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שם טוב SHEM TOV

JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF TORONTO

Serving the Greater Toronto Area since 1985

VOLUME XXX No. 2

June 2014 Sivan 5774

JRI-Poland and the Museum of the History of Polish Jews Announce New Agreement

We are proud to announce the signing of a new 8-year agreement on promoting research and education between Jewish Records Indexing - Poland and the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw.

The new agreement expands the relationship of the two organizations to promote research and to educate those interested in their family history and the rich and historic culture of Polish Jewry, which dates back almost 1,000 years.

Under the new agreement, the Resource Center at the Museum will have special access to the JRI-Poland database and website. Museum staff will educate visitors and respond to their questions regarding the database and provide guidance to Museum visitors on the next steps they can take in their research of family roots in Poland.

In 2010, the two organizations signed a cooperation agreement linking their websites. The Museum's "Virtual shtetl" portal commemorates and includes research resources for more than 1,800 Polish towns. JRI-Poland has Jewish record indices from the birth, marriage, death and census records for the Jewish families that lived in many of these same towns. By using the two websites together, researchers are able not only to obtain names, dates and sources of family records from JRI-Poland, but are also able to learn about town histories from the Museum's web pages.

The Museum of the History of Polish Jews documents Jewish experience in Poland - from the early settlements ten centuries ago, to the modern revival of the Jewish community.

www.jri-poland.org www.jewishmuseum.org.pl/en

Stanley Diamond, Executive Director

For the Board of Jewish Records Indexing - Poland

NEW MEMBERS

JGS Toronto is very pleased to welcome
as new members:

Irving Rosen

Mitchell Shnier

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Message From the President

Volunteer Appreciation

How many volunteers does it take to keep our Jewish Genealogical Society running smoothly? You might be surprised (or not) at all the work that goes on in the background. In recognition of the many contributions, I would like to declare the month of June as JGS Toronto Volunteer Appreciation Month, because without volunteers we would not have a Society. We would be missing out on a framework that gives us ideas for advancing our own research and the tools to make it happen.

Our Board members meet once per month to coordinate current activities. This is in addition to their individual responsibilities because every Board member fulfils a specific role. The Board also explores opportunities for new initiatives that will keep our Society relevant. A very big thanks to all of our Board members whose names are listed at the bottom of this page.

Recently a number of volunteers have “stepped down”, and we also need to extend our thanks to them: many thanks to Faye Blum (Programming), Michael Keleman (Welcome Desk) and Karen Lasky (Publicity) for their significant contributions over the past years. Now we are very keen to find members to replace them in their roles.

We understand that some of you might be concerned about time commitments so we have started breaking down roles into smaller “bites”, on the premise that every little bit helps. So let us know how much time, or how little time, you have, and we will find a way to let you help while respecting all your other commitments. This includes those who travel to escape our winters. Please contact me at

president@jgstoronto.ca
Your Society Needs You.
Les Kelman,
President, JGS Toronto

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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

At Temple Sinai, 210 Wilson Avenue, unless otherwise stated
Doors open 30 minutes prior to events.
Members: Free • Non-Members: \$5

Wednesday, June 18th at 8 p.m.

Brickwalls and Breakthroughs

Come and hear the stories of our members!

Sunday, August 10th at 10:30 a.m.

WOMEN OF VALOR: Female Resisters to the Nazis

Joanne D. Gilbert, author, will discuss her newly-published book which was based on her inspiring interviews with women who actively defied Hitler's regime. Ms. Gilbert is an adjunct professor at the University of Southern Nevada.

Wednesday, September 10th at 8 p.m.

Eric Bowman will speak about **Caribbean Jewish Communities**. Mr. Bowman and his wife Penny are citizens of Barbados. He has studied the history of Bajan Jews for many years; he frequently lectures to groups who come to Barbados on cruise ships and/or tourists/visitors to the island. Dr. Simon Kreindler will also be present to comment on 20th century Jewish immigration/emigration. Both men have an intimate knowledge of the families who played important roles in the culture and development of Barbados.

HOLD THESE DATES:

Wednesday, October 22nd

Wednesday, November 5th - Holocaust Education Week Programme

Wednesday, November 26th

Wednesday, December 17th



The IAJGS Annual Conference Coming Next Month!

