



Pioneer Women at 100

by *Maxine Fischbein*



Pioneer Women logo

2025 marks 100 years since the establishment of Pioneer Women — today Na’amat — in North America, making this a good time to look back at some of the Calgary and area women who made it their mission to build and support this important organization.

Pioneer Women was born in Palestine with the establishment, in 1921, of Mo’etzet Hapoalot (Council of Women’s Workers), an affiliate of the Histadrut (General Foundation of Labour). Four years later, a chapter was established in New York City and rapidly spread to other American and Canadian centres.

The first Alberta chapter was formed in Edmonton in 1931. The organization came south in 1934, when a group of women that had already established a club for Yiddish speakers reinvented themselves as Pioneer Women’s first Calgary chapter. Founders included Tillie Shulman, Sarah Lubinsky, and Betty Dvorkin.

The Calgary Herald reported on May 25, 1934 that “Mrs. J. Joffe [Ruth] was elected president of the Palestine Pioneer Women’s Organization at the Shabuoth (sic) social meeting, held at her

home, concluding the season’s activities.” Other officers included Mrs. Rose Kettner (VP), Mrs. Max Fradkin (treasurer), Mrs. I. Engle (secretary), and Mrs. M. Freedman (educational chairman); other presidents in the early years included Jennie Bulshin, Rose Cohen, and Leah Kelson.

Highlights for Alberta Pioneer Women were visits by Mo’etzet Hapoalot Secretary-General Golda Meyerson during the 1930s. A poster in the JHSSA Archives confirms that Meyerson spoke at a Pioneer Women meeting in Edmonton in 1936. We also know that Golda visited Calgary, with some sources stating that a visit may have happened as early as 1933. The minutes of a September 18, 1935 Hadassah meeting refer to an upcoming visit by Meyerson, likely around the same time she visited Edmonton.

A brief history of the Shulman family provided by grandson Paul Finkleman states that Tillie Shulman hosted Meyerson at the Shulman’s 9th Street SW home. Three decades later, Meyerson — by then known as Golda Meir — became Israel’s first — and so far, only — female prime minister.

A progress report in *The Jewish Post* (January 27, 1944) outlines Calgary Pioneer Women fundraising successes and disbursements to various funds supporting women in Palestine. Also noted is their contribution on the home front through “the raffling of a \$50 War Bond and the sale of \$10,000 worth of bonds.” Mrs. J.H. Bergman served as Pioneer Women’s Red Cross and *Clothes for Russia* convenor.

While there are gaps in the archives pertaining to Pioneer Women Calgary, especially during the 1950s, some insight can be found in a fundraising booklet published in 1949 (5710) consisting of Rosh Hashanah greetings for 1949 and 1950. The theme of this ninth annual greetings booklet was the establishment, 16 months earlier, of the modern State of Israel when David Ben Gurion, the country’s first Prime Minister, read the Declaration of Independence — signed by founders including Golda — on May 14, 1948.

Appropriately, the cover of the booklet is blue. Mrs. J Chernoff (Ida) is listed as president of Pioneer Women in Calgary, and

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Upcoming Events



Canadian Jewish Heritage Month Programs

We are participating in Chinook Country Historical Society’s monthly library speaker series! Katie Baker will present **Sharing Our Stories, Ourselves** reflecting on JHSSA and our work preserving and sharing our community’s history, including some of the joys, challenges and quirky moments. It will take place at the Central Library on **Tuesday, May 20, 2025 at 7 p.m.** Registration is through the Calgary Public Library.

Also in May, please join us for a screening of **A New Life on the Land – Jewish Farmers in Canada** on **Wednesday, May 28, 2025 at 7 p.m.** at the Heritage Park Railway Orientation Centre. We are delighted to partner with Heritage Park to show this documentary. The program will be free-of-charge, but pre-registration is required at heritagepark.ca/events.

Historic Calgary Week

Farther on the horizon, you’ll want to save the date for our HCV program: **Thursday, July 31, 2025 at 7 p.m.** Bruce Dawson will present on Polar Aerated, a local bottling company that was owned by the Pearlman family. Please watch for more details.

Please contact our office if you have questions about any of these events.

