



DISCOVERY

The Journal of the

תגלית

JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY of Southern Alberta

VOLUME 26, NUMBER 2

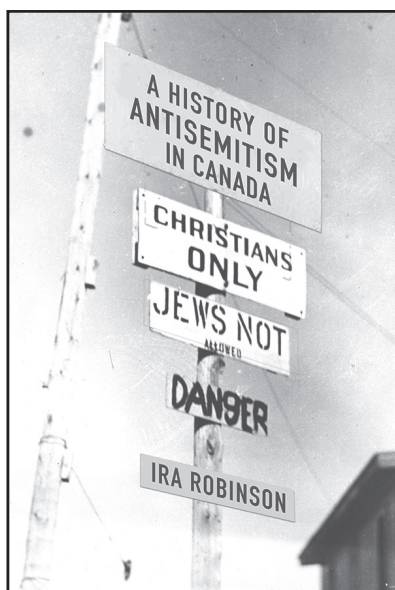
SPRING 2016

Invitation to Attend the 2016 ACJS Conference

The 2016 Association for Canadian Jewish Studies (ACJS) national conference will be held in Calgary from May 29 to May 31, and everyone is invited to attend! The ACJS was founded in 1976 as the Canadian Jewish Historical Society, with the goal of encouraging scholarly research on Canadian Jewish history, life and culture through academic disciplines.

One of the highlights this year will take place at the Calgary JCC on May 29, as the conference kicks off with Community Day. This full-day event provides an opportunity for members of the local community to get together with scholars and researchers in celebration of local history. JHSSA is proud to co-sponsor this event, which acknowledges simchas for both the ACJS, on the occasion of their 40th anniversary, and for all of us in southern Alberta, on the 100th anniversary of the Montefiore Institute.

The full Community Day schedule can be found elsewhere in this issue, and there are several items worthy of special note. The morning panel will feature Dr. Richard Menkis (University of British Columbia), Bernie Katz (Independent Researcher), Harry Sanders and Agi Romer Segal offering several perspectives on southern Alberta Jewish history. This will be followed by a lunch that is being offered with distinctly southern Alberta flavour: since many of the conference attendees are likely to be unfamiliar with our unique history, seated at each table will be a member of our community who grew up in a small prairie town, to share stories and answer questions about their experience.



After lunch, Dr. Ira Robinson from Concordia University will deliver a keynote speech for the launch of his latest book, *A History of Antisemitism in Canada*. This will be followed by a panel devoted to the Montefiore Institute, featuring Dr. Trudy Cowan, Irena Karshenbaum, Reva Faber and Ellen Gasser, from Heritage Park.

Community Day will continue with a trip to Heritage Park to visit the Montefiore Institute, familiarly known as The Little Synagogue. The closing

Continued on Page 6

ACJS Community Day Schedule Sunday, May 29, 2016 at Calgary JCC

9:30am – Registration and refreshments

10:00am – Welcome

10:05am – Southern Alberta Jewish History panel:

Dr. Richard Menkis, Bernie Katz, Harry Sanders, Agi Romer Segal

11:30am-12:30pm – Lunch

12:30pm – Book Launch of Dr. Ira Robinson's *A History of Antisemitism in Canada*. Copies available for purchase.

1:15pm – Coffee break and book signing

1:30pm – Montefiore Institute panel: Dr. Trudy Cowan, Irena Karshenbaum, Reva Faber, Ellen Gasser

3:00pm – Chartered Bus to Heritage Park

3:15pm – Visit to Montefiore Institute / Heritage Park until the park's closing

5:00pm – Return to the JCC

5:00pm – Appetizers at JCC

5:30pm – ACJS 40th Anniversary Banquet, including the presentation of the Louis Rosenberg Canadian Jewish Studies Distinguished Service Award; Speech by 2016 Rosenberg Award winner Janice Rosen reflecting on the past 40 years of scholarship and preservation of Canadian Jewish history

Registration and payment for Community Day events is through the JHSSA office at 403-444-3171 or jhssa@shaw.ca or via the website www.jhssa.org

In this Issue:

Invitation to Attend the 2016 ACJS Conference	1
The Montefiore Institute: Beginnings and Endings.....	2
A Jewish Farming Colony in Bolivia?.....	3
Jews and the University of Calgary	4
Can You Name These Happy Campers?.....	6
New Publication about Jewish Edmonton	6
Historic Calgary Week	7
Impressions of Israel: Highlights of a Visit to our Homeland.....	7
JHSSA News	8
<i>In the Footsteps of Giants</i>	8
President's Message.....	8

THIS ISSUE OF *DISCOVERY* IS SPONSORED BY B'NAI BRITH CALGARY LODGE NO. 816.
THEIR SUPPORT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.

