

# Calgary Women Aid Jews Around the World

By Betty Sherwood

From the earliest decades of the Calgary Jewish community, its women were inspired to assist not just their own community, but their fellow Jews in all corners of the world. The (Hebrew) Ladies Aid, founded in 1906, was possibly the first Jewish charitable organization here. Twenty-five homesteaders disembarking from the train were provided assistance by the HLA, while during the First World War its top priority was sending relief to needy Jews and refugees in Europe. Funds were raised through teas, raffles, dues, and dances. The *Calgary News Telegram* (CNT) reported on October 19, 1912 on a "Brilliant Ball Given by Hebrew Ladies Aid at the Al Azhar Temple."

A report in *The Jewish Times* of September 13, 1907 says, "The Jewish ladies of Calgary have had their Zionism aroused. Several of them have already joined the movement and it is anticipated that within a very short time a society of "Daughters of Zion" will be established in that city." We have no knowledge of specific developments in this regard; however, the CNT from November 30, 1915 shows that an impressive event was soon to take place.

The Calgary Jewish Benevolent Society was established in 1916 with Mrs. D. Cohen as president. Our files reveal little about its good works, but a report from the following year states "Very good work had been accomplished including local charity and patriotic work." The undertakings of both the HLA and the CJBS seem to have been folded into that of National Council.

Formed in Calgary in 1920, the local section of the (National) Council of Jewish Women met under the leadership of Sarah Zemans. Other early presidents were Mrs. C. Greenfield, Marcia Goldberg, Mrs. David (Mary) Cohen, Mrs. S. (Jennie) Bercov, and Sarah Bercuson. Today we

think of Council as having a local or Canadian focus, but in the past many efforts abroad benefitted from its energy and funds. During the 1920s its major fundraiser was an annual bazaar at the Al Azhar Temple, with support given to the Canadian Jewish War Orphans Fund and then to Youth

Aliyah. Weekly sessions of sewing and knitting were organized during WWII; attention soon turned to the resettlement of Jewish survivors in Israel and elsewhere. The Overseas Service Program included homes for women in post war Europe, and support was also given to the Palestine Blood Bank in 1945, to teacher training in Israel, and to the Clothing for Europe Drive. A 1963 project was Ship-a-Box, which sent toys and other essentials for children to Israel, while in the early 1980s funds were raised to support Refuseniks by selling packages of dinner napkins for one dollar. Council ended its impressive Calgary run in 1990.

The Calgary branch of Pioneer Women (Na'amat) was founded in 1934 with Mrs. J. (Ruth) Joffe as president and is still assisting Jews at

*Continued on Page 8*



*Calgary News Telegram, November 30, 1915*

## Our Place in This Place

By Betsy Jameson

Canadians have become accustomed to opening a meeting with a land acknowledgment. I virtually memorized the University of Calgary's: "I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta. The City of Calgary is also home to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3"—sometimes expanded to specify, "the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations), as well as the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda (including the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations)."

I'm a relative newcomer to Treaty 7 territory, where my home in Varsity stands. My first ancestor arrived in North America 14 years after the Treaty was signed in 1877. Our family eventually spread from the East Coast to occupy many traditional Indigenous

*Continued on Page 2*

### In this Issue:

Calgary Women Aid Jews Around the World .....	1
Our Place in This Place.....	1
Thank You .....	2
Highlighting the History of Rimmon Calgary.....	3
The Younger Demographic.....	3
Hadassah-WIZO Celebrates 100 Years in Calgary .....	4
Pink Elephant... The Ladies of the Bazaar.....	5
Tillie Shulman – A Driving Force in 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Calgary .....	6
From the Yiddish.....	7
2022 Membership List.....	7
JHSSA News .....	8
Thank You to our LIFE & LEGACY Donors.....	8

## Our Place in This Place

*Continued from Page 1*

territories in Canada and the United States. Before Calgary, I lived on the traditional land of the Karankawa, Shawnee, Delaware, Potawatomi, Miami, Wyandot, Seneca, Ottawa, Wapaghkonnetta, Anishinaabeg, Pueblo, Navajo, and Apache, among others. I did not personally take these lands from Indigenous North Americans; I inherited the claims of those who did. I wrestle with what this means to me as a historian and as a Jew.

Some Treaty 7 land was carved into 160-acre homesteads. That was the pattern in both Canada and the U.S. Many Jewish homesteaders had fled antisemitism and pogroms, including members of the Trochu, Rumsey and Montefiore agricultural colonies. They didn't come to dispossess anyone; they just sought a better life. But they and their homesteads were part of the process that academics call settler colonialism—a form of colonialism that seeks to replace the Indigenous population with a new society of settlers, either by assimilating or removing the Indigenous people. What did that mean for Jewish homesteaders themselves?