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Flight Club: a retrospective of our communities and the RCAF

by *Sandra Lipton*

The Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) marked its 100th anniversary on April 1, 2024. Prior to its creation, Canadians, as members of the Commonwealth, were part of the British Royal Flying Corps, later named the Royal Air Force (RAF).

During the Second World War over 16,000 Canadian Jewish men and women served in the Canadian military forces. On a local level, the Southern Alberta Jewish War Veterans of World War I & II Database identifies more than 190 individuals born or raised in southern Alberta, with 81 of them in the Air Force. A few local enlistees began their military career in one branch of the armed forces and then switched to another section. Calgary-born Joseph Weinfeld (Winfield) enlisted in the RCAF in 1940 serving as a bombardier but was discharged due to a heart murmur. Committed to serving, he then joined the merchant marine and subsequently enlisted in the army in 1941 where he served another five years. Fellow Calgarian Samuel Shnitka (Shaw) enlisted in the army for a year before transferring to the RCAF in 1941.

The roster of Air Force veterans includes at least five Jewish women from southern Alberta; Calgarians Annette Freedman and Tanya Volovnik, and Bertha Freedman, Esther Raber and Rose Schechter from Medicine Hat. The RCAF had created a women's division in February 3, 1942, and at the beginning, women were restricted to select duties. While information on their military roles is scant, at least two local women served as secretaries to high-ranking officials. One was Esther Raber, who committed to join the military, following in the footsteps of her brother Manuel. Over her parents' objections, she enlisted in the spring of 1943 and was stationed in Ottawa at Air Force headquarters where she worked as a secretary. Tanya Volovnik also served as a secretary, working for the Wing Commander of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan.

Twenty-five southern Albertan Jewish airmen have been identified as having served in Europe or Asia, with 19 working overseas as pilots or airplane crew. Two of the very few Jewish pilots in the RCAF were from southern Alberta: Calgarian Jack Cahan, and Trochu-born Philip Waterman. Other crew members consisted of air observers (navigation and bomb aiming) and wireless operators/air gunners. While Peter Usher's study of Jews in the RCAF noted that air observer was the most common role for the Jewish airmen, the southern Alberta Jewish airmen were predominantly wireless operators/air gunners. Paul Belkin, Bernard Bercuson, Sam Camerman, Leonard Fox, Charles Green, Manny Raber, Harold Segall, Harold Sengaus, Tom Sengaus, Morris Switzer and Joseph Weinfeld, were all wireless operators/air gunners. The six air observers/navigators identified to date were Cecil Gurevich, David Dworkin, Herbert Ludman, Albert Margolis, David Rosenthal and David Waterman. Additionally,



*Paul Belkin, lower left, with his crew in front of Liberator bomber "Dumbo Delivers", India 1943.
Photo courtesy Matt Poole, Wheaton, MD*

at least six men from southern Alberta provided ground support overseas: Joseph Barron, Dave Sair, Samuel Shnitka, David Spindel, Stanley Winfield and Louis Benjamin Woolfe.

Bombing crews had less than 50 percent chance of finishing their service alive. The bombers faced long trips where they encountered high winds, clouds, and icing of control surfaces, in addition to searchlights and enemy flak. Calgarians Paul Belkin, Bernard Bercuson, Charles Green, Cecil Gurevitch and Albert Margolis are among the 17,000 Canadian airmen who died in battle. Belkin, 22, was a rear gunner on a flight shot down by the Japanese during a raid in Burma. His mother, in a 1946 letter to the Chief of the Air Staff archived on the Canadian Virtual War Memorial website, notes that "with millions of others all over the world, we must remember that our son has paid the great sacrifice for a great cause." Bercuson was killed in skies over the Baltic Sea in August of 1944. The Canadian Virtual War Memorial includes a 1945 letter from his sister to the military asking that the cross marking his grave in Denmark be changed to a Star of David. Charles Green was noted as "missing, presumed killed" when his plane was hit with enemy fire off the coast of England in August 1943. Cecil Gurevitch was killed while on a mission over Germany. Albert Margolis was attached to the RAF when he was shot down while on an attack of Japanese ships near Akyab, Burma (now Sittwe, Myanmar) on September 9, 1942. The pilot who survived the crash noted that, "Immediately after we were first hit "Happy" [Margolis] came rushing back from his position in the nose with blood streaming down his face, he had been hit by shrapnel and started combating the fire with extinguishers and kept fighting the flames in the terrific heat and choking smoke until we crashed and when I got his body out later he was still grasping a fire extinguisher." Margolis' body was not recovered, and he is memorialized through a monument in Singapore.