The Montefiore Institute – Beginnings and Endings

Numerous articles highlighting the Montefiore colony and its settlers have appeared in past issues of *Discovery*. This article features the very beginnings and the end of the Institute as reported in the press.

This summer marks 100 years since the opening of the Montefiore Institute building in the Jewish Montefiore colony near Sibbald, Alberta. The restored building now stands proudly as a popular feature in Calgary's Heritage Park after having served for many years as a private residence in the town of Hanna following the dissolution of the colony in the late 1920s.

The completion of a communal building to serve the social and religious needs of the colonists was considered a major milestone and the local press gave the dedication ceremony considerable coverage. On August 9, 1916 an "Important Notice" signed by the committee leaders, president Louis Novikoff and secretary-treasurer Harry Oretzky, appeared in *The Oyen News*. It contained information about the opening ceremony of the Montefiore Institute to be held on Thursday, August 14 at 2:00 p.m. "sharp". The article elaborates:

"The committee will cordially welcome the presence of all neighbors, more particularly our Christian friends. Dr. Herbert J. Sandheim is an English Rabbi [from Winnipeg] and will conduct the ceremony and deliver an address in English. Arrangements are being made to have Professor [sic] Rutherford deliver an address. Refreshments and dance will be given free of charge at the close of the meeting."

The News followed up with a detailed description of the event in an August 20, 1916 article headlined "Dedication of the Montefiore Institute; Grand Social and Dance". From it, we learn of some unexpected changes to the original plans, possibly even to the date of the event.

"One of the largest and most enjoyable gatherings that has taken place in this locality for some time was that which assembled on the afternoon and evening of the 17th inst., the occasion being the dedication of the Montefiore Institute building. As early as two p.m. the people commenced to gather, and from then until four next morning the place was the scene of feasting and merry making.



Minnie Dworkin c. 1919 JHSSA #681

The English Rabbi, Dr. Herbert J. Sandhaim [sic], B.A. of Winnipeg, who was to be master of ceremonies was unable to be present owing to illness. A grand concert was given in..."

The article then lists ten performers of songs and recitations, including both Jewish and non-Jewish performers. Among those performing was "Minnie Dvarkin [should be Dworkin] of Calgary, a Miss of twelve years [who] delighted the audience with her songs and dances." A number of students from the local University School, which the Jewish chil-



Sam Ullman house in the Montefiore Colony. Photo taken by Reevan Dolgoy in the 1970s. Courtesy of the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta (JAHSENA) DOL05.1"

dren also attended, assisted with the programme.

The celebrations did not end with the formal proceedings.

"After the concert a very enjoyable dance was given and continued until the small hours of the morning. The most pleasing feature of the evening was to see so many of the old people who took an active part in the proceedings. Mr. Harry Oretzky very ably acted as chairman. The ladies of the district are to be congratulated for all the good things supplied by way of refreshments. The Temple is a very fine and costly building and is quite a credit to the neighborhood, as well as been [sic] useful place for holding social and public meetings."

We know the building did indeed become the focal point of the community and served it well. Unfortunately, after a few productive years, most of the colonists felt they needed to try their luck elsewhere and the building fell into disuse.

A short notice appeared on Friday, November 26, 1926 on page six of the Winnipeg Yiddish newspaper, *Dos Yiddishe Vort*, known in English as *The Israelite Press*, in the "News from Regina" section about Sam Ullman's visit to the newspaper's editorial office. Sam Ullman had been among the first group of men to have filed for a homestead in the Sibbald area in 1910. A number of his family members also settled in the colony.

By November 1926 Sam had left the colony with his family. They eventually moved to Los Angeles. The purpose of his visit to the editor's office was to present a donation of \$30 for the Palestine Fund and \$5 for the Winnipeg Jewish Orphanage. These sums reflected the \$3 and \$5 donations of the individual men and women from Montefiore. The funds had been collected in what the newspaper called "the last minyan" in the final days of the colony. The article states that only one Jewish "pioneer" still remained in Montefiore.

This milestone anniversary will be celebrated in Heritage Park during the 2016 season. Representatives of the Montefiore Institute will march with their banner in Heritage Park's Dominion Day Parade on July 1. On Wednesday, August 17, the public is invited to enjoy a free concert of Jewish music in the Music in the Plaza series. The official birthday celebrations for the Montefiore Institute will take place on Sunday, August 21, with a partial re-enactment of the original dedication ceremony described here. For further information about this summer's programs at the Montefiore Institute in Heritage Park, contact Leslie Levant at leslielevant@shaw.ca

A Jewish Farming Colony in Bolivia?

By Ruth Ullman

The histories of Jews who left Russia in the early 1900s to become homesteaders on the farming colonies scattered across Alberta are brought to life at the Montefiore Institute, the Little Synagogue at Heritage Park. For the past five years, I have had the opportunity to interpret this part of our history to visitors who are often surprised to hear about Jewish farmers.

