

ירשה

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HERITAGE

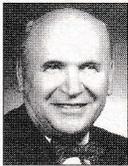
The Journal of THE JEWISH ARCHIVES & HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF EDMONTON & NORTHERN ALBERTA



Abe Cristall

A memoir of an Edmonton Jewish pioneer

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Elected Alderman for the City of Edmonton

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Who? What? Where? When? Why?

Help identify these photos

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Genealogy Alert!

Do you, or someone you know, have a special interest in Jewish genealogy? JAHSENA is considering establishing a genealogy committee. If you do, please leave your name with Debby Shoctor in our office **489-2809**, and we will be in touch with you.

Historical documentary planned

JAHSENA WILL BRING EARLY HISTORY TO LIFE IN EXCITING VIDEO

In keeping with its mandate to collect, catalogue, preserve and reflect the ongoing history of our Jewish community, JAHSENA president Dan Kauffman and the Board of the Society have announced a new project. They have

begun the planning process for the production of an historical video documenting the early life of our community, with special emphasis on its exciting business and cultural aspects.

~ continued on page 2



The fire sale of Walk-Rite after a fire destroyed their store in 1944 in the Moser Ryder Block. JAHSENA Archives. Donated by David Friedman. Walk-Rite was established by Israel R. Friedman in 1923. Initially it was a quality shoe store at the corner of 101 St. and 101A Avenue. The store expanded into fashions and accessories in 1929 which it moved to the Moser Ryder Block, rebuilt after the fire and eventually sold to Johnstone Walker.

Historical Documentary Planned

Continued from page 1

As Uri Rosenzweig noted in editing *The First Century of Jewish Life in Edmonton and Northern Alberta*, "They came to western Canada with the promise of free land; would be farmers who were not permitted to own land in the 'old country'. From homesteading they moved on to small towns in northern Alberta, opening general stores, and from there on to Edmonton, to assure their children had both Jewish and higher education, and to be closer to Jewish institutional life."

The years 1903 through 1914 were the boom times in Edmonton. Our Jewish population increased from 17 in 1901 to 171 in 1911, and many were involved in the dynamic retail business life of the city.

The proposed twenty-minute documentary is planned to incorporate historical photos in JAHSENA'S collection, excerpts from oral histories, old film footage and new interviews with senior members of the community who can recall stories and memories of the era. After its premiere showing, planned for late 2002, the video will be made available to organizations, schools and both the Jewish

and general community. As president Kauffman notes, "We have a rich and vibrant history here and we hope this video will reflect that dynamism and help us remain in touch with our heritage."

We are asking all members of our community to contribute any photos they may have in their homes of businesses their families may have been involved with in those early years. Please contact archivist Debby Shoctor at our office 489-2809 if you would like to contribute. The Society is approaching granting foundations to help with the financing of this project.

From the Archivist's Desk...

by DEBBY SHOCTOR

Several types of finding aids are now available for our collection. We have a complete list of all the *Fonds* and files in our possession. For those of you unfamiliar with the term, a *Fonds* is the basic unit of description used in an archives. It is a French term for the records or papers of a particular individual, institution, or organization. In our collection, we have the *Fonds* of various individuals and/or families within the community, either donated by themselves, their families or friends. We also have the *Fonds* of various Jewish community organizations, such as B'nai Brith Edmonton Lodge, Hadassah-WIZO Edmonton, and Edmonton Jewish Life. These *Fonds* may contain papers, photographs, audio tapes and/or video tapes.

Additional finding aids include an *Oral History Database* of all Oral Histories already completed by our members or others, as well as those we are hoping to complete in the near future. We have an *Accessions Database*

listing all the materials donated to us since our inception. Our Newspaper Collection is catalogued and listed, and most issues of the seven community newspapers we have had over the years are available for reference.

In addition, we have many books on Jewish Canadian history available for reference, which are all catalogued, as well as VHS *videotapes*, and *audiotapes*, all catalogued and listed in a reference binder for your perusal. There are hundreds of *photographs* found throughout the various *Fonds*, and as yet there is not a specific photographic index, but the larger collections are grouped together and easily accessible.

The painstaking process of making detailed file lists for each *Fonds*, and of entering all this information into a searchable, computerized database has just begun. With the finding aids we do have, however, and the knowledge of the archivist, most material in our collection is accessible for reference.