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Flight Club *Continued from Page 2*

Downed airplane crews faced the risk of capture by the enemy. While thousands of allied airmen and soldiers successfully evaded capture — like Calgarian Sam Camerman, who was reported missing in January 1945, and safe in the UK in May — others had a different story to tell. Manuel Raber from Medicine Hat bailed out while on his thirty-fifth mission and ended up in Stalag Luft III prisoner-of-war camp. Calgary-born David Rosenthal was on his twenty-third mission in January 1944, when his aircraft was hit by enemy fire just after a bombing run over Berlin. Rosenthal was captured and also imprisoned in Stalag Luft III, where he acted as a watchman during the building of the tunnels for what became known as “The Great Escape”. Philip Waterman was shot down January 1944, and he too was held in Stalag Luft III, as was Herbert Ludman of Lethbridge. Prior to his capture and imprisonment, Ludman had been stationed in Italy during liberation, and when not flying missions, he gathered items for refugees and worked with other servicemen to settle child survivors on farms. After a forced march across Germany that led to many POW deaths, Rosenthal and the other southern Alberta POWs were liberated by the British Army in May 1945.

While stories of the RCAF personnel often focus on the experiences of those serving overseas, far more of the airmen and women served in Canada. The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP) operated hundreds of schools in Canada training pilots, wireless navigators and other members of airplane crew from Canada and Britain and other parts of the Commonwealth, Europe, and the United States. The Royal Air Force No. 34 Service Flying Training School opened in Medicine Hat in early 1941. Esther Raber’s family entertained Jewish servicemen training at the school at their Medicine Hat home. Many of the southern Alberta Jewish RCAF enlistees worked at the various training schools across Canada. A number of Jewish airmen from across Canada met their spouses through their postings to the Calgary schools.

Those working as airplane maintenance crew at the BCATP sites faced heavy demands with aircraft being used multiple times during the day. There were often accidents, some fatal. Military historian, David Bercuson, estimates that as many as 3,000 instructors, staff and student pilots may have died in training. Two of southern Alberta’s Jewish cemeteries have headstones marking the burial sites of young Jewish foreign servicemen killed while training in the area; Solomon Lavine from Calgary died while in training in Port Stanley, Ontario. Calgarian Phil Pomerance,

1. NO. 1385530	2. RANK OR RATING Leading Aircraftman	3. SERVICE CASTLE	4. CHRISTIAN NAME Barrington Vincent
5. UNIT OR SHIP No. 34 S.F.T.S., Medicine Hat.	6. DATE OF CASUALTY 17th September, 1941.	7. S.G. FILE NO. 791-C-373 229954107/449/1.	8. RESIDENCE C. of E.
9. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY 1385530 LAC, Castle, B.F. had completed one hour's pilot navigational training with his instructor, F/O, Hinder. He was then sent solo in Oxford A1.97 to practice navigational exercises. On his first take-off at 15.50 hours he was seen to go into an almost vertical climb as soon as he left the ground, and then did a stall turn to the left into the ground. The aircraft was completely wrecked, and LAC. Castle was seriously injured, suffering a fractured skull and broken legs and arms, of which he died after admission to the Station Hospital. Subsequent inspection of the aircraft revealed that the tail trimming was within half a turn of being wound right back. The aircraft was the same in which Castle had received dual instruction from his instructor immediately before. Wind - approx. 25 m.p.h. No civilian personnel were injured on the ground.		10. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN Mrs. S.M. Castle, WIFE Barrington House, Wilmington Road, London, E.2., ENGLAND. Mother - Mrs. Prentice, Dolphin Square, London, S.W.1, England. Father - Deceased. Date of birth - 8th July, 1910.	
11. LOCATION OF BURIAL AT TIME OF CASUALTY Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada.			
NOTE:—Items 10, 11 and 12 are not to be completed until grave is permanently located.			
12. CEMETERY "Hillside" Cemetery	13. LOCATION OF CEMETERY Medicine Hat, ALTA.	14. GRAVE LOCATION H. half of 32 Lot 11 Block 399 R.A.F. Section	15. REGISTERED NO. OF GRAVE I.W.G.C. As 1846 ADSTONE ERECTED
16. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TAKEN Yes	17. EXPOSURE NO. G.242-243-244.	18. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE AND CEMETERY SUPPLIED TO A.F.H.Q. Ottawa. Next-of-Kin.	
19. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF SHEET.			