Imagine my delight to find a similar story played out in the jungles of Bolivia. My husband and I were on a bird-watching tour of this landlocked country in the centre of South America in late 2015 and found ourselves staying at El Jiri Ecolodge. Established about eight years ago, El Jiri was built on the very foundations of a farming colony called "Buena Tierra" (Good Earth) established for German and Austrian Jewish refugees in 1940. Although there is very little left to see of the original colony, its history is beautifully recorded in words, photos and artifacts in a museum established in 2014 in the nearby tiny town of Charobamba.



The Museo Judio de Charobamba which preserves the history of the Bolivian Jewish farming colony of "Buena Tierra" from the website <http://www.paginasiete.bo/revmiradas/2014/2/9/judios-fundan-museo-yungas-13189.html>

The Museo Judio de Charobamba was the result of the determination of Mario Burgoa, owner of El Jiri Lodge and a dedicated historian. He was instrumental in obtaining funding for the museum from the German government and although not Jewish himself, he is proud of the fact his daughter is now Jewish and lives in Winnipeg, married to one of the descendants of the original colony.

How did Jews wind up as farmers in a semitropical valley 400 km northeast of La Paz, between the highlands of the Andes and the jungles of the rainforests? The story, although different in time and place, is very similar to the story of immigrants to our prairies.

Prior to the outbreak of WWII, Bolivia was one of the last countries to issue visas to Jews wanting to leave Europe. As a result, in 1938 there were many Jewish refugees in the two main cities of Bolivia: La Paz and Cochabamba. It was difficult to find work or housing and there was growing antisemitism as Bolivians feared the immigrants would take jobs from them. The idea of agricultural colonies was the brainchild of Mauricio Hochschild, a German-born but naturalized Bolivian citizen who had become one of the "Big Three" tin mining owners in the country. He exerted considerable influence with the government and along with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) established the Bolivian Colonizing Corporation, or SOCOBO.

During this time, Bolivia was recovering from a disastrous war and the government was trying to rebuild and diversify the country's economy. It was interested in developing its agricultural base, particularly in the sparsely populated lowlands. Hochschild envisioned the establishment of agricultural colonies for Jewish refugees as a way to encourage the acceptance of yet more refugees, since it would redistribute Jews away from cities. Hochschild wrote to the JDC, "I am of the opinion that even if Jews who have never done any farming...are put on the land here, with one or several agronomists who teach them farming and stay with them for some time, they will be able to make money and a very good living...within three years' time." He also hoped that a successful agricultural effort in Bolivia would influence neighbouring countries, particularly Peru and Chile, to follow suit and expand their acceptance of Jewish immigrants from Europe. He envisioned up to 30,000 Jews becoming colonists. The JDC was supportive of this idea but also skeptical and provided funding of \$100,000. Hochschild invested \$1,000,000 of his own money.

And so, after much lobbying of government, in April 1940, the first 35 Jewish settlers arrived at the site of the future agricultural colony in the Yungas region, near the "hacienda" of Charobamba. Gradually their families followed. The vision was that the settlers would soon learn to produce four main crops—bananas, pineapples, tangerines and coffee—all of which would be shipped and sold in Bolivia's cities. In addition, the planners thought that each settler family might eventually raise goats, sheep and some dairy cattle along with chickens, ducks and geese. The reality was very different. Rather than raising crops, the settlers' time was spent in road and bridge building, land clearing and housing construction. By 1941, only five hectares were planted rather than the 425 believed fit for cultivation. By 1943, the dream was already fading. Even at its peak, there were never more than 180 adult Jews in the colony as it remained difficult to attract German speaking refugees to somewhere "deep in the jungle". The planners hired to help the colonists brought farming techniques from Argentina that worked well on the flat pampas but were a disaster on the steep hillsides. The local indigenous population had learned to farm by terracing, but they were not consulted. The journey to the colony from La Paz and also the only route out to sell produce was via the "Death Road". Today, this route is used only by tourists and cyclists, but in the 1940s it was the sole hazardous link to the highlands and La Paz. Many settlers lost their lives on these journeys.

Despite the efforts of many and the ongoing support of the JDC and Hochschild, by 1944 the colony was essentially abandoned and the colonists had returned to the cities, where they remained until they were able to leave Bolivia and rejoin family in North America, Argentina and other parts of the world.

There are estimates that 7,000–10,000 Jews fled to Bolivia before the war; only about 4–6% remained. Today's Jewish population in Bolivia is about 500. The story of this time, including that of "Buena Tierra", is told well in Leo Spitzer's book *Hotel Bolivia*, [Hill and Wang, 1998]. That is the name Spitzer gave to a country that offered refuge but eventually became a stop on a journey, not unlike the Jewish farming colonies of Alberta.