Researchers must keep in

mind, however, that archives do not work in the same way as libraries - access is not subject-based, but based on *Provenance* and *Respect des Fonds*. This means that materials created together stay together, regardless of the different subjects they cover. For example, if an individual was a business owner, belonged to the Menorah Curling Club, the Beth Israel Synagogue and canvassed for UJA, material on all of those subjects will be found in their own personal *Fonds*, not separated out under those subject headings. This is why archival research is more painstaking than library research.

Please feel free to come in and peruse our collection when the office is open, or phone me with your questions. The collection is there for you to use, and for future generations. All researchers must, however, adhere to the posted *Rules and Regulations for use of the Jewish Archives*, so that the collection will be available for use for many years to come.

יהודה HERITAGE

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of Edmonton & Northern Alberta

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With Sadness

We note with sadness the recent passing of Eve Pascoe in Toronto. Eve, together with Hymie Baltzan, was responsible for the first efforts in the collection of much archival and oral history material from our Jewish community in the 1970's.

Abe Cristall

Edmonton's First Entrepreneur

A memoir of Edmonton Jewish pioneer Abe Cristall, from a book titled "Abe Cristall - The Story of a Simple Man" by Edmonton author and historian Tony Cashman. Reprinted by permission of the author.

Abe and his wife Rebecca (Levitt) arrived in Edmonton in the fall of 1893. "Abe and his bride moved into a house on Jasper Avenue where the **Macdonald Hotel** stands today. Abe did well in the cartage business. In a year he had a wooden floor for their home, and in the front of the building opened a general store. Abe's friend and political idol, Frank Oliver, the editor of the **Edmonton Bulletin** used to have a standing joke about Abe in those days. The Bulletin would report: 'Edmonton's Jewish community observing Yom Kippur.' But there was no community - just Abe and Rebecca."

By the turn of the century, when Abe started bringing in relatives, Edmonton had grown to about four thousand people. Abe figured it was big enough for a men's clothing store. He began importing the suits of Hart, Schaffner and Marks - three Jewish gentlemen who were pioneering ready-made suits in New York - and converted the general store into the **Cristall Palace** men's clothing store. ...Abe's business

competitor William "Boss" Diamond also used a play on words for his own advertising. His slogan was: "*Why trade with a Cristall when you can trade with a Diamond?*"

At one time, Abe owned a good deal of the **Macdonald Hotel** property. He owned the site of the **Churchill Building**, the site of the **Tegler Building**, the old **Heintzman**. When the **Hudson's Bay Company** wanted to expand along Jasper Avenue, the "honourable company" had to buy fifty feet from Abe. Abe thought that was pretty good. The "honourable company" had been here a century before him, but when it needed land for expansion it had to come to Abe.

In 1909, Abe began development of the **Royal George Hotel**...He didn't intend to run it as a hotel. In fact he didn't intend to build it as a hotel. It started out to be an office building. Then along came Jim McKernan and Tommy Malin and persuaded him to make it a hotel...it was redesigned and went into operation in 1911 as the **Royal George Hotel**, coincidental with the accession

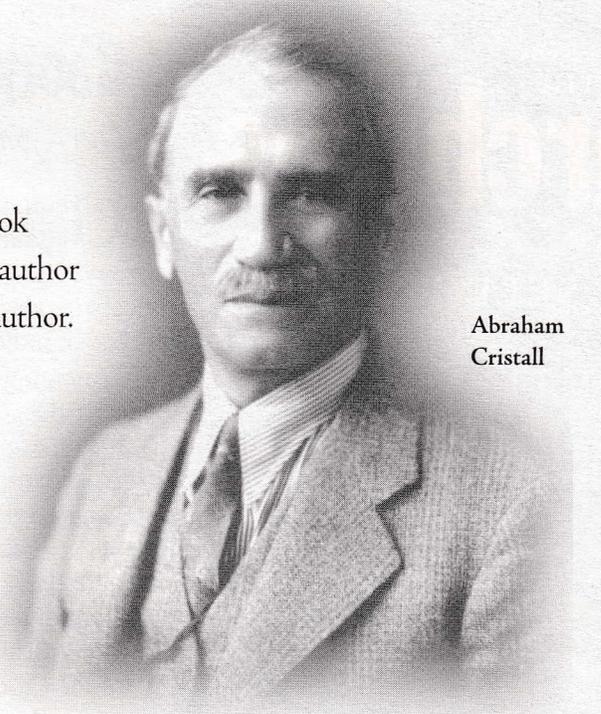
of King George the Fifth. Abe had his office in the old **Heintzman Block** - before he sold the building. Then he moved his desk into the Royal George, and that was his business address as long as he lived.