For Conference news, go to
<http://conference.iajgs.org/2014/>

IAJGS LIVE!, a live internet broadcast of the Conference, will be offered for a second year thanks to the generous support of [FamilySearch](#)



JGS Toronto Mentoring Program

Need to break through your brick wall?
Need documents, letters, or postcards translated?
Need help deciphering tombstones?
Need sources?

Contact me in person at a JGS Toronto meeting or by email at mentoring@jgstoronto.ca. At a meeting you can also place your question, including your name, email address and telephone number, in the Mentoring Box located at the Welcome Desk. A response is guaranteed!

I will either answer your question(s) to your satisfaction or suggest someone who might have the expertise or experience to help you.

You can also place your question, including your name, email address and telephone number, in the Mentoring Box located at the Welcome Desk. A response is guaranteed!

Tip of the Month:

People might refer to their town by the Yiddish name which was/is not the official name, e.g. Shavel, Lithuania is actually Siauliai

Valerie Fox
JGS Toronto Mentoring Coordinator

Art Spiegelman Retrospective Comes to AGO

by *Judy Kasman*

From December 20th, 2014 to March 14th, 2015, the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) will be hosting an exhibition entitled *Art Spiegelman's CO-MIX: A Retrospective*.

New York City-based Spiegelman, who was born in Stockholm in 1948, won a Pulitzer Prize in 1992 for "*Maus*, a two-volume graphic novel that recounts his parents' lives in Nazi-occupied Poland and later at Auschwitz", according to the AGO's press release, which goes on to say that it "...was the first and only work of its genre to win..." this prize.

The Spiegelman exhibit will feature "three hundred works on paper ranging from trading cards to magazine covers", including original manuscripts of *Maus*.

For further information go to, <http://www.ago.net/ago-presents-retrospective-of-acclaimed-comics-artist-art-spiegelman-this-december>

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

A Family Search: What a Ride!

by Debbie Sacrob. JGS Toronto member

On February 20th, our Society paid a visit to the Ontario Jewish Archives (OJA) at the Lipa Green Centre. I attended as the Archives is a place that had long been an object of my curiosity.

I have always wanted to get a clear picture of the Sacrob Family which has been in Toronto since the 1890s. There is so much that I don't know about my family's history. This visit gave me the push I needed to embark on an odyssey that has far exceeded my expectations.

My great grandfather, Abraham Sacarob, settled in Toronto while his brother Peter settled in Haverhill, Mass. A third brother, Harry, never came to America. However, two of his daughters did: Miriam (Mushka) Sacrob Siegel settled in Toronto and Bessie Sacrob Dubin/Dubinsky settled in Chicago.

Miriam Sacrob Siegel died in 1920. She is buried in the Roselawn Avenue cemetery. She had four children, all of whom are now deceased. I have spoken to one of Miriam's granddaughters who has helped me enormously.

Bessie Sacrob Dubinsky died in Chicago in 1923. She is buried in the Waldheim Cemetery in Chicago. She, too, had four children, Sam, Irving, Morris and Lilian. They used the name Dubin or Dubinsky. I had no other information.

Throughout the United States there are about a gazillion Dubins/Dubinskys. I searched up, down and sideways, finding no link. Some indefinable force made me zero in on Lilian who was born in 1916, even though logic told me that:

- she could have settled anywhere in the States.
- she was probably long gone.
- if she married, I couldn't guess what her married name might be.

I took a chance, Googling "Lilian Dubinsky obituary". This is when the goosebumps started. Lilian Dubin Herst died in June 2013 in Wilmington, Delaware. The obit listed her parents as Bessie and Samuel Dubinsky. I knew that I had hit paydirt with this find. Lilian's son Jeff and his wife Sue live in Wilmington. I found their address and wrote them a letter, providing what I thought to be enough pertinent information, to assure them I wasn't a scam.

One week later I received an answer from an astonished, surprised, amazed, Jeff Herst. Jeff, Lilian's only child, grew up in Akron, Ohio. He didn't know much of his Mom's family. He thought his Mom's maiden name was Dubin; only after her death did he discover Dubinsky. As a young boy he remembered meeting two of her brothers. (He sent me what he had of their information.) In his mother's papers, he discovered the name Sacrob. Jeff checked me out on Google before responding. His response has been overwhelmingly positive. I also write to his wife Sue. As it turns out we share

some common health issues.

