



JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY of Southern Alberta

Historic Calgary Week 2019

The Play's the Thing: 50 years of great theatre in the Calgary Jewish community, presented by Zelda Dean

Friday, August 2, 2019 at 1:30 pm at Memorial Park Library

JHSSA is pleased to partner with Chinook Country Historical Society and Memorial Park Library for 2019 Historic Calgary Week (HCW), themed "Oh what fun we had." We are especially delighted to have Zelda Dean as our guest presenter.

Zelda Haskovitch was born, educated, and married in Calgary, where she and her husband, Bill Dean, raised their two children, Stephen and Marni. She was very involved in the Jewish community for over 40 years including teaching at the Talmud Torah. She enjoyed a long and satisfying career in the Calgary arts scene as a director, producer and actress in film, television and stage. Zelda was one of the founders of Beth Israel Players in 1969 and served as artistic director. This respected and popular Jewish community theatre group involved hundreds of people from both the Jewish and general community and helped to break down many barriers of the day.

Zelda and Bill then opened Calgary's first professional dinner theatre and toured productions for several years throughout rural Alberta.

As well as her involvement in the general community, Zelda directed and produced numerous shows for the JCC before moving to Victoria in 1997 to join her children and many grandchildren. She was soon offered a career change and focused her energy and skills facilitating a specialized program helping clients forced to make career changes.

Zelda is now thrilled to have returned to her Jewish theatre roots as founder and Producing Artistic Director of Bema Productions out of Congregation Emanu-El Synagogue in Victoria. This award-winning Jewish theatre company is in its sixth season with a mandate of raising funds for not-for-profit organizations in need.

For the HCW program Zelda will review some of the highlights of her years working with the Jewish community to present quality theatre.

As an added bonus for all those who were involved with Zelda's productions on stage, backstage, or in the audience, JHSSA in partnership with Beth Tzedec Congregation is hosting a **Reunion in Celebration of Jewish Theatre on Thursday, August 1, at 7:00 pm at Beth Tzedec**. We invite you to bring your stories, photos, and artifacts from Beth Israel Players and Zelda's JCC productions.



Zelda Dean.

Photographer: Katya D Photography.
Source: Zelda Dean. JHSSA #3224

President's Message

By **Sandra Lipton**

The contents of this issue largely reflect the ongoing work of JHSSA in fulfilling the mandate of preserving and enhancing understanding of our community's history in southern Alberta.

This work, be it research into our military veterans or the creation of archival descriptions, advances as funding permits, and we are pleased to share some of the information gleaned from our collections.

The story of the Heilik artwork is just one of many that we come across in our efforts to respond to requests that come to our office from across the globe.

Our communal history is made up of your stories and we are pleased to present David Eisenstadt's update on the accomplished 1958-59 cohort of AZA First International Chapter #31.

This issue also highlights Brent Belzberg and Ron Ghitter, who have recently been appointed to the Order of Canada. I would also

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PLEASE SUPPORT JHSSA WITH YOUR MEMBERSHIP.

Vigour, Pride, and Swagger Too

AZA First International Chapter #31: The Class of 1958–59

By David Eisenstadt

A few years ago, David Eisenstadt submitted an article to *Discovery* about his AZA experience. With help from his Calgary family and many friends, he connected with most of his “gang” or their families. We were initially unable to use his article, but because 2019 marks the 60th anniversary of his cohort, we now present an edited version of David’s article to mark this milestone. We have attempted to update the information presented here and welcome further updates.

It has been said that if you’re not first, you’re last! In that spirit, in 1958–59, a group of young Calgarians embraced membership in AZA First International Chapter #31, with vigour and pride. Add swagger too!

AZA (the Grand Order of the Aleph Zadik Aleph) is an internation-

al youth-led fraternal organization for Jewish teens, “a social and Zionist youth group” founded as Chapter #1 in May 1924 in Omaha, Nebraska, as the male wing of BBYO Inc., an independent not-for-profit organization. Its sister was BBG (B’nai B’rith Girls) and both were embraced by B’nai B’rith. AZA arose as a response to Jews not being allowed into Greek fraternities.

In 1926, Calgary became the 31st chapter in the order and the first outside the U.S. A second Calgary Chapter, Stampede AZA #1046, headed by Irving Rootman, was formed during my time at Chapter #31. Subsequent chapters in Alberta and Saskatchewan made up what is now referred to as the Northwest Canada region.

