

Shalom

CONNECTING THE ATLANTIC JEWISH COMMUNITY

 Atlantic
Jewish
Council
SPRING 2019



IN THIS ISSUE: THE MONTREAL SHTETL: MAKING HOME AFTER THE HOLOCAUST
RESEARCHING THE JEWISH HISTORY OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND | A MOMENT OF SILENCE (POWAY, CA)
COVER ARTWORK BY TOM FORRESTALL

Atlantic Jewish Film Festival



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NOTE TO OUR READERS

Our Atlantic Jewish community is losing more and more members as the years go on. In the past, Shalom has printed stories of regional community members who have passed away. While we try to acknowledge the major contributions of many of our late friends and family members, we request that you inform Shalom of passings of which we may be unaware so we may recognize these individuals. Shalom's editorial staff reserves the right to determine the length of memorial pieces to be printed in the magazine.

Written articles are the opinion of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the AJC.

Shalom

SPRING 2019

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12



20



26

FEATURES

- 12 Canadian Young Judaea
- 14 My Kadimah Home is Here
- 18 An Evening of Dramatic Readings from *The Montreal Shtetl: Making Home After The Holocaust*
- 20 Researching the Jewish History of Prince Edward Island
- 40 A Moment of Silence (Poway, CA)
- 41 Letter to the Editor
- 43 **The Abraham Leventhal Memorial Scholarship Winners!**

IN EVERY ISSUE

- 4 President's message: Marilyn Kaufman
- 5 From the desk of Naomi Rosenfeld, Executive Director
- 7 From the desk of Edna LeVine, Director of Community Engagement
- 9 The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) Report
- 11 Campus News
- 13 Camp Kadimah News
- 36 Rabbis Corner

AROUND OUR REGION

- 26 ThankYou and Farewell!
- 28 Prince Edward Island
- 29 Moncton
- 30 Saint John
- 31 Fredericton
- 32 Cape Breton
- 34 Newfoundland



From The Desk Of MARILYN KAUFMAN

President of the Atlantic Jewish Council

SHALOM FRIENDS

Although it has been a long cold winter, members of the Atlantic Jewish Council have convened on a regular basis to discuss and outline priorities and implementation of programs for our communities. This is an on going process and it has, indeed, been a busy few months as you will see in my following remarks. Let me thank Naomi, Edna, Lindsay, Svetlana and Ben for their assistance with implementing a number of our programs and keeping our office running smoothly. Thank you to members of the AJC Board for your continued input and work on behalf of all Jewish communities in Atlantic Canada.

Aviv—Spring—a season of birth and renewal, much like the events which define our Jewish history.

On Jan.27th, some of our communities observed **International Holocaust Day** simultaneously with the showing of the award winning film documentary, **Who Will Write Our History**. The global screening event debuted at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, France. A poignant film, it gives us first hand knowledge, through a Jewish lens, of Jewish life in Warsaw during the dark days of the Holocaust. It documents the work of a group called the Oyneg Shabes, scholars, journalists and community leaders who, using pen and paper, worked in the Warsaw Ghetto, to challenge the Nazi propaganda. Known as the Ringelblum Archives, "it contains the collection of more than 35,000 pages of art works, photographs, execution announcements, and hand-drawn maps of concentration camps." These are only from 2 discovered post World War II caches. A third is thought to be buried beneath the Chinese Embassy in Poland. This film was part of the 2019 Miami Jewish Film Festival. If you have seen it, it is deserving of a second viewing.

Tu B'Shevat, the holiday of the New Year of the Trees in Israel, once again saw the launching of a successful Atlantic Canada JNF telethon under the direction of Susan David. Many of our chedar children were recipients

of fruit treats native to Israel, to celebrate the occasion.

The happy holiday of **Purim** was celebrated in many local communities. Queen Esther proved to be too much of a match for the evil Haman and so, in a time honoured tradition, we made lots of noise and munched on Hamantashen.

The **Shabbat Across Atlantic Canada initiative**, where young families came together for Shabbat dinner, saw participation from various areas of our region. We may have taken creative licence with the "age factor" to broaden the scope, but the outcome proved to be successful. Meanwhile, ongoing Hillel programming continues on a number of campuses bringing both Jewish students and faculty together.