Consider just one—Rachel Bella Calof, born south of Kiev in 1876. Her mother died when she was young, and her father sent his children away. Rachel laboured as a maid for her aunt. In 1894, because it seemed her best option, she agreed to an arranged marriage with Abraham Calof, who had claimed a homestead near his parents, brothers, two cousins and other Jews clustered around a post office called Benzion, near Devils Lake, North Dakota. In 1936 Rachel Calof wrote a memoir in Yiddish that she called “My Story—A Life Worth Living.” It wasn't an easy life, raising a family on 160 acres, cooking and heating with dried cow dung, struggling to assert her place in the extended Calof family. The first winter, her 12x14-foot shanty housed five people, chickens, and a calf. Nine Calof children soon joined them—Rachel wrote that “personally the most dependable state of affairs I knew during the many years I lived on the prairie was pregnancy.” She yearned most for privacy and to claim her own domestic space as a Jewish woman. She began by fashioning lamps from mud and butter to bless the Sabbath.

For most Jews, homesteads were not the goal, but equity to pursue other goals. Most left their homesteads for cities with larger Jewish communities. Rachel and Abe Calof sold their land and moved to St. Paul in 1917. Abe's cousins, Maier and Leib Calof, moved with their families to Winnipeg. Leib Calof's granddaughter Alice married Abe Zeisler, and eventually joined a Calgary Jewish community that included descendants of Alberta's Jewish agricultural colonies.

Settler colonialism, in both Canada and the United States, brought some of the most impoverished settlers, like the Calofs, to live near impoverished Indigenous people whose land they inhabited. As the settlers' lives improved, the First Nations' lives deteriorated. The homesteads that offered opportunity for Jews meant constricted space and diminished options for their Indigenous neighbours. The territory of the North Dakota Chippewa extended across the U.S. border into Canada, and both governments tried to impose patriarchal gender roles. Indigenous women in the U.S. lost their traditional farming roles and ownership of family land allotments. The same women in Canada would lose their Indigenous status altogether if they married non-Indigenous men.

The tangled path to Treaty 7 involved military force and the un-

intended violence of European diseases like measles, chicken pox, smallpox, and cholera that dropped the North American Indigenous populations from an estimated 50-100 million in 1492 to between 7-15 million by 1900. Europeans' horses and guns reached Treaty 7 territory by the late-18<sup>th</sup> century, leading to depleted buffalo herds, so that First Nations sought peace agreements and new ways to survive on the land.

North American Indigenous Nations had, historically, formally acknowledged land territories when welcoming visitors and visiting neighbouring communities. Since the late-15<sup>th</sup> century, they had encountered strangers from other continents with entirely different religions, family systems, clothing, languages, concepts of property and of how human beings should act. Those differences operated profoundly among the parties to Treaty 7. The Canadian government thought it acquired 130,000 square kilometers of land. The First Nations thought they agreed to share the land and allow Canadian settlers to use the topsoil for farming.

Indigenous perspectives disappeared from national histories when Europeans arrived. So did the First Nations people themselves, rendering them invisible to their settler neighbours as well. Land acknowledgments, among much else, begin to correct the stories of nation building that erased Indigenous people, Jews, women, and many others who brought us to this time and place. Could we imagine land acknowledgments that recognized the tangled histories that brought Jews to traditional Indigenous territory, acknowledgments that might open conversations and paths to reconciliation

with the Indigenous People who offered to share their space? We could begin.



*While many of the specifics of this story take place in the United States before Rachel Calof's family came to southern Alberta, it speaks to underrepresented elements of our experience as immigrants and settlers. If you would like to learn more of Rachel's story, reflecting the life of a Jewish woman on the prairies, "Rachel Calof's Story" is available in the JHSSA's Harry and Martha Cohen Library.*

## Thank You

Thank you to all of our loyal members and volunteers. Your support enables us to continue our work and expand not just our holdings and resources, but also our understanding of our community and our stories. Your financial help maintains and sustains us; your practical help, with everything from mailings to programs, inspires us. We would not be where we are without you.

# Highlighting the History of Rimon Calgary

By Susan Podlog

Rimon Calgary, the local Judaic Needlework group, celebrated 13 years in January 2021, with a virtual “A Trip Down Memory Lane.” The group came together in September 2007 with a plan for monthly meetings, to learn new skills, to emphasize Judaic themes, and to foster Jewish connections and traditions.

Agi Romer Segal has recalled the beginnings of Rimon as something of which she was especially proud. ‘It began with an official letter to Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta (JHSSA) from the Judaic Textile Treasure Workshop committee. Soon there was a commitment from the Calgary Jewish Centre for support for publicity and for space for a day-long workshop. JHSSA provided funds for the guest speaker, Gail Niinimaa, who gave a detailed presentation on textile conservation.’

