



DISCOVERY

The Journal of the

תגלית

JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY of Southern Alberta

VOLUME 31, NUMBER 2

FALL 2021

JHSSA 31st Annual General Meeting

“Jews of Silence”

50-year anniversary of the Calgary campaign supporting freedom for Soviet Jews

Monday, October 25, 2021, 7:00 pm on Zoom

The year 1971 was a very unusual one for Jewish life in Calgary. Numerous regular events and fundraisers were cancelled in order to shift the focus to the campaign to free Soviet Jews. During the Cold War period, Jews who expressed their desire to leave the Soviet Union were punished with job loss, imprisonment and other economic and social sanctions. Please join us 50 years later for a retrospective of our community's engagement in this international social justice movement.

As always, the AGM will also include our financial report, board elections, and the presentation of certificates in recognition of those in our community who have celebrated their 80th birthday in the past year. Please contact our office if you know of someone who has become an octogenarian since our last AGM.



Prisoner of Conscience bracelet.

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President's Message

By Sandra Lipton



While COVID has presented many challenges to our organization, a silver lining has been an increase in people's availability and the simplicity with which people in different cities can gather over Zoom. During February and March, the board devoted four Sunday afternoons to work on strategic planning. Out of that effort we accomplished much—a revised mandate, an articulated vision statement and a good start on a strategic plan. JHSSA is most grateful to Heather Nickel, Community Development Officer, for all her work in facilitating these online sessions and to the Alberta Government's Culture and Tourism Community Development Unit for providing Heather's services as a free resource. I am very much appreciative of the board's support and dedication to this ongoing process and especially want to thank our second vice-president Barry Finkelman for all his efforts in crafting the results of our planning sessions into a draft strategic plan.

This draft document has served as a basis for committee goal setting, and will undergo further review at our monthly board meetings. The planning process has codified our core functions and identified clear objectives to be accomplished. A number of objectives, such as digitizing all back issues of *Discovery*, are already in progress thanks to volunteer efforts. Other more costly goals, such as a library catalogue update, the creation of a digitization plan, and an overhaul of our photograph collection, require donor or grant support.

One of our goals is to publish at least two issues of our journal *Discovery* each year. The extended suspension of Casinos, upon which we depend for almost 50% of our budget, has required significant reduction to our publications budget. We are most grateful to Calgary Jewish Federation's Jewish Together Fund for funding this issue of *Discovery*. This financial support will allow us to publish a second issue of *Discovery* in Spring 2022. We recently received word that we will be scheduled for a casino in the first quarter of 2022.

The JHSSA is also most appreciative of all of our LIFE & LEGACY donors who are not only ensuring future support for our organization, but have also qualified us for current financial assistance. I am pleased to announce that in year two of this legacy-giving programme we received a \$7,750 bonus grant, a much-needed supplement to our budget, especially in light of the lengthy delay in casino funding. If you are not yet a participant in this programme, please consider including JHSSA in your legacy planning.

The JHSSA is so grateful to our dedicated staff, supporters and

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THIS ISSUE HAS BEEN GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY CALGARY JEWISH FEDERATION'S JEWISH TOGETHER FUND

Community Milestones 1921 and 1971

by Agi Romer Segal

The information for this community history was derived from the collections of the JHSSA. If you have any further information regarding these or other events from 100 or 50 years ago, please contact our office.

1921

Perhaps the most exciting community event reported in 1921 was one that did not actually happen. On June 1, a *Calgary Daily Herald* headline read "Jewish Flag to Fly over City Hall." The article announced the upcoming visit of "Prof. Chaim Weizman [sic], head of the World Zionist Organization and the inventor of TNT". He was to receive a civic reception followed by a luncheon at the Canadian Club. The article noted, "that the Zionist flag exists will be a surprise to many people." Weizmann did visit North America that year, but it seems the visit to Calgary did not take place. While it must have been a great disappointment to the local Jews, the article is indicative of the growing impetus of the Zionist movement.

