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שֵׁם טוֹב
SHEM TOV

JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF TORONTO

Serving the Greater Toronto Area since 1985

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AN EARLY JEW IN TORONTO: JACOB MAIER HIRSCHFELDER

by Dr. Rolf Lederer, a JGS Toronto past president

According to Stephen A. Speisman in *The Jews of Toronto, A History to 1937*, there were only three identifiable German Jewish families in Toronto in the mid-19th century: the Nordheimers, the Rossins, and the Hirschfelders. Jacob Maier Hirschfelder was a tutor in Hebrew at King's College when "only professing Christians" could teach there. But it is well known that Hirschfelder was a member of St. Paul's Cathedral and that he is buried in St. Paul's Cemetery together with his wife and a son, Frederic.

In 1988, I received a letter from a lady in Québec, Joan Gilday, who informed me she was a great-granddaughter of Jacob Maier Hirschfelder. She was interested in knowing about Hirschfelder's ancestry, especially where he was born and particularly if he could have been born Jewish. Over the ensuing years an extensive correspondence between us developed. Joan would follow up my suggestions by writing to various institutions, and when time permitted, I would do some research too.

Joan knew that her great-grandfather had been born in Germany, and Baden-Baden in the state of Wurtemberg seemed to ring a bell, but inquiries at the Standesamt in Baden-Baden were not conclusive. There was no doubt in my mind that the name Jacob Maier Hirschfelder was incontrovertibly Jewish. What evidence was there to prove this?

I decided to do some "digging" at King's College and the University of Toronto (U of T) archives in the hopes of attaining some personal details of Hirschfelder. Some interesting facts emerged, while dealing with his appointment, salary, applications for leave, etc., but nothing pertaining to this age or birthplace. I was apprised of the fact that Hirschfelder had published several books and curiosity led me to track down his publications in the Rare Book Collection at U of T's Robarts Library. There were six items as follows:

1. *A Key to German Conversation* (1845), Toronto.
2. *An Essay on the Spirit and Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry* (1885), Toronto.
3. *The Biblical Expositor* (Toronto), new ed. 2 vols., Toronto, 1882-85.
4. *The Scriptures Defended: Being a Reply to Bishop Colenso's Book on the Pentateuch and the Book of Job* (1863), Harry Rowsell, King Street, Toronto.
5. *Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul* (1876), Rowsell & Hutchinson, Toronto.
6. *A Wife to Her Sister* (1878)

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Message From the President

The *Not-for-Profit Corporations Act* came into effect on October 17, 2011. This Act, rather than the provincial version which is scheduled to come into effect on July 1, 2013, impacts our Society. Although we comply, the new Act provides us with an opportunity to review our by-laws, corporate structure and change our legal name.

The Board decided to move ahead quickly, and we have adopted a new name, Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto. On all of our literature, we will indicate that we serve the Greater Toronto Area. We have also improved our logo, as you see in this edition of *Shem Tov*.

Some may ask: so what has this got to do with genealogy. Not a lot, really, except that we (Members of the Board) have a responsibility to ensure that our Society follows all of the legislated rules and regulations.

On the other hand, if we were to choose a name for our Society that reflects our most important mission, what would it be? My vote would go for "The Society for Jewish Family Stories". As Lil Blume wrote in her introduction to a writing workshop: "Stories passed from one generation to the next carry the values, culture and unique mythology of that family. Knowing our family's stories solidify our sense of belonging.....Some stories may be unjustly forgotten, but no stories are unjustly remembered."

When I started my genealogy work, it was all about events, dates and locations. Now it is all about stories. I hope that over

the next few years we can encourage all of our members to write their family stories and share them with fellow members.

Finally I would like to acknowledge Bill Gladstone, a past president of our Society, who over the past number of years has been donating the royalties from one of his books to our Society. Allow me to express our appreciation to Bill on behalf of all of our members.

Wishing everyone an enjoyable summer.

Let me know if you will be attending the IAJGS Conference in Boston.

Les Kelman - President, JGS Toronto

From the Editor

Here's why you should write to shemtov@jgstoronto.ca:

- To send your comments and questions
- To submit items of interest, photos, research tips or details of your latest genealogical discoveries
- To write a personal account (up to 1,500 words) for On A Personal Note.
- To connect with one of the authors featured in this issue

The next *Shem Tov* deadline is September 4th.

Looking forward to hearing from you!

Judy Kasman

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The Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto), now known as Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto, was founded in 1985 and serves the Greater Toronto Area. It is volunteer-run and is registered as a non-profit charitable organization. Membership is \$40 per calendar year, \$18 for students. Programmes are held monthly from September to June. Programme details, including topic, speaker and location, can be found in *Shem Tov* and on our website.

The goal of JGS Toronto is to provide a forum for the exchange of knowledge and information through programmes, workshop and guest speakers, thereby promoting an awareness of genealogy within the Jewish community. JGS Toronto is a member of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (www.iajgs.org) and is affiliated with the Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto.

New members are always welcome.

www.jgstoronto.ca

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Please see below for locations of each programme.
For updates, please visit www.jgstoronto.ca

Wednesday, June 19th at Temple Sinai
8 p.m. (doors open at 7:30)

Brickwalls & Breakthroughs

Hear personal stories of discovery by JGS Toronto members.

Coming this fall...

Wednesday, October 2nd at 8 p.m.

Toronto 20th Century History and Genealogical Research

This talk offers researchers a better understanding of who the City's newcomers were and why they came here. Speaker James F. S. Thomson has taught courses and workshops at Toronto Branch Ontario Genealogical Society, the Toronto Reference Library and U of T's School of Continuing Studies.

More programmes to come! Look for notices via JGS Toronto emails, at www.jgstoronto.ca, and in the September issue of *Shem Tov*.