So how did Calgary become the first international AZA Chapter? Ian Kandel, Director, AZA/BBG & The Teen Movement at BBYO Inc. in Washington, DC, provided some insight from the archives.

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Vigour, Pride, and Swagger Too

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"On December 21, 1926, Jacob M. Finkelstein, the third Grand Aleph Godol, installed Chapter #31 in Calgary, Alberta, making AZA an international organization. Five days later, he installed Chapter #38 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Calgary was one of the largest cities in Western Canada, and Winnipeg was the fourth largest city in all of Canada."

Kandel adds, "While there might be truth to there being strategy to this decision, it might have been done strictly out of geographic convenience and where they had leads to root chapters in Canada. From that point through today, AZA and BBG, thus BBYO, swept across Canada, and we're proud that First International still exists to this day."

Lots of AZA traditions abound: a menorah logo, a password "Ami" (Hebrew for my people), an Aleph pin worn with pride, plus songs and cheers, most notably "Up You Men". Seven "Cardinal Principles" were identified to which members subscribed...patriotism, Judaism, filial love, charity, conduct, purity and fraternity. There are 10 chapter officer titles which range from Aleph Godol (President), Aleph S'gan (Programming Vice President) and Aleph Gizbor (Treasurer) to Aleph Shotare Godol (Sergeant-At-Arms).

The following update on the lives of the 1958–59 AZA First International Chapter #31 men follows the photo in clockwise order, starting with their Aleph Godol.

MAURICE YACOWAR was born in 1942 in Saskatchewan to Samuel and Sophie. At the University of Alberta at Calgary (UAC) in 1960, he was the founding editor of *The Gauntlet* and then UAC's student union president, 1962–63. He holds degrees from University of Alberta and from the Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham (UK). He couldn't stay away from academia and started his career as a lecturer at Lethbridge Junior College in 1964. He then went on to teach English and Drama at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario, where he established Canada's first Film Studies program. He was named Dean of Humanities, 1981–87. He went on to serve as Dean of Academic Affairs, Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, 1989–95. Maurice returned to Calgary and became Dean of Fine Arts at the University of Calgary, 1995–2000. He retired as Professor Emeritus in 2006. Maurice has authored several books and written numerous articles and papers on literature and media. His latest work is about the popular Israeli television series *Shtisel*. Maurice and his wife have now retired to B.C. He had two children and is blessed with two grandchildren.

HENRY KRYGIER (1940–2014) was born in Gomel, Belarus, to Sam and Esther, who came to Calgary in 1950. He left university in 1962 to start Calberta Manufacturing Ltd. with his father and a few sewing machines. By 1996, Calberta employed over 70 people manufacturing fire retardant garments for the oil industry and civic firefighters. After 35 years in that business, Henry became proprietor of Sign of the Times. Henry married Phyllis Bleiweiss of Montreal who worked with Henry until Calberta was sold. She then worked for 10 years as the sole employee of JNF in Calgary. They had two daughters and became grandparents. Their daughter Ilana has continued her mother's connection to community service and is currently Calgary Jewish Federation's Director of Programming, Holocaust and Human Rights Education.

EARLE SNIDER'S 1967 Centennial project was marrying Ruthie Sklar. Their two sons were both AZA members. Earle graduated with a BA (Psychology) and an MA (Sociology) from UAC. His PhD in Sociology was from Michigan State. Since 1969, Earle has been doing research, consulting, and teaching. He is currently Professor Emeritus (Sociology) at the University of Alberta, an instructor at Grant MacEwan University and President of Strategic Management and Communication Associates Ltd. He and Ruth are proud grandparents.

H. GRAHAM SATTIN, son of Robert and Esther, graduated from the University of Alberta with a Chemical Engineering degree in 1964. He received an MBA from the University of Western Ontario in 1968. At the time of his death in 2008 at the age of 65, Graham worked as an independent consultant in business process reengineering. He had two children and three grandchildren.

MELVIN (MEL) FISHMAN, son of Percy and Sophie, graduated from Radio College of Canada in Montreal as an electronic technologist. He worked in broadcasting with CBC and CHQR radio in Calgary; then he launched a successful career in retail electronics and as a manufacturers' rep culminating as National Merchandising Manager for Sony PlayStation. Mel tried retirement after moving to Toronto and claims to have failed at that. He has served as executive director of a synagogue there. He continues to be involved with genealogical research. He and his wife, Deana Shuster of Montreal, have two children and numerous grandchildren.