By 1921, Calgary's Jewish population of over 1200 reflected a 97% increase from the 1911 census. The Lethbridge community had grown to 108 and there were 77 Jews in Medicine Hat. While much of this growth was due to immigration, there was also movement within Alberta. Two notable examples are the arrivals of the Waterman and the Goldberg families in Calgary that year. Both families greatly enriched our community, and both proved themselves committed to the Zionist cause.

The Charles Waterman family moved from Trochu and subsequently was vital to the development of community organizations, especially of the Calgary Hebrew School. The Goldbergs had moved to Edmonton from Minnesota and arrived in Calgary in 1921 with daughters Mozah and Muriel. They all became community leaders.

Marcia Goldberg made her mark immediately with the formation of Calgary's first Hadassah chapter that year. Rose Rabinovitz (later Mrs. S. Jaffe) served as chapter president for the first four years.



Palace Theatre, 1920s. Glenbow NA-11781

Marcia was the first secretary. She went on to become part of the organization's national leadership. Other members of the first board were Gertie Markus and Sara Shnitka. Local Hadassah WIZO grew to more than ten chapters over the decades.

Another Calgarian who made his mark in 1921 was David Pasternack (1903-1974). His father, Israel, was a local tailor and David, who had lost a leg at the age of four, had been a newsboy from a young age. This is what drew the attention of the local press, which reported in September of 1921 that David had saved his earnings to attend Queen's University for chemical engineering. After completing high school, he had earned a teaching certificate and had taught at Rumsey. Pasternack graduated in 1925 and went on to obtain advanced degrees at McGill. He eventually settled in Edmonton and his research led to innovations in the oil and gas industry.

Calgary's city centre was enhanced in 1921 with the opening of the Palace Theatre at 219 8th Avenue SW. It has been described as the largest and grandest of the Allen chain of theatres. It was an elegant Neoclassical building with a luxurious interior that originally seated 1,950. The official opening on October 25 featured both the Lieutenant-Governor and the Mayor. It is famous for hosting William Aberhart's "Back to the Bible" broadcasts, starting in 1925. Primarily for cinema, it was also a venue for community events. The building closed as a cinema in 1990 and has gone through many incarnations. The Palace was declared a national historic site in 1996.

1971

Local efforts on behalf of Soviet Jewry got a boost at a Public Information Rally on January 7, 1971. The event at Western Canada High School was co-sponsored by the Western Region of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews and the Calgary Jewish Community Council (CJCC). The *Calgary Jewish News* reported that 500 were in attendance. Dignitaries included numerous clergy and government representatives. A joint statement was forwarded to the Prime Minister's Office and to the government offices of the

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Goldberg Family, 1921. #724

Community Milestones 1921 and 1971

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U.S.S.R demanding to "... halt the continuous and growing acts of anti-semitism [sic] against Jews, and discrimination against all minority groups throughout the world." The momentum continued in October with a Soviet Jewry Caravan of 40 cars, holding 150 people, driving to Edmonton to protest the policies of the Soviet Union.

Calgary Jewish Community Council and the United Jewish Appeal committee took an unprecedented step in 1971, calling for a moratorium on fundraising for all constituent local organizations. All leaders agreed to cancel or postpone their major events of the year. The UJA campaign slogan was "Survival means Sacrifice." Funds were needed for humanitarian needs in Israel. To support the UJA campaign and to express appreciation for local efforts, Israeli deputy Prime Minister Yigal Allon visited Calgary in April. The Jewish National Fund Negev dinner and the Histadrut event were cancelled. The Hadassah Bazaar did take place in April since most of the funds raised came from outside the Jewish community. The National Council of Jewish Women's Angels' Ball, themed "Un Ball de Musique", was pushed back to October. Hadassah's Youth Aliyah event, *Bye Bye Bubeleh*, was produced and directed by Joe Brager and Miriam Creemer and presented in November. The community was also entertained by the Beth Israel Players' productions of *Teveye and his Daughters* in March, and *Have Mezuzzah Will Travel* in November.