The Montreal Shtetl, Making Home after the Holocaust, a book by Dr. Zelda Abramson and John Lynch was launched in Fredericton (Feb.) and in Halifax (Apr.). The Drama Dept. at St. Thomas University headed by Prof. Robin Whittaker sponsored the Fredericton program, and Halifax presented it's program through St. Mary's University. Dr. Abramson, an Associate Professor in sociology at Mount Allison University, launched her co-authored book which depicts life of Eastern European Jews who immigrated to Montreal after the Holocaust.

April 1st, I had the honour of representing Atlantic Canada at a state dinner held in Ottawa hosted by **Prime Minister Justin Trudeau** for **Israeli President Reuven Rivlin** who was here to discuss updating the **Canada Israel Free Trade Agreement**. Both gentlemen offered toasts and re-affirmed their strong 70 year long friendship between our two countries. President Rivlin spoke proudly of his being a 7th generation Jerusalemite. It is to be noted that the bill outlining the upgrades to the new CIFTA just passed its third reading in the House in Ottawa.

Community seders were hosted by Synagogues in some communities while many

private homes hosted relatives and friends to celebrate **Passover**. We hear of the significance of the unleavened bread, of the bitter herbs, of the dipping of the bitter herbs and of eating in a reclining position. This is the legacy of our forefathers, the exodus from bondage in Egypt to becoming a free nation. While shopping for Passover, I encountered a gentleman from Sackville, NB whose wife was preparing for a large troupe for the first seder. I also bumped into Debbie and Morely Rinzler from Moncton. When wandering around a grocery store at Pesach time one is bound to meet up with fellow kin.

Sadly, the world once again was confronted with terrorist attacks, this time at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, and days later followed by bombings of Christian churches in Sri Lanka and then the shooting at a Chabad shul service in Poway, California. I attended an open house at our Fredericton mosque. Interfaith vigils were held in a number of our communities which were attended by members of our congregations.

Also in April and May, Fredericton, Moncton, Saint John, Halifax, Sydney, St. John's and Prince Edward Island held **Holocaust Remembrance** ceremonies. **Andy Reti**, an **Hungarian child Holocaust survivor** and **Ellin Bessner**, journalist and author of the book **Double Threat: Canadian Jews in the Military, and World War 11**, travelled to some of our communities to give presentations. Andy also addressed students at several schools in Saint John, N.B.

We held **Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrations—Israel's Independence Day**. Halifax, Moncton, Saint John and Fredericton had Mijal Ben Dori, the Canada Director for Israel, a shaliach on loan from the Jewish Agency, bring us a sound and video presentation which traced the history of Israel through music, song and dance. The film clips illustrated the country's changing social fabric

Continue on page 42



From The Desk Of NAOMI ROSENFELD

Executive Director

THE TOP 6 LESSONS THAT BIG JEWISH COMMUNITIES CAN LEARN FROM SMALL JEWISH COMMUNITIES

Big Jewish communities are all the rage, and why wouldn't they be? In an increasingly urbanized Jewish world, the vast majority of Jews live in large Jewish communities. These communities do amazing work—they raise tons of money, they provide countless programs and services, and they inspire communal innovation.

However, when I moved to Atlantic Canada in the summer of 2016, I was immediately taken aback by the countless dedicated Jewish leaders and other strongly-identified Jews. Obviously, those of us living in small Jewish communities are doing some things RIGHT. Here is just the tip of the iceberg:

6. THE “SHOWING-UP-FOR-MINYAN” MENTALITY

There's a sense of responsibility that comes with accepting this request to be the 10th person for a minyan. Your presence is intimately tied not just to the success of the minyan, but the *existence* of the minyan overall. Well, those of us living in small Jewish communities bring this “showing-up-for-minyan” mentality to each and every program—religious or not. I have countless stories about parents that leave work early or drive 45 minutes to get their children to Hebrew school on a Tuesday afternoon. Or families that refuse to miss a single PJ library program. In our small Jewish communities, we know that *our presence* makes these programs happen.