Military record for RAF Leading Aircraftman Barrington Castle, noting burial and headstone in Medicine Hat

in charge of personnel records at a flight training school, was tasked with the difficult job of writing next-of-kin letters for those killed in training accidents.

Fifty Canadian Jewish airmen were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) or Distinguished Flying Medal (DFM). Captain David Dworkin from Calgary, was a bombing leader of 432 Squadron. In recognition of his exemplary service, which included 33 missions, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in August 1945.

While the vast majority of the Jewish RCAF volunteers left the military at the end of the war, a few, like Calgarian pilot Jack Cahan, did continue their service. Cahan was part of the RCAF from 1943 to 1965. David Davids from Lethbridge originally enlisted in the RCAF as a band member, but as a scientist with a university degree in agriculture, he was quickly transferred to the research section. When he left the service at the end of the war, he went to work for the Defence Research Board. Post-war at least one Jewish Calgarian, Edward Lavine, enlisted in the RCAF. His brother Solomon had served in the RCAF during the Second World War until his accidental drowning in 1944; Edward died at the age of 23, two years after he enlisted, when his RCAF F-86 crashed during a routine training flight.

The small Jewish community of southern Alberta has made a significant contribution to the RCAF with a number of young men from the community making the ultimate sacrifice for Canada. May those who perished and the veterans who returned from service be honoured and remembered for their sacrifices in the battle to preserve freedom.



David Dworkin receives the Distinguished Flying Cross. JHSSA #451

For information on all of our World War I and II veterans please visit the database on jhssa.org.

Pioneer Women *Continued from Page 1*

a receipt issued by Corresponding Secretary Mrs. H. Kelson to Mrs. J. Joffe shows that greetings sold for as little as a dollar. By the 1970s, the price had quadrupled.

The Rosh Hashanah Greetings booklet was a popular fundraiser for decades. Also standing the test of time were Yizkor Teas, Donor luncheons, Passover and Membership Teas, Child Rehabilitation Drives, Dollars for David, fashion shows, and bake sales. (In later years, phone-a-thons, direct mail appeals, scholarship galas and casinos were popular).

A 1962 issue of *This Week in Calgary*, welcomed delegates to the Pioneer Women's Western Harvest Conference held October 27 to 29 at the Palliser Hotel. Joining Calgaryans were women from Edmonton, North Battleford, Prince Albert, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, and Vancouver. The conference was significant enough to Calgary tourism that it made the front page of the issue, and rated a multi-page insert in a publication that promoted local highlights like square dancing, pro wrestling, dances and art exhibitions.

Pioneer Women chapters active during the 1960s included Omna, Rachel and Dimona, each of which was represented on a Pioneer Women Council that, like the chapters, met monthly. (Other chapters through the years included Rose Cohen, Mona, Jaffa, and Tikvah as well as a Young Women's Division in the mid-1980s.)

In 1963, Pioneer Women State of Israel Bonds "Chairman" Sarah Steinberg was credited in the Calgary Jewish News with "selling more bonds than any woman in the city."

In November 1969 — some three years after Pioneer Women became an independent charitable organization in Canada (that is, separate from its American counterpart) — Sarah Lubinsky, Esther Lichstein and Rifka Goodwin represented Calgary at the Second Triennial Convention in Toronto. Mary Berman won the draw for a trip to Israel and an Israeli Bible for recruiting the most new members in Calgary. The following September, Berman represented Calgary at the "World Seminar of Pioneer Women of Canada" in Israel.

In May 1970, Tillie Shulman received a mother of the year award at a Mother's Day Luncheon held at Shaarey Tzedec Synagogue. Her contributions as founder of both Pioneer Women and the I. L. Peretz School were celebrated.