There were two significant developments in the Jewish community's infrastructure. The Calgary Community Mikvah opened in the Calgary Hebrew School basement. It was financed by the CJCC and spearheaded by its Religious Affairs committee, led by Barney Gelfand. In October, zoning approval was given for a Jewish centre and senior adults' residence to be built at the 90th Avenue site. Construction began in 1978.

Descendants of three long-time Calgary Jewish shopkeepers marked milestones in 1971, and their achievements made local headlines.

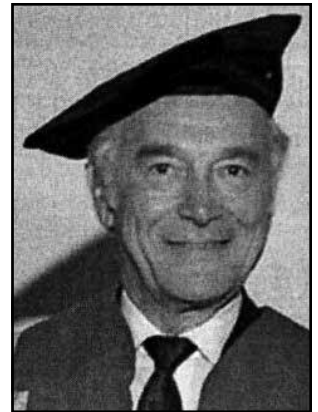
Jacob and Etta Safran arrived in Calgary in 1911. Jacob had spent 1903-1905 in Palestine and continued his support of Zionist activity here. He eventually purchased the Little Gem Confectionery. Their two sons, Nate (1914-1964) and Carl (1917-2005) grew to be community leaders. In 1971, Carl Safran was named designate Chief Superintendent of Calgary Public Schools and took up the post the following year. By that date he had served with the Royal Canadian Engineers and had earned advanced degrees in education. He had been a counsellor, consultant, published author, and Alberta's first school psychologist. In 1964 he was named superintendent of special educational services for the school board. Within the Jewish community, Carl Safran was active in Young Judeaea, the Calgary Hebrew School and the Sharon Zionist Club. In a 1971 interview for the *Calgary Herald*, he explained his goals. "We must take what kids think is important and recognize what society thinks is right, to create a changed emphasis in school curricula." In 1972 the school board renamed the historic 1908 Calgary Collegiate Institute building on 13th Avenue the Carl Safran Special Class School. Carl Safran was awarded an honorary degree by the University of Calgary in 1978.

William Epstein (1912-2005) was the second child of Harry and Marcia Epstein who had settled in Calgary in 1910. Harry ran the Grand Cigar store. William was a rising star in the community as

a leader of the Jewish youth, especially in Zionist circles. He graduated with a degree in law from the University of Alberta in 1935 and continued his studies in England. During World War II, he served in the Canadian army there and was a legal officer. He joined the staff of the United Nations at its start in 1945. In 1948, he was with the UN mediator staff in Palestine. JHSSA files contain a photocopy of a thank you letter to Epstein from Chaim Weizmann dated 1949, on the first anniversary of the creation of the Jewish state. Epstein became director of the UN's Disarmament Division in 1950 and much of his career was devoted to that field.

In 1971 William Epstein became the University of Calgary's first recipient of an honorary doctor of law degree. In his official address to the graduates, Epstein stated, "Your generation may not have all or many of the right answers. But you were and are asking the right questions ... Science and technology will on one hand continue to offer great gifts while on the other continue to threaten to strangle the life out of you." William Epstein was invested as an Officer of the Order of Canada (O.C.) in 1990. He died in New York in 2001.

Ron Gitter was born in Calgary in 1935. His grandfather, Morris Gitter, had opened a menswear store soon after the family's arrival in the early 1900s. Louis and Etta Gitter left Calgary when Ron was a child and he was raised in Edmonton. The family later moved back to Calgary. Ron established his law practice here. In 1971 he was elected Conservative MLA for Calgary Buffalo and served until 1978. Gitter sponsored the Individual Rights and Protections Act in 1972 and chaired the Minister of Education's Consultative Committee on Tolerance and Understanding in 1980-81. He went on to become the first Jewish Calgarian to be appointed Alberta senator (1993-2000). He was the honouree of the 1995 JNF Negev dinner. Gitter received an honorary degree from the University of Calgary in 2001. Gitter's life-long love of tennis led him to launch a campaign to build a tennis complex as a way of giving back to his hometown. The Osten and Victor Alberta Tennis Centre opened in 2016. He was invested as a Member of the Order of Canada (C.M.) in 2019.