I had started this search two years ago, but stopped. Two years ago there would have been no obituary. Sue Herst would not have shared my health issue. We have discussed this. It is indeed *bashert* (fateful) that I embarked on this journey in 2014.

Jeff and Sue gave me the names and address of Harold and Barbara Dubin (cousin, son of Morris) in Arizona. I wrote them a letter similar to Jeff's, giving what I thought to be enough pertinent information to assure them that I wasn't a scam. Within two weeks, I heard from Barbara Dubin. We have been able to chat on the phone. She was aware of the name Sacrob. She has been amazingly helpful. Harold, suffering from advanced dementia, passed shortly after I spoke to Barbara.

Before embarking on this odyssey, I knew of one relative in Chicago, Eve Handler. I wanted to find out how she was related to the Sacrobs. Jeff didn't know of her name but Barbara did.

Eve Handler was at my brother's Bar Mitzvah in 1970. She had come with Bertha Siegel Ginsberg. They were close cousins. Barbara Dubin gave me the name of Eve's daughter, Sandra Lichtman, of Chicago.

Through more Google searching I found contact information for Sandra Lichtman. Once again I wrote my letter, similar to the two letters I had already written. A week later I received an email from Sandy, telling me that indeed she was the woman I was looking for. She, too, was familiar with the name Sacrob. She gave me her phone number. We have since spoken twice. I opened up all kinds of memories for her. Since receiving my letter, she called Barbara Dubin and they have had a good catch-up.

Sandy told me a lot about her mother. Eve Fine Handler, who was born in Toronto in 1910. When Eve was nine, her family moved to Chicago. I am still working on how Eve Fine Handler is related to the Siegel/Sacarobs. Sandy is so enthused that she has asked for regular updates.

Between Google and Ancestry.ca I have been able to put together quite an impressive puzzle. I have discovered three new sets of cousins originating from the Chicago branch. I am totally awestruck by the very warm, positive reception I have received from my new-found cousins.

Jeff and Sue Herst are close to me in age. This is a nice plus. Sandy and Barbara are somewhere around the 80 year mark. (I am too polite to ask!)

I also found family documents in Toronto indicating that our last name in the early 1900s was Sacarob. As my grandfather and his brothers approached adulthood, it seems that they removed the extra "a" and thus we became Sacrob. This is my work in progress, a journey I have to take. Wow, what a ride!

Searching For Roots in Spain and Portugal

by Harvey Glasner, Immediate Past President, JGS Toronto

For centuries, Holy Week religious processions of penitents in robes and peaked hoods, reminiscent of the dreaded KKK in America, march through the narrow streets of Spanish cities such as Malaga, Segovia and Seville. These sinister costumes are a dark reminder of the days of the Inquisition in the 15th century and beyond when Spain's Jews were rounded up, forced to convert, or face losing all of their properties, deported, and even worse, savagely tortured and murdered.

In the south of the country, it is chilling to hear the mournful notes of the *saeta*. These melodies, sung *a cappella* during Easter, echo the rising and falling chants of the *Kol Nidre*. It is believed by Flamenco experts that *conversos* sing the *saetas* to passing processions of life-sized images of Jesus and Mary to demonstrate their loyalty, but with a double meaning.

Doreen Carvajal, a correspondent for the *International New York Times* in Paris and author of *The Forgetting River*, has exhaustively studied her Spanish Jewish roots.

Her name, Carvajal, is Sephardic and translates to "lost place" and/or "rejected".

Carvajal is a convert to Judaism. Her father, grandmother and an aunt emigrated to San Francisco where she was born. She grew up as a practicing Catholic.

Her most significant breakthrough took her all the way back to the 16th century through her grandmother's line, to Isabel Arias Davila, wife of the first governor of Costa Rica, who emigrated from Segovia during the Inquisition.

With that name, she learned about the Inquisition trial that tangled the family's identity for generations and forced others to lead new lives as *conquistadores* in Spanish colonies. The patriarch was Diego Arias Davila whose family converted when he was a boy and whose son Juan was the bishop of Segovia for 30 years. The latter Davila often clashed with Tomas De Torquemada, the inquisitor who relentlessly investigated the bishop's family for any evidence of a double life.

