

ירשה

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# HERITAGE

The Journal of THE JEWISH ARCHIVES & HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF EDMONTON & NORTHERN ALBERTA

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## B'nai Brith Edmonton Lodge c. 1950

Back row: 4. Herb Leon, 5. Burton Margolus.  
Middle Row: 3. Howard Starkman, 5. Ted Shnitka.  
Bottom Row: 2. Eli Adler, 5. Hyman Goldstick

Courtesy of JAHSENA collection

If you see anyone who isn't listed in the photo, please contact us and we will update our records.

### JAHSENA Recent Acquisitions

*Judy Goldsand has donated items from her own personal collection, including several JNF programs to add to our collection.*

*Cory Felber has donated items from her own personal collection, including personal documents and photographs of her family.*

*Kindly contact our office if you have any questions about donating items.*



## From your President

MICHAEL PAULL

Fall, 2023

**T**oday, the official financial year end for JAHSENA, I am pleased to report that we have had an exceptionally good year.

Carly Heffner, our Archivist, is settling in nicely. She has recognized the enormity of the work that needs to be done, and is appreciating the help she is getting from our volunteer base. As a result, she can concentrate her abilities on other aspects of her job.

With the incredible dedication of our volunteers, we have catalogued over 1,500 of the library books, and hope that the remaining several hundred books will be completed by the end of 2023, so that we can launch our online catalog!

With the help of another dedicated group of volunteers, we continue to gather oral histories, using audio recordings and video equipment.

We are looking forward to joint ventures with other Jewish organizations, for example, the Jewish Senior's Drop-In Centre, as they have the reputation of putting on quality programs.

In an effort to ensure that JAHSENA has an annual income in perpetuity, and is not dependent only on Casinos and Membership, a drive has been mounted to secure endowments. We have had some success in this endeavor, and will announce those at the JAHSENA AGM in October. In addition to the endowments, we have received generous donations from former Edmontonians Saul Reichert and his daughter Rochelle and her husband Henry Wolfond.

The casino we had this year was our major revenue source, and I am looking forward to the time we can rely on endowments and donations to fund our yearly expenses, and keep JAHSENA a viable institution.

Our AGM this year is October 15th at the Beth Israel Synagogue starting at 2:00 pm. Our guest speaker will start promptly at 3:30 pm.

The JAHSENA Board has made many changes to the Bylaws, and we will be voting to accept the new Bylaws at the AGM. We will also be voting in the new Board, accepting the financial statements, and hearing about future plans.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you at our AGM.

Michael Paull, President of JAHSENA.

## JAHSENA Mourns the Passing of Former Board Member Jack Chetner



Jack's father, Abraham Chetner, arrived in Canada in about 1912 from Bes-sarabia to join his parents, two sisters and three brothers at the Montefiore colony near Sibbald in Eastern

Alberta. He had his own homestead, and dedicated one corner of his land for use as a community synagogue. That building has been restored and relocated to Calgary Heritage Park. The colony was very poor, and most of the Jewish farmers left the area in the 1920s, some going to California, and some to Edmonton and Calgary (see Heritage Volume 24, No. 1).

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# HERITAGE

The Journal of the Jewish  
Archives & Historical Society  
of Edmonton and  
Northern Alberta

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## Archivist Report

CARLY HEFFNER

Fall, 2023

It has been a quiet Summer with a very busy ending! I have started quite a few projects which will continue into Fall. Specifically, the Heritage/Yerusha Index and re-organizing sections of the office space. There is never a dull moment at the Archives, always planning something to do. We are never short of ideas, there just aren't enough hours in the work week to execute them all. I am thankful for all the volunteers who help projects move along in a timely manner.

This issue of Heritage/Yerusha has taken many different shapes and turns from what the original idea was. Nonetheless, I am very happy with the finished result, and would like to thank all the contributors and editors for all their hard work.

I visited the Ontario Jewish Archives in August, and it was absolutely fantastic! Though we at JAHSENA are much smaller and our budget is a fraction of theirs, I am proud to represent JAHSENA and our collection. Building relationships with other organizations like ours is incredibly helpful.

This issue is one that I have contributed quite a bit to including a book review and an article about Jewish Genealogy outlining the tools to find information

on one's family history. Though I was not successful in finding any information about my father's parents, I hope the article inspires others to research their own personal genealogy, and I hope that seasoned researchers find helpful tips.

The Edmonton Heritage Council Operational Grant is something that has been a focus of mine for the better part of August. I have written, rethought, and rewritten the application, with the help of Colleen, Debby, and Michael.

It has been great seeing all the membership renewals coming in! I am excited for the year ahead and I look forward to seeing you all and maybe some new members at the AGM. It is going to be fantastic.