Historical Maps of Toronto: A New Website by Nathan Ng

Toronto resident Nathan Ng has created a website, *Historical Maps of Toronto: a collection of maps to amuse, delight and inform*. (You can tell from this title that Ng enjoys this endeavour and that he wants others to similarly enjoy!)

Ng writes:

I would like to inform you regarding a website that I just recently launched, that some members of your genealogical society may find of peripheral interest:

[Historical Maps of Toronto \[oldtorontomaps.blogspot.com\]](http://oldtorontomaps.blogspot.com) is an easy to use, free online collection of notable pre-1900 maps of Toronto. These maps connect us to the city as it used to be, providing remarkable glimpses into our history and heritage.

I hope the site will facilitate discovery and exploration, as well as serve as a convenient resource for casual research [It's also enormously fun to randomly browse through]. The site is intended to serve as a companion resource for my previous mapping project, [Goad's Atlas of Toronto -- Online!](#)

I would be delighted if you could please share this with anyone (in your membership or otherwise) who would enjoy it or find it useful as a resource...

Kind regards,
Nathan Ng



33rd IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy

August 4th to 9th, 2013
at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel

co-hosted by the

**International Association of
Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS)**
and the
**Jewish Genealogical Society of
Greater Boston (JGSGB)**

Keynote speaker: Aaron Lansky,
Founder and President of the National
Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, Massachusetts

A bus tour of the Center will be available
during the Conference.

Conference registration is now open.

<http://iajgs2013.org>

Never Forget to Lie Film by Marian Marzynski

Film-maker Marian Marzynski's life was saved when, as a five year-old Jewish child, he was smuggled out of the Warsaw Ghetto and was entrusted to a Catholic priest. For the past forty years, Marzynski has lived in the United States. His very poignant hour-long film, *Never Forget to Lie*, in which, almost seventy years later, Marzynski returns to the Warsaw Ghetto with other child survivors of the Ghetto. This film aired on PBS on May 14th but can also be viewed at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/never-forget-to-lie/>

At this link, in addition to this film are other related articles, particularly those by other child survivors who were featured in the film.

Bella & Max Wilder: Reflections

by Sandee Sharpe, granddaughter of Bella & Max Wilder
Sandee Sharpe is a new member of JGS Toronto!

Part 2. Part 1 appeared in the March issue of *Shem Tov*.

Their first child, Ann, was born on April 5th, 1940. When Bella became pregnant with her second child in 1944, their landlady was furious and would not, under any circumstances, allow two children to be running around in her house! Bella and her Mother were quite close - unfortunately Shifra passed away in December 1944 just before Bella's second son, Stan, was born on January 21, 1945.

Max borrowed money from the family and found a house in Toronto's west end, just north of Dundas between Dufferin and Lansdowne, quite far from the Jewish area around Spadina and Bathurst. Their first and only house at 300 Brock Ave. was purchased in 1945 for approximately \$4,500. Bella and Max rented out most of the rooms, to repay the family loans, the mortgage and medical bills for their children for mumps, measles, chicken pox, whooping cough and scarlet fever.

Max never owned a car but he did treasure his bicycle and rode it everywhere until traffic became too heavy and he switched to streetcars. Both Max and Bella took the streetcar anywhere and everywhere across the city. In 1945 they had a party line phone that was shared with other people in different houses. On Saturdays, Bella, Ann and Stan would head to the movie theatre to tap their feet to the musicals. When Max's youngest sister Sarah got married, she moved into a house on Grace St. between College and Harbord. Max would often take Ann and Stan there to visit his Mother, Sister and her family. Bella and Max's family was complete with the birth of Allen Wilder on January 23, 1951.

In 1955, the family purchased their first black and white TV. Now the soaps weren't only on the radio - they were on TV too! Sundays were spent at Sunnyside Beach with the adults playing cards and all of the kids hanging out together. Bella's favourite activities included listening to soap operas on the radio, playing cards and Mah Jongg with her friends and going out to the Bingo. She adored baking and cooking and was forever transporting treats by streetcar to friends. At home, her door was always open for coffee and her famous apple strudel. She was the telephone contact for the Independent Women's Group to which she belonged for over 50 years. She also kept in touch with her family in Israel and England, writing letters frequently.

In the late 1960s, Bella worked briefly in a factory sewing lace on dresses. She was an excellent seamstress. At one time, Bella even went to the local high school to learn how to read and write in English but she still loved to speak Yiddish. Like her mother back in Poland, Bella insisted that her children have a strong Jewish education and they were sent each day after school by streetcar, to the Borochoy School located on College between Bathurst and Spadina to learn about their heritage of being Jewish. Sunday mornings, Bella enjoyed reading her Jewish newspaper and listening to the Jewish hour on the radio. Max enjoyed coming home after work to a quiet house to watch

TV. He liked reading the newspaper daily and walking with his friends downtown. Max knew the man who used to play music for the dancing girls at the Zanzibar and he was known to visit for an occasional beer! Max had his own sewing machine in the basement and made pants to order for customers and friends. Although he had a passion for lottery tickets, he was truly content with what he had, particularly true for his life in Toronto. Max would often take his young children for a walk after dinner, treating them to ice cream while Bella was at the Bingo.

Bella and Max shared a life filled with both joy and pain. Their son, Stan, passed away in June 1974 from Hodgkin's Disease. They lit candles every Friday night and kept a traditional kosher Jewish home. They belonged to the (orthodox) Dovercourt Shul for many years and when it was sold to Shaarei Shomayim, Bella continued to take the bus north to Shul every Saturday morning. Bella's brothers were very important to her, particularly Victor with whom she had lived when she first arrived in Toronto and she spoke to him daily on the telephone.