MICKEY (MICHAEL) DAVIDMAN, son of Harry and Anna, left Calgary in 1962 after two years of pre-med at UAC. He graduated in medicine from the University of Alberta in Edmonton in 1966. Since 1974, he has worked as a nephrologist at Montreal's Jewish General Hospital. Mickey and spouse Kim Smyth have two daughters and are grandparents.

Born in 1941 in Calgary to Michael and Betty, **IRA KATZIN** graduated from Ryerson Polytechnic Institute in Toronto in 1965 with a Business Administration Diploma. He worked in investment research and analysis until his retirement in 2010. Ira and his late spouse Sheila Seach had two children and were grandparents. He married Saretta Baron in 2002.

Advisor **BILL DEAN** married Zelda Haskovitch in 1960. Together they were very involved in Calgary's theatre scene, opening Calgary's first professional dinner theatre. Bill was a successful Calgary entrepreneur for many years. The Deans moved to Victoria, BC, in 1997. They had two children and are blessed with numerous grandchildren.

AZA Advisor **MORRIS SWITZER** (1924–1993) was the son of Charlie and Ida. He attended Crescent Heights High School and served for three years as a bombardier in the RCAF. Morris and his wife, Alice Ostrovsky (d. 2004), had two children, Patti and Sandy. Morris was an electrician who worked for Calgary District Hospitals until retiring at 62. An avid golfer who loved dancing, especially with Alice, he was very active in B'nai Brith. His co-advisor Bill Dean was "kind of adopted" and lived with Morris' parents after WWII. Affectionately known as Zaidie, Moishe was a great big kid at heart who loved to play with his grandchildren, loved Saturday morning cartoons, cookies and milk before bedtime.

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Vigour, Pride, and Swagger Too

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Born in Calgary in 1944 to Max and Bessie, **DAVID EISENSTADT** was in the final graduating class of UAC (1966) and as *The Gauntlet* sports editor "reported to" Maurice Yacowar. He earned a graduate degree in Journalism from Ottawa's Carleton University in 1967. After stints at the Canadian Film Institute, IBM Canada Ltd., and ad agency Goodis, Goldberg Soren, he founded The Communications Group Inc. (tcgpr) in 1973. He is one of the first Canadians named A Fellow of the Public Relations Society of America and in 2017 he was awarded the Canadian Public Relations Society Shield of Public Service. He was named a Member of the Order of the U of C in 1997 for his service on the Senate and with Alumni in Toronto. He is married to Rhoda Coppersmith of Ottawa. They have two sons and are proud grandparents.

PETER BLITT (d. 1997), son of Anne and Leo Blitt, graduated with a degree in Economics from Boulder University in Colorado. Moving to Ottawa, he held various positions with the Federal Government, with an emphasis on the oil patch. He had two daughters.

KENNETH ALLEN HECTOR (1942–1964) was the son of Morris and Hylda. He was the adoptive "brother" to war orphan Oscar Kirshner while he lived with the family for two years after 1948. Ken was tragically killed in a car accident while studying at the University of Denver, Colorado. He is buried in Calgary.

ELLIOT GELFAND, son of Barney and Sunny, was born in 1942. He graduated from University of Alberta 1965 as an MD. and continued his training in Cardiovascular & Thoracic Surgery at Marquette University, Milwaukee 1966–72. He practiced cardiac surgery in Montreal before going to the University of Alberta Hospital, Edmonton, in 1974, where he served as Chief of the department, 1986–91 and retired in 2007. He married Dena Tabachnick and has three children and numerous grandchildren.

HARVEY SHAPIRO, born to Joe and Rose in 1943, left Calgary to attend University of British Columbia and the University of Alberta in Edmonton. Harvey returned to Calgary to help manage his dad's iconic Calgary Shoe Hospital. He later moved to California. He had a 35-year career in the optical business. Harvey has three children and three grandchildren.