### Donation Cards

JAHSENA has donation cards with historic pictures on them available for purchase. Mark your simchas by making a donation to JAHSENA. Contact the office for more details at 780-489-2809. We have received the following donations:

#### MAZEL TOV

- To Judy Goldsand on her 85th Birthday, from Cyril & Faye Kay, Laurie Shuler, Aaron & Jean Oshry, and Larry Witten.
- To Jared Jacobson and Toby Vickar on their engagement, from Billy & Gillian Horwitz.
- To Josh and Michele Miller on their wedding anniversary, from Marshall & Debby Shoctor.
- To Irv and Dianne Kipnes on their anniversary and many milestones, from Billy & Gillian Horwitz.
- To Alvin and Debbie Goldsman for a happy and healthy new year, from Billy and Gillian Horwitz.

#### NEW MEMBERS

- Don Charnaw, Kimberly Chow, Victor & Lena Linetsky, and Saul & Rochelle Reichert.

#### SYMPATHY

- To Marshall & Debby Shoctor and family on the passing of their mother, mother-in-law, and grandmother Kayla Shoctor z'l from, Karen Farkas & Clyde Hurtig, Judy Goldsand, Michael & Colleen Paull, Cory Felber, and Marni Dlin.
- To Naomi Shoctor on the passing of her mother Kayla Shoctor z'l from, Michael & Colleen Paull, Billy & Gillian Horwitz, Cory Felber, and Marni Dlin.
- To Abe Silverman and family on the loss of their wife, mother, grandmother, and great grandmother Toby Silverman z'l from, Billy & Gillian Horwitz, and Cory Felber.
- To Harry & Sveta Silverman on the loss of their sister-in-law Toby Silverman z'l, from Gillian & Billy Horwitz.
- To Mark & Debbie Joffe on the loss of their mother, mother-in-law, and grandmother Esi Olyan z'l from, Billy & Gillian Horwitz.

## A Partial History of Kashruth in Edmonton

by Debby Shoctor

1906–1912: Rabbi Hyman Goldstick is hired as first Kosher Butcher and Shochet, Mohel and Rabbi.

1920s–1952: Opening of Friedman's Kosher Market, 9666 Jasper Ave. Run by Oseas Friedman, Rabbis Pinsky, Haft and Postone of Beth Israel operated as Shochets. Mr. Shaw and Mr. Nelson served as Mashgiachs. After Postone, Kalman Yaffee and Label Radin served as Shochets.

1952–1960s: Friedman's shop moved to 124 St.

1950s–1982: Zal's Kosher Market opened, run by Noach and Feivel Zalmanowitz and Jack Woodrow. Rabbi Postone is Shochet, they have their own slaughterhouse near the Edmonton

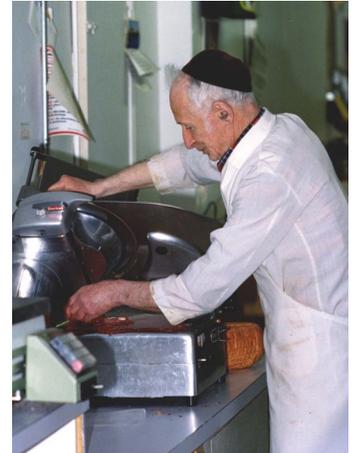
Stockyards. Mr. Motkovich was Mashgiach. By 1982, meat sales are very low. Only 20 regular customers, and the shop closes.

1960s: Friedman shop sold to Mr. Schwarzberg.

1970s: Friedman shop sold to Marco Silverman. Closed in 1975.

1976–1982: Kashruth Committee of Edmonton Jewish Community Council tries to oversee the sale of Kosher meat in the city.

1976–1978: EJCC hires Rabbi Sultan to be Shochet, Mohel and Mashgiach for \$17,000 per year. He was the last Shochet in Edmonton. When his contract expires, he refuses to slaugh-



Philip (Feivel) Zalmanowitz - Zal's Meats.

*Continued on page 8*

### Remembering Jack Chetner

*Continued from page 2*

In 1926, Abe married Rachel Hinda Caplan from Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. She and her family had arrived in Canada in 1923 from Shedrin, Russia. Abe and Rachel had three sons: Dov (married to Arlein Hoffman), Jack, who married Sylvia Dattner, and David (Glenda Binsky.)