5. IT'S ALL ABOUT OUR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are always an essential part of every Jewish community, large or small. So, how's it different here? When paid staff are few and far between—a common occurrence in small communities—volunteers do EVERYTHING. Cook, clean, program, administer, handle HR, educate, manage finances, sort garbage, paint the synagogue, etc. You name it, our volunteers have done it! Some of our community volunteers are even

committing 40+ hours a week to our Jewish institutions. Is it any wonder that we produce some of the most dedicated and committed Jewish communal leaders—wherever they end up in the world?

4. THE “WELCOME-TO-THE-FAMILY” ATTITUDE

Utter excitement, joy, and warmth whenever a new Jewish family moves to town? Well of course, that's just the norm around here! We know that every Jewish family—every Jewish person—is so incredibly vital for our community's future and long-term success. We work hard to involve every new Jewish family in our community programming and services. Talk about a strong push for inclusion and pluralism! But, more than that, we go above and beyond to make sure that every family has everything they need to feel at home.

3. WHEN IT COMES TO OUTREACH—WE GET CREATIVE!

As one community member said to me recently, “in a small Jewish community, you can't hide.” It's true. Jews in small communities are impressively inventive when it comes to outreaching to unaffiliated Jews. We have to be. I frequently get calls with community members telling me: “I saw someone wearing a chai necklace and I got his name” or “I overheard a couple speaking Hebrew in Costco, so I introduced myself.” In fact, this year, I even staked myself out near the matzah display at Sobeys just before Passover... all to try and find more Jews.

2. A PERSONAL INVITATION GOES A LONG WAY

At a recent Jewish community conference, I went to a presentation about one of the latest and most innovative trends in Jewish community programming: home-hosted shabbat dinners and holiday programs. This made me laugh a little... in our community, we've been doing home-hosted programming forever. And having community members instinctively invite newcomers to their homes

has always been in style. If you want to go to shul in our community, expect an invitation for lunch that very same day!

1. WE WORK FOR IT

In a small Jewish community like Atlantic Canada, you don't develop Jewish identities on the basis of your environment or your friend group. In fact, just the opposite is true: being Jewish—and raising Jewish children—is really hard: services, programs, and communal institutions are scarce, and the vast majority of people around you are not Jewish. You can't just decide at 4pm on a Friday that you want to buy some fresh challah for shabbat dinner, or, really, that you want to buy any Jewish cultural food at any time. Everything needs to be thought out and arranged in advance, and nothing is ever conveniently timed or located.

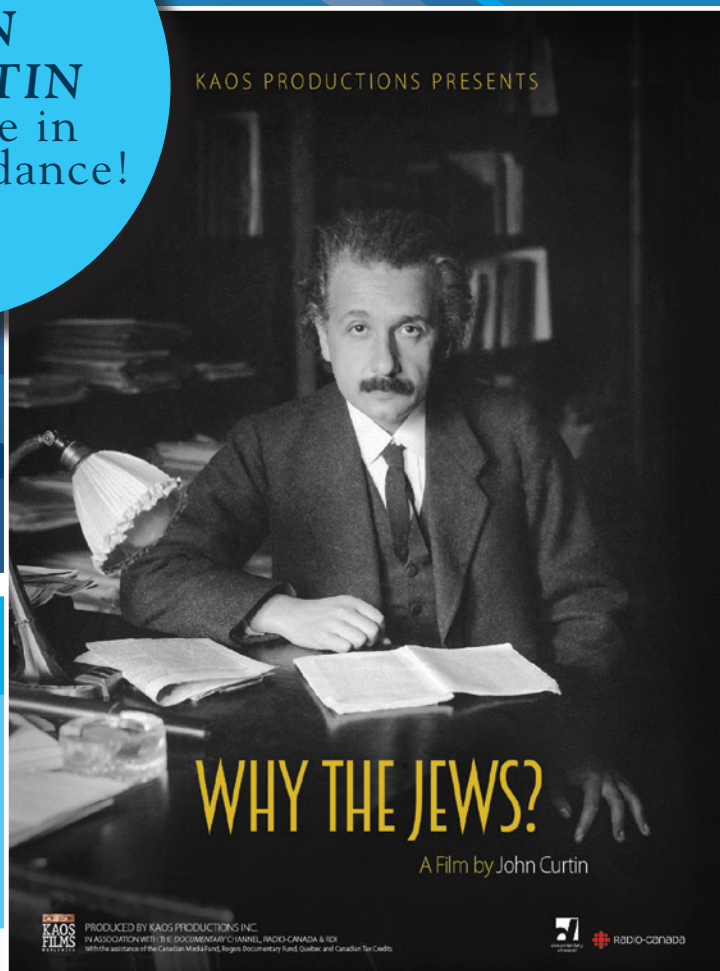
Yet, despite it all, hundreds of families put in the constant effort to make our Jewish community the best it can be. 🌟