Finding birds in Bolivia was beautiful, but finding a piece of Jewish history in the jungle of South America—priceless!

Jews and the University of Calgary

By Harry Sanders

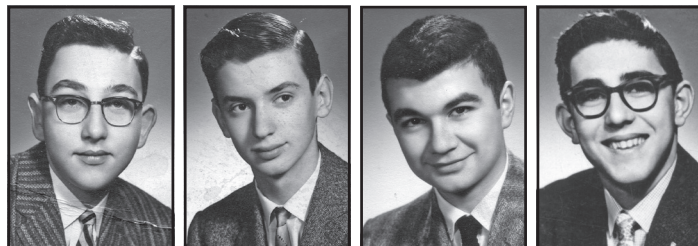
This April, the University of Calgary (U of C) celebrated the 50th anniversary of its establishment as an autonomous institution. As with the city's population at large, the university has played a large role in the lives of Calgary's Jewish residents. And, as with the broader community, Jews have played no small role in the university's history.

The present University of Calgary is the second institution by that name, although the original was officially known as Calgary College. The institution was founded in 1910 and held classes in the old Carnegie Library (now the Memorial Park Branch of the Calgary Public Library) from 1912 until 1915. It was Calgary's answer to the provincial government's 1907 decision to locate the provincial University of Alberta (U of A) in the Edmonton area instead of Calgary. Technically, U of A was in Strathcona, or South Edmonton, a separate municipality that later amalgamated with Edmonton in 1912. But it was a provocation to Calgary's business and professional class, who formed Calgary College as a privately-endowed institution. The province denied the college degree-conferring power, and that limitation—combined with an economic downturn and the outbreak of the First World War—spelled the end of Calgary's university experiment. However, the province was sufficiently impressed by the city's interest in higher education, and in 1916 it made Calgary the location of the new Provincial Institute of Technology and Art ("Tech," the forerunner to the present SAIT and Alberta College of Art and Design).

None of Calgary College's 100-odd students or half-dozen faculty and administration members are known to have been Jewish. But there is a small connection. Two months after classes began, the *Calgary Daily Herald* published a story about the Chanukah concert at the newly-established Hebrew School in what is now the Downtown East Village. "The importance of the school for Calgary which has started a university needs no pointing out," reads the December 13, 1912 story. "All know that since a few years the Hebrew language has been recognized on a par with Latin and Greek by all colleges.... Should that school find support by the citizens of Calgary at large it would be possible to form a special class for gentile students." Sadly, that iteration of the Hebrew School suffered the same fate as Calgary College. Both disappeared during the First World War.

The present U of C already existed in the form of the Calgary Normal School, a teacher training college that began classes in 1906 and moved into its purpose-built facility—today's McDougall Centre, the provincial government's southern headquarters—in 1908. There it remained until 1923, when the present SAIT campus opened. The main campus building, Heritage Hall, was purpose-built to house two institutions—Tech in the east wing and the Calgary Normal School in the west wing. One of the Normal School's Jewish students was Sabine Nagler, who attended in the late 1920s (approximately) and then taught in one-room rural schools before she became a public school teacher in Calgary. Her second husband, Samuel J. Helman, donated 2,000 books from his personal library to the university.

During the Second World War, the provincial government determined that all teacher training in Alberta would come under the aegis of the U of A's Faculty of Education. On April 1, 1945, the Calgary Normal School became the faculty's Calgary branch. As more courses were added, the branch became a complete university branch known



Future UAC students from their earlier years with AZA. Left to right: David Eisenstadt, Earl Snider and Morris Yacowar photos taken from the AZA First International Chapter 1958-59 photo. JHSSA #3130. Irving Rootman photo from the AZA Stampede Chapter 1958-59 photo. JHSSA #283.

as the University of Alberta, Calgary (UAC). This created a new educational option for high school graduates in Calgary. It was now possible to complete up to two years at UAC before having to move to UAE (the University of Alberta, Edmonton), as the provincial university became known. Allan Corenblum attended UAC on the Tech campus before completing his commerce degree at UAE.

"The campus wasn't crawling with Jews," remembers U of C Emeritus Professor Maurice Yacowar, who enrolled at UAC as an English student in its final year on the old campus. "Susan Aizenman, Morris Dancyger, Morris Bleviss were the only ones I remember from freshman year." Yacowar was involved in the birth of two enduring U of C institutions—Bermuda Shorts Day and the *Gauntlet* student newspaper.

"Bermuda Shorts Day (BSD) was started when [history student] Alan Arthur put a notice on the blackboard in the central rotunda at the Tech announcing that the next morning would be BSD and people should wear their shorts," Yacowar recalls. "His motivation was that he had just bought a pair and wanted an excuse to wear them. Oddly, it caught on, and even grew to ridiculous proportions over the years, to my amusement when I occasionally heard what was going on." Yacowar was one of five students who competed in one of the day's main events, a championship marble tournament. Aizenman reported on the event as a contributor to the *Calgary Herald's* "Schoolgrounds to Campus" column.