Together, Bella and Max enjoyed their family, particularly their grandchildren and great grandchildren. Stan married Linda and had Stephen. Al married Diana and had Jennifer and Adam. Ann married Norm Sharpe and had Jeff and Sandee.

Bella frequently stayed with her grandchildren, Jeff and Sandee, when Ann and Norm travelled, at times on very short notice!

Bella lived with Max at 300 Brock Ave. for 48 years until 1993 when, as a result of her battle with Parkinson's disease, she moved into Cheltenham Nursing Home. Max would come and visit Bella every day at Cheltenham, often staying for dinner and then going home to the house on Brock St. Max joined Bella at Cheltenham in 1994 as a result of an ongoing battle with Alzheimer's.

Ann and Norm's son Jeff married Miriam (Pomerantz) who gave Bella and Max the honour and pleasure of great grandchildren. Justin, Tyler and Ryan have great memories of ice cream birthday cakes with their Little Bubby and Little Zaida at Cheltenham!

Max passed away on July 25th, 1999 and Bella passed away on December 18th, 2002.

In the eyes of their great grandchildren, they'll be forever remembered for birthday parties, "cut the cake" and "take a picture"! For them, Little Bubby and Little Zaida meant time for celebrations. For all of us, it's a time to celebrate their lives, their families and our cherished memories!

With many thanks to Bella and Max (Bubby and Zaida) who gave us many reasons to reflect; to all who contributed their memories; and to the family who continues to keep their memory alive.

Sandee (Shifra) Sharpe

An Early Jew in Toronto - continued from Page 1

As I leafed through these books written in the 1840s and 1860s, I was dumbfounded to read that one book, *Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul*, was dedicated to his late brother, Aaron Hirschfelder, who drowned between “Oakland and San Francisco.” Joan was not aware of this (or any other) brother. I now turned my focus on California speculating there might have been an obituary in a San Francisco newspaper. Much to my amazement, Aaron’s accident was recorded and mention was made that his burial took place in the “Home of Peace” Cemetery in Colma, California. I was acquainted with this cemetery, having visited the graves of Sophie Steiner, daughter of my great-great grandfather’s brother, Solomon Lederer, and Sophie’s descendants there. Discovering that Aaron Hirschfelder had been buried in a Jewish cemetery confirmed his Jewishness and, by extension, that his brother, Jacob Maier, was of Jewish extraction.

Years later, Joan received further information about Aaron’s death from a great-granddaughter who reported that Aaron’s body was only recovered several months after he disappeared and positive identification was based on the boots he was wearing. Even later, personal item such as a pocket watch and personal papers were reclaimed from the sea. The great-granddaughter also indicated that there was yet another brother, Emmanuel, who had lived in Texas.

One of Jacob Maier’s sons, Rodolph, had a distinguished military career in Toronto—records having been unearthed at the Military Academy. Together with his wife and children, he moved to Chicago and the family were members of the Catholic Church. Rodolph seems to have abandoned his family and he was never heard from again.

Jacob Maier’s Will was probated shortly after his death in 1902, in which he made some minor bequests to St. Paul’s Cathedral; the bulk of his estate was divided between his grandchildren, who could receive their inheritance upon reaching the age of 21, but no grandchild could receive any funds until his daughter, Maud, married or died. Maud remained a spinster, eventually moving to England, and apparently she had an unscrupulous lawyer handling her affairs. By the time she died, very little money remained.

St. Paul’s is a very impressive building on the south side of Bloor Street East, between Jarvis and Church Streets, an edifice I would walk past almost on a daily basis, a few hundred yards from my office at Bloor and Sherbourne.

When I learned that Hirschfelder was buried in St. James Cemetery at Parliament, a few hundred yards east of my office on Bloor Street, I walked over there one lunch-time in the summer (having obtained the exact location from Joan Gilday) and took several photographs of the stone. There is nothing inscribed on the stone to indicate Hirschfelder’s Jewish origin (not unexpected!). The family home is located at 10 Maple Avenue, 0.5 km from my office, going north on Sherbourne Street, and then turning slightly east. I drove past the address one day but couldn’t take any photographs, as the property is surrounded by a high wooden fence.

With the help of Google, I discovered that one of Hirschfelder’s books was reprinted in 2012 in paperback format, and

the text is used by students at U of T.

My goal when I was first approached by Joan Gilday was to help her definitively determine her great-grandfather’s Jewish ancestry by locating a birth record for him. Unfortunately, this did not happen, and despite the fact that it was generally recorded that he was born in Baden-Baden, it appears his brother Aaron was actually born in the nearby town of Rexingen, one of a large family. Jacob Maier is not recorded in this family, though the oldest is named Jacob, born in 1814. Jacob Maier’s birth date always appears as 1819 in any Canadian document.

A positive link to his Jewish ancestry was provided by the discovery that his brother Aaron had been buried in a Jewish cemetery near San Francisco.

Descendants of Aaron were located and two older brothers, Emmanuel and Jacob Hirsch Moses, were identified. Joan was thus connected to a large number of relatives of whom she had no previous knowledge.

Joan Gilday died in August 2007 at the age of 84, having been predeceased by her second husband (of 28 years), Angus Gilday (December, 2004), in his 90th year. [Respective obituaries appeared in the *Montréal Gazette*.]