Carvajal repeatedly tried to find any proof that her forbears were practicing Judaism in secret, as did so many Iberian Jews during the 15th and 16th centuries.



Genie Milgrom of Miami, Florida receives letters and emails "from all over the world" for those "in search of their pre Spanish-Inquisition Jewish roots". The daughter of Cuban parents who emigrated to Miami in the 1960s, she felt uncomfortable with being Catholic from an early age. She married a Jewish man, converted and, set out to prove her Spanish Jewish lineage. Like Carvajal, Milgrom's research took her from Latin America to Spain and ultimately to Portugal.

Amazingly she has been able to trace 22 generations, including several before the 1492 Edict of Expulsion from Spain that sent her ancestors into hiding in Portugal.

The family hailed from many small villages in a region in the north of Portugal known as *Tras-os-Montes* which means

"beyond the mountains". There, the *bnei anusim*, descendants of crypto-Jews, remain to this day.

The *anusim* are a very closely knit and wary group who do not easily reach out to accept strangers. However, Milgrom has been able to win their trust with the help of Rabbi Elisha Salas, the Rabbi of Belemonte. (Recently, Milgrom and her husband Michael made seders in the region for students of the rabbi.)

Genie Milgrom is the president of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Miami and author of *How I Found My 15 Grandmothers*.

For more of Genie Milgrom's story, see the back issue of *Shem Tov, My Fifteen Grandmothers*, September 2011, Vol. XXVII, No. 3, p.10.

Ontario Genealogical Society, Toronto Branch presents

*How Uncovering my Grandmother's Deepest
Secret Revealed a Rich Jewish Ancestry*
Speaker: Coral Grant

Monday, June 23rd from 7:30-9:30 p.m.
at North York Memorial Community Hall,
Burgundy Room
5110 Yonge Street, Toronto

Admission is free

All That Jazz

by Judy Kasman

Local jazz singer Jackie Richardson is the radio host of *Identities*, a series of six interviews of local jazz musicians who all were immigrants to Canada. At www.jazz.fm/identities/ you can listen to these hour-long shows. Episode 2 in the series features popular singer Sophie Milman, who is Jewish.

Jazz-lovers will know that Sophie resides in Toronto. She was born in Russia, then emigrated with her family to Israel, coming to Toronto as an adolescent about twenty years ago. The radio broadcast sheds light on her immigrant experience, her family and her career in music.

BRANCHING OUT

by Elaine Cheskes

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto's library collection is located at the Gladys Allison Canadiana Room, North York Central Library, 5120 Yonge Street, 6th floor, Toronto.

Third Annual Jewish Heritage Month Ontario

In celebration of Jewish Heritage Month Ontario, an exhibit entitled *Tracing Our Jewish Roots: Selections from the Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto Library Collection*, which I curated in association with the North York Central Library, was presented during the month of May 2014 at the North York Central Library, Gladys Allison Canadiana Room, 6th floor. Through the use of book covers, a historical panorama of the Jewish people was developed. The display highlighted archival records that described the cultures of Jews from the shtetls of Eastern Europe, and depicted the colourful traditions of Sephardic life in Spain and Turkey. Also featured was a chronology of Jewish emigration to Canada with the building of settlements from the Atlantic Coast to the Western Provinces. Early Toronto Jewry was captured with a pictorial history of immigrant life. The exhibit presented resources for the genealogist to research the fate of victims who were massacred in the Holocaust. In addition, the award that the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies presented in 2013 to the Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto for its publication, *Tracing Our Roots, Telling Our Stories*, was prominently displayed.

The JGS Toronto library collection provides important and invaluable reference books, particularly those that are not accessible online, for researching family histories.



Elaine Cheskes with her latest exhibit

Addendum to *Shem Tov* VOLUME xxx no. 1, March 2014, p. 4, Dr. Rolf Lederer: A Vital Part of *JGS Toronto: Avotaynu*

The American genealogy journal, *Avotaynu*, maintains an online index of selected articles from the years 1985-2011. The index is a guide for the genealogist to determine those areas of interest that may require additional research. Back issues, published within an entire year, from 1985-2011 are available **online** by subscription at a one-time charge of \$35.00. The relevant articles can be read and/or printed. In addition, a complete set of current and back issues of *Avotaynu* is included, for reference use, in the JGS of Toronto library collection that is located at the Gladys Allison Canadiana Room. Data from the author, title, and subject files from our online catalogue are continuously updated and available by accessing our website: www.jgstoronto.ca

Resources

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto Library Collection.