Continued on Page 5



Economics student Michael Laub, third from right in this 1963 photograph, demonstrates with fellow students in support of autonomy for the University of Alberta, Calgary (UAC) from its parent institution, the Edmonton-based University of Alberta. University of Calgary Archives 82.010/01.24_3

Jews and the University of Calgary

Continued from Page 4

In September 1960, UAC moved to the present U of C campus, which consisted of two squat public works buildings. That year, Yacowar became the founding editor of the new *Gauntlet* student newspaper, which replaced the nine-year-old *Cal-Var* (a name derived from "Calgary Varsity"). Aizenman became the news editor and Dancyger the advertising manager. Yacowar was famously disciplined after publishing an anti-war Remembrance Day editorial that discouraged readers from buying poppies. He was ultimately fired as editor, but the following year Yacowar was elected Students' Union president. He graduated in 1962 and moved to Edmonton to pursue a master's degree at U of A and then a Ph.D. at the University of Birmingham in England. In 1995, Yacowar returned to his alma mater, which had long since been renamed U of C, as an English professor. His *Gauntlet* colleague Susan Aizenman left Calgary to complete her degree, and she now lives in New York. Morris Dancyger continued his studies at the U of A.

Yacowar recalled that Earl Snider and Henry Krygier enrolled at UAC during its first year on the new campus. "As a student here, Earl tried to get the Students' Union to let him book Peter, Paul and Mary for a concert, but I'm not sure his foresight was approved," Yacowar remembers.

More Jewish students enrolled in the coming years. Still, recalls sociology student Irving Rootman, "There wasn't a huge Jewish contingent at the university. Most of us knew each other, but we didn't hang around in a group." In his valedictory speech at the spring 1964 convocation, Rootman spoke in favour of autonomy for UAC, a goal that involved activism from students as well as administration. After earning a Ph.D. from Yale, Rootman returned to U of C from 1970 to 1972 as a research associate in Health Sciences. His later career led him to Health and Welfare Canada and the World Health Organization, as well as a number of Canadian universities.

Economics major Michael Laub was one of those students who demonstrated in favour of autonomy that ultimately saw UAC become the autonomous University of Calgary in April 1966. Later that year, Laub married a fellow UAC alumnus, psychology major Marsha Corenblum (Allan's sister). Following Michael's career as an academic, the Laubs took over Lake O'Hara Lodge in Yoho National Park, which they operated together for many years.

Another early student, David Eisenstadt, graduated in 1966 and went on to receive a degree in journalism from Carleton University. He has maintained a close relationship to his alma mater, having served as Senator at U of C since 2007. He is a Member of the Order of the University of Calgary.

Eva Dorchik, who even then was dating her future husband Gordon Hoffman, enrolled as a French student with a minor in Spanish in 1964. "It was so cold up there," she remembers of the tiny campus, which had four buildings apart from the Engineering complex at the time she started. But she loved her time there. "It was small—a comforting, homey place to go to," she remembers. "I guess I could have chosen U of A, but it was just comfortable to stay at UAC. Now it's a sprawling, wonderful campus, and when I go up there, I get lost." Hoffman graduated in 1967 and remained one more year to earn her teaching certificate. After many years as a French teacher, she returned to U of C to take a credit course in Spanish. "They had to go to the basement, to the microfiche files, to get my student number," she



Morris Bleviss (3rd from left) was one of the organizers of Bed Pushing Day which featured a race between the campuses of the Universities of Alberta. This photo of the UAC's test run, which appeared in the *Calgary Herald* on March 3, 1961, featured Campus Queen Lynn Thomas. Photographer: Ron Meigh. Courtesy of Glenbow Archives PA-1599-595-451.

laughs. "When they posted the marks for this Spanish course, everyone would always know when it was my mark because it started with a '00'. All of the other students' numbers began with '95' or whatever year they had started."

One of Hoffman's professors was Henri Mydlarski, who became an assistant professor at the new U of C in 1966. "He was a wonderful professor," she recalls. "He was just vibrant, so enamoured with what he was doing." Mydlarski, who was born in Paris in 1934, had survived the Holocaust in hiding and moved to Calgary in 1957. He had previously taught at UAC for a single year in 1962–63 while at the same time attending as a student. Before UAC, Mydlarski taught French at Western Canada High School, where he met fellow French teacher Donna Robertson. They later married, and both eventually became French professors at U of C, where Donna ultimately became Associate Dean (Academic) of Continuing Education as well as the director of the Centre Français for 15 years.