Resources Utilized in Toronto

- 1) University of Toronto Archives
- 2) King’s College Archives
- 3) City of Toronto Archives Assessment Rolls. JMH listed as “E” after 1869-70
- 4) University of Toronto Robarts Library, Fisher Rare Book Collection
- 5) Upper Canada College Archives.
- 6) St. Paul’s Cathedral Archives
- 7) Military Academy Archives.
- 8) Anglican Diocese Archives (no records for University College)

Non-Canadian Resources

[JG = Joan Gilday, RAL = Rolf Lederer, SL = Sherrill Stern Laszlo (CA)]

- 1) Central Archives for History of Jewish People, Jerusalem (JG)
- 2) Standesampt—Baden-Baden, Germany (JG)
- 3) San Francisco, California: Newspapers, burial records, synagogue records (SL)
- 4) Chicago (JG)
- 5) Bureau of Missing Persons—Israel(RAL)
- 6) Canadian Census 1901 (JG)
- 7) Mr. Friedrich Wollnershauser - Abstracts of vital records in Rexingen, 2 Hirschfelder families (JG)
- 8) Max Hirschfelder (Clayton, Missouri)
Descended from Jacob Hirsh Moses Hirschfelder Max
- 9) Joseph O. Hirschfelder, descended from Aaron Hirschfelder but not related to Max Hirschfelder (RAL)
- 10) *A Biographical Dictionary of Canadian Jewry 1909-1914*, Tapper, L.F. (RAL)
- 11) *Encyclopedia of Southern Africa*, Rosenthal, Eric (1961)
Bishop Colenso - First Anglican Bishop of Natal Colony 1814-1883) (RAL)

BRANCHING OUT

by Elaine Cheskes

Jewish Genealogy on the High Seas and in the Big Apple: Coincidence or Bashert?

On August 29, 2010 my husband Albert and I were onboard a ship whose destination was the British Isles. When a newsletter was delivered to our cabin, we read the following announcement with surprise, and excitement:

CONGRATULATIONS TO
REGINA AND MAURICIO CHESKES
ON THEIR 40th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

In the early 1960s, we visited Mexico City where we met my husband's relatives who emigrated from Odessa to Mexico. However, it had been fifty years since we had seen or had contact with them. Upon reading this announcement, we immediately realized that Mauricio was the son of Manuel Cheskes whom we had met in Mexico. We requested immediately to be connected to Mauricio's stateroom, and subsequently introduced ourselves. Within minutes Mauricio and his wife, Regina, aka Linda, greeted us in the lobby where we asked and answered countless questions. All of us were ecstatic and overjoyed to be reconnected with family. Mauricio recalled that his parents spoke about relatives who lived in Toronto. The likelihood of this chance occurrence in the Atlantic on an ocean liner of 1,000 passengers was most extraordinary. The "word" spread among the passengers and their congratulatory wishes made us feel like celebrities. Shortly after the cruise, we travelled to Houston, Texas to meet for the first time Mauricio and Regina's daughter Ingrid and her family.

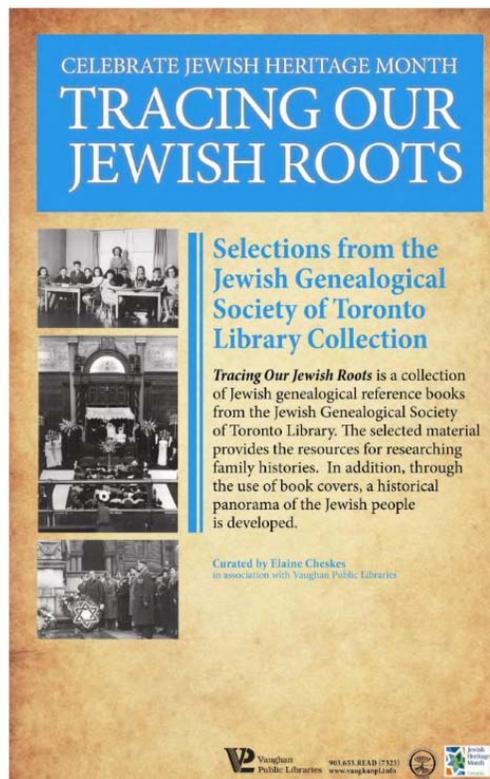
Several months later, to our overwhelming astonishment, in a large New York hotel, upon entering an elevator, Mauricio and Regina exited. Again, we considered the probability of this fortuitous encounter in a city of over 8 million people.

Since our initial meeting, we have maintained contact through emails. Although we have not established the exact link that connects both families, Albert and Mauricio were aware that one branch of the Cheskes family emigrated to Canada while the other emigrated to Mexico. Perhaps their grandfathers were brothers. I am continuously trying to obtain as much information as possible through vital documents to establish relationships between family members. Jewish genealogy: *coincidence or bashert?*



Jewish Heritage Month

In celebration of Ontario's 2nd annual Jewish Heritage Month, a display entitled *Tracing Our Jewish Roots: Selections from the Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto Library Collection* was shown at the Bathurst Clark Resource Library throughout the month of May, 2013. The exhibition was curated by Elaine Cheskes in association with the Vaughan Public Libraries (see photo on p. 8).



MISSING LINKS

I am seeking any information from anyone regarding the following families (with the non-traditional Jewish names of) Wilson and Bennett in the Toronto Jewish community during the period 1850 to 1900, specifically, one Harry Wilson who married Mary Wilson and had a son, Frank, and Meyer Bennett who married Sarah Bennett and had a daughter, Lena.

Sandford Silverburg,
North Carolina

Editor: If have any responses to this query, please send them to shemtov@jgstoronto.ca

ON A PERSONAL NOTE - My Journey Back to Cecil Street by Deborah Sacrob

We are pleased to present another story written by a JGS Toronto member.

Whenever I find myself downtown, whichever area I find myself in or what path I take, the adventure becomes a history lesson for me. I can easily trace back four generations of ancestors who called Toronto home; presumably their stomping grounds were deep in area of the downtown core. Of course, their Toronto is very different from mine. My adventures take me through some of the same neighbourhoods where my ancestors lived, worked and helped. My latest adventures have provided me with an entirely new chapter of my history. The location of this new chapter is Cecil Street.