Pioneer Women, Rachel Chapter, 1980. JHSSA #561

l-r standing: Debbie Krovitz, Shirley Shecter; seated: [guest], Perla Gankin, Roni Glaisher, Esther Chetner, Ellen Kravson, Penny Glaisher, Sabrina Aldrich; on floor: Monica Purkin, Elly Aldrich

Following Pioneer Women's 1976 rebranding as Na'amat in Israel and the Diaspora, an ad in the *Calgary Jewish News* read, in part: "We are pleased to announce the birth of Na'amat...on June 2nd, 1977 at 8:00pm." At first the organization was known as Pioneer Women-Na'amat and, later, solely as Na'amat, based on the Hebrew acronym for Nashim Ovdot U'Mitnadvot — Movement of Working Women and Volunteers.

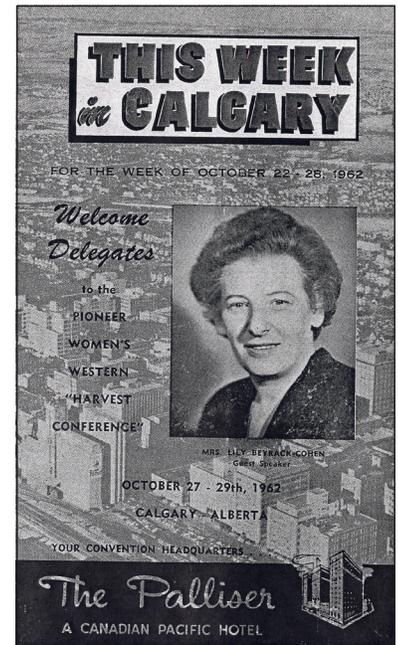
The October 1980 issue of *Canadian Pioneer Women* (Vol. VI, No. 3) features a list of Calgaryans supporting "Spiritual

Adoptions" in Israel, including Lilly Wolfman. The following June, Wolfman and Rifka Switzer — a 30-year member and former president of the Rose Cohen chapter — were honoured at a Spiritual Child Adoption Program. Mary Austin and Lily Horodezky were similarly honoured in 1981. Later known as Adopt-a-Child, a version of the program still exists today.

In the inaugural issue of *The Jewish Star* (August 22-September 4, 1980), an ad refers to Ester Laing as President of Pioneer Women-Na'amat in Calgary. Less than three years later, Laing and her husband Jack made the ultimate Zionist choice: aliyah. In a February 1983 issue, *The Jewish Star* states that the couple "... will be fulfilling a long-time dream of settling in Israel."

While Na'amat lost one stalwart member, it gained another when Stephanie Sacks became inaugural president of the newly-established Ariel chapter in the mid-1980s. It eventually merged with another chapter to become the Yachad chapter, still going strong today. Chapter growth was supported by field workers like Muriel Macklin (c. 1970s), and Karen Greenberg (mid-1980s), and Andrea Davis, professionals tasked with recruiting and supporting members.

The 1990s and 2000s saw new fundraising events, including the Na'amat Calgary Annual Bingo and Auction Night (1992-2009) — a highly-anticipated event on the community social calendar. Musical fundraisers included a *Fiddler on the Roof* Sing-Along (2007), a *Grease* Sing-Along (2011), a concert by mezzo-soprano Leah Field (2014), and *Red Hot Mama: A Sophie Tucker Cabaret*, featuring Edmonton singer Melanie Gall (c. 2016). Proceeds supported various Na'amat initiatives including the ongoing *School Supplies for Kids*, established in 1997. It was a source of pride for Na'amat and Jewish Calgary when Sacks was honoured with a 2007 YWCA Women of Vision Award recognizing the positive impact she and her chaverot had made by providing thousands of backpacks filled with school supplies to Calgary kids



"This Week in Calgary", October 22-28, 1962

Pioneer Women *Continued from Page 4*

temporarily housed, together with their mothers, at local domestic violence shelters.

Another significant Na'amat project, begun in the early 2000s, was to spearhead local participation in the Coalition of Jewish Women for the Get, a network devoted to supporting *agunot* (women chained to failed marriages because of their husbands' refusals to grant Jewish divorces). The work done by the coalition — which included representatives from other Jewish women's organizations — was later assumed by Jewish Family Service Calgary.