Another early Jewish professor was A.E.D. (David) Schonfield, who joined the institution in the late 1950s and helped to develop the Psychology program. He became recognized as an expert on aging. "He had a great sense of humour," Rootman recalled. Other Jewish faculty members at UAC included Stanley Solomon Blank (Educational Psychology) and Talmon Herz (Music).

By the time UAC became U of C, the university had dozens of Jewish students and a handful of Jewish faculty members. But Jewish life was limited; Hillel and a Jewish chaplaincy lay in the future. Also still to come were Chancellor Muriel Kovitz, President Harvey Weingarten, Dean of the Faculty of General Studies Marsha Hanen, and Dean of Graduate Studies David Bercuson. These later developments will be the subject of a future column in *Discovery*.

If you have recollections of the early years of U of C, you are welcome to share them with JHSSA at jhssa@shaw.ca



Dr. A.E.D. Schonfield. University of Calgary Archives 84.005.4.42

2016 ACJS Conference

Continued from Page 1

event will be a banquet at the JCC in celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the ACJS. The evening will feature a talk by Janice Rosen, recipient of this year's Louis Rosenberg Canadian Jewish Studies Distinguished Service Award, reflecting on the growth of Canadian Jewish historical societies and scholarship over the last 40 years.

The conference itself takes place at the University of Calgary on May 30–31. It begins with a panel focusing on various aspects of the history and experiences of Jews in Quebec. This will be followed by an event that is **open to the general public**, the 2nd Annual Educators' Roundtable. Chaired by Dr. Ira Robinson (Concordia University), this discussion of Holocaust education in Canada will feature Ilana Krygier-Lapides (Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Director, Calgary Jewish Federation), Sarah Jane Kerr-Lapsley (McGill University), Aviva Atlani (Independent Researcher), and Belarie Zatzman (York University). The final panel of the day focuses on music and literature, and will discuss the post-war correspondence of Yiddish writers Chava Rosenfarb (Canada) and Zenia Larsson (Sweden), Torah stories reimagined in modern North American literature, and Jewish maestra Ethel Stark and her women's orchestra in Montreal in the 1940s.

Tuesday morning starts with another event that is **open to the general public**: a keynote speech by Dr. David Bercuson (University of Calgary) on Canadian Jewish servicemen and women in World War II, followed by a panel discussion on Canadian Jewish servicewomen in the army and the RCAF women's division, Canadian Jewish enlistment in WWII, and a Canadian Jewish soldier's experience liberating Bergen-Belsen. Panel participants include Peter Usher (Independent Researcher), Ellin Bessner (Centennial College), Adara Goldberg (Clark University) and Sandra Lipton (Independent Researcher). The

afternoon panel on medicine and ritual will discuss mutual-aid society doctors in early 20th century Toronto, and contemporary debates over ritual circumcision. The conference will conclude with a tour of the Glenbow Archives (pre-registration required).

The 2nd Annual Educators' Roundtable and the Canadian Jews and WWII keynote speech and panel are free and open to the public. Attendance at the other sessions requires registration for the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences and the ACJS Conference (<http://congress2016.ca/register>). The Congress will also feature a number of open public events such as an academic trade fair, lectures by public figures in the "Big Thinking" series and interdisciplinary symposia.

Sponsorship opportunities are available for any segment of Community Day. For more details about the events and fees or to register for Community Day, please contact the JHSSA office at 403-444-3171, or via email jhssa@shaw.ca



Association for Canadian Jewish Studies
Association d'études juives canadiennes

New Publication about Jewish Edmonton

We are pleased to announce the publication of a new book by the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta (JAHSNA). *From Generation to Generation: Jewish Edmontonians as Heritage Builders* can be ordered directly at www.jahsena.ca

Can You Name These Happy Campers?



Camp B'nai Brith at Pine Lake first session campers, 1956. Source: Evelyn Sheftel. JHSSA #2526. Camp BB Riback's 60th Anniversary reunion will be held the weekend of June 24-26. The general public is invited to attend either the entire weekend or just the Sunday events. For more details see www.campbb.com

Historic Calgary Week

July 22 – August 1, 2016

Closing Concert *Calgary Songs, from the Hysterical to the Historical* featuring Paul Finkleman on Heritage Day, Monday, August 1 at 2:00 pm in the Burns Theatre in Fort Calgary. Free Admission

JHSSA is proud to be a sponsor of this year's Historic Calgary Week's closing event. This lively and entertaining concert will highlight many of the exceptional characters and events of Calgary's colourful past, including some from Alberta's Jewish community. Produced and performed by local musician, poet and JHSSA direc-

tor Paul Finkleman, *Calgary Songs, from the Hysterical to the Historical*, is an enjoyable and engaging way to learn about the men and women who brought spunk, spirit and a sense of community to early Cowtown.

An additional event of interest to our community will be Irena Karshenbaum's presentation "The Little Synagogue on the Prairie Turns 100" on Tuesday, July 26 at 7:00 pm at Temple B'nai Tikvah, 900-47 Avenue SW.