Jack received his early schooling in Calgary and his post-secondary education in New York, at NYU and Jewish Theological Seminary. He was offered the job of teacher at Edmonton Talmud Torah in 1952, and by the end of the year became the Principal, a position he would hold for over 20 years. Under his leadership, the school's program was changed to be a half-day religious curriculum taught by Israeli

certified, Sephardic Hebrew-speaking teachers, with a half day English curriculum that reflected Western Canadian culture and was accountable to provincial educational standards. Chetner went on regular trips to Israel to recruit teachers who could bring firsthand knowledge and experience to the school. He also played a key role in the introduction of Holocaust studies into the curriculum at Talmud Torah.

Jack served as Principal of the Edmonton Talmud Torah for 20 years, until his resignation in 1972. He moved to Vancouver and continued to work in Jewish education and real estate, and to commute back and forth to Edmonton until his retirement in 1992. He soon moved to the Vancouver Talmud Torah, where he became director of Hebrew Education and Vice-Principal. He was a founding Board

member of JAHSENA.

Sylvia served as the long-time head librarian of the Medical Sciences Library at U of A. She passed away in 2014. Sylvia was born in Calgary, the youngest daughter of Samuel and Bertha Dattner. Her grandparents had homesteaded in Rumsay, Alberta, arriving in 1904, her mother from Palestine, and her father from Austria, via North Dakota. She and Jack had one son, Michael, a retired urologist, who is married to Bonnie. They have one son, Daniel. Their daughter Sara, a lawyer, and her husband live in Toronto.



Jack Chetner c.2022

# Meandering out of Africa

by Mel and Robin Fainsinger

At their annual 2023 conference, the Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians (CSPCP) awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award to Dr. Robin Fainsinger, in recognition of his sustained and lasting contribution to palliative medicine and whose wide-ranging and enduring contributions to patient care, leadership, education and research in the realm of palliative care are truly outstanding.

Dr. Fainsinger graduated from the University of Cape Town in South Africa in 1981. In 1991, he completed the first fellowship in Palliative Care Medicine at the University of Alberta. Before retiring from clinical practice in 2022, Dr. Fainsinger had a 32-year career with the Edmonton Zone Palliative Care Program. After he became Director of the Division of Palliative Care Medicine at the University of Alberta and Clinical Director for the Edmonton Regional Palliative Care Program in 1999, he elevated the program to new levels, while making major contributions to the palliative medicine field - locally, regionally, nationally, internationally and academically. To give an indication as to how much Dr. Fainsinger has contributed to the field over the lifespan of his career, he has over 200 peer-reviewed publications on diverse topics such as pain classification, opioid rotation, methadone, delirium, nutrition and hydration, bowel obstruction, shortness of breath, spiritual care and palliative care program administration, has had 15 grant funded projects with a total funding of ~ \$3M, been a sought after conference presenter with over 300 presentations, been an invited

speaker on five continents, and has participated on over 65 committees. He served on several journal editorial boards and was an external reviewer for 37 different journals and projects.

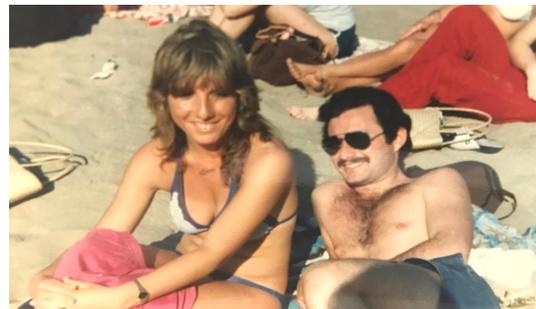
Dr. Fainsinger's contributions have been recognized through numerous awards over the years including the Capital Health REACH Award for Leadership and Teamwork (2005, 2006), the CSPCP's Eduardo Bruera Award (2016) and recently, the Edmonton Zone Medical Staff Association Lifetime Achievement Award (2022).

Nevertheless, the Lifetime Achievement Award profile noted that "Dr Fainsinger has no hesitation in naming his biggest all-time honor and privilege dates to 1982 when he became Melanie Fainsinger's husband and later father to Dr. Lara Fainsinger, MD, CCFP and Lisa Fainsinger BSc, MScSLP."

This begs the question: - how did a young boy from Durban, South Africa and a young girl from Cape Town, South Africa end up raising a family in Edmonton?

## How they met

"I was 22 and Mel was 21 when we met on a blind date in Durban in Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa in July, 1980. I was a 5th year Medical Student at the University of Cape Town (UCT), back home in Durban for the mid-year holiday. Mel was a postgraduate student doing a Diploma in Personnel Management at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg,



July 1980 - Mel and her summer fling. Photo Fainsingers.