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Return of Genealogy TV Shows

The series "Who Do You Think You Are?" begins on July 23rd on The Learning Channel (TLC).

The shows will feature the genealogical searches of celebrities Jesse Tyler Ferguson, Lauren Graham, Kelsey Grammer, Rachel McAdams, Valerie Bertinelli and Cynthia Nixon.

EOB

On Tuesday, September 23rd, PBS will begin to air the second season of "Finding Your Roots" with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

Stay tuned to see the line-up of celebrities to be featured.

Visit Toronto This Summer!

Many people only explore their own cities when they have guests from out-of-town. But we are fortunate in Toronto to have great opportunities to act as at-home tourists over the summer months: there are many walking tours (many of free!) covering different parts of the city. These tours are led by knowledgeable guides so that everyone can learn more about different communities, their histories, architecture and gardens and at the same time get some exercise and fresh air!

Here are some ideas for you:

The **Royal Ontario Museum (ROM)** presents ROMwalks. Some are:

- **Heart of Toronto - Wednesday, July 2nd at 6 p.m. and Sunday, August 3rd at 2 p.m.**
- **The Annex - Sunday, July 6th at 2 p.m., Wednesday, August 27th at 6 p.m., Sunday, October 5th at 2 p.m.**

See the complete list at https://www.rom.on.ca/sites/default/files/imce/romwalks_2014_rev.pdf

❧

This is the twentieth year that **Heritage Toronto** has organized historic walking tours throughout the city, with the sponsorship of TD Canada Trust.

Some walks of note are:

- **Kensington Market - Thursday, June 26th at 6:30 p.m.**
- **St. Clair West: The Growth of a Streetcar Suburb - Sunday, June 22nd at 11 a.m.**
- **On Wednesday, July 9th at 6 p.m. , together with Ontario Jewish Archives -Dedication of a plaque at the Cecil St. Community Centre** (formerly the Ostrovitzer shul – see Cyril Gryfe's article in *Shem Tov*, *Carved in Stone: The Founding Families of the Ostrovitzer Synagogue*, March 2008, Vol. XXIV, No. 1, p.1.
Followed by Sense of Spadina Walking Tour at 6:30 p.m.
- **The Royal Alexandra Theatre and Its Neighbours - Sunday, August 22nd at 11 a.m.**

For a detailed listing, go to www.heritagetoronto.org/tours

❧

The **Ontario Jewish Archives (OJA)** has launched its new and improved website. A new feature is the *Research* tab where you can search the digital collection online.

Here are the tours offered by the OJA:

- **Sense of Spadina Walking Tours, Sundays, July 20th, August 24th, September 21st, 11 a.m., Rain or shine**
- Tour the Kensington Market area

❧

Pape Avenue Cemetery, dates to be announced

The Pape Avenue Cemetery was established in 1849 and is Toronto's oldest Jewish cemetery, now owned by [Holy Blossom Temple](#).

Cost: \$15 per for these walks, \$12, for seniors and students
Go to <http://www.ontariojewisharchives.org/> for further registration and information.

❧

If you benefit from a Toronto heritage walk this summer, share your experience with other JGS Toronto members by writing a story for *Shem Tov*!

National Holocaust Monument To Be Built In Ottawa

by *Judy Kasman*

On May 12, 2014, the design selection for the National Holocaust Monument was announced: from among the six finalists in the national competition, Team Lord of Toronto was chosen. Team Lord consists of Gail Dexter-Lord, co-president of Lord Cultural Resources, Daniel Libeskind, architect; Edward Burtynsky, artist-photographer Claude Cormier, Landscape architect, and Doris Bergen, subject-matter advisor.

The Monument, entitled Landscape of Loss, Memory and Survival, will be located at the corner of Wellington and Booth Streets, facing the Canadian War Museum. It is slated to be completed in the fall of 2015.