With increasing challenges facing both the Jewish and wider communities, the dedicated members of Na'amat Calgary have continued the work begun almost 100 years ago. They honour the vision of those pioneering women who came before them, proudly raising funds for services both in Israel and at home, with an emphasis on the health, well-being, and education of women and children. A hearty *mazal tov* to them and to the fondly-remembered founders who, inspired by Golda Meir, set it all in motion.

Sarah Lubinsky: a pioneering leader

As her biblical name suggests, Sarah Lubinsky (1900-1983) was one of the matriarchs responsible for the birth of Pioneer Women — now Na'amat — in Calgary. Lubinsky, though small in stature, cast a giant shadow, serving in multiple ways for five decades and inspiring others to follow in her footsteps.

Honoured multiple times for her dedication to Pioneer Women and her community, Lubinsky was the 1967 Jewish National Fund Negev Dinner co-honouree together with Hadassah powerhouse Charna Shapiro. Some 11 years later, she and Rifka Switzer traveled to Israel for the Fifth Triennial Convention of the Pioneer Women-Na'amat Organization of Canada in Israel. Highlights of the trip and concern for Golda Meir, whose failing health prevented her from attending the conference, were captured by Eva Reid in a December 15, 1978 article in *The Albertan*. In the article, Lubinsky reminisces about a talk given by Golda in Calgary at the Alhambra dining room in 1933.

On June 12, 1980, Lubinsky was honoured by Pioneer Women-Na'amat at the Shaarey Tzedec Synagogue. Her nephew by marriage, Morris Shumiatcher, delivered a moving tribute. Preserved in the JHSSA archives, Shumiatcher's words offer fascinating insights into Lubinsky (nee Sarah Epheemova Rivkin), who was born in the Russian *shtetl* of Tsche-Tschersk and settled in Calgary together with her husband, Zalman (Ziama) Lubinsky, in 1926.

By then, Sarah had proven her chops as an independent, capable and working woman. Thanks to her mother's efforts, and her own resourcefulness, she was well-educated and, in Shumiatcher's words, "...entered the mainstream of contemporary learning in Czarist Russia, when girls, especially Jewish girls, had virtually no access to secular learning."

Working as a *modistka* (hat designer), Sarah earned enough to fund her education as a pharmacist and thereafter "became the first and the only girl-pharmacist" in Tsche-Tschersk.

Following the 1917 October Revolution, Sarah's family fled their *shtetl*, where terrifying pogroms were omnipresent, and sought the relative calm of Gomel where she met her future husband.

Seeing no future in Russia, the couple, wed in 1923, settled in Calgary.

Five years later, Sarah was recruited as a member of Hadassah by local founder Marcia Goldberg but soon "threw herself into the work of the Pioneer Women with the same zeal that she had brought to her profession in Tsche-Tschersk, and to her husband's business [the Cosy Corner Store] in Calgary," Shumiatcher said.

Shumiatcher credits Sarah "...for managing 36 of the 39 editions" of the organization's Rosh Hashanah Greetings booklets, adding that the Pioneer Women Donor Luncheons "were of her making" and that she "laboured at all 40 of them."

"She bridged the age of narrow parochialism and crossed into the age of science and technology. She built a bridge between the old world and the new; between Asia and North America; between Gomel and Calgary; between Calgary and Jerusalem," said Shumiatcher.

Working woman, volunteer extraordinaire and bridge builder — not to mention cherished mother and grandmother — Sarah Lubinsky was the archetypal Pioneer Woman. A new generation continues her legacy, making life a little easier for women and children in Israel and here at home.



Sarah Lubinsky, 1967. from JHSSA #898

New to the Archives

JHSSA was recently surprised by the donation of a 1928-1930 Hebrew Ladies Aid minute book, with two 1929 receipts tucked into the pages. A photocopy of the book had been in the office for many years, with a note indicating that the location of the original was unknown. Imagine our delight when it turned up in a box belonging to Charna and Archie Shapiro, whose daughter, Judy, has no idea how it ended up with them.

Corrections from our Fall 2024 issue:

In the Negev dinner photo, the man on the left is Mel Nagler not Bert Promislow; the unidentified man is [*sheliach*] Avner Moses.

In the article about Lewis Ginsburg, the *Herald* journalist identified as Tom Keiser is actually Tom Keyser.