William Epstein, May 1971

Call for Information

JHSSA is planning a program in honour of our late board member and resident history buff, Manny Cohen. The program will touch on areas of local Jewish history that Manny held close to his heart, interspersed with stories from people who knew him in the many different facets of his life. Please contact the JHSSA office if you can share any memories, photos or video of Manny.

Memories of the House of Israel Building

By Judy Shapiro

Shortly after I moved back to Calgary in 1990 after a 22-year absence, I heard that the sale of the House of Israel building on 18th Avenue was soon to be finalized. I was devastated. That beautiful white building, with its sweeping front steps and the proud Magen David on its façade, had been a centre of Jewish life in Calgary since 1930. I have wonderful memories of that building—and I'm sure I'm not the only Calgarian who remembers learning, worshipping, playing, and celebrating there.

The House of Israel building had a slow and painful birth. The leaders of the community in the mid-1920s had a grand plan for what was meant to be the largest and most modern Jewish Centre of its kind in Canada, housing synagogues, schools, charitable organizations, a library, a gymnasium—everything a thriving Jewish community could ask for and more. Six lots along Centre Street, stretching from 17th Avenue to 18th Avenue were purchased for the princely sum of \$7,600, and construction began in 1929. But alas, the Depression cast a shadow on the grandiose plan, fund-raising faltered and only the basement of the building was completed and open for use in 1930. Even so, the building housed a school, a synagogue (Beth Israel), and community organizations including B'nai Brith, National Council of Jewish Women and Hadassah, as well as the office of what later became Calgary Jewish Community Council.

The community continued to struggle to raise the necessary funds to complete construction and finally, after 20 years of effort, the House of Israel building was finished in 1949, at a total cost of around \$200,000.

My dad, Archie Shapiro, was one of the many students who went to Talmud Torah (as it was called then) in the basement of the building. But by the time I entered kindergarten in 1955, the building was in its glory.

My memories of my first years at school are sketchy. But I remember sitting in little one-piece desks, with wooden tops that opened up to a drawer below for our scribblers and books. And there was a hole in the corner for the ink well we no longer used.

I remember the beautiful auditorium with its polished hardwood floors. The stage was large, more than enough room for the Chanukah concerts and Purim *shpiels* we staged there. I remember teachers and volunteers helping us put on our candle crowns at Chanukah and beards for the boys on Purim.

I remember there was a very large room in the basement which was where we had gym, and where we were fed hot lunches, especially latkes at Chanukah. There was a huge industrial kitchen, with two sides for *milchik* and *fleishik*, and I remember the community's caterers, Mrs. Jacobson and Mrs. Manusewicz, bustling around that kitchen, cooking large

communal meals. I don't know why I have that memory because I certainly wasn't invited to the Gentlemen's or Negev Dinners of the day, but I do remember the prep that went into those gala events.

I remember that there wasn't much playground space, so we used to play soccer in the front yard of the building. Once I kicked the ball all the way across the street into the yard of St. Mary's, the Catholic School. We were afraid to go get the ball and trespass on a different religious institution.

The new Talmud Torah, or Calgary Hebrew School (Calgary Jewish Academy as it is called today) was built in 1959 and the music of children's voices no longer filled the halls of House of Israel on a daily basis.

But that was not the end of my romance with the building. I was in Young Judaea (YJ) and we were assigned a room in the basement for our *mo'adon* (club house). The community building was our building; our home, our hang-out. We had regular meetings there (as did BBYO) and every Sunday we led programs for the little kids. Wearing our blue and white *anivot* (neckerchiefs), we taught Israeli dancing, sang Israeli songs, organized crafts and games and talked about Zionism.