ALLEN ZYSBLAT, son of Zeishe and Rose, graduated from the University of Alberta in 1963 with a BA in Economics. He completed advanced law degrees at UBC and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Allen was an Associate Professor of Law at UBC from 1971–76 when he moved with his family to Israel. From 1976 until retirement in 2003, he was Senior Director of Legislation at the Israel Ministry of Justice. He was Adjunct Professor of Law at the Hebrew University and was on the executive of the Israel Association of Canadian Studies. Allen and his wife Linda Feldstein have three children and grandchildren.

LEONARD (LENNY) EDWARD MARKS (1942–2001) was the son of David and Rose. He moved to Vancouver in the early 1960s to pursue a pharmacy degree at UBC, graduating in 1965. He worked as a pharmacist at London Drugs in their Main St. store and then built his own pharmacies, Langara Pharmacy and Marks Plaza Pharmacy, on Vancouver's west side. His wife Barbara Shuler died tragically in 1974 leaving behind two daughters. Lenny returned to London Drugs and for many years served as senior vice-president and a director. Despite significant limitations because of his lifelong battle with scleroderma, Lenny continued to work until 1999. His success was marked by his appointment in 1997 as Board Chairman of the Canadian Association of Chain Drug Stores, and he received many industry and community awards. Lenny was actively involved in charitable causes including the Arthritis Society where he was on the board of directors and was later appointed an honorary member. He was married to Carol Aronin in 1977.

We always look forward to learning more about the history of our community members. If you have information about your experiences in Calgary community organizations, please contact us at jhssa@shaw.ca or 403-444-3171.

Order of Canada Updates

Brent Belzberg, C.M.

Brent was appointed a Member to the Order of Canada in December 2018 "for his contributions to Canada's economic and social landscape as a business leader and philanthropist." He is following the example set by his mother, Jenny, who was similarly honoured in 1996 (invested 1997). Brent grew up in Calgary and earned his degrees at Queen's University and the University of Toronto. He is founder and senior managing partner at TorQuest Partners. He has served Mount Sinai Hospital as a volunteer for over 25 years and is chair of the board of directors of Sinai Health Systems. He has been involved in numerous Jewish community organizations in Toronto. Brent and his spouse, Lynn, chaired the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada Gala in 2018. They have three children.



The Honourable Ronald D. Ghitter, C.M.

Ron Ghitter was awarded the Order of Canada in May 2018 and was invested as a Member on May 8, 2019. He is recognized for "... promoting Canadian values. A lawyer and politician, he introduced Alberta's first human rights legislation and co-founded the Dignity Foundation to promote tolerance and understanding in his province. He continued his efforts to advance social justice as a founding director of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development and, later on, as a senator. His civic-mindedness has improved the well-being of his community, particularly in the areas of youth development, education, the eradication of family violence and the promotion of healthy living."



A Documentary History of the Jewish Community of Medicine Hat

By R. Kerr

The first known Jewish residents in the area were Isidor Feldman and family, who began homesteading south of the current city in the early 1880s, and Inky Finkelstein, a cattle dealer with the federal government through the 1880s–1890s. By the turn of the century the first permanent residents had arrived, including Harry and Jenny Lewis, Josef and Rachel Friedman, and Max and Esther Conn, as well as the Silvers, Grands, Schecters, Tuckers and Plotkins.

From its earliest days, the community drew people from farms and towns throughout southeastern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan, including Hilda, Fox Valley, Hatton, Oyen, Lemsford, Redcliff, Suffield and Maple Creek. The Sons of Abraham Congregation was established in 1912, with services conducted in various homes or rented halls. A Torah scroll was purchased by a group of several of the community's patriarchs, and religious leadership and education was provided by a succession of rabbis and lay leaders, including Rev. H Kopelovitz (c1922–1926). Ben Grand, from Maple Creek, sometimes provided cantorial services. The Lewis family donated land on their farm at Finn's Lake, north of the city, to be used as a cemetery, with these early graves later being moved to the Hebrew Section of Medicine Hat's Hillside Cemetery.

Although in 1929 the congregation made an offer of \$500 to purchase some city property on Third Street in order to build a synagogue, it wasn't until some years later that the Hebrew Ladies Aid spearheaded the purchase of a former garage on Fifth Street SE. Renovations to the building began, and the Sons of Abraham synagogue building opened in 1936. Among its adornments was a wooden *magen david* (Star of David), almost a foot in diameter, made by Max Conn. The synagogue served as a social hall and a gathering place for the community, which by then included upwards of 40 families. Additional renovations occurred over the next decade to keep up with the continued growth of the congregation, and the building was (re) dedicated in 1955.