From the Government of Canada Canadian Heritage News Release: "The concept depicts a star created by six triangular volumes at each of its points organized around a large gathering space for ceremonies. Each one of these volumes provides a unique theme and ambiance for interpretation, contemplation and artistic expression. The National Capital Commission will take on responsibility for the design development, construction and maintenance of the National Holocaust Monument."

IN MEMORIAM: Sara Edell Schafler Kelman

We announce the passing on May 5th of our member, **Sara (Edell) Schafler Kelman z"l**. Sara was former President of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston, wife of Hebrew College President Rabbi Dr. Samuel Schafler z"l and wife of Rabbi Joseph Kelman z"l of Toronto. Her brother, Sol Edell, was one of the founders of the Canada Jewish Archives, and her grandfather, Rabbi Joseph Weinreb, was one the earliest prominent Orthodox rabbis in Toronto.

The funeral was held in Mamaroneck, N.Y.

JEWISH HERITAGE MONTH

At Shaarei Tefillah Synagogue

An event, co-sponsored by JGS Toronto and Shaarei Tefillah Synagogue, was held at Shaarei Tefillah on May 21st, hosted by Harvey Glasner.

Opening remarks were given by MPP Mike Colle to mark Jewish Heritage Month in Ontario.

The speakers, each an author in our society's award-winning anthology, *Tracing Our Roots, Telling Our Stories*, presented a highly personal account to a most appreciative audience.



Henry Wellisch –Related his astonishing escape in 1938 from his hometown of Vienna



MPP Mike Cole



Elaine McKee - Talked about each of her parent's trajectories in wartime Europe and the twists of fate that brought them together; she also spoke of her own identity as a child of immigrants in a new country



Pearl Kazdan – Told of her family's Canadian origins in Melfort, Saskatchewan

JEWISH HERITAGE MONTH

At Beth Tzedec Congregation

A special event, *Learning From Our Family Heirlooms*, conceived and organized by JGS Toronto member Gella Rothstein, was held at Beth Tzedec on May 27th, courtesy of co-sponsors JGS Toronto and Beth Tzedec. In her presentation, Dorion Liebgott, curator of the shul's Reuben and Helene Dennis Museum, described projected photos of numerous holdings of the Museum, many of which were donated by Judaica collector Dr. Cecil Roth ז"ל. Dorion was able to give us the story behind the precious items, which, among other things, were *matza* and *challah* covers, *tallit* and *tefillin* bags, candlesticks, a 19th century carpet and an Elijah chair (used for a brit). Gella was particularly proud of her prized possessions, an ancestral engagement contract and the *challah* cover which had been embroidered by her grandmother in Poland over 100 years ago.

To read more about the Museum, visit <http://www.beth-tzedec.org/page/museum>



Gella Rothstein



Dorion Liebgott

In addition to the holdings of the Dennis Museum, Beth Tzedec also has on display in its corridors wonderful photographs of its historic founding shuls, Goel Tzedec and Beth Hamidrash Hagadol (both from the late 1800s), as well as a collection of old photographs from the Ontario Jewish Archives entitled *The City Limits: Small Jewish Communities in Ontario*.



Elijah's chair



Photos of Goel Tzedec and Beth Hamidrash Hagadol



From the OJA Exhibit, *The City Limits: Small Jewish Communities in Ontario*

JGS Toronto Presents First-Rate Speakers

On March 9th at Temple Sinai, Dr. Rose Lerer Cohen of Jerusalem gave a presentation, *Search Strategies and Integrating Resources*, filled with information for those doing Israel & Israel-Holocaust research.



Paul Jones, former Chair of the Ontario Genealogical Society, spoke at North York Central Library Auditorium on April 23rd. Presented in conjunction with North York Public Library, Jones' topic was *Designing an Efficient and Effective "Tracing Forward" Description*.



Time and Money!

by Judy Kasman

As JGS Toronto is a volunteer-run non-profit organization with no outside funding, donations in any amount are always welcome to help our Society provide first-class programming for our members.

One simple way to make a donation is to go to www.canadahelps.org. An added feature is that at that site, once you choose our Society's name (which is also listed under Jewish Organizations), you can select *Charity Gift Cards*. There, you can choose an occasion and a suitable card style and have a greeting emailed to your recipient of choice. (I know this works as I recently was surprised to find one in my Inbox!)

Another way of giving support to JGS Toronto is by choosing to sponsor an event/programme.