In Toronto in 1918 (or likely a year or two prior), a group of determined Jewish women took it upon themselves to create a home for the Jewish elderly and infirm. These women undertook this task with the simple goal of helping. All through history, the Jews have had to look after themselves. This situation was no exception. The Jewish community of Toronto had to take care of its own people and not rely on others for help. The Jewish elderly needed a caring environment where they felt comfortable, where their language(s) were spoken and where they were to eat kosher meals.

I know the stories of the founding women of the Jewish Home for the Elderly because two of these remarkable people have had a direct effect on me. They are my great grandmothers. Lena Goldstein and Sarah Marcus. These women recognized the needs of the Jewish community, and along with their friends, they set out to serve those needs.

Lena Goldstein came to Toronto in 1900 from Poland with her husband and three year-old daughter. They chose Toronto because branches of family were already established here.

Sarah Marcus emigrated from Galicia to New York in the late 1890s and came to Toronto from New York City in 1910 with her husband and their six children, all of whom were born in the Lower East Side of Manhattan. They also had family in Toronto.

The first location of the Jewish Home for the Elderly, established in 1918 was 25-33 Cecil Street, which is south of College Street, running east of Spadina Avenue. In those early years, the women were members of a group known as Ezras Noshem (translation: women helping) Society. This was a charitable women's group that collected money door-to-door. These women, who really had very little themselves, were helping their community at large. They were immigrants in a new land, raising their large families, never losing sight of their surroundings. They recognized a need and they did everything they could do to fill that need. I am in awe of their resourcefulness. Today the Jewish Community of Toronto continues to reap the benefits of the tremendous work done by Lena Goldstein and Sarah Marcus and many others, as their Jewish Home for the Elderly grew into what has become Baycrest Centre, a world-renowned facility for seniors..

Today in 2013, when you enter Baycrest on Bathurst Street south of Wilson, there is a picture of those determined ladies of the Ezras Noshem Society who so tirelessly worked to establish the Jewish Home for the Elderly. Among those featured are my two remarkable great grandmothers, Sarah Marcus and Lena

Goldstein. I am so proud of the fact that I am named after Lena Goldstein.

I thought that the Baycrest connection would be the end of the story about my Cecil Street heritage, but to my astonishment it is not.

I have new 2013 chapter of my story, since nearly 100 years later, the same block on Cecil Street is now a part of my life. In 2001, I became a member of Gilda's Club Greater Toronto (a cancer support centre). For ten years, Gilda's Club was located on Lombard Street in downtown Toronto. In April 2012. Gilda's Club opened its doors at its new location at 24 Cecil Street, right across the street from the original location of the Jewish Home for the Elderly. Thus begins my journey back to where it all started.

I walk along Cecil Street, looking at the buildings, wondering about the families, especially the women, who lived there and helped others. Today there are descendants of the founders, each of whom had a story. So much history as I walk along that street. I am fortunate and I am inspired by those memories.

I dedicate this story to my great grandmother, Lena Goldstein, and her daughter, my grandmother, Martha Caller, and to Martha's daughters, my aunt, Adeline Caller Cohen, and Selma Caller Sacrob, my mother, a founding member of JGS Toronto.

Send your story of up to 1,500 words to shemtov@jgstoronto.ca

Our April 24th Special Event at the North York Central Library

On April 24th, an overflow crowd attended at the Auditorium at the North York Central Library to hear Dr. Anthony Polonsky speak about his new three-volume book, *The Jews in Poland and Russia*. Dr. Polonsky, a professor at Brandeis University, brought with him his years of scholarship and wealth of knowledge as he outlined the subject matter of his book. This event was co-sponsored by The Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation and North York Central Library.

Dr. Polonsky's talk was preceded by a presentation by Peter Jassem who had just returned from Poland to attend the opening of Warsaw's Museum of the History of Polish Jews built on the site of the Warsaw Ghetto. This opening coincided with the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Peter was able to show the audience photos, including those of dignitaries and of ceremonies that he had attended in his official capacity as Canadian Representative of this new Museum.

Many of our readers will know that Peter Jassem has for many years been the Chair of the Toronto Chapter of The Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation and is a member of JGS Toronto.

To see more about Dr. Polonsky's lecture and about Peter Jassem's recent trip to Poland, including his wonderful photos taken in Warsaw, please visit The Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation's website: www.pjhf.ca

To see more about the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, go to www.jewishmuseum.org/pl/en

Jewish Heritage Month Ontario, May 2013 A Pictorial Review

UJA Federation: Inaugural Celebration on April 30th at the Lipa Green Building



Prof. Irving Abella, Co-author of *None is Too Many*, speaking about the history of Jews in Ontario and their numerous contributions to society in the Province

At Queen's Park on May 29th



DJ Schneeweiss, Consul General of the State of Israel, giving address at closing reception of Jewish Heritage Month.

At the Barbara Frum Library

Three of the five panels from the Ontario Jewish Archives' travelling exhibit, *Being Jewish in Ontario: A Pictorial Celebration*, which was displayed at 10 different venues throughout May



MPP Mike Colle, who had introduced the *Jewish Heritage Month Act* in the Ontario Legislature; it was passed in February, 2012



Rabbi Erwin Schild, rabbi emeritus, Adath Israel Congregation, offering closing remarks



Left to right, Henry Blumberg (moderator), Harvey Glasner, Dr. Cyril Gryfe, Elaine McKee, Neil Richler, all JGS Toronto members and authors in book, *Tracing Our Roots, Telling Our Stories*, who spoke to a rapt audience on May 7th.