Patience. Perhaps that was the steel in Abe's character. It helped him in life and it helped him to the remarkable foresight he had in business. The proprietors of the **T. Eaton Co. Ltd.** would agree to that. In the late thirties Abe helped **Eaton's** assemble the land for their new store north of 102nd Avenue. The land included some of Abe's. With his profits he bought the adjacent property on 102nd Street. Then, in partnership with Harry Friedman and Henry Goldberg, he bought the

northwest corner of the block. Then he waited, looking forward to the day when **Eaton's** would have to expand. "They can't go over me", said Abe, "and they can't go under me. All they can do is deal with me. And they know where they can find me."

Abe had faith in the province and in the people. On one occasion he declared: "Alberta will be the great province of the Dominion. It is all here. It has all the resources. And there is oil too. When they need it they will find it and there will be lots of it. You will see."

The book "Abraham Cristall 1868 -1944", by Tony Cashman, is in the JAHSENA collection, and available for reference use.



Abraham
Cristall

Call for
Volunteers!

We need volunteers in our office to identify photos, photocopy newspapers and clippings, do oral history summaries and transcripts and many other interesting tasks. Your own desk and all the coffee you can drink awaits you!

Call Debby Shector at 489-2809



FROM
THE
archives

A SELECTION
OF ITEMS
FROM OUR
COLLECTION

George Levine Honored by Scouts

Our Community News, November, 1960

George Levine, veteran Jewish community leader, has been awarded the Silver Acorn for distinguished service to the Boy Scout movement by the Governor General, Georges P. Vanier, Canada's Chief Scout. He is one of fifty members of the Boy Scout Association of Canada to be honored during National Boy Scout Week. Mr. Levine served initially as Cubmaster and Group Committee Chairman of the 18th B'nai Brith Pack. He was president of the Edmonton Regional Council of the Boy Scout Association in

1959 and 1960. He also serves on the executive of the Alberta Provincial Jamborees and the National Canadian Rover Meet at Banff.

Mr. Levine has given dedicated service to our Jewish community and at present is chairman of the Liaison Committee, which is responsible for raising and distributing UJA funds.

The entire community extends its warmest congratulations to George Levine on his well deserved recognition by the Boy Scout Association.



Incorporation of the Beth Israel Sisterhood, from the minute book, 1950-1960

From the collection of Eva Shoctor Gorasht

“On the evening of October 26, 1950 at the home of Mrs. S. Dolinko, twenty four ladies convened for the purpose of organizing a ladies' auxiliary to the Beth Israel Synagogue.

“The chairman, Rabbi Abraham Postone, held the attention of all those present as he told of the long-felt need for such an organization, whose functions would help to strengthen the congregation in many ways, including:

1. Arranging suitable treats for the children on the holidays and festivals.

2. Preparing and participating in the annual Beth Israel banquet and meeting.

3. Arranging affairs for the purpose of raising money to purchase unified mahzers for use of all members of the congregation; and for any other expenditures as the necessity arises.

“B'noth Israel, the name chosen by Rabbi Postone for this new organization meaning 'Daughters of Israel', met with the ladies' unqualified approval.

“Until a general meeting

of all women members of the congregation can be called, a temporary executive was appointed as follows:

President:

Mrs. Max Bornstein

Secretary: M. Kline

Executive Members:

Mesdames S. Dolinko, E. Landa, J. Ritch, J. Eaman, M. Podolsky, S. Dlin, J. Shragge, B. Estrin, L. Kline, J. Shtabsky, B. Shugarman, A. Postone, H. Soifer, M. Dolgoy, M. Brody, Raiber, Starkman.

“It was decided that nominal dues of \$1.00 per year would be collected from every member. It is the

“The meeting was adjourned and tea was served.”



hope of this writer that the birth of the B'noth Israel will bring together a congregation united and uplifted in spiritual understanding, under the leadership of our Rabbi Postone.

“The meeting was adjourned and tea was served.”