Yes, money is important to keep our Society financially healthy, but equally important is your time. JGS Toronto welcomes the contribution of your skills and talents for its ongoing success. You can make a difference!

If you can help to plan a programme, design flyers, publicize events, act as a greeter, make telephone calls, work on the website, proofread, write articles, record cemetery data, read or translate languages other than English, research, lead a workshop, mentor a newbie and/or take photos, then we can put you to work.

Other tasks abound, both big and small. Become an ACTIVE member of JGS Toronto!

Please contact Les Kelman respecting any of the above at president@jgstoronto.ca or at 647-247-6414.

From the Editor

Shem Tov is always enhanced by contributions from JGS Toronto members.

- Send in your personal accounts of up to 1,500 words for the **On a Personal Note** column. You will find Debbie Sacrob's submission on p. 4, her second!
- Share your tips and discoveries with fellow members!

The deadline for the next issue is August 13th.

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Mini-Survey

What are your top three articles in this issue?

Send your responses to shemtov@jgstoronto.ca

Judy Kasman
Editor, *Shem Tov*

Israel Genealogy Research Association's New Databases

Garri Regev, President of Israel Genealogy Research Association (IGRA), has recently announced the release of eight additional databases:

Ruslan Passenger List - 19 Dec 1919

The Ruslan is considered by some as the first ship to bring immigrants to Eretz Israel after World War One, and the beginning of the Third *Aliyah*, but it is one of many ships that brought immigrants in 1919.

This list of the heads of the families also contains the number of members of the family that were on the ship. There were approximately 670 passengers on board. Not all of the passengers are listed as immigrants in the file found in the Israel State Archives. Some of the passengers said they were returning to Eretz Israel. This document is from the Central Zionist Archives.

Exiled to Palestine: The Emigration of Zionist Convicts from the Soviet Union, 1924-1934

This database was donated by Prof. Boris Morozov and Prof. Ziva Galili. The database was built while compiling the data for their book *Exiled to Palestine: The Emigration of Zionist Convicts from the Soviet Union, 1924-1934*. It contains 1759 names of people of the many thousands of active Zionists in the Soviet Union who were allowed to emigrate during the period of the Fourth *Aliyah* to Eretz Israel. This database is built from the compilation of many sources and therefore the information available varies from person to person. For many of the people listed in the database there is information about the date of their arrest, their sentencing and their immigration. The original file was prepared in software no longer available. There was some loss when it was transposed to Excel and some of the longer sentences were lost.

Staff List of the Government of Palestine 1935

This document was found in the Israel State Archives. It contains the names of 789 people who served in the Palestine Mandate government at that time, including information on their appointment, rank, date of appointment to the present rank and where they were stationed.

Jerusalem Pinkas Bogrim (Adult Lists = Voters List) for Knesset Israel

1942 - 41,399 adults including four adults that lived at the Dead Sea and the adults at Kibbutz Ramat Rachel, from the Central Zionist Archives.

Yagur Pinkas Bogrim (Adult Lists = Voters List) for Knesset Israel

1942 - 746 adults are listed. The document is from the Central Zionist Archives.

Who's Who in Palestine 1944

The database is composed of two lists prepared by the British Mandate government and marked SECRET and closed until 1996! The documents included the names of 153 Jewish politicians and personalities and 69 Arab politicians and personalities. Inside the booklets there are summaries on each person.

Voters List for Local Election, Herziliya 1945

This database has 1,925 voters for the election of the Local Council in Herziliya. The list was found in the Israel State Archives.

The Signatories of the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel: The 38 people who signed the Declaration of the State of Israel

To see the IGRA website, go to www.genealogy.org.il where you can register for free to access the databases.

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Seeking JGS Toronto Memorabilia

JGS Toronto would like to gather old Society photos and other memorabilia for the purpose of creating an archive. Should you have any suitable material, please contact Les Kelman at president@jgstoronto.ca.

Traces of the Past – Montreal's Early Synagogues

T*Traces of the Past – Montreal's Early Synagogues* is a 2011 book by Sarah Ferdman Tauben. According to Martyna Starosta in "The Synagogue Detective of Montreal" in *The Jewish Daily Forward*, May 15, 2014, the author follows "...the development of Montreal's Jewish community from the 1880s until 1945. Much like a detective, she has pored over historic city maps and directories, sepia-coloured photos, brittle newspaper articles and long forgotten anniversary publications to track the locations of Montreal's early synagogues."