For the entire week's schedule see www.chinookcountry.org.

Impressions of Israel: Highlights of a Visit to our Homeland

Leo and Goldie Sheftel's souvenir booklet of their 1983 tour

From the foreword: "In this book Leo and Goldie Sheftel have attempted to share with the reader, in the form of a guided tour, the many faces of Israel. Mr. Sheftel had previously visited Israel in 1981 as a member of the Ministerial Trade Commission. Official commitments precluded any extensive private exploration of the country but, at that time, he made himself a promise that some day in the future he would return with Goldie and enjoy Israel—past and present. In October 1983, in the company of very dear friends, with arrangements made by the State of Israel Bond Tour through Aron and Ida Eichler, that promise was fulfilled.

This visit was so successful that Mr. & Mrs. Sheftel searched for a way of preserving a permanent memory—this book is the result."

In their introduction, Leo and Goldie expressed their joy that their dream of Israel had finally become a reality. "Israel is much more than we anticipated...all we had heard about and read about throughout our lives no longer existed solely on printed pages of books but jumped to life right before our very eyes."

Most of the book is devoted to a detailed itinerary of the three-week tour, which interspersed days "At Leisure" in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, with eight full days of sightseeing around the country. A capsule history of each destination is provided, as well as details of the specific routes and stops along the way.

The booklet's closing line states, "Our beloved 'Medinat Israel'—with love and respect, we salute you!"

While this was neither the first nor the last tour to depart from Calgary to Israel, it made a profound impression on its 20 participants. Many of them shared their thoughts in writing, and we are happy to include excerpts of them here.

Tour leaders Ida and Aron Eichler expressed their thoughts in their trademark fashion—with a long poem.

"A Journey to Jerusalem, A holiday – a dream.

T'was more than just a package tour,

Much more than it did seem.

For we set out, - some young, some old,

Both veteran travellers, and new,

Armed with just a bright brochure of things to see and do."

Other participants shared their excitement:

"Where does one begin? Interestingly enough, going to Israel on the fourth trip is almost as exciting as going the very first time. We were most grateful for and delighted with all the others who shared this very special time....Perhaps the most touching moment...was hearing Zubin Mehta conduct the playing of Hatikvah and the entire Mann Auditorium guests rose to attention and sang with great emotion....We had our share of mishaps but were so touched by everyone's concern, for everyone else's welfare, when the fire occurred at the Astoria Hotel."

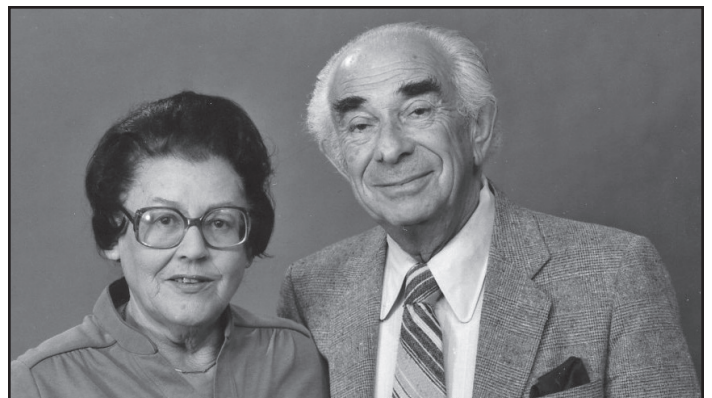
"Beginning with our El-Al flight we had a feeling of belonging... In the course of a day we saw everything from a large urban centre to Bedouin desert camps."

"My friends asked why we wanted to go to Israel with all the dangers and also with 18 Jewish people. It didn't occur to them that Israel is the cradle of our civilization."

"Our first trip to Israel was a 'happening' we will never forget... no amount of explanation can prepare one for the emotional experience of this event."

"Solemnly sharing our Sabbath the way it should be enjoyed. Practicing your Judaism without explanation to your neighbours—what a miracle! Yes, we are truly in Israel."

This souvenir booklet was printed in 1984. JHSSA has a copy (Acc.2006-010)



Goldie and Leo Sheftel on their 45th anniversary, 1981. Photographer: Hunts' Photographer. Detail from JHSSA #928

JHSSA NEWS

Seeking 80-Year-Olds

Our upcoming October AGM will again present certificates to those in our community who turned 80 this past year. We are also collecting names of our 90-year-olds, and those who are 100 years or older. Please contact the JHSSA office at 403-444-3171 or jhssa@shaw.ca with the names of such worthy seniors for our list.