At JGS Toronto Event on May 29th

Harvey Glasner with speaker, Dr. Albert Engelhardt of New Mexico, who gave a presentation about his Toronto upbringing and family genealogy on May 28th

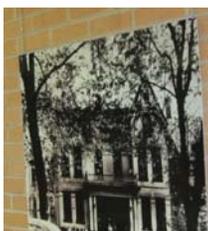


John Diener, Vice President, and Hymie Reichstein, President, of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Ottawa, speaking about the History of the Ottawa Jewish Community



At Baycrest Centre

Photograph of the original Old Folks' Home on display, *Baycrest's Legacy: A Look Back at Cecil Street* (see p. 7)



At Bathurst Clark Resource Library, display entitled *Tracing Our Jewish Roots: Selections from the Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto Library Collection* (see p.6)

The All Galicia Database

Excerpts from March 13, 2013 presentation
for the Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto

by Pamela Weisberger, President & Research Coordinator, Geshher Galicia

Geshher Galicia (“The Bridge to Galicia”) is the Special Interest Group (SIG) for people researching their Jewish roots in the former Austrian province of Galicia. Geshher Galicia members (dues payable annually) receive the quarterly journal, “The Galitzianer”, and receive access to the new website’s Member’s Only Portal. There they can search the “Geshher Galicia Family Finder,” and back issues of “The Galitzianer”, and also have access to videos, articles and original documents not available on our public site. Our re-designed website is up and running. Navigate the drop-down menus to learn about the projects and search all of the databases:

The Galician Archival Records Project (GARP) is the new “umbrella” project under which all other Geshher Galicia research projects exist. Our extensive “Cadastral Map & Landowner Records Project” will be included, but the availability and desirability of other types of records required the expansion of the scope of our projects. This list is not finite. Quite the opposite. We are committed to growth, and new projects can be suggested, and added, at any time by our members.

The GARP Project currently includes:

- The Cadastral Map & Landowner Records Project
- The Voter, School, Tax and Tabula Records Project
- The Vital Records & Census Project
- The Polish Magnate Record Project
- The Austrian State Archives Project
- The Stanislawow 1939 Census & Passport Applications Project

How is the Galician Archival Records Project organized? What is its focus? Most of these projects are town-centric. We focus our research on Galician towns in an attempt to acquire many different types of records containing genealogically relevant data. As many of the Galician vital records held in Polish archives have already been indexed by JRI Poland, we are committed to indexing Galician records which reside in Ukrainian archives. We are also acquiring “province-wide” documents, which contain details on every Jewish community in Galicia, including lists of religious communities, Kahal leaders, teachers in Jewish religious and state-mandated schools throughout Galicia.

The All Galicia Database - AGD

This search engine currently features 192,268 records from 60 different data sources, covering everything from birth, death, marriage and divorce records to phonebooks, school and landowner records from the former Austro-Hungarian province of Galicia. Today, this area is part of eastern Poland and western Ukraine. The majority of this data exists nowhere else

online and the AGD is expanding daily.

Although Geshher Galicia's primary focus is on helping people research their Jewish roots in this region, the diverse “community” sources of information contained in this database often contain names that span all of the ethnic and religious groups who lived in the area. If you know people who are researching their Galician ancestors of Ukrainian, Ruthenian, Polish or German background, encourage them to take a look. It is our hope that by working cooperatively with other ethnic research groups, we can eventually include even more records that will prove useful to genealogists everywhere.

You can search by given name and surname, with wildcard search options. You can also use our new Beider-Morse Phonetic Matching (BMPM), with Daitch-Mokotoff soundex to follow soon. A special innovation on this site, created by Brooke Schreier Ganz, is the ability to search by “kinnui” or Jewish nickname or name variant. For example, searching for Rebecca will also turn up matches for names like Rivka, Becky, etc. A search for Hersch will find spelling variants like Herz and Hirsch, but also Tzvi and Zvi. If you’ve ever wondered about the myriad searching possibilities for your ancestors in a database like this, check out the informative JewishGen info file on the subject:

<http://www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/GivenNames/>

We also welcome submissions of new data sets. Do you (or someone you know) have copies of records that could be helpful to genealogists and historians researching Galicia? Examples are school yearbooks, *landsmanschaften* records, *Chevra Kaddisha* books, *mohel* records, tax lists, census records, etc. If so, please let us know, and we can add them here so everyone can benefit. We do not have a requirement for a minimum number of records, so any type of material is welcomed.

CADASTRAL MAPS, LANDOWNER, VOTER & SCHOOL RECORDS: NEW HORIZONS FOR GENEALOGISTS

A “cadastre” is an “official register of the quantity, value, and ownership of real estate use in apportioning taxes.” When Austria acquired Galicia, in order to establish a reliable basis for land taxation, the authorities initiated land and tax reforms that required the measurement of all land properties in the new crown land. The Josephine Cadastre was initiated in April 1785 and formally ended in the fall of 1788. The Franciscan Cadastre followed in 1817, ordered by Francis I. During the mapping process numerous texts were created: descriptions of the communities, and the names of property owners, a register of house numbers and their owners, a list of property owners and their parcels numbers, including the map sections where these parcels could be located.

Continued on page 12

Discoveries from the 1765 Polish Census

A Shem Tov Interview

For fifty-three years, Alex Korn's and Shayndel Tallan's families had lived in Toronto without knowing of each other's existence until a former JGS Toronto president, Henry Wellisch, introduced Alex to Shayndel in 2001. He had figured that since both had a common ancestral name, Lapides, and a common ancestral town, Działoszyn, in Poland, that perhaps they were related. Alex's mother and father had come to Canada in 1948 as refugees from post-war Europe from a DP camp, while Shayndel's grandfather, Pinkus-Shulem, had come to Canada in 1912.