Marilyn Samuels recalled contacting the U.S.-based Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Needlework, to discuss forming a local chapter. In September 2007 the group began as Rimon Calgary, the only Canadian chapter of the Pomegranate Guild. (Rimon, Hebrew for pomegranate). Participants in the inaugural July 2007 workshop created a quilt with squares on the biblical theme, “As Numerous As the Stars.”

Most members of Rimon have come together after careers and work life. Some have a particular skill. Others are capable in many areas, from quilting, knitting, paper cuts, embroidery, needlepoint, or felting. Focusing on Jewish tradition, formal meetings open with a d’var Torah (literally a ‘word of torah’.) Individual members may offer a relevant lesson, thoughts from the weekly Torah portion, or reflect on one of the yearly festivals.

Over the years, Rimon’s leadership has guided the group to ensure program continuity and the development of creative projects. In 2019 careful study led to the decision to separate from the US based Pomegranate Guild. Rimon independently mounted a Calgary-based major conference, successfully involving Canadian and US participants.

Recently the focus has involved programming virtually during the global Covid 19 pandemic.



Lily Joffe (left) and Esther Silberg (right) discuss “Shades of Blue” quilt project designs with Trudy Cowan, c2010. Source: Trudy Cowan.

The original goals have led to a history of collaboration and engagement with the Jewish community and beyond. Rimon has replicated historic textiles for the Montefiore Institute at Heritage Park, won a ribbon for a group quilt on the theme of fall harvest/ Sukkot submitted to the Creative Arts & Crafts Exhibition at the Calgary Stampede, created and donated a quilt that proudly hangs at the Chevra Kadisha, participated—as a group and as individuals—in the Annual Festival of Quilts, and designed and created The Tree of Life chuppah, a wedding canopy, available for rental. They have donated funds to a range of charitable causes.

Rimon women continue to learn from each other and from outside experts. Collegiality and cooperation are the threads that weave the group together. Members have supported each other in both joyous and difficult times. They have enhanced their skills, their friendships and their community engagement.

Marilyn Samuels commented in 2021, ‘The group is still fulfilling the objectives set down those many years ago, meeting monthly, learning new techniques, building on Jewish traditional needlework. Moving into our 14th year, we keep growing, and supporting and encouraging each other to be our best selves.’

Rimon continues to welcome new members.

## The Younger Demographic

It isn’t surprising that Calgary has such a long history of strong and active women’s organizations, since each generation has encouraged the next. The Hadassah-WIZO article elsewhere in this issue mentions an obvious example of this, in the Junior Hadassah chapter, Tel Hai, which engaged in many social action activities. There was also a “Calgary Section National Council of Jewish Juniors”, which was divided into Junior and Senior Councilettes. These girls, aged 16 and up, participated in Red Cross work, collected Jewish Orphanage boxes, and helped to sponsor the Calgary Jewish Choir. In addition to these offshoots of established women’s organizations, there were other involvement options for young Calgary females. Post-high-school they could join one of Calgary’s several Jewish sororities, including Mem Zadick Gimel, Chi Omega Chi, Ki Lo Naeh, Sheen Rayshe Faye, or Aleph Gimel Mem, which all participated in fundraising for local and broader community causes. After 1947, those still in high school could join the first Calgary B’nai Brith Girls (BBG) chapter, Daughters of the Star (DOTS). (AZA, the boys arm of the B’nai Brith Youth Organization, had been active in Calgary since 1926). What is particularly interesting, though, is something that came to light only recently, and speaks to the involvement of an even younger demographic: At some point in the 1920s, Ida Landa (nee Pepper)—perhaps inspired by the establishment of a Calgary Jewish Boy Scouts troop in 1923—started a company of Jewish Girl Guides, believing that “... the principle they learn ... tends to make them good citizens and good mothers.” Her first recruits were Alice Belkin and Minuetta Shumiatcher, and other members included Charna Manolson, Phyllis Waterman, Goldie Silver, Jeanette Guttman, Rose Polsky and Stella Joffe. If you have additional information about any of these groups, or if you know of one that we’ve missed, please contact our office.

# Hadassah-WIZO Celebrates 100 Years in Calgary

By Ruth Ullman

Calgary Hadassah-WIZO marked its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2021. At the time it was founded, Calgary had a population of about 63,000, with a Jewish population of 3186. The first Calgary chapter of Hadassah-WIZO was established in 1921 by Rose Rabinovitz (later Jaffe) and Marcia Goldberg.

What inspired these women? Canadian Hadassah-WIZO had been established just four years earlier in 1917 and by 1921 chapters were being established across Canada, with the goal of providing badly needed aid to the people of Palestine. Marcia Goldberg, secretary of the newly established Calgary Chapter, made it her mission to inspire the Jewish women of Calgary to support Zionist projects in Palestine. Goldberg, an early chapter president, went on to be elected national vice president of Hadassah-WIZO's Western Division and served from 1930 to 1945. Other local leaders over the early years included Ethel Libin, Fanny Mitchell, Ruby Smolensky, Ruth Sherwood, Nellie Zimmerman, and Vera Himelfarb.