I have no idea what he was thinking, but then-executive director Harry Shatz gave a key to the building to the *rosh* (president) of YJ. Who would entrust a community asset to a bunch of teenagers? Well, Harry did and I thank him for that. Because I was the *rosh*, and I had the key, my friends and I hung out there. It was a safe place to do what kids do.

We explored the building from top to tail. We found the small attics above the wings of the stage that still held some costumes and some books. We found the locked room where Hadassah stored donations for the annual Bazaar. We explored the kitchen where the pink and blue dishes were still kept (blue for *milchik*, pink for *fleishik*). I loved that building. I loved being there. I loved the freedom. I loved that rebellious youth were trusted enough to have a key.

I went to university in Jerusalem in 1968 and didn't return to Calgary until 1990. In my absence, the current JCC was built in 1979,

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Young Judaea Convention 1947. L-R Jack Austin, Naomi Barenholtz, ?, Izzie Gleaner, Charlie Finkelman, Saul Estrin, ?. #2338

The Four Documents Necessary for a Jewish Wedding in Calgary in 1912

By Heather Shapero

"Matchmaker, matchmaker, make me a match. Find me a find. Catch me a catch. Matchmaker, matchmaker, look through your book and make me a perfect match."

It was 1911 and Calgary's Jewish population had been growing since the first couple, Rachel and Jacob Diamond, settled in 1889. With a population of 600 souls, many families eventually made the city their destination after leaving the Pale of the Settlement.

One such family was that of Tzvi Hirsch Sossinky and his wife Etta Sair. They had settled in Calgary in 1905, where Hirsch was the Cantor of Calgary's first shul, Congregation House of Jacob, for several years and then later owned a grocery store.

Another such family were members of the Margolis clan, 8 siblings out of a total of 10 who went originally to Minneapolis, Minnesota. Following the lead of the oldest sibling, Harry Margolis, they moved north to the blossoming city of Calgary and worked in various businesses—from pawn shop to photography studio to delicatessen to second hand furniture. The family surnames in addition to Margolis were Chazin, Carnat and Lerman. One of the siblings was Bernard Dov-Ber Margolis.

In 1911 a young single girl by the name of Sarah Sossinsky, decided to join her older brother Tzvi Hirsch Sossinsky in Calgary. She had immigrated initially to Toronto to be with two other brothers there. But at the age of 20 she decided to move to Calgary and moved in with Hirsch and Etta at 328 4th Avenue East.

Being a small Jewish community, many of course knew each other. It was almost inevitable that Sarah's sister-in-law Etta, together with Bernard's sister-in-law, decided to introduce the two eligible singles. The matchmaking worked and the young couple, Sarah, 21, and Bernard, 25, decided to get married on Sunday, July 28, 1912 at Sibley's Hall, 333 4th Avenue East. But it was not a simple process. No fewer than four different official documents had to be applied for and secured before the wedding could take place. Fortunately, the family kept the original documents, which, over 100 years later, clearly illustrate the process.

The first step was the religious engagement ceremony. The cen-

trepiece of this celebration was the signing of the *tna'im*, the pre-nuptial agreement. This was a legally binding pledge of marriage, and took place on the 20th of Nissan 5672, which corresponds to Sunday April 7, 1912, three months before the wedding. The document was signed on a beautiful printed form, typical of those used in that period, that depicted the future home of the couple. Unfortunately, one section of the document failed to survive the many moves the couple ended up making during their lives. But enough is visible to imagine the whole. The roof of the home is supported by sturdy pillars, has floral and leaf motifs at the top and bottom, and a banner across the top with the words taken from one of the seven blessings given to the bride and groom under the chuppah (wedding canopy): *Kol chattan v'kol kallah*, the voice of the (joyful) groom and bride. Four lines down in the body of the document is the signature of Sarah's brother Cantor Tzvi Hirsch (Sossinsky). At the bottom third there are four signatures—the bride, the groom, one illegible, and finally Yehuda son of Avraham Yitzhak.