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HOLIDAY, BIRTHDAY, OR
OTHER MILESTONE!**



Contact Naomi Rosenfeld,
Executive Director:
902-422-7493
nrosenfeld@theajc.ca

Filmmaker
**JOHN
CURTIN**
will be in
attendance!



John Curtin is a Montreal filmmaker and journalist with more than 30 years of experience in television, radio and print. He has a Gemini Award and several other film prizes to his credit. He has freelanced for The New York Times and reported from abroad for CBC and National Public Radio. Curtin has produced and directed 22 documentaries, including a four-part series on the British monarchy for CBC's DocZone. His films have been broadcast on the BBC, PBS, ARD, NHK, National Geographic, ARTE, The Discovery Channel and others. He is the son of Viennese-born photographer and Holocaust survivor, Walter Curtin (né Spiegel).

The Atlantic Jewish Film Festival and the Atlantic Jewish Council
in partnership with the Halifax Central Library are pleased to present:

WHY THE JEWS?

A FILM BY JOHN CURTIN

The stunning accomplishments of the Jews raise a question no film has dared ask before. How do they do it? Some of the world's most prominent thinkers tackle a mystery shrouded in ignorance and prejudice. They tear back the curtain on a taboo and draw a startling link between a people's achievements and the darkest hours in its history.

Thursday, June 20, 2019 | 7:00 pm | Free admission
Halifax Central Library | 5440 Spring Garden Rd, Halifax

A Q&A WITH JOHN CURTIN WILL FOLLOW THE SCREENING!



From The Desk Of **EDNA LEVINE**

Director of Community Engagement

Volunteer engagement initiatives continued this winter with support to “Out of the Cold”, a Halifax community-based organization which provides shelter, meals, support, and a community drop-in space for people who are homeless or precariously housed during the winter months. Following up on our partnership last year with the Shaar Shalom’s Tikkun Olam committee and the local Shambhala community, we once again came together to provide several hot meals for the shelter from January to March. Spencer House Seniors Centre renewed their offer of the use of their commercial kitchen for us to prepare some of the meals.

In 2005 the United Nations General Assembly designated January 27 as the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust. Since 2009 the Atlantic Jewish Council has commemorated this date and presented programs to contribute to a shared culture of remembrance. This year on January 27th three communities in our region, Halifax, Fredericton and Saint John, participated in the global film screening of *Who Will Write Our History*. The main event with filmmaker Roberta Grossman was hosted at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France, with 354 additional screenings in 55 countries joining in. The program in Halifax was introduced by Dr. Dorota Glowacka, University of King’s College, and presented

in partnership with the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21.

The B’nai B’rith International Holocaust memorial project “Unto Every Person There is a Name”, now in its thirtieth consecutive year, is a unique project designed to perpetuate the memory of the six million Jews who were murdered while the world remained silent. This year on Yom HaShoah, on the front plaza of the Halifax Central Library, we continued our tradition of commemoration with a two hour public recitation of names, one at a time, to remember the victims, not only as a collective, but rather as individuals. The Halifax evening program, held in partnership with the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, featured keynote speaker Ellin Bessner author of *Double Threat: Canadian Jews, the Military and World War II*.

The 21st National Metropolis Conference was held in Halifax this spring and I had the opportunity to attend several conference workshops. Metropolis is the largest annual gathering of researchers, policy makers, and representatives from community and settlement organizations working in Canada. The Conference connects almost a 1000 people to discuss emerging issues, identify and set research priorities, and inform policy regarding immigration, refugees, settlement and integration in Canada.

This spring five students from Halifax completed the Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program, culminating in a trip to Winnipeg to visit the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. The Asper Foundation created the program using a curriculum specifically developed by Holocaust and human rights educators. In our community we organize this program in alternate years, for students in grades 8, 9 or 10.