These early members were inspired by Zionist beliefs and a desire to assist those women and children less fortunate than themselves who lived in Palestine. Fundraising was a key activity through emergency teas, self-sacrifice teas, luncheons, fashion shows, plays, musical performances, and small bazaars. In 1928, a Junior Hadassah-WIZO group of about 40 women was formed. The goal of the Tel Chai Chapter, according to a 1942 AZA publication, was to "Educate the young girl of the day to give her a better understanding of Hadassah's place in the world and what Zionism stood for."

By the mid-1950s, amid the struggles in the newly-established State of Israel, other chapters were formed, including the Israel Chapter, with Leah Saltman as president, and the Sabra Chapter, with Ida Eichler as president. By 1961, the original Calgary Chapter

boasted approximately 300 members and gave birth to four additional chapters: the Orah Chapter led by Rose Hector, the Henrietta Szold Chapter by Miriam Dvorkin, the Queen Esther Chapter by Esther Gorosh, and the Aliyah Chapter by Lil Groberman. These four chapters created new and innovative fund-raising events that carried on for many years, including the Medical Aid Tea, which raised funds for Assaf Harofeh Medical Center. A Bridge Party fundraiser has continued in various forms and still exists today as the annual Games Day, and events such as Just a Second and Whale of a Sale, drew hundreds.

The annual Youth Aliyah campaigns, often culminating in banquets attended by hundreds, were also a major source of funds starting in 1933 and continuing into the 2000s. This organization, supported by Canadian Hadassah-WIZO, was formed to rescue children from Nazi Germany, and continues to play a major role in the absorption of young newcomers to Israel.

Memories of the Hadassah Bazaar are still strong in the minds of Calgarians, Jewish and non-Jewish alike. From the moment Calgary Hadassah Council opened the doors for the first mammoth bazaar at Mewata Armory on October 19, 1960 (chaired by Pat Maerov) to the very last Bazaar in May 1985, tens of thousands of Calgarians made their way through the turnstiles to the greatest annual event in Calgary Hadassah-WIZO history. Preparing for, working at, and visiting the Bazaar became an essential part of the year's events for the whole Jewish community, uniting friends and family and projecting a positive image of "Hadassah" to Calgarians. Changing times in the late 1980s closed this chapter in Calgary's Hadassah-WIZO history, but the memories live on.

During this era of large chapters and fundraising efforts, a number of local leaders, including Charna Shapiro, Ida Eichler, Sophie Kettner, Doreen Abugov, Sharon Sattin, Ruth Ullman, and Lauren Bell, were all elected as officers on the National Executive of CHW.

Calgary Hadassah-WIZO is tremendously proud that two local members have been elected National President, including Sandy Martin, 19th National President, 2005–2008. During Sandy's term, the Sustainers program was established, a perpetual giving program which continues to provide funds on which the organization can rely, and the organization was rebranded with the acronym CHW, including a tagline, "Children, Healthcare and Women." Calgary was proud to host the National Convention, in true Western style, in November 2008. Attended by over 300 members and guests, it was the last of the large-scale conventions to be held as the national organization downsized and trimmed costs. But what a 'shindig' it was, complete with a Western themed dance and a gala dinner in honour of Sandy Martin's term in office. Also, in honour of her term the WIZO daycare center in Ramat HaSharon is now the Sandy Martin Alberta Day Care Center.

Marilyn Libin, a long-time member and supporter of CHW and Israel, was elected 24<sup>th</sup> National President in October 2018, serving until October 2020. During this time, fundraising grew and the challenges of COVID-19 were met. In Marilyn's honour, the Marilyn Libin and Jed Gaines Fab Lab was dedicated at the Neri Bloomfield Academy of Design in Haifa. The Fab Lab is a centre of excellence in



1955 Hadassah Youth Aliyah Launch. Included in this photo are Eleanor Barron, Ida Eichler, Sarah Fasman, Lillian Groberman, Annabelle and Evelyn Gurevitch, Mrs. Barnett Janner, Ethel Kerr, Rose Libin, Gertie Markus, Fanny Mitchell, Susan Nagler, Leah Saltman, and Ruby Smolensky.

*Continued on Page 5*



# Pink Elephant...the Ladies of the Bazaar:

*an independent project conceived and developed by Sheryl Livergant and Jennifer Eisenberg*

"Call it an extravaganza if you like, there's no doubt that the Hadassah Grand Bazaar and Exposition...is the largest project of its kind ever undertaken by a group of Calgary women. Expecting to draw about 25,000 persons, the 400 and some Jewish women of the Calgary, Israel, and Sabra chapters of Hadassah have had the event in the making for six months." *Calgary Herald, Friday, September 23, 1969.*

## How the Project Originated

Conceptualized by Sheryl, the project took flight through collaboration with Jennifer, with the support of JHSSA. Reflecting on the changes to Calgary and the Jewish community over the years (including the redevelopment of the Stampede grounds where the Bazaar was held for most of its 25 years), they shared their memories of the Bazaar from their perspectives of growing up in Jewish Calgary. They also looked back at conversations over the years with family members and other Bazaar participants.