Ferdman Tauben was born in Sweden, raised in California, and then lived in Israel before moving to Montreal over thirty years ago. She is a designer and holds a Masters in Judaic Studies.

Alongside the archival images in the book, there are current photographs which were taken by Montreal-born film-maker and photographer David Kaufman, a Toronto resident.

Time Travel Project at the National Library of Israel

Rose Feldman of the Israel Genealogy Research Association (IGRA) has announced the launch of the "Time Travel" project of the National Library of Israel.

Rose writes: "The objective of the 'Time Travel' project is to collect and scan Israeli ephemera and make them accessible to the general public. The project is sponsored by the Arcadia Fund and is a collaborative undertaking with UCLA. At the moment there are more than 70,000 items. Some are limited to viewing at the National Library itself."

http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/digitallibrary/time_journey/Pages/default.aspx

Presently there are thirteen partner archives in this project. Some of the scans require registration.

http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/digitallibrary/time_journey/Pages/partners.aspx

At Toronto Fringe Festival

The Kiever Shul (officially The First Russian Congregation of Rodfei Sholem Anshei Kiev) at 25 Bellevue Avenue in Kensington Market, will next month be home to one of the 150 plays of Toronto's annual Fringe Festival. The musical play, *A Simple Twist of Faith*, written by local talented cousins Evan Malach and Rafe Malach, will be mounted in that historic synagogue.

Here is the play's description from the Fringe Festival web-site:

Honour the start of the WWI Centennial with this musical inspired by a true story. In 1917, a Jewish American soldier in Germany enters a synagogue seeking solace from the terrors of war. After initial mistreatment, he is touched by an act of kind-

ness from a German congregant. The moment sets off a ripple effect and changes the course of both of their lives.

A Simple Twist of Faith will be shown numerous times during the run of this year's Fringe Festival, July 2 to 13. For further information, go to <http://fringetoronto.com/fringe-festival/shows/a-simple-twist-of-faith/>

To learn more about the Kiever Shul, go to www.kieverhul.com

From Nu? What's New? The E-zine of Jewish Genealogy From Avotaynu

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Gary Mokotoff, Editor

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British Pathé Historical Films Now On YouTube

The newsreel firm, *British Pathé*, has put their entire collection of 85,000 historical videos on YouTube. Pathé invented the newsreel format in 1908. They were short documentaries shown prior to feature films in movie theaters. Find an introduction to the collection at <https://www.youtube.com/user/britishPathe>

Searching YouTube for "British Pathe Jewish" revealed a large collection of film clips about Eretz Yisrael pre-and post-founding of the state of Israel and other Jewish matters.

Just a small sample includes:

- [British] Jewish Battalion (1918)
- Jewish Agency Leaders Released (1946)
- [London] Jews New Year (1922)
- Jewish Child Refugees [Kindertransport] (1938)
- Illegal Jewish Immigrant Ship (1940-1949)
- Jewish Demonstration Against Hitler - New York (1935)

Many film clips do not have sound.

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Museum of Family History Has Al Jolson Online Exhibit

The Museum of Family History has added what it states is the largest online exhibit on the life of entertainer Al Jolson, both personal and professional. It can be seen at <http://www.museumoffamilyhistory.com/ajolson.htm>. The exhibition includes 23 pages containing 156 pictures, 17 film clips and nearly four dozen audio clips. On the "Jewish Side of Jolson" page at <http://www.museumoffamilyhistory.com/ajolson-jsi.htm>, Jolson sings *Cantor on Sabbath* (Yiddish), *Kol Nidre* (Hebrew) and *Hatikvah* (Hebrew).

The site itself is worth browsing. The Museum of Family History is a virtual (Internet only), multimedia, and interactive creation that was designed for those of us who are interested in learning more about modern Jewish history, as well as those who were a part of this history, who now grace the many branches of our family tree. According to its creator, Steven Lasky, it now contains more than 6,000 pages, 20,000 photos, and hundreds of video and audio clips. Visit the home page at <http://www.museumoffamilyhistory.com/> and then go to the Site Map to gain an understanding of the vast scope of the web-site.