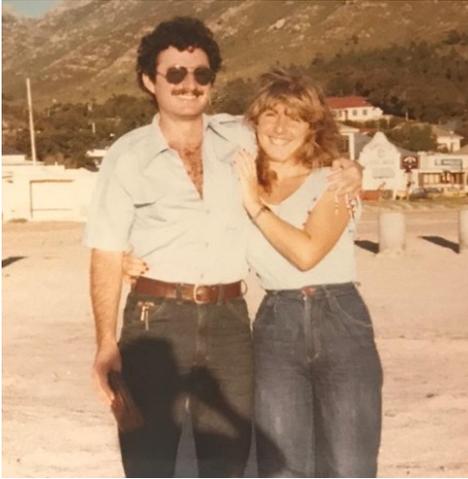
who met her family in Durban for the holidays. Ironically, we had both been in Cape Town at UCT at the same time in 1977-1979. A holiday romance blossomed quickly, and ended as holiday flings sometimes do.

"I was back home for a weekend in November, 1980 when I found my mother unconscious. She had had a massive hemorrhage from a brain tumor and died the next day. Mel heard about this through family connections and wrote me a condolence letter. I called Mel to thank her for the letter, and Mel invited me over. The romance blossomed again. We married in Cape Town on Mel's birthday, April 4, 1982.

"We had 2 goals - to be together and travel the world. Work was an unfortunate necessity to support those goals."

## Serving in the Army

"Impossible to ignore was that we lived in a South Africa run by an apartheid government and that compulsory national service for me in the South African Defense Force (SADF) could not be delayed beyond July 1983. If I left the country, I



1981 - second time around. Photo Fainsingers.

ran the risk that if the political situation did not change in a more positive direction, I might be unable to return and cut off from family for potentially many years.

"I reported for national service in July, 1983 and after completing basic training and a Medical Officer's course, was fortunate to find myself as a 2nd Lieutenant working in the Sickbay at Youngsfield military base in Cape Town. It was only a short drive from an apartment we had bought in the suburb of Plumstead. Mel was working at a Personnel consultancy in Cape Town and supported us, bringing in a higher salary than my paltry army pay. All Medical Officers in the SADF were obligated to serve a three-month rotation in northern South West Africa to support the Border War. We had just celebrated our 2nd anniversary when we said a tearful goodbye at Ysterplaat Air Force base in Cape Town on April 27, 1984.

"Army security regulations forbade taking a camera or having a diary while on duty in the Border War. I wrote a daily diary which I kept hidden. The only way

for us to keep in touch was by writing letters. Those letters and the diary were found unexpectedly in a bag in the basement of our house in Edmonton 37 years later in May, 2021. We used this material to create a book, *'An Old Fashioned Love Story'*, which sits on a coffee table in our home.

"As I neared the end of my army service, I was issued a weapon, and placed with a standby unit that could go into the townships to quell the riots against apartheid that were intensifying. When I took off my army uniform at the end of June, 1985, I was determined not to put it on again."

Mel picks up the story - an overnight Greyhound to Maple Creek

"In July 1985 the army was behind us, and it was time to add the second goal - world travel. We had little money. Rob planned to work as a doctor in the United Kingdom, but the rules changed just before we got there, and getting a work permit had become complicated and expensive. Instead, we discovered Canada needed locums in a province we'd never heard of called Saskatchewan.

"Rob applied and obtained a locum position with a doctor in Maple Creek, Saskatchewan. In transit at the Toronto airport, we discovered Canadians were very friendly and chatty and enjoyed teasing us. We knew nothing of where we were going and they kept telling us all about the rattlesnakes we could expect to discover (we never saw any). We arrived in Calgary late in the evening and couldn't afford a hotel, so took an overnight Greyhound bus from Calgary to Maple Creek. It was the beginning of October, 1985 - the weather was grey and chilly. We asked the bus driver to let us off at Maple Creek.

"We arrived at a gas station/café in the middle of nowhere at 6am and the bus driver told us this was Maple Creek. Rob and I were aghast, we couldn't see a town anywhere in sight. Just the highway, two gas stations/truck stops on either side. We retreated to the café for coffee. We discovered that we were dropped at the Maple Creek Junction and the actual town was a few kilometers south. We were so relieved! Maple Creek was a town of 3000 people amidst rolling ranch land. It was a big adjustment for two Jewish city folks. However, Canada seemed like such a peaceful place compared to the conflict in South Africa."

### Travelling

"Rob was facing a call up back to the army, and we thought that South Africa was headed to civil strife, and we couldn't, at the time, see an end to apartheid. Making a new life for ourselves in Canada, seemed a better proposition.