Why call the project "Pink Elephant"? Simply because the Pink Elephant booth, which sold all kinds of household wares and knick knacks, was an annual favourite of many who attended.

## Description of the Project

To date, the project consists of a collection of conversations recorded on Zoom with 24 women ranging in age from 61 to 96, sharing memories and reflections of their (or their mother's) involvement in the Calgary Hadassah Bazaar which ran from 1960 to 1985. These conversations are being collected for archival and historical purposes, possibly for use in a larger presentation or production.

## What do the Conversations Tell Us?

These conversations provide an insightful and colourful look back at the Bazaar, complete with wonderful stories of how these women with chutzpah pulled off such a successful event year after year.

They include reflections on every aspect essential to the Bazaar—from concept to completion—including neighbourhood baking bees, solicitation of goods and services, ticket sales, publicity, a vast array of booths selling all kinds of things from blintzes to vinyl



Ben Goldenberg (behind sign), Sharon Cohen (striped shirt) and Helen Goldenberg (blue shirt) at the Pink Elephant booth, Hadassah Bazaar, 1981

records to men's suits and much more, contests, salesmanship, enthusiastic crowds, and the continuous call for volunteers. And as the slogan went, there was "Something for Everyone!"

## Reflections on Community

Moreover, these conversations illustrate the role of women and volunteerism in an era when commitment to Israel and community were priorities. Through their participation in the Bazaar, we see how personal connection, friendship, and camaraderie thrived, forging community spirit and cohesion, laying the foundation for community fundraising.

The conversations also make obvious the hard work and challenges that were part of each and every Bazaar, including societal changes and the evolving roles of women, which impacted the continued viability of the Calgary Bazaar which ultimately, like every other Bazaar in Canada, came to an end.

## Next Steps

Building on the success to date, *Pink Elephant* is moving on to record memories of the ladies of the Edmonton Bazaar.

As *Pink Elephant* continues, if anyone has stories they wish to share about their own, or their family members' participation in the Calgary, Edmonton, or any other Hadassah Bazaar, please contact Sheryl or Jennifer at [thepinkelephant84@gmail.com](mailto:thepinkelephant84@gmail.com).

## Hadassah-WIZO Celebrates 100 Years

*Continued from Page 4*

fashion design in Israel and was the highlight of "Fashion Blooms", a national video tribute to Marilyn in May 2021.

CHW continues in Calgary with a reduced membership and one active Tikvah Chapter. But the determination to support Israel continues and the memories live on, after 100 amazing years.

Source: *One Hundred Years of Canadian Hadassah-WIZO Through Calgary Eyes 1917-2017*

Right: Sandy Martin (centre, holding child) at the inauguration ceremony for the WIZO Sandy Martin Alberta Daycare Centre in Ramat HaSharon, Israel, Oct 2010. Source: *CHW Staying Connected with Israel, Nov 2010.*



# Tillie Shulman – A Driving Force in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Calgary

By Paul Finkleman

How can someone who was driven to help others and became such a positive driving force in the Calgary Jewish community, also hold the title of Calgary's worst driver? Well...

Our Grandma, Tillie Shulman, was the fifth child born to Shimon and Passie Block in 1893 in Kherson, a town near Odessa in Ukraine. The family had eight kids when they arrived in Calgary in 1908. Tillie met her husband, Simon Shulman, while visiting Chicago, married him, and they moved back to Calgary in 1913.

Simon was a tailor at 'Twenty-Five Cent Tailors', 113 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue S.W. They raised a family of three girls, Emily (Finkleman), Jean (Libin) and Nettie (Sarvas). A strong-willed character with a love of people and a high regard for the local Jewish community, Grandma achieved much in her lifetime, particularly as someone who championed women and their families.



Tillie Shulman's Pioneer Women brooch. Source: Paul Finkleman

Decades before she became Prime Minister of Israel, Golda Meir toured North America as an emissary speaking to numerous Women's Councils. During her stop in Calgary in 1928, she met up with Tillie, and inspired her to help start the Calgary chapter of Pioneer Women (renamed Na'amat in 1981), an organization dedicated to helping women, children and families

in need. Shortly after that, Golda Meir personally gifted her with a special brooch (see photo), naming Grandma a "Life Member" of Pioneer Women.