Alberta's first Rabbi – Hyman Goldstick

by Jack Switzer (1937-2012)

Reprinted from *Discovery Volume 4 No 3, Spring 1994*

Alberta's first Jewish religious leader was a commuter, who served both Edmonton and Calgary as *schochet*, *mohel*, teacher and rabbi for several years early in this century.

Hyman Goldstick lived in Edmonton, but made frequent visits to Calgary in 1906 and 1907. He continued to serve the Edmonton Jewish community for several years, and went on to become a prominent Alberta civic leader.

He was born in Latvia in 1882, and began his *yeshiva* studies at 16 in Tels, Lithuania. He graduated in 1902. After practicing for a year as a *schochet* and *mohel* in Latvia, he married, and the Goldsticks moved to Leeds, England. They soon moved to the United States, and came to Toronto in 1904.

Historical sources are vague about Hyman Goldstick's ordination status. He used the title Reverend and although he performed many "rabbinic" duties, it is possible that he was not, in 1906, a fully-qualified rabbi. [editor's note: In an interview recorded in 1973 for the Provincial Archives of Alberta, Rabbi Goldstick stated that it was after his examination by the "chief rabbi of Quebec" that he was offered the job in Edmonton — see * below]

Religious quorums had begun in Calgary in 1894, and were carried on whenever possible by laymen. Community leaders in the new province of Alberta, notably Jacob Diamond in Calgary and his brother William Diamond in Edmonton, petitioned Canada's Chief Rabbi to send someone West.

Goldstick's own narration of his sojourn here is as follows:

"During the year 1906 the Jewish people of Edmonton and Calgary made inquiries to the Rabbis in Montreal to seek a young Rabbi to organize the scattered Jewish People of Edmonton and Calgary, providing he possesses all the qualifications of a *schochet* to provide kosher meat; a *mohel* to perform circumcisions; to serve as a Hebrew teacher and to serve as a cantor; that is, to conform to all Jewish tradition.

"At that time I had a position in Toronto as a *schochet* and Hebrew teacher. I was advised by a Rabbi in Toronto who knew that I was qualified in all the requirements, that I would be the proper man to organize the Jewish people in the west, to interview Hirsch Cohen in Montreal.

*"I spent three days in Montreal and during that time Rabbi Cohen gave me a thorough examination of all my credentials



Rabbi Hyman Goldstick

that I had from Europe, the United States, and Canada; as well as an oral examination of everything. I was sure that my proficiency satisfied him as he gave me his own credentials in writing with his signature attested thereto dated August 2nd, 1906.

"I was given transportation and expenses to travel directly to Edmonton; I arrived on August 6, 1906. A meeting was called to arrange as to salary and other important matters. Those present were A. Cristall, Wm. Diamond, Jack Berkman, Mr. Frankenberg, Mr. Boyaner, Mr. Philipson, Mr. Hyman, Mr. HB Kline, Mr. Shugarman Sr. (of Strathcona on the south side).

"On my advice it was agreed to name the congregation the Edmonton Hebrew Association and it was registered under that name."

Goldstick arranged for a "kosher corner" in a local butcher shop, using a new block and new utensils. He was able to conduct high holiday services at the I.O.O.F Hall. Late in 1906, he presided at the first Jewish funeral in Edmonton.

"During 1906-07 I had to travel to Calgary twice a week," Goldstick recalled, "and sometimes more often, to provide kosher meat for

the Jewish people there and other times to perform weddings or circumcisions."

[This account] differs somewhat from an interview he gave to an *Edmonton Journal* reporter. The article says Goldstick came to Calgary first, intending to base his Alberta operations from that city, but he became discouraged with the small number of Jews there.

"I was a very idealistic young man back in those days. I wasn't satisfied in Calgary, so I moved to Edmonton."

Calgary had only twelve Jewish families in 1907, but despite this small number, the community formed a religious organization, the House of Jacob congregation. Hyman Goldstick was undoubtedly instrumental in the formalization of this religious effort, as he had been the previous year in Edmonton.

In Calgary, the House of Jacob was soon able to hire its own religious leader, Mr. S. Sosinsky, so it was no longer necessary for Goldstick to keep on commuting from Edmonton.

Goldstick continued to serve the Edmonton Jewish community until 1912, when he moved to Edson, Alberta where he operated a men's clothing store. While in Edson, he served on the school board, town council, and became mayor. He spent his retirement in Edmonton, and died in 1978, at 96.