"We made some money and by the spring of 1986 we were traveling again. We drove across Canada to Montreal, camping along the way, discovering the giant mosquitos and every Canadian Tire to keep our ramshackle car operational. We were woefully unprepared for a Canadian spring - so cold even with the sun shining! We traveled to New York and then south as far as Washington, flew to Greece for a few weeks and then spent six months doing an Ulpan on Jill's (Rob's big sister) kibbutz in Israel.

"In between Hebrew lessons I worked in a childcare center and Rob worked on a production line in the plastics factory - both rather remote from our university training! Exploring the option of Aliyah included Rob spending time with a Family Physician cousin who was working

crazy hours with three jobs to make a living for his family. We didn't have the courage to stay.

"In 1987 we ended up back in Maple Creek for a year, before we moved to Midale, Saskatchewan (a town of about 500 people) in 1988 where Rob was the only doctor, and I could work as the Office Manager. We eventually obtained our Landed Immigrant status in Canada on August 8th, 1988. However, many of the townsfolk in Midale had never met anyone Jewish, and we were continually being asked which church we were going to join. Some of Rob's patients were perplexed that we said we were from Africa but clearly were not black. We knew we would need to move to a larger center with a Jewish population eventually."

#### Finding our new home

"Rob had discovered an interest in Palliative Care, and was offered the first fellowship in Palliative Care at the University of Alberta in Edmonton starting in July 1990. At this point in the story, Rob usually interjects to tell listeners that the only reason he ended up in Palliative Care was because I like to talk to strangers, which is partly true, as I introduced him to a woman who worked for the Canadian Cancer Society, and she convinced him to volunteer with the organization. They sent us to Rob's first Palliative Care Conference, where he met a professor who told him to apply to a new palliative care training program in Edmonton.

"I had been having trouble falling pregnant, but the water in Edmonton seemed to agree with me and during a hectic time with a new job (for both of us), new house, new city. Our "miracle" baby Lara was conceived soon after. Lisa arrived in 1993.

"We have built a loving, close family unit with the four of us here in Edmonton with its relatively small but active Jewish community and several South African Jewish families. Some of them have become our surrogate family as we all live far from our roots and extended families.

"We both grew up with large extended families and have missed our family spread around the world in South Africa, Israel, USA, England, and Australia. We regret that our kids missed out on having close grandparents and cousins. We took every opportunity to keep in contact by taking trips to visit family whenever possible – it did cause our kids to complain bitterly once in the middle of a trans-Atlantic flight that they just wanted to have a holiday in Canada like their friends!"

#### Mel & Rob reflect

"Edmonton, in the middle of the prairies and four hours from the Rocky Mountains, has been a great place to live and bring up our kids – a comfortable vibrant city with an active arts and music community, and of course the Oilers! We love the festivals especially the Folk Festival which we have been attending in August whenever we can. However, it is nowhere near the sea and that has been a major complaint for Mel every January to March – 'how on earth did we end up in this icebox?' Over the years we had opportunities to move to Ontario, BC and even



Family photo at Lisa's graduation. Photo Fainsingers.

Australia. However, life here in Edmonton has grown roots, and the opportunities we have had with Rob's career and the opportunities life here has given our children, has more than validated that long ago decision to meander out of South Africa. "We're looking forward to many more adventures together – certainly lots of travel and many more get togethers to see our family all over the world. We are a couple who have weathered life together and are still in love as we walk down the trail of life wearing our battered sun hats - talking, smiling, laughing, and holding hands. It's a tale as old as time, but it's our story."



Photo Fainsingers.

## A Partial History of Kashruth in Edmonton

*Continued from page 4*

ter any more meat, even though it is right before Pesach. Crisis ensues. Mr. Fox steps in to save the day by offering to sell meat out of ABC Grocery in Crestwood, but the committee is not convinced it is kosher enough. He chooses another location.

NB: Slaughtering was done at Chester Gainer's, brother of Gainer's Packing plant. It then moved to Canada Packers, and later to Oulette's Abattoir.

1977: Kalman Estrin opens a shop, wants a loan of \$10,000 from Federation. Committee says they don't have the money, this must be done privately. There are discrepancies between the two shops which leads to extensive debate on the council.

1979: Three Kosher kitchens in Edmonton are under the supervision of EJCC Kashruth committee: The Edmonton Plaza Hotel, Riviera Hotel and the Jewish Community Centre. Cards are placed on tables at events stating that the event has been certified kosher.

1980: Andy's Valleyview IGA starts selling Kosher meat. EJCC will not give them official sanction, but it is a private business, so they have no jurisdiction.

1981: Jack and Bertha Fox open a store on Stony Plain Rd. which later sold to Kalman Estrin, closed after a year.