Tillie was also one of the founders of the *Mooter Farein* of the I.L. Peretz Shul (Calgary's first Jewish day school, organized by members of the I.L. Peretz Institute) which, although it translates to 'Mother's Club', was much more than just a Parent Council. *Mooter Farein* was very much a cultural force in Calgary, putting on and presenting plays, concerts and lectures, particularly in the 1930s, 40s and 50s at places like the House of Israel and even the Palace Theatre. The *Mooter Farein* also started up the Calgary Jewish Community Telephone Directory. This volunteer work involved hundreds of phone calls and countless meetings with groups and individuals, earning her the nickname 'Tillie the Toiler'.

Always a strong advocate for women, she caused quite a stir in the community in the 1930s when she started wearing pants. No women back then wore slacks. But Calgary winters were cold, and with hemlines rising to just below the knees, Tillie decided she'd had enough with cold legs. Using her admirable tailoring skills, she created her own pants.

However, a neighbour of hers, Harry Carnat, didn't like what he saw, and one day told my Zaida, "You tell your wife it's un-ladylike to wear pants. She should stop wearing them!" Zaida's simple response: "YOU try telling her!"

Eventually, Shulman's Tailors on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue became their busi-

ness, and one of their specialties (seen in Yellow Pages ad c.1949), was: "To Tailor Men's Suits Into Ladies' Suits," undoubtedly Tillie's brainchild.

By the late 1940s she was widowed, but somehow managed to obtain and keep her driver's license. I say 'somehow' because everyone who knew her agreed that although she may have been a superb citizen, she was a terrible driver.

Around 1970, I took Grandma, now 77 and hard of hearing, to get her driver's license renewed. It was simply a written multiple-choice exam. When the fellow giving her the test showed her the results (Grandma got 5 out of 20 correct), she immediately put on a thick accent pleading that she could barely read English, and asked to be guided through the test with his help. Well, you can guess the outcome: She manipulated him into telling her the right answers, and she got to keep her license. What an actress!

In 1963, Tillie was honoured by the Calgary Jewish community at a special Mother's Day luncheon at the Shaarey Tzedec as "Mother of the Year." But this award wasn't just because she was a great mother (which she certainly was). It was intended in a more meaningful and significant way, recognizing all her accomplishments as the woman whose heartfelt efforts and enormous energy gave birth—figuratively speaking—to groups like Pioneer Women and the I.L. Peretz *Mooter Farein*.

Her legacy lives on. When her grandkids get together, stories abound and laughter ensues. But these tales of Tillie are always infused with a deep sense of admiration and respect for this woman who empowered others, and gave so much of herself to creating a healthy, happy and helpful Jewish community in 20<sup>th</sup> century Calgary.

Paul's full article, including several detailed anecdotes about driving with Tillie, can be found on our website: <https://jhssa.org/tillie-shulman-a-driving-force-in-20th-century-calgary/>.



Tillie Shulman, age 23. Source: Paul Finkleman

## From the Yiddish

"The Peretz Institute is bestowed with motherly and fatherly love from two sides. From one side, the *Mooter Farein* [Mothers' Association] takes care of the budget of the school and aids the administration however possible.

I was able to witness how a member of the *Mooter Farein* came at the appointed time to seat the chicks of the kindergarten on their bus. This supervision is taken on daily by a different member of the *Mooter Farein*, even though the driver is an upstanding man and the teacher rides along until the last child is delivered home.

"Fatherly love is bestowed on the Peretz School by the administration and the principal Mr. Pravatiner ... "

**Source:** "The City of Calgary and its Jewish Population" (Correspondence) by S. Caplan *Keneder Adler*, April 13, 1931. Translation by Agi Romer Segal.

[Note: In 1931 the kindergarten was not part of the School, but of the Institute.]

## 2022 Membership List

### Individuals

Valerie Barsky  
Brian Belzberg  
Karen Belzberg  
Sheila Bermack  
Annabelle Bondar  
David Busheikin  
Sarabeth Carnat  
Judy Chetner  
Jeri Churgin  
Bernice Cohen  
Cheryl Cohen  
Donna Crawford  
Alberto De Mayo  
David Eisenstadt  
Reva Faber  
Terrie Faber  
Lynda Feingold  
Barry Finkelman  
Arthur P Fishman  
Mark Glickman  
Louise Glin  
George Goodman  
Lori Gray  
Lily Joffe  
Linda Jeffery  
Irena Karshenbaum  
Naomi Kerr  
Rachel Kerr-Lapsley  
Frances Sheftel Kolinsky  
Leslie Levant  
Lucien Lieberman  
Stanley Major  
Chana Nachal  
McKereghan  
Chuck Mozeson  
Jason Nisenson  
Roberta Nitkin  
Susan Podlog  
Eileen Quan  
Shirley Rabinovitch  
Karen Roth

Miriam Sanders  
Minnie Segal  
Marilyn Segall  
Laura Shuler  
Sandy Shuler  
Alan Silver  
Tillie Sklar  
Andria Spindel  
Jack Van Ameringen  
Lori Wolf  
Edward Wolfman