In addition to the Ladies Aid, the Jewish women of Medicine Hat supported the Lillian Freiman Chapter of Hadassah, which had been established in 1940 under the leadership of Sophie Lesk and Fanny Veiner. The chapter was still active through the 1990s, with ten Life Members continuing to raise funds through the sale of cards and an annual tea. Medicine Hat B'nai Brith Lodge #1506, which had 36 men listed

on its 1942 charter, was a regular recipient of awards bestowed by the National B'nai Brith organization, particularly for membership retention and "In recognition ... of life-giving support to the agencies of B'nai Brith ...," specifically including "youth agencies." Community members were affiliated with larger Jewish initiatives such as State of Israel Bonds and Jewish National Fund, and they also participated in the wider Medicine Hat community. Leo and Bee Lewis, for example, along with his aunt Sophie Lesk, were instrumental in the establishment of the Medicine Hat branch of the Victorian Order of Nurses. Other wider involvement included the political arena, notably Sam Stone, who served as city alderman, and Harry Veiner, who was the city's mayor for a total of 20 years.

The Medicine Hat Jewish community peaked at almost 60 families in the mid-1950s. By the late 1990s, however, it had dwindled to only a handful of active members, and the synagogue building was put up for sale. Bee Lewis, daughter-in-law of community founder Harry Lewis, arranged for the Sons of Abraham's first Torah scroll to be "lent" to Calgary's Temple B'nai Tikvah; another scroll found a new home with a congregation in California (see page 6).

The JHSSA Medicine Hat Jewish Community fonds consists of 4.5 cm of textual records and six objects, including brief community histories, cookbooks compiled and printed by the Medicine Hat Hadassah Lillian Freiman Chapter, B'nai Brith certificates and plaques, and two wooden display items from the Medicine Hat Sons of Abraham synagogue building—the *magen david* made by Max Conn in 1936, and a plaque of the Ten Commandments, given to the Sons of Abraham Congregation by the Lewis family, "In Loving Memory of Harry Isaac Lewis."



Medicine Hat Hebrew School, c.1954. The families represented in this photo include Bellas, Block, Conn, Freedman, Gibbs, Kohn, Lesk, Levinson, Lewis, Lupa, Maltin, Prasow, Raber, Rosenblatt, Shindelman, Shore, Spivak and Stone. Rabbi Louis Gold is in the back row, 5th from the left. JHSSA #428

The Story of a Medicine Hat Torah

by R. Kerr

While doing research into the history of the Jewish community of Medicine Hat, we came across a poorly-copied newspaper article that had been faxed to the office over 10 years ago. Under the headline "Family Connection brings Canadian Torah to Santa Cruz," only the top few lines of each of the several columns were legible. The first sentence said, "In the small Alberta city of Medicine Hat, the Jewish community has died down to less than a minyan." and the top of the next column mentioned a "Conservative Congregation Kol Tefillah in Santa Cruz." We were able to locate and contact that congregation and are pleased to share the story of one of the Medicine Hat Torah scrolls.

The Sons of Abraham congregation had been established in 1912 and used a Torah scroll that had been collectively purchased by several of the community's earliest members. Max and Esther Conn were among the founding families, and when a synagogue building was finally purchased in 1936 Max made a wooden Star of David to adorn the building. The following year, Max and Esther commissioned a new Torah scroll from a scribe in Winnipeg.

The ivory-crowned scroll was used by the Sons of Abraham for over 60 years. But the Jewish population of Medicine Hat, which had begun dwindling in the mid-1960s, eventually reached a point where there was no longer a viable congregation. The synagogue building was put up for sale, and most of its belongings were disbursed. News of the synagogue's closure reached Miriam (Raber) Fishman, granddaughter of Max and Esther Conn. Fishman was a founding member of a young Conservative congregation in Santa Cruz, California, which had been saving money to purchase its own Torah scroll. She began negotiations on behalf of her congregation; in January 2000, her uncle Manny Raber, one of the stalwarts of the Medicine Hat community, flew the scroll to its new home in Santa Cruz.