1982: Jack Fox and Rabbi Sultan open a store in Crestwood, later sell it to Mark Zelczer, who calls it the "Edmonton Kosher Bratislava Deli." It lasts for two years. EJCC pays the 6 cent per pound Shehita fee to the wholesaler for both butcher shops. Later, private money is given as

loans to keep the shop going.

1980s: Rabbi Shmuel Mann operates Merkaz Kosher Meat and Deli in Lynnwood for three years.

1980: EJCC Kashruth Committee adopts the E.K. symbol. Feivel Zalmanowitz is hired as official community Mashgiach.

1985-1992: The Zalmanowitzes and Nate Siegel as well as his wife Lil Cohen Siegel, come out of retirement and reopen the Edmonton Kosher Deli. This lasted about 8 years until the men got too old to continue the work. Nate Siegel serves as volunteer community Mashgiach.

1980s: Westin Hotel has kosher kitchen, as well as Fantasyland Hotel. Westin closes kitchen in about 1992, Fantasyland continues.

Ca. 1992: Kashruth Committee disbands.

1992-94: Lawrence Bliss took over the Edmonton Kosher Deli and operated it for two years.

Ca. 1996-1998: Koshermart on Stony Plain operates privately, sells frozen meat. Begun by the Ghermezians and Kolllel, with help from Eddie Yedgarova, Michael Zabłudowski briefly involved. Taken over by the Aboudi family, closed around 2003.

Ca. 2000-2012: Several kosher restaurants and caterers are run out of the JCC by Mark Estrin, Beryl Nathan, Gary Siegel and Daniella Drisdell.

Ca. 2008 - 2014: Sobey's Hawkstone carries frozen kosher meat, Gary Siegel in charge of kosher products.

Ca. 2013 - 2015: Kosher Konnection store at Wolf Willow Plaza operates privately, sells frozen meat.

2016: OPH opens with full kosher kitchen, supervised by full-time Mashgiach. He leaves after a year. Kitchen subsequently reduced to ¼ size because of lack of Jewish residents who require kosher food. Various Rabbis supervise until OPH is sold in 2020.

2017: Kosher meat sold frozen at IGA, Sobeys Lewis Farms, and brought in by private individuals and groups, including Fantasyland Hotel. Fantasyland is only hotel with separate kosher kitchen supervised by Rabbi Ari. Only Kosher restaurant is Café Levi at WEM. Bliss Baked Goods only kosher bakery, also selling pareve food items. Each Synagogue has own kosher kitchen and level of supervision. Senior's Drop-in Centre does own supervision. No resident Shochet or Mohel. Two kosher caterers who do non-synagogue functions.

2023: Kosher/Vegetarian Food Truck run by Eddie Yedgarova, Bliss Bakery still provides kosher baked goods. IGA sells frozen kosher meat. Two Safeway locations in the West end provide a small selection of kosher products. Families order as individuals or in groups from suppliers in Winnipeg, Montreal and Toronto, or bring back Kosher products when travelling. Still two Kosher Caterers. Fantasyland Hotel still provides Kosher banquet facilities.



Nate Siegal. JAHSENA photo.

# In the Midst of Civilized Europe by Jeffery Veidlinger

reviewed by Carly Heffner

This book offers a horrific well-researched account of the pogroms of 1918-1921 and the destruction which came to the Jewish people. It is broken down into five parts.

1. War and Revolution, March 1881 - December 1918
2. The Ukrainian People's Republic, December 1918 - March 1919
3. Power Vacuum, March 1919 - August 1919
4. The Triumph of Bolshevism, August 1919 - March 1921
5. Aftermath, 1921 - 1941

The book provides a detailed account of what the Jewish people lived through during that time period, and what awful events can take place when autocratic policies challenge the ethics of democracy.

What surprised me most was learning of the horrific accounts of anti-semitism before the Holocaust. Perhaps because of my age (naivety), I was shocked to read of the bloodshed, and to learn how Jews were scapegoated as they were threatened in acts of Bolshevism.

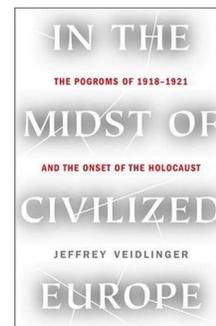
As the civil war with Ukraine reigned terror throughout the Russian Revolution, Jews were forced to migrate over and over again, described as wandering hostages. I learned that I had a skewed view, thinking shtetl life was like *Fiddler on the Roof*, a song and dance. Once the pogroms came, they found other places to settle, and lived somewhat quiet lives be-

fore the Holocaust. Outlining a context to the realities of what Jewish people were really experiencing, this book gave a greater context to the images of Jews fleeing Europe and entering Ellis Island in the early 1900s. Over 100,000 Jews were killed in the pogroms, described as “public, participatory, and ritualized.”

