays, but J.B. Barron made the venue available for Jewish and community-wide charitable causes, such as this film. No admission could be charged on Sunday, but a "silver collection" was taken. The Herald also ran a large article that day about Canadian and American settlers in the Holy Land, and the work of the Palestine Foundation Fund. Source: Calgary Daily Herald, April 9, 1938; Library, Glenbow Museum.*



# Thank You To All Our 2006 Members

## CALGARY BENEFACTORS

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