The scroll continues to be used regularly by Congregation Kol Tefillah. An email received from the congregation states, "We love it and we call it the Medicine Hat Torah." An article written soon after the Torah's California dedication ceremony quotes Fishman as saying, "That somebody from our family is there to witness [the Torah's use] almost every Shabbat really gives us great joy."



The Torah scroll from Medicine Hat. Photo courtesy of Congregation Kol Tefillah, Santa Cruz.

Discovering a Family Who Served: The Schecters of Medicine Hat

by R. Kerr

We continue to develop the JHSSA Jewish War Veterans of World War I & II Database. The ongoing work is focused both on uncovering new veterans and on expanding the records of veterans already known to us. We have now identified 45 southern Alberta men who served in the First World War and are aware of three more for whom we have only a surname. Our World War II veterans number in the high 400s, including 18 women.

The process of researching our veterans is occasionally a straightforward effort. In some cases, JHSSA files already contain a wealth of information, perhaps gleaned from an oral history or other family records. For other individuals, a simple computer search can sometimes provide a surprising number of leads. And as readers of these pages might remember, the military records of veterans who died more than 20 years ago can be freely requested from Library and Archives Canada.

But for every individual that we can search directly and successfully, there are many to whom the path is more circuitous. JHSSA embarked on a perfect example of all these possibilities after consideration of an oral history of former-Medicine Hat resident Esther Raber, herself a veteran of the RCAF Women's Division. We already knew of Esther's service, as well as that of her sister Molly who served as a nurse in the American Army. In addition, their brother Manny was with the RCAF, and his memoir, *Manny Goes to War*, provides a wealth of detail regarding his military service. But what intrigued us was that in Esther's history, she mentions another pair of Medicine Hat sisters who had also enlisted, Esther and Rose Schechter. A computer search soon led to ancestry.com records for both Schechter sisters, and the uniform Esther is wearing in the photo accompanying her entry seems to be that of the Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWAC). Rose's ancestry.com entry also includes a military portrait, in a uniform that looked to be RCAF.

The 2004 obituary for Esther lists the first names of all her siblings: Tom, Rose, Anne, Abe and Joe. These names allowed us to confirm that a previously-noted 1921 Canada Census entry for a southern Alberta "Schechter" family—including Annie, Thomas, Abe, Rosie and Joseph—did, in fact, document the family we were looking for, simply misspelled. Having confirmation of the census record was important as it gave us birthdates for all the Schechter children, several of whom—besides Esther and Rose—would have been the right age to enlist. Our hunch regarding their military participation was eventually confirmed when our research turned up various *Medicine Hat News* articles from the 1940s that mentioned the service of brothers Tom and Joe.

We located obituaries for both brothers (Joe in 1994, Tom in 2007) and were pleased to realize that they included a few details about their respective military service. We were even more pleased, however, to realize that Joe's obituary provided something invaluable to us: Rose's married name. The main challenge with researching the lives and service of female veterans is that their military records, which are usually under their maiden names, can't be requested

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We Get Questions: The Journey of a Painting

This spring JHSSA received an inquiry from Gil Braverman about some paintings in his family collection. One depicts a Holocaust scene and the other is probably of Queen Esther pleading before the King. Gil included photos of the works, with a close-up of the artist's signature—S. Heilik—in English and Hebrew. He had reached out to JHSSA because he had come across an article about another painting by Shimshon Heilik, published in the May 2006 issue of *Discovery*. Based on the style of the artwork and the signature, we could confidently confirm that the painting was indeed by Calgary's Shimshon Heilik (1917-2005). Gil was interested in donating the paintings, perhaps for exhibition. With permission, we forwarded his email to the Heilik family. They have kindly informed us of the happy outcome of the story.



We learned that the paintings were purchased in Mexico directly from Mr. Heilik, who often made trips there to exhibit and sell his work. Gil had grown up with the artwork in his Mexico home prior to moving to Israel 20 years ago, and as a child had always been afraid of the Holocaust scene. Following his mother's death, the paintings came to him in Israel. He attempted to donate the artworks to a number of organizations, with no success. Since one painting was about the Holocaust, he approached Yad VaShem and the United

States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM). Although the art did not fall into their collection mandate of artwork created during the Holocaust, the staff at USHMM researched the artist and came across our *Discovery* article, and so the connection to JHSSA was made. Gil was contacted by the Heilik family. Since then, the works have been returned to Shimshon Heilik's daughter in Israel. She is very appreciative of the efforts made to find a fitting home for the artwork. It now has a proud place in her home. We are delighted that JHSSA has had a role in the history of Mr. Heilik's work and that his art has made a full circle, back to his family.