I learned that the Russian Revolution provoked a civil war, which led to mammoth tensions in Ukrainian communities. This book deepened my understanding of how Jews were blamed and scapegoated in Europe long before Hitler reigned his brand of terror against the Jewish people. Jews were the convenient scapegoats, as Ukrainians were fighting for a republic of their own, while being squashed by Bolshevik incursions.

It is impossible to ignore the parallels to the war in Ukraine then and now as Europe's current crisis. I have never had a clear understanding of Europe's need to keep certain nations white and Christian, and to what lengths certain leaders will go to ensure it stays that way. Giving reason as to why understanding history is so important. It aids our understanding of the importance of knowing what dangerous outcomes can result in such discrimination.

It is also important to mention how Jeffery Veidlinger was able to examine and write such a well-researched account of the



A copy of *In the Midst of Civilized Europe* can be found in the JAHSENA library.

pogroms. It was because of Archives -- by having thousands of newly discovered witness testimonials, trial records, and official orders available to use for research.

This book is for a reader who first and foremost can stomach graphic descriptions of bloodshed towards Jews, for researchers where Europe from 1918-1921 is relevant to their studies, or for anyone with a general interest in learning about the Pogroms or Jews in Europe from 1918-1921 and pre-Holocaust, or an interest in Ukraine and Russia in general.



Emil Flohri print in response to the 1905 Kishinev pogrom (Library of Congress).

# How and where to start with Jewish Genealogy

by Carly Heffner

At JAHSENA, 65% of our reference requests come from members outside of the Edmonton Jewish community looking for information about distant Jewish relatives, some of whom didn't know they were Jewish until they were told by a relative. They contact JAHSENA to learn about that one family member, and to understand their connection to the Jewish community. Television shows like *Finding Your Roots* and *Who Do You Think You Are* have sparked an interest in many to find out more about their lineage. It is important to be mindful that Jewish Genealogy can be challenging due to historical events like the Holocaust and migration, but it is interesting and fulfilling nonetheless.

There is something special in discovering one's genealogy. To many, it is interesting to understand one's personal connection to certain world events, and where their family was in specific time periods. I come from a family where I know quite a bit about one side, and barely anything about the other. I wanted to utilize all the resources around me to see what I could find out about my grandparents on my paternal side.

As I got started with my personal journey, I read through selected readings available in our library. Reading *Generation after Generation and Avotaynu*, it became clear what the best place to start was, and what should follow:

1. Start your research at home – speaking with family, especially older family mem-

bers, can give great leads, such as providing information about your ancestors, names, places of birth, marriage/death, and stories or even documents.

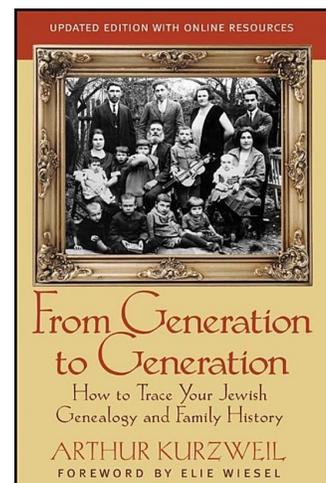
2. Looking for resources – search your home and ask family members for documents like marriage certificates, photographs, or letters. Any of these can provide valuable clues and next steps.

3. Reach out to Archives, Historical Societies, and Libraries – Jewish Archives and Historical Societies just like JAHSENA may have birth, marriage, and death records that can help trace your family history. If not, they have leads to online resources, other archives, and other researchers who may be able to help. Libraries have a great deal of newspapers and census information.

4. Holocaust Records – Yad Vashem, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and other Holocaust centered organizations have databases with Holocaust-related records.

5. Build a network and connect with other researchers – websites like JewishGen have online forums and zoom events to connect with seasoned genealogists. There are also Facebook groups and local genealogy societies.

6. Ancestral Locations – visit the towns and cities where your ancestors lived and where relatives settled who have closer lineage to you. They may have documentation that aren't available online.



*From Generation to Generation - How to trace your Jewish Genealogy and Family History* by Arthur Kurzweil.

## DNA Testing Services

There are three types of genealogical DNA tests: Autosomal (atDNA), mitochondrial (mtDNA), and Y-chromosome (Y-DNA). Autosomal DNA tests look at the entire DNA admixture. They are also common DNA tests for Jews, as they tend to form genetic isolates, finding related groups in independent communities, which share ancestry.