Shem Tov interviewed Shayndel and Alex following new discoveries they had made in a census taken in Działoszyn on January 2, 1765.

Shem Tov: Thank you for granting us this interview. After Henry Wellisch introduced you to each other, what happened next?

Shayndel: Alex and I got together to examine our respective genealogical charts. Alex's family tree was based on family memory and the Mormon-filmed metrical records from Działoszyn, or Zaloshin, as the Jews called it. My family tree was based on the research my cousin, Fern Stimpson, had done interviewing family members. There was no link in our charts, however. But when Alex and I got together on July 3, 2001 at the Toronto Public Library to examine the Mormon-filmed metrical records from a neighbouring town, Kłobuck, where my ancestors had moved to, that gap was closed. We discovered a document that made the connection. We were cousins!

Alex: Right. From the Działoszyn metrical records, I had traced my mother's lineage to the family's patriarch, Lapides Majorowicz (born c. 1753). I learned that my mother's maiden surname, Lapides, originated from the given name of this ancestor. As a given name, Lapides (or Lapidot), which means "torches", is rare. It appears in *Judges* 4:4 as the husband of Deborah; the midrashic commentaries tell us that it was his nickname. According to Lapides Majorowicz's 1825 death certificate, he was born around 1753 to Major Moskowicz (Meir, son of Moshe) and Brandla Faywiszowiczowna (Brandla, daughter of Faivish).

Shayndel: Lapides was the great-great-grandfather of my grandfather, Pinkus-Shulem.

Alex: There is a tradition in my mother's family that we are descended from a holy man by the name of "der *maggid* Faivish", or "Faivish, the *maggid*". A *maggid* is a preacher, though not a rabbi necessarily. My mother told me that he was buried in the older of the two cemeteries in Zaloshin and that her *bubbe* used to go to the cemetery and place a stone on the *matzeiva* (headstone) to ask for benevolent intervention from Heaven. Another feature of the tradition was that his power of intervention extended only to the tenth generation. Nothing in the family tradition, however, enabled me to determine the historical time in which he lived nor how we are genealogically connected to him.

In the spring of 2012, another Działoszyn researcher, Martin Davis of London, UK, acquired a copy of the 1765 census of the Jewish population of Działoszyn from a Polish archive. This was a surviving fragment of a much larger, Poland-wide census that recorded the Jewish population, including men, women, children and household servants, for the purpose of calculating a per capita taxation of the Jews after the dissolution of the Council of the Four Lands in 1764. The historian, Raphael Mahler, had access to the entire census before the Second World War when it was largely destroyed, and the census was the subject of his Yiddish-language demographic study of 18th century Polish Jewry: *Yidn in Amolikh Poyln in Likht fun Tsifern* (*Jews in Historical Poland in Light of the Census: The Demographical and Socio-Economic Structure of the Jews in the Kingdom of Poland in the 18th Century*) [Warsaw, 1958].

On page 13 of Mahler's book, we read how the census was to be undertaken: in each town, three Jewish census-takers were assigned. They were the town's rabbi, the current Council Elder (*parnas ha-chodesh*) and the *shamash* (sexton), together with a Catholic official. Before the recording began, the census takers were required to swear an oath in the synagogue, wrapped in a *tallit* before a Torah scroll, to the effect that the lists were accurate, that all Jews, young and old, including those who were not currently in town, were registered, and that no one was left out, that no favours were given nor taken, and that no promises were made nor received. Further, in order to ensure the accuracy of the census, to this oath was added the following curses:

"And, if we have not recorded honestly, and have left people out, may our G-d bewilder us, [our G-d] Who destroyed Sdom and 'Amorah in a hellish fire and who annihilated Pharaoh in *Yam Suf* (Sea of Reeds). May the earth swallow us up as it did Dathan and Abiram. May we be stricken with leprosy as it struck Na'aman and then infected Gehazi. May we be erased from The Book (of Life). May we be transformed into a stone as was Lot's wife who became a pillar of salt. May we become swollen and may the great sicknesses destroy us and may the devils take us down, both in body and in soul, to Gehinom." [Mahler, footnote, pages 20, 21].

Thus, we can safely rely on the accuracy of this census for our genealogical research.

One discovery is a man by the name of Fajbus (=Faivish) and who is a "*kasnodzieja*". A quick flip through a Polish dictionary reveals this to mean "preacher". He is without a doubt "*der maggid Faivish*"! The census shows that his wife was Ester and that they had a servant named Rywka and that they lived in the "Dom Szkola", or schoolhouse.

Shayndel: What was curious, however, was that Lapides, our patriarch, was not in the census. But the oath ensured that no one would be missing. He would have been about 12 years old, which is too young to be out of town studying in *yeshivah*, and even if he was not living in Działoszyn at the time of the census, the census law would have required that he be registered nevertheless.

Continued on page 11

Discoveries - continued from page 10

Interestingly, a couple, Major Mosiowicz and Broyna, were listed in the census living in the Council Elder's house. Broyna is a variation of Brandl and so this couple must be Lapidés' parents, Meir, son of Moshe, and Brandl/Broyna, daughter of Faivish. The census also lists their sons, Michał and Chlawne [pronounced Chlavne]. While Michał is the Polish equivalent of Michael, Chlawne looks like a clerk's spelling mistake. What kind of a name is Chlawne?

Alex and I thought about this and discussed it between ourselves, but we couldn't come to a satisfactory conclusion. I thought maybe we could get a clue from Alexander Beider's *A Dictionary of Ashkenazic Given Names* [Bergenfield NJ: Avotaynu, Inc, 2001]. So, on page 352, I found the name Khlavne. The name Khlavne was "derived from the Slavic root meaning firebrand. . . . Khlavne was used as a *kinnui* for the biblical *Lapidot*, derived from the common noun meaning torches. . . ." According to Beider, Lapidot was not used before the beginning of the nineteenth century. So, it seems likely that Khlavne had been used in the eighteenth century and Lapidot (or Lapidés) in the nineteenth for the same person. Thus, we had found our eponymous Lapidés ancestor. He was indeed listed in the 1765 census as living in Działoszyn, just under another name.