### Families

Irvin & Sandy Adler  
William Aizman  
Allan & Marcia Bell  
Shel & Cylia Bercovich  
Rudy & Jeanette Berger  
David & Sonia Bickman  
Labie & Eleanor Doctor  
Lorne, Zena &  
Sara Drabinsky  
David & Nadine Drexler  
Delsie B Dworkin &  
Family  
Jennifer Eisenberg  
Harry & Libby Feldman  
Nate & Naida Feldman  
Paul & Deb Finkleman  
Paul Gronnerud &  
Debra Carnat  
Henry & Avrona Gutman  
David Joffe  
Hal & Robyn Joffe  
Jonathan & Kristen Joffe  
Allan & Annette Kolinsky  
Mel & Carol Levitt  
George & Connie Nagler  
Izak & Hindy Paul  
Harry Sanders &  
Kirsten Olson  
Allan & Sharon Sattin

Robert & Tamara Seiler  
Gayle Sherman  
Brian & Gail Sidorsky  
Harvey & Bev  
Silverstone  
Barry & Debby Smolkin  
Jerry & Judith  
Spevakow  
Doran & Patty Veiner

### Patrons

Gerry Barron  
Joey Bleviss  
Richard Bronstein &  
Judy Shapiro  
Barrie Carnat  
Marcia Century  
Al & Shirley Chafetz  
Sidney & Bronia  
Cyngiser  
Miriam Diamond  
Jerry & Faith Dubisky  
Ruth Dvorkin  
Tish Dvorkin  
Shael Gelfand  
Bruce & Halley Girvitz  
Valerie Grossman  
Barry & Ila Hardin  
David & Susan Inhaber  
Lea Kohn  
Susan Lubell  
Leon Luker &  
Trudy Cowan  
Allen Mendelman  
Jack Lazer Meyer  
Paul & Katherine  
Pearlman  
Lorne & Beth Price  
Saul Prince  
Harvey & Rayna Rabin  
Molly Ross

Eliezer Segal &  
Agi Romer Segal  
Heather Shapero  
Evelyn Sheftel-Shapiro  
Bob & Cheryl Shiell  
Karen Sklar  
Sheldon Smithens  
Elliot Steinberg &  
Diana Kalef  
Darlene Switzer-Foster  
Lorne Tucker &  
Beverly Sklar  
Marc & Suzanne  
Waterman  
Fred & Joyce Zemans

### Benefactors

Doreen Abugov  
Rebecca Aizenman  
Marilyn Belzberg  
Marni Besser  
Murray Blankstein  
Louis Bracey  
Rachel Carnat-Rabess &  
Tish Carnat  
David & Glenda Chetner  
Arline Diamond  
Ken Drabinsky &  
Natashia Halikowski  
Gary & Francoise  
Dvorkin  
Milton & Maxine  
Fischbein  
Marlene Franks  
Ron Ghitler  
Sonny & Gena Gorasht  
Ralph & Sheila Gurevitch  
Stan Guttman  
Nelson & Debbie  
Halpern  
Betsy Jameson  
Barbara Joffe  
Stephen G Kennedy  
Garry Kohn  
Mel & Gail Ksienski

Bruce & Carolyn Libin  
Steven Lipton  
Michael & Phyllis  
Moscovich  
Les Moss  
Stuart & Elaine Myron  
Therese Nagler  
Philip & Judy Parker  
David & Cynthia Prasow  
Murray Robins  
Sabine Ryder  
Fred Schaeffer  
Michael Shafron  
Fania Wedro  
Sandra Morton Weizman  
Rose Zivot

### Sustainers

Jack Adler  
Jenny Belzberg  
Jim Casquenette &  
Betty Sherwood  
Arlein Chetner  
Bernie Ghert  
Hayim & Jackie  
Hamborger  
Candice Hanson  
Gordon & Eva Hoffman  
Robert & Sydney Kalef  
Ron & Barb Krell  
Eric & Gay Libin  
Philip & Harriet Libin  
Harold & Sandra Lipton  
Larry & Sandy Martin  
Walter Moscovitz  
Sheldon Shagal &  
Dorothy Hanson  
Janet Sherman  
Stan & Carey Smith  
Joe & Sondra Spier  
Shauna Switzer  
Ken & Mary Taub  
The Alvin and Mona  
Libin Foundation  
Phil & Ruth Ullman

## Calgary Women Aid Jews

*Continued from Page 1*

home and abroad. Our archives reveal an interesting list of speakers over the years including Golda Meir, Maj Gen David Ofer, and someone who "lived through the Six Days". During the Second World War, PW created the Child Rescue Fund and joined forces with other organizations such as the Red Cross, the Clothes for Russia Campaign, and the War Bonds Campaign. Today, the Dollars for David Campaign helps provide toys, books, and games for Israeli children in Na'amat facilities. Many innovative fundraisers have been held over the years, including lectures, bingos, auctions, and musical events.