However, DNA testing can also trace further than shtetl life. Where genetic analysis can find descent from Middle Eastern ancestry, studies on genetic composition of Ashkenazi, Sephardi, and Mizrahi populations can trace Jewish people back to Southern European, North African, Italian, and even Iberian regions. The source of these is an admixture with a non-

Jewish Population typically along the maternal lines.

I am sure many of you reading this have taken part or heard of someone doing in 23andMe. DNA tests can provide information about ethnic background and find potential DNA matches with relatives. Below is an example of how 23andMe can find Jewish heritage with a simple saliva sample.

There are a number of articles on how Jewish Genealogy is traced in the JAHSENA collection. If you would like to know more, and take your research further, please email us to request a subject guide, including a list of online articles.

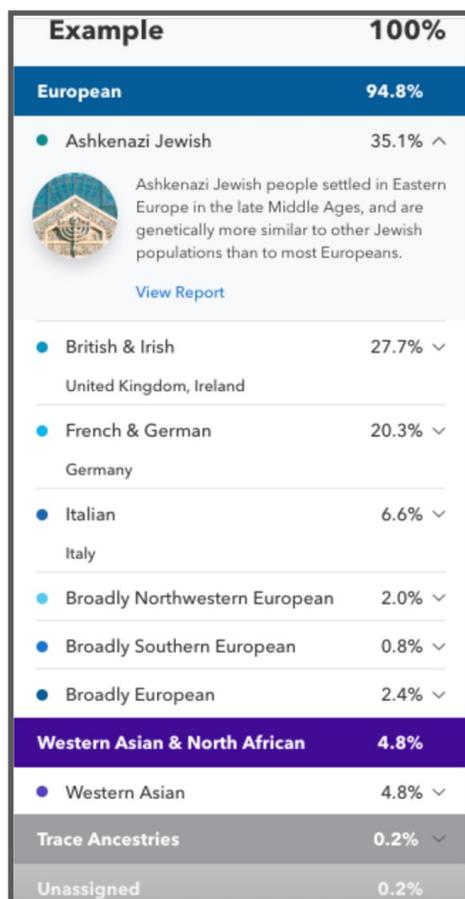


Figure 1. 23&Me breakdown of DNA sample.



Figure 2. Screenshot of JewishGen interface.

### Online Resources

Online organizations can help you start your search at home. JewishGen, MyHeritage, Ellis Island Records, The Leo Baeck Institute, Ancestry.ca, and Statistics Canada are resources with census data, immigration records, and even research tools. There are also resources to help troubleshoot any hiccups you may have along the way. YouTube videos and online webinars dedicated to outlining the process and presenting on new developments in the industry are helpful. While reviewing a number of guides, I came to understand a common theme that using family names doesn't necessarily yield results, no matter what variation in spelling you use. Many came to North America without knowing any English, they changed their name as soon as they came here, or it was changed because of how it was heard through thick accents. I was told my grandfather's name was Hefenstein and changed to Heffner. I have zero documentation supporting this, just the few times he told my father, who told me.

Try not to get frustrated by the search process. Though JewishGen has a sophisticated search engine, I still had no

luck. I attended a webinar to help my search, and realized I needed some additional help. There are a number of people who work for these organizations and are very passionate about Jewish genealogy, another reason why creating a network is so valuable.

### Things to keep in mind as you research

As you are going through the research process, it is important to stay as organized as possible. Systematically document your findings and scan any discovered papers and photographs. Keeping a record of where you found resources, and when, will give you a concise record of where you have been in reaching whatever goal you have set for yourself.

Remember to be patient and persistent, the nature of genealogical research can be very rewarding, but also frustrating. When you experience barriers, try to look down different avenues. Though I was not as successful in finding as much information as I had hoped, I will not give up, and continue to research my own personal Jewish genealogy. What I gained from this is a general interest, any additional personal information I find is a bonus.



**JAHSENA**  
Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta

## Annual General Meeting



### Topics of Discussion

- Financial year end
- Election of new board members
- By-law changes
- Highlights of 2022-2023

### Current JAHSENA Board of Directors

President - Michael Paull  
Past President - Gillian Horwitz  
Secretary - Susan Binnington  
Treasurer - Debby Shoctor  
Karen Farkas  
Cory Felber  
Karen Hering  
Sam Koplwicz  
Dave Marcus  
Netta Phillet  
Jeff Rubin  
Rowena Schwartzberg  
Wayne Shur  
Esther Starkman

**Sunday**  
**October 15,**  
**2023**

Beth Israel Synagogue

131 Wolf Willow Rd

Doors Open at 1:30 pm for membership renewals

AGM meeting starts at 2 pm

Special Guest Speaker starts at 3:30 pm

[www.jahsena.ca](http://www.jahsena.ca)