President's Message

By **Saundra Lipton**

The mandate of the Jewish Historical Society is to "to record, preserve and present the history of Southern Alberta's Jews and the communities they built". For over 25 years, the JHSSA has acquired and preserved a considerable number of records from Jewish individuals, institutions and organizations in Southern Alberta. This material complements holdings in other local repositories: Glenbow Archives holds the most significant collection of resources for Jewish life in southern Alberta, but material is also available at the Galt Museum and Archives (Lethbridge), Museum of the Highwood (High River), Esplanade Archives (Medicine Hat), and the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta. The JHSSA holdings include material from the Jewish pioneer farming communities of Rumsey, Trochu and Montefiore; personal papers of individuals such as Rabbi Lewis Ginsburg; and documents from the local institutions including the Chevra Kadisha and the original Congregation House of Jacob.

In January, Roberta Kerr, our contract archival assistant, provided board members with an overview of the JHSSA collections, including a tour of our new expanded archival storage space. The scope of resources provided by the JHSSA for research on Jewish life in southern Alberta is truly amazing and I encourage you all to contact our office if you are seeking any information on the southern Alberta Jewish community. During the last few months, Roberta and our archivist/librarian, Agi Romer Segal, have begun to organize these collections. We hope in the near future to produce detailed finding aids of all our print archival material.

This January, JHSSA board member Ken Drabinsky inaugurated his series of genealogy workshops. His series included four sessions: a general overview, tools for building a family tree, a Skype lecture by Stanley Diamond and an advanced class. Ken is continuing with less formal monthly meetings to provide peer support for those who want to continue their genealogical research.

Please mark your calendars for May 29–31, when the Association for Canadian Jewish Studies will be holding its annual conference in Calgary. The JHSSA is proud to be an official partner of the Community Day on May 29 at the JCC. The sessions that day are open to the public and registration is through the JHSSA office. More details about the conference can be found elsewhere in this issue of *Discovery*.

Thank you to all our members and supporters who assisted with our January casino. The casino funds are key to providing financial support for all our activities.

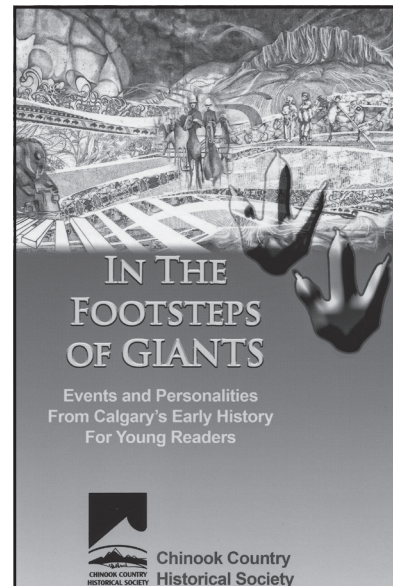


In the Footsteps of Giants

In celebration of 25 years of Historic Calgary Week in 2015, Chinook Country Historical Society (CCHS) initiated the publication of a collection of stories for young readers, aged eight to twelve, about people and events in Calgary's colourful past. Enough material was submitted for two volumes. The first volume of *In the Footsteps of Giants* has recently been published. The stories are not connected, but all feature siblings Sarah and Harry as they explore our rich past. Each story is followed by suggested activities. Two copies of the first volume have been donated to every elementary school in the public and separate school boards in Calgary.

JHSSA is pleased to be part of this project. "Building the House of Jacob: Jacob Diamond and Congregation House of Jacob" by JHSSA archivist Agi Romer Segal is included in this first volume.

A celebration of the publication of the book will be held during Historic Calgary Week on Wednesday, July 27 at 6:00 pm at Bow Valley Ranch in Fish Creek Park. More details about the event and book, as well as ordering information are available at www.chinook-country.org.



DISCOVERY

Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta

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

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

President: **Saundra Lipton**

Vice-President: **Zena Drabinsky**

Treasurer: **Mary Taub**

Secretary: **Laura Shuler**

Director at Large: **Shauna Switzer**

Directors: **Rebecca Aizenman, Marc Baron, Emanuel Cohen, Ken Drabinsky,**

Barry Finkelman, Paul Finkelman, Halley Girvitz, Sheila Gurevitch, Naomi Hashman,

Lil Hershtfield, Naomi Kerr, Jason Nisenson, Karen Roth, Harry Sanders, Allan Sattin,

Laura Shuler, Hilda Smith, Caroline Ullman

Honourary Directors: **Hy Belzberg, Jack Edelson, Henry Gutman**

Archives: **Agi Romer Segal, Roberta Kerr**

Office Staff: **Katie Baker**

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

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 the responsibility of the authors alone, and do not imply the endorsement of the editors or the JHSSA.

Please address all communications on editorial and circulation matters to:

Discovery

c/o The Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta

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

Phone 403-444-3171

Email: jhssa@shaw.ca

Website: www.jhssa.org

ISSN: 1916 - 3886

© 2016 by the Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta
(a non-profit, registered society). Donations gratefully accepted.