Alex: So, now Shayndel and I could proudly enter "*der maggid Faivish*" into our Lapidés family charts. He is the maternal grandfather of our patriarch, Lapidés Majorowicz, and is estimated to have been born in the early 1700s. Counting the generations between him and me, I determined that I am the ninth generation after the *maggid*. So, his heavenly intervention is still good.

Shayndel to Alex: You know, our ancestral surname could have been Chlavne.

Shem Tov: I can barely pronounce it myself.

Alex: Good thing it was Lapidés instead of Chlawne.

Shem Tov: Lapidés seems to just roll off the tongue.

Alex and Shayndel together: Yeh, it does sound a lot nicer.

Shem Tov: Thank you, Alex. Thank you, Shayndel.

Editor: Thanks to Cheryl (Shayndel) Tallan, JGS Toronto member and her cousin, Alex Korn, for this entertaining and informative interview!

NEW MEMBERS

JGS Toronto is very pleased to welcome
as new members:

Eleanor Bonder	Gerry Pozner
Jerry Scherer	Ann Sharpe
Sandee Sharpe	William Sklar

**From Nu? What's New?
The E-zine of Jewish Genealogy
From Avotaynu
Gary Mokotoff, Editor**

From Volume 14, Number 21 | May 26, 2013

U.S. Version of *Who Do You Think You Are?* Returns to Television

The U.S. version of the family-history based show *Who Do You Think You Are?* returning to television on July 23 at 9 pm Eastern, 8 pm Central time. It will appear on the TLC network. Ancestry.com will remain as the sponsor. There will be eight one-hour episodes in the new season.

❧

From Volume 14, Number 20 | May 19, 2013

PBS To Air "Genealogy Roadshow"

The Public Broadcasting System (PBS) will add a new series, "Genealogy Roadshow," to its Fall lineup. Four programs are scheduled to air Mondays, September 23–October 14, 9–10 pm Eastern Time from Nashville, Austin, Detroit and San Francisco.

Experts in genealogy, history and DNA testing will use information provided by participants such as family heirlooms, letters, pictures, historical documents and other clues to hunt down information.

❧

From Volume 14, Number 19 | May 14, 2013

Jan Meisels Allen Wins NGS President's Citation

The National Genealogical Society has awarded its President's Citation to Jan Meisels Allen, vice president of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies. The citation is given in recognition of outstanding, continuing, or unusual contributions to the field of genealogy or to the society. The National Genealogical Society President selects the recipient.

❧

From Volume 14, Number 16 | April 21, 2013

JRI-Poland Begins Linking Its Index to Actual Records

Jewish Records Indexing – Poland has started its previously announced plans to link their 5 million indexed records to the actual digital images of documents in Polish archives. The first major collection comes from fond 300 of the AGAD - Archiwum Główny Akt Dawnych (Central Archives of Historical Records) in Warsaw. More than 700,000 records are now linked to images.

When using the JRI-Poland index at <http://jri-poland.org/>, if there is notation "View Image" in the leftmost column, it means the image is now online. Write down the contents of the "Akta" column. This is the consecutive entry number in the AGAD register. Then click "View Image." This may not bring you to the exact page of the document but it will be close. The last four digits of the URL is the page number of the sub-collection. Increasing/decreasing the value will take you to the next/previous page.

❧

The above is reprinted with permission of Gary Mokotoff. Past issues of *Nu? What's New?* are archived at <http://www.avotaynu.com/nu.htm>

The All Galicia Database - *continued from page 9*

Value of Cadastral Maps and Landowner Records to Genealogists:

(Search our new Map Room at:
www.MapRoom.GesherGalicia.org)

School, Voter Records, and Householders List – Given Name & Surname

Polish Magnate Landowner Records

Austrian State Archives – Vienna -<http://www.oesta.gv.at/>

Results for Researchers

Gesher Galicia's researchers continue to extract the names from these sources and include them in the searchable All Galicia Database (www.search.GesherGalicia.org). The fact that the AGD fully translates the document text will ensure a richer, more complete portrait of your town. Even if you have no vital records linking your family to their towns, these alternate sources may surprise you by adding a personal element to your research.

www.GesherGalicia.org ~ click "JOIN GG"

Letter to the Editor

I am a recent member who lives in western New York. I am very excited to get the newsletter every quarter as it is such an informative read. I always look for any internet helps in the issues. I only wish I could just drive up to Toronto and attend your programs. They look wonderful and perhaps would help me in my quest to find more info on my father's relatives who came to N. America through Canada. Some stayed in Canada & some went on to the US. If you ever hear of anymore passenger lists getting indexed, that would help me a lot. I haven't had a lot of luck getting some passenger list info as the time frame when these relatives came to Canada wasn't indexed. But I am always on the hunt. Thanks also to the kind people who emailed me a photo of a relative's headstone from a Toronto cemetery. Your publication is topnotch and I always look forward to receiving the next issue.

Thanks to all for your efforts,

Joyce Thompson

Spencerport, NY

WALK BACK INTO HISTORY AND DISCOVER WHERE YOU CAME FROM

Trace your ancestry. Discover your story.



Aufgang Travel has extensive experience in organizing Jewish Heritage tours in Eastern Europe and around the world. On our tours you can explore the history and background of your ancestors, visit synagogues, monuments and even places where only traces of your Jewish heritage still remain. We can even arrange a personal guide and private tours.

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