Closer to the wedding date, the couple needed to apply for a license as a prerequisite for getting a marriage certificate from the Alberta government. The application for the license asked questions regarding any previous marriages and status of any previous spouses. It also asked about familial ties between the prospective couple, and their ages. In addition, the couple had to declare "that there is no affinity, consanguinity, or any other lawful cause or legal impediment to bar or hinder the solemnization of the said marriage". The license itself, #17100, confirms "... that the requirements ... of the Ordinance respecting Marriages have been complied with." It was signed by the Deputy Provincial Secretary and sealed by issuer D.E. Black. It was dated July 16, 1912, 12 days before the wedding.

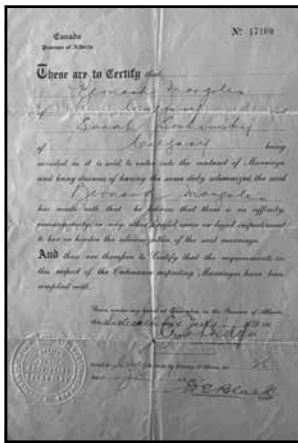
The Province of Alberta issued the third document, the Registration of Marriage, on the day of the wedding, July 28. It was record No. 2281-P, and clearly references the license number and provincial issuer's name. The Registration was signed by officiating clergyman, J. Klegman, and later confirmed by M.C. Bernard, attorney on August 3, 1912.

And finally—the *ketubah*, the Jewish wedding certificate. This piece of very thin paper, folded in four, was found at the bottom of a pile of pictures in an old tin cookie box, where it had lain undisturbed for over 100 years. In keeping with Jewish tradition, the document would have been handed by the officiating Rabbi to the bride for safe keeping. And this bride, Sarah Sossinky, accepted this responsibility and kept the *ketubah* safe, not only for herself but for future generations. It survived subsequent moves to four cities in two countries.

The printed certificate is beautifully adorned. It has quotes from the *sheva brachot*, the seven blessings given to every



Margolis tna'im, April 1912.



Margolis marriage license, July 1912.



Margolis marriage registration, July 1912.

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The Four Documents Necessary for a Jewish Wedding

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Margolis ketubah, 1912.



bride and groom on their wedding day. It has quotes from *Tehillim* (Psalms) and the book of Ruth. It is adorned with pictures of grapes for fruitfulness, and with a lyre for the richness of harmony. The arched quote near the top is a phrase not always seen on a marriage document. It translates as: "May G-d embrace this woman to his house like he did for Rachel and Leah who together built the House of Israel." How powerful and poignant. It is a unique blessing to the bride herself.

Interested readers might like to know that Sarah Sossinsky Margolis and Bernard Margolis were married for 58 years, had three children, and six grandchildren. They lived in several cities—Calgary, Minneapolis, back to Calgary, then Montreal and finally settled in Toronto. Sarah lived to 79 and Bernard to 89. And they left the history of their courtship and wedding protocol for future generations to study, at the bottom of a tin cookie box.

Heather Shapero is one of Sarah and Bernard Margolis's six grandchildren.

Wedding photo, Sarah Sossinsky Margolis and Bernard Margolis, July 1912.

Preserving Documents at Home

All documents suffer from exposure to light, dust and dampness. Photographs and documents should be stored in dark, dry places, placed individually in archival-grade sleeves, like the "sheet protectors" readily available from Staples and other office supply stores—look for the words PVC Free, Acid Free, and Archival Quality on the packaging. While old paper is often stronger and more stable than new—primarily due to higher rag vs wood pulp content—ink and colours fade; paper tears; mold grows. If you have documents that are only slightly dirty or damaged, you may be able to repair them yourself with the gentle use of a white eraser and acid-free document repair tape, sometimes available through scrapbook or art supply stores. If you are reluctant to take the chance, consider consulting a paper conservationist. They can generally provide advice as to the best way to restore—and safely store—your material, and can also be hired to do the required work. This may involve not just cleaning and repairing the documents, but also using specialized materials in order to provide support for fragile items.