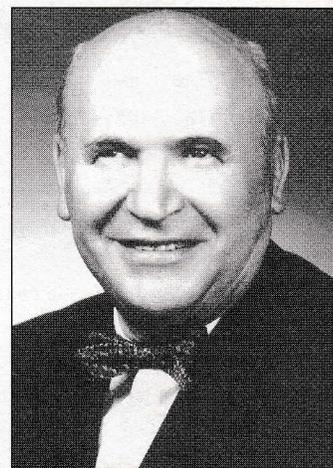


Dr. Morris Weinlos Elected Alderman

Our Community News, September, 1961

The Jewish Community extends its heartiest congratulations to Dr. Morris Weinlos on his election as Alderman in the City of Edmonton. A well-known surgeon and a member of the University of Alberta faculty, Dr. Weinlos has long been active in the Jewish community. At present, he is serving as President of the Beth Israel Congregation,

second Vice-President of the Edmonton Jewish Community Council and a member of the Advisory Board of the Edmonton Zionist Council. Dr. Weinlos is a Past President of the Zionist Council. We are confident that Morris Weinlos will make a valuable contribution to City Council and will ably represent all the citizens of Edmonton.



Dr. Weinlos has long been active in the Jewish community



Community Council Archives Historical Committee Begins Massive Task

Our Community News, March, 1973

Hy Baltzan, Chairman of the Archives and Historical Committee of the Community Council, Has reported that substantial preliminary ground work has been done during the summer months in an effort to establish an official archives for the Jewish community of Edmonton and district.

David Nelson, who was hired for the summer by the Provincial Archives and Museum to assist in the project, undertook various assignments which included: taping interviews with about

a dozen "old timers" in the community, helping to collate, examine and record historical documents and photos turned over to the committee and recording on tape the official historic closing of the synagogue in Vegreville, including interviews with some members of the community.

Working closely with Mr. D. Ridge, the Provincial Archivist, the committee is in the process of gathering as much historical material as possible including photos, organization minute books, programs, letters and other

historical documents.

Through the cooperation of Mr. Ridge, all papers, documents, photos, artifacts, etc., will be held in trust by the Provincial Archives which will house and catalogue all material for purposes of reference and research.

Future plans call for an historical exhibit to be displayed at various community functions when sufficient material is gathered.

Various individuals and organizations have already come forward to present

the committee with historical material. A concentrated effort will be made this fall to secure as much additional material as possible.

"Many people in our community," stated Mr. Baltzan, "have boxes of personal and organizational material of historical value just stored away in basements and attics. Turning this material over to us assures the donors and the community that such material is preserved for future generations for reference and research."

JAHSENA *Recent Acquisitions*

These items have recently found their way into the archives, and are available for research purposes:

Oral Histories of Goldie Rosen, Dr. George Goldsand.

Kreisel, Henry, "The Rich Man", 1948

Kreisel, Henry, "The Betrayal", 1964.

"Archival Sources for the Study of Canadian Jewry", National Archives of Canada, 1987.

"The Singers", Videotape donated by Trudy Singer Pekarsky

"Joe Shoctor Tribute", Videotape donated by Shoctor family, October, 2001.

"It Happened at Vic", film featuring Joe Shoctor, 1948.

B'nai Brith Edmonton Lodge records

B'nai Brith Canada Edmonton Office records

Camp B'nai Brith records, photo collection

B'nai Brith Youth Organization records

Jewish National Fund - complete collection of Negev Dinner Programs for Edmonton.

On display at the JCC: Moses Lieberman Collection - Trophies, photos and documents, gift of Justice Sam Lieberman.

The Jewish Archives & Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta is always looking for new donations. If you have any personal papers, photographs, negatives, books, audio-visual recordings or other items relating to the history of the Jewish community of Edmonton and Northern Alberta that you would like preserved for generations to come, please contact our office at: (780) 489-2809.

INTERESTED IN OUR JEWISH COMMUNITY'S HISTORY?



JAHSENA needs a volunteer historian who would like to write articles on the history of families, individuals, organizations and businesses of our community in Edmonton and northern Alberta for our newsletters. If you have an interest in history, please let us know!

Can you identify these photos?

Can you identify these photos? What is the setting, the year, and the event? Who are the people in it?

If you would like to try your luck, there are many more like these in the office waiting for you to identify!



Can you identify these photos?



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Membership donations are used for the operating costs of the Society which is a self-sustaining organization. Membership fees include spouses except for individual membership. Members are eligible to vote at the annual general meetings of the society. Fees cover uniform membership year from September 1st to August 31st. Donations are tax deductible.

WE THANK THE ABOVE LISTED PEOPLE FOR THEIR SUPPORT IN THE PAST YEAR.

Note: Starting with our next issue, this newsletter will be sent **ONLY** to Members of JAHSENA. If you would like to continue to receive it, please join us using the attached envelope.

WE NEED YOU AS A MEMBER OF JAHSENA!
 PLEASE HELP US PRESERVE OUR HISTORY FOR OUR FUTURE!