2025 Membership List

Membership donations are used to support the projects and operations of the JHSSA, which is an independent, self-sustaining organization. We issue official tax receipts for all donations. Our membership year is from September to August. Welcome to our new members.

Special thanks to all those members who have made donations beyond their membership fee. Please inform our office of any inadvertent omissions or corrections so we can include them in our next issue.

Individual

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Barrie Carnat
Sarabeth Carnat
Jeri Churgin
Bernice Cohen
Reva Faber
Lynda Feingold
Arthur P Fishman
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Ila Hardin
Les Horlick
Roberta Hulmes
Shaun Hunter
Linda Jeffery
Lily Joffe
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Stanley Major
Chana Nachal
McKereghan
Chuck Mozeson
Lila Mydlarski
Stephen Nagler
Jason Nisenson
Susan Podlog
Eileen Quan
Karen Roth
Marilyn Segall
Heather Shapero
Gayle Sherman
Laura Shuler
Sandy Shuler
Esther Silberg

Alan Silver
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Karen Sklar
Tillie Sklar^{z1}
Jerry Snukal
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Jackie Busheikin
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Sara Drabinsky
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Deb & Paul Finkleman
Bruce & Halley Girvitz
Henry & Avrona Gutman
Don & Riki Heilik
David Joffe
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Irena Karshenbaum
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Jewish Genealogy Tips

by Sandra Morton Weizman

There are several ways of researching and documenting when and how one's ancestors first immigrated to Canada. If you know the name of the ship that brought them here, you can begin by searching online for the ship's name. If you know the date and location from where they set sail and whether they arrived at Pier 21 in Halifax or Grosse Ile, near Quebec City, you can search for the ship manifest where you may find your family's names listed.

In 2000, my father wrote a memoir where he stated that he, as a young child, and his family spent some time in Warsaw visiting an uncle before boarding a ship to Liverpool. He was very specific that they set sail from Liverpool to Quebec City on July 30, 1925. Several years ago, I checked online and found that the S.S. Doric Steamship set sail on that date. The website only included the list of first and second-class passengers, and I was certain that my father's family would have sailed steerage. I checked the online listing of passengers through the Library and Archives Canada website, but their names did not appear. For seven years, I had wrongly assumed they came to Canada on the S.S. Doric.

Only recently did I discover that it's important to check passenger lists from the few days before and after the departure date concerned. Obviously, my father's memory was not quite as precise as I had thought, as we were able to find his family's names listed as passengers on the S.S. Athenia that set sail from Liverpool to Quebec City on August 1, 1925. In addition, often the spelling of names and even the names themselves may have been altered. My father's name was Izzy Motkovich (later changed to Fred Morton), Izzy being short for Isaac. Yet, he was listed as "Rachmil, Boy, Age 7" in the ship's records. Perhaps Isaac was his middle name. His sister Lee, was identified as Blema; his sister Ann, as Frondlach; his brother Larry, as Chaim. Hymie had been his name in English, and so

he was the only one who ended up with a version of the same name. On the ship manifest, their surname was listed as Motkewicz, later changed to Motkovich. It should be noted that the family name in Poland was Smotkowicz. It is unknown when, or by whom, the "S" was dropped: my father, his brother who emigrated before him, or the immigration officer.

If you are interested in locating the ship manifest for your own ancestors' arrival in Canada, you can search by going to the following:

Passenger Lists itemized below are all fully searchable on Ancestry.ca, with some records also available on FamilySearch.org. Border Crossing records for crossings between Canada and the USA are available on both Ancestry and FamilySearch.

- LAC Passenger Lists: <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/immigration/immigrationrecords/passenger-lists/Pages/introduction.aspx>
- Passenger Lists 1865-1922: <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/immigration/immigrationrecords/passenger-lists/passenger-lists-1865-1922/Pages/introduction.aspx>
- Ocean Arrivals, Form 30A, 1919-1924: <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/mass-digitizedarchives/ocean-arrivals/Pages/ocean-arrivals.aspx>
- Passenger Lists and Border Entries, 1925-1935 – Nominal Indexes: <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/immigration/immigration-records/passenger-lists-border-entry-1925-1935/Pages/introduction.aspx>

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