Keep in mind that there is one simple step everyone can take to prevent the loss of their treasures: ensure that someone else has copies. While we often take pride in having the only one of something, as anyone who has lost everything will tell you, an intact copy is absolutely better than an unsalvageable original.

Regarding the kind of events that often result in damage to our personal belongings, most of them, at some point, involve water damage. Information regarding the salvage of documents and other belongings that have suffered such damage can be found in the Fall 2014 issue of *Discovery*.

JHSSA NEWS

She Also Served: Jewish Women from Southern Alberta in the Canadian Armed Forces of the Second World War Tuesday, November 16, 2021, 7:00 pm (event to be confirmed)

Please join us for this presentation by Sandra Lipton on her research for the "She Also Served" art exhibit at The Military Museums in Calgary. Over 260 Jewish women eagerly volunteered for the Canadian armed forces of the Second World War. Coming from a wide variety of backgrounds, these women proudly served within Canada and overseas in a diverse range of functions from secretaries, to coders and classifiers, to military police officers. Sandra's presentation will highlight the little-known stories of the southern Alberta Jewish servicewomen (including Cecilia Feingold, Esther Raber, Tanya Volvnick) as well as the experiences of the Jewish servicewomen who moved to southern Alberta in the postwar period.

Historic Calgary Week

This summer JHSSA had the opportunity to partner in two Historic Calgary Week events. This year's theme was appropriately "Zooming Back: Unmasking the Past". On July 26, 2021, Trudy Cowan presented a program for kids at Heritage Park based on her book, *Quarantine: Keep Out*, and on July 28, 2021 Harry Sanders gave a talk over Zoom about the only street in Calgary to ever be named for a Jewish person, Reinach Avenue. Both programs were enthusiastically received. Many thanks to Heritage Park, Calgary Public Library and Chinook Country Historical Society, and especially Trudy and Harry for their efforts toward the programs.

Thank you

Many thanks to Alan Silver, who recently scanned all early issues of *Discovery*. The complete catalogue of back issues can now be found on our webpage.

History Mystery Boxes

JHSSA received a delightful variety of responses to May 2021's History Mystery Box program. Thank you to everyone who participated! We will hold a program based on the fruits of the project next Jewish Heritage Month, May 2022. *A copy of the box is available for loan through our office.*



Susan Podlog volunteering at History Mystery Box pick-up table, April 2021.

JHSSA NEWS

13th Annual Jay Joffe Memorial Program

In partnership with the Beth Tzedec Jewish Film Festival



The Jay Joffe Memorial Program honours the memory of JHSSA's founding president with a film that explores Jewish history in an engaging way. We're not able to reveal this year's feature yet, but in keeping with a tradition that's explored everything from refugees to rugelach—from baseball to Broadway—we know it will be worth watching!

For up-dated information, keep an eye on our website, look for Beth Tzedec Film Festival literature, and make sure you've agreed to receive programming emails from JHSSA.

As in previous years, all those who have renewed or taken out a JHSSA membership prior to the Festival, will be entered into a draw for two free tickets to the screening of our film.

Voices of Experience: Jewish Community of Southern Alberta's Memory Project Part 2

JHSSA is pleased to announce that we have received funding to continue our Voices of Experience oral history project through a Heritage Preservation Partnership Program grant from the Government of Alberta. We are delighted that Judy Shapiro is back to helm the project, and are grateful to our intrepid volunteers, who have been working steadily since we received notification mid-summer. Our target for Part 2 is an ambitious 50 interviews recorded and transcribed over nine months. We would welcome additional volunteer transcribers to help us reach this goal. Please contact the office for more information.

Recollections

Therese Nagler

With history one could be really enthused,
These memories here to be fondly perused.

It's not often mentioned (Because people have tact)
That I, in myself, am a true "artifact"

So with personal knowledge and my advanced age,
It was easy relating to most every page.

The embroidered cloth, of Hadassah-wide fame,
Recalled to me many a familiar name.

Some people not thought of in quite a long while
Were remembered today with a warm, wistful smile.