Discovering a Family *Continued from Page 6*

without proof of death, which is usually under a married name. Esther Schecter's obituary mentioned all of her relevant names ("Esther "Penny" Harbridge, nee Schecter"), so requesting her LAC records will be a straightforward matter once the required time has elapsed. But when Rose (Schecter) Forester died in 2008, her maiden name was not included in her obituary. Although it will be almost another decade before her records can be requested from LAC, we are grateful for the zigzagging path that led us to her. Without that, our knowledge of the details of her service would likely forever remain "a uniform that looked to be RCAF."

"Manny Goes to War" as well as further information about our veterans can be found in the JHSSA library and files.

Thank You to our LIFE & LEGACY™ Donors

JHSSA gratefully thanks our legacy donors to date:

- Marni Besser
- Milt and Maxine Fischbein
- Ron and Barb Krell
- Elaine and Stuart Myron
- Betty A. Sherwood
- Shauna L. Switzer



Help ensure the future of the JHSSA with a gift in your will, trust, retirement account or life insurance policy. Contact our office at jhssa@shaw.ca or through jhssa.org or call 403-444-3171.

JHSSA NEWS

Thank You to our Casino Volunteers

The efforts of our Casino chair, Mel Ksienski, and all our dedicated casino volunteers are much appreciated.

JHSSA Purim Moustache Contest Winners

Of the 42 ballots cast for the winning moustache photo, Marcel Segal's moustache was voted the winner. The winner of our random draw is the proud owner of a lovely, moustachioed mug. The display even drew some comments. "I was delighted to see my Zaida Moshe David Sheftel's picture displaying his great Moustache!!", "Thank you for all the creative presentations of our wonderful community!"



Montefiore Institute Celebrates 10 Years at Heritage Park Sunday afternoon, June 23, 2019

The public is invited to the celebrations marking a decade since the Montefiore Institute, the Little Synagogue on the Prairie, was opened as a living heritage site at Heritage Park. Events will include performances by Paul Finkleman and the JCC Klezmer Band. Park fees apply. Check heritagepark.ca for special programs throughout the summer.

President's Message

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like to acknowledge Robbie Babins-Wagner and Cynthia Prasow, who recently were named to the Order of the University of Calgary.

The past few months we have been involved in training as part of the LIFE & LEGACY™ program, a collaboration between Calgary Jewish Federation and the Jewish Community Foundation of Calgary and nine other community organizations, to promote after-life-time giving to ensure the vibrancy of our Jewish community into the future. I am truly grateful to Dorothy Hanson and Laura Shuler for all their work as part of the JHSSA LIFE & LEGACY team. We hope that you will consider supporting JHSSA with a legacy gift through your will or estate planning.

As the weather starts to warm up, the JHSSA turns its attention to Historic Calgary Week. This year we are pleased to sponsor Zelda Dean's presentation on Jewish community theatre in Calgary. We also invite you to a reception with Zelda, hosted by JHSSA and Beth Tzedec Congregation, on **Thursday, August 1 at 7:00 pm**. We hope former (and current) thespians will share stories and artifacts from their participation in the Beth Israel Players. w

As always, thank you so much for your yearly support of the JHSSA. I wish you a wonderful summer and hope to see you this fall at our AGM which will feature stories collected through our Alberta Historical Resources Foundation funded *Voices of Experience* Oral History project. We very much appreciate the work of Judy Shapiro in spearheading this project and all the volunteer hours from our interviewers, interviewees, and transcribers.

Membership Corrections and Additions

Updates to our list from our previous issue: Sustainer: Arlein Chetner; Patron: Norm & Rosslyn Steinberg; Member: Judy Chetner, Louise Glin, Roberta Kerr.

YES, I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

- Sustainer – \$250 Family/Corporate/Institutions – \$45
 Benefactor – \$125 Individual – \$25
 Patron – \$75

Please make cheques payable to:

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1607 - 90 Avenue SW, Calgary, AB T2V 4V7

Membership payable by credit card through our office or through www.jhssa.org

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JHSSA membership year is from September to August

Do not send cash through the mail

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-Presidents: **Barry Finkelman, Laura Shuler**

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