On June 20, the Atlantic Jewish Film Festival (AJFF) is excited to present a special screening of the film *Why the Jews*, with filmmaker John Curtain in attendance to introduce and discuss the film; this program is with the support of the Halifax Central Library.

The 6th AJFF in Halifax opens November 21 screening international award-winning films for four days. Working with returning chair Lynn Rotin and the organizing committee, Phil Belitsky, Rosalind Belitsky, Jon Goldberg, Anna Hazankin, Linda Law, Alex Rudcovski, Jordan Schelew, and Peggy Walt, to ensure filmgoers an engaging line-up of films, and relevant programming. For information and details on how you can support the festival please refer to the film festival website: AJFF.ca.

Congratulations to the students and families of the 2019 Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program:

Noah Drucker Sarah Goldberg Sarah Myer Rebecca Schelew Tovia Wolfe

*Thank you to the volunteer educators: Dawn Frail and Judith Goldberg
And to educator and chaperone: Lindsay Kerr*

Concerned about security?

Be prepared with **free security training** from the National Community Security Program.

Visit ncsp.ca to sign up.



SPRING APPEAL 2019



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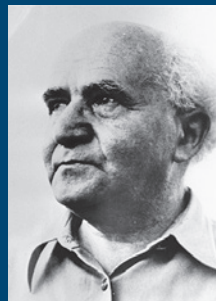
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Jonathan Allen,
Executive Director

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At BGU we are fulfilling David Ben-Gurion's dream of transforming the Negev.

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CIJA'S 5-POINT PLAN FOR COMBATING ANTISEMITISM

JOEL REITMAN AND JEFFREY ROSENTHAL, CO-CHAIRS, CENTRE FOR ISRAEL AND JEWISH AFFAIRS (CIJA)

What are you doing about antisemitism? The CIJA team receives this question at virtually every meeting and event held across Canada. From small to large communities, Jewish Canadians across the country are rightly concerned about the rise of antisemitism in many parts of the world. Recent headlines confirm a chilling surge in various forms of Jew hatred.

While Canada remains a relatively safe country, we must be vigilant, proactive, and strategic in combating antisemitism. As parents wanting to secure a future for our children, we can't afford to be complacent. That's why we volunteer with CIJA.

Let's be honest, antisemitism is a complex challenge that requires a comprehensive strategy. To fight antisemitism, authorities must first be able to identify it. **This is why CIJA is calling on all three levels of government to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of antisemitism.**

And that's not all.

HERE IS AN INSIDE LOOK AT CIJA'S STRATEGY FOR COMBATING ANTISEMITISM:

1. PREVENTION

Through proactive outreach, we raise public awareness of antisemitism and build coalitions to speak out against it. We also conduct training for key officials—including public school superintendents and human rights commission staff—to identify and take appropriate action to counter antisemitism, so that small incidents do not snowball into larger trends. Our objective is to ensure fewer Canadians adopt antisemitic attitudes, which is why outreach to media, community leaders, and educators is so vital.

2. PROTECTION

Our security team provides free-of-charge

services to synagogues, day schools, and JCCs to make their facilities more secure. CIJA also operates the National Community Security Program, providing local Jewish communities with guidance, security training, and incident support. Our recent security consultations and situational awareness training seminars in St. John's, Moncton, and Halifax provided community organizations and professionals with important tools to prevent and manage crisis situations. Our team is also in constant contact with local and national law enforcement. Through the NCSP, we rapidly share intelligence so that community institutions deploy the right measures in response to threat levels.

3. ENFORCEMENT

When antisemitic activity is criminal, we are not shy about calling for the full weight of the law to be applied against perpetrators. We work diligently to share evidence and voice our community's concerns with legal authorities, as we have when Jewish children were threatened in Montreal and antisemitic propagandists spread hate in Toronto—to name just two recent examples.

4. POLICY ADVOCACY

When laws are inadequate, we advocate for policy change—and do so in partnership with non-Jewish allies. For instance, we mobilized more than twenty organizations from a diverse set of faith and ethnic groups

to push Parliament to pass Bill C-305. As a result, hate vandalism targeting day schools and JCCs is now automatically treated with the same level of seriousness under the Criminal Code as similar crimes against places of worship.