The hairbrush and mirror was from B'nai B'rith
To Melvin Polsky. It is no myth

That he was a friend and to this very day,
We think of his service to JHSSA.

The Dominion Certificate of Naturalization
Meant, to so many, true emancipation.

With Canadian citizens to be on a par,
And to have no more fear of the cruel Russian Czar.

Telegrams came and were read, kept and treasured
And important occasions were often times measured

By the number of greetings wishing health, joy and love.
To the "Ghitters", in this case, a big Mazel Tov!

The Grand Concert Program was meant to salute
The many supporters of I.L. Peretz Institute

We loved Benny Kerr, whose singing was savoured,
And bright Eda Diamond, who was my in-laws' neighbour.

The Cummins map would have been one which we prided,
For it features Rumsey where our family resided.

The Gurevitches lived there, and it was a pity
That Raphael's death brought them into the city.

The Mizrachi calendar wall art and such
Is attractive while giving a Middle East touch.

And the *kippah* included was simple perfection.
I have added it into my ample collection.

Now, the Hebrew School picnic old photo was wild,
Our son was the FIRST third generation child.

He attended the School like his Dad and Grandmother,
Followed by two little sisters and their younger brother.

The recipe page from Bazaar made me glad
As I possibly sold one or two of the ads.

Mouth-watering cheesecake and corned beef and kugel,
Those girls were amazing at "using their noodle".

I wish I could give an identification
Of the two men on whom you have no information.

It looks like a wedding where the groom was quite nervous,
But such speculation is to do a disservice.

It was fun looking into the historic pages,
Hadn't thought of those relics for ages and ages.

Preserving the past and our stories to tell
Is extremely important — and you do it so well.

Memories of the House of Israel Building

Continued from Page 4

and the House of Israel building was basically abandoned.

In 1996, the building was sold. When I heard about the sale, I begged Riki Heilik, who worked for Calgary Jewish Community Council at the time (now Federation), to let me come with her to say good-bye to the building. It was no longer the place I remembered. It was still a beautiful building. The auditorium was still beautiful, the upstairs balcony still commanded an imposing view, but there was no life left in what was once my home away from home. Riki and I wandered around the empty shell, looking for any treasures waiting to be saved and found very little. We did retrieve a few pink and blue dishes, and you can see a cup and saucer, as well as a YJ *Anivah* in the display cabinets outside the JHSSA office upstairs at the JCC.

The House of Israel building was converted to condos which opened in 1998. The Magen David symbol above the door is no longer there but the date of its (completed) construction, 1949, is still etched into the façade. The building isn't what it used to be, but every time I drive by there, and sometimes I go out of my way to do so, I am flooded with warm memories of a time and a place that is no more.

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President's Message

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volunteers. It is their contributions that ensure we continue to fulfill our mission to record, preserve and interpret the history of the Jewish presence and experience in southern Alberta, despite the challenges presented by the current pandemic. As we start our new membership year, I thank all our new and renewed members and hope that if you are not yet a member, you will consider joining us in keeping our history alive for current and future generations. Please check out the resources available on our website and I hope you will participate in our upcoming programs, including our Annual General Meeting on October 25.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy 5782.

Membership additions and corrections for our 2021 membership list:

Members: Jennifer Eisenberg, Deb & Paul Finkleman, SJ Kerr-Lapsley & Boris Karn, Lucien Lieberman.

Patrons: Shael Gelfand, Abby Robins, Sheldon Smithens, Shelley Sugarman, Maurice Yacowar.

Benefactors: Ken Drabinsky and Natasha Halikowski, Joyce Zemans.

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Thank you to all of our members for your ongoing support.

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Two of our members have issued a challenge to our *Discovery* readers: Would you match their \$500 donations towards sponsoring an issue of *Discovery*? Seven additional donors are needed. For more information, please contact our office.

DISCOVERY

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Please address all communications on editorial and circulation matters to:

Discovery

c/o The Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta

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

Phone 403-444-3171

Email: jhssa@shaw.ca

Website: www.jhssa.org

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