The first Calgary Women's ORT (Organization for Rehabilitation Through Training) meeting convened in 1972 under the leadership of Gertie Lerner and Mim Diamond. ORT funded secondary and skills education for Jewish youth around the world, through annual teas and the sale of cookbooks. Rabbi Lewis Ginsberg was a particular champion of ORT, and the organization's profile was enhanced during the 1970s when it was declared one of the beneficiaries of the Miles for Millions Marches that were held in that decade.

Mizrachi, the religious arm of the worldwide Zionist movement, was introduced here in 1940. The men's group was short-lived, but many women remained active until 1979. Rabbi David and Mrs. Rose Barenholtz were particularly key as leaders in helping to raise funds for tradition-based day care centres and schools in Israel. An unusual fundraiser was the sale of Israeli flower bulbs.

Not to be forgotten are the Jewish sororities which flourished in Calgary from the 1930s to the 1960s with both social and altruistic goals. Aleph Gimmel Mem and Emuna contributed to Youth Aliyah; Chi Omega Chi staffed a booth at the Hadassah Bazaar and collected clothing for Jewish refugees; Ki Lo No'eh donated money for air raid victims and knitted for the Armed Forces; Mem Zadik Gimmel held fundraisers for JNF and the Red Cross.

While only Na'amat and Hadassah-WIZO (see article in this issue) survive today, it has been a pleasure to discover, share, and salute the drive and commitment of earlier generations of Calgary women in their desire to enhance Jewish lives around the world.

## JHSSA NEWS

### Our Sincere Thanks

JHSSA is honoured to have received a most generous donation in memory of Beryl and Leon Libin and the legacy they left, from Eric and Gay Libin and family.

### Events Past and Upcoming

It has been a winter full of exciting programs for JHSSA. The past few months have seen solid attendance and positive feedback for several events, including a co-presentation with Beth Tzedec Synagogue of Harry Sanders' *More Stories from Reinach Avenue: Calgary's Forgotten Jewish Street*, a romance-themed musical lunch for the JCC Seniors, and a heartfelt tribute to Manny Cohen<sup>z"l</sup>. Future plans include a celebration of Jewish Heritage Month in May, and participation in Historic Calgary week in mid-summer, on the theme of "We'll Meet Again: Unseen History Brought to Life". Keep an eye on our emails and website for details of these upcoming events, and while doing so, don't forget to spend a moment enjoying our new logo. Many thanks to Digital Lion for facilitating its creation.

## Thank You to our LIFE & LEGACY™ Donors

Anonymous (5)	Steven Lipton
Alice <sup>z"l</sup> & Jacob (Jack) Adler	Elaine & Stuart Myron
Dan Balaban & Family	Alex A. Osten
Michael Balaban	Harry Sanders
Jenny Belzberg	Brenda & Garry Sapoznikow
Marni Besser	Eliezer Segal & Agnes Romer Segal
Val & Lou Bracey	Betty A. Sherwood
David & Jackie Busheikin	Robert Shiell & Cheryl Baron
Judy Chetner	Cheryl & Morley Shore
Barry Finkelman	Jared Shore & Christina Ellerbeck
Milt & Maxine Fischbein	Laura Shuler
Bruce & Halley Girvitz	Sandy Shuler
Dr. Ralph & Sheila Gurevitch	Esther Allman Silberg
Annette Hanson	Gary Silberg
Candice Hanson	Lorraine Spector
Dorothy Hanson & Sheldon Shagal	Sam & Ida Switzer
Lucille Hanson <sup>z"l</sup>	Shauna L. Switzer
David Inhaber	
Betsy Jameson	
Barbara Joffe	
Birgit Krausch	
Ron & Barb Krell	
Mel & Gail Ksienski	
Philip & Harriet Libin	
Sandra & Harold Lipton	



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](mailto:jhssa@shaw.ca), 403-444-3171, or through [jhssa.org](http://jhssa.org).

### DISCOVERY

#### Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta

Founding President: **Jay Joffe<sup>z"l</sup>**

Past Presidents: **Betty Sherwood, Sheldon Smithens, Jack Switzer<sup>z"l</sup>**

President: **Sandra Lipton**

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

Treasurer: **Mary Taub**

Secretary: **Marni Besser**

Director at Large: **Shauna Switzer**

Directors: **Rebecca Aizenman, Judy Chetner, Sara Drabinsky, Halley Girvitz,**

**Sheila Gurevitch, Dorothy Hanson, Garry Kohn, Mel Ksienski, Harry Sanders, Alan Silver, Sandra Morton Weizman**

Honorary Director: **Henry Gutman**

Archives: **Roberta Kerr**

Program Coordinator & Office Manager: **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](mailto:jhssa@shaw.ca)

Website: [www.jhssa.org](http://www.jhssa.org)

ISSN: 1916 - 3886

© 2022 by the Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta  
(a non-profit, registered society). Donations gratefully accepted.