5. EXPOSURE AND ISOLATION

When antisemites rear their head, we shine a light on them, expose the danger such hate poses to all Canadians, and ensure those who promote Jew hatred are shunned by broader society. Our video footage of antisemitism taking place at the notorious Al-Quds Day protest, which we first exposed in 2011, resulted in its broad condemnation in recent years.

While there is much more to share than space will allow, our hope is that this gives you a sense of our strategy in this vital area. Our community is a source of incredible wisdom and ideas. We encourage you to email us at info@cija.ca to share your thoughts on how best to counter the world's oldest hate. 🕊





**Know any children ages 6 MONTHS
THROUGH 8 YEARS OLD
living in Atlantic Canada?**

TELL THEM TO SIGN UP FOR PJ LIBRARY!

PJ Library is a program that sends free, award-winning books that celebrate Jewish values and culture to families with children 6 months through 8 years old. In Atlantic Canada, PJ Library is sponsored by the Atlantic Jewish Council.

*Signing up is free, easy, and takes less than
3 minutes. Go to pjlibrary.org!*



**Know any kids ages 8½ TO 11 YEARS OLD
living in Atlantic Canada?**

TELL THEM TO SIGN UP FOR PJ OUR WAY!

PJ Our Way is a program that offers the gift of exceptional chapter books with Jewish themes to kids ages 8½-11 – books that they choose themselves! Every month, kids visit the PJ Our Way website to choose a book from a selection of four high-quality titles that have been reviewed by a panel of PJ educators, parents, and kids.

*Signing up is free, easy, and takes less than
3 minutes. Go to pjourway.org!*



Craving more than just books?

The AJC regularly offers PJ Library and PJ Our Way programming for Jewish children in Atlantic Canada.

Join us for Kids' Shabbat Dinners, holiday programming, social events, and more!

Please contact nextgen@theajc.ca for more information.

CAMPUS NEWS

BY LINDSAY KERR, DIRECTOR OF HILLEL AND NEXT GENERATION ENGAGEMENT

This semester at Hillel we decided to add a guest speaker series to our Halifax Shabbat dinners so that in addition to sharing a delicious Shabbat meal together, we could also learn together.


Through this series we learned about Tu B'Shevat, Birthright Israel and other opportunities provided by Canada Israel Experience, and the role of the Halifax Jewish community in the aftermath of the Swiss Air 111 tragedy. The Swiss Air Shabbat presentation was a preview of a full presentation on the topic done by Leah Simonot, a second year Journalism student at the University of King's College. Leah began working on this project in the fall and shared her findings on King's campus at the end of the semester. This year instead of celebrating Purim with an extravagant ball as we have the last two years, we celebrated in our own space in two ways. We hosted an open hamentaschen making program where we got creative with our fillings including apple pie and s'mores, while also offering the tried and true prunes, and chocolate. Bakers took home some of the hamentaschen they made and packed others into bags to be put in mishloach manot. A couple of days later (on Purim) students from Dalhousie and Saint Mary's delivered the bags to all the administrators and student union executives on those campuses as well as King's. The recipients were very grateful to be included in our celebration!

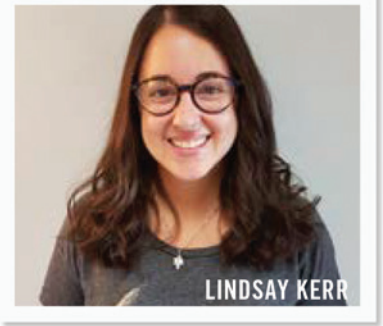
In addition to programming in Halifax, this semester Hillel Atlantic had programming in Fredericton and St. John's. Fredericton faculty and students celebrated two Shabbatot together and are looking forward to continuing their programming in the fall. Students in St. John's continued to host programs for just Hillel as well as a collaboration with the debate club. I am so excited that Hillel programming has been branching out past Halifax and am even more excited for that to continue!

In the summer of 2017 the AJC applied for and received a major grant from the Harold

Grinspoon Foundation (HGF) to be used for community programming for PJ Library families. We were able to increase our young family programming exponentially last year and were lucky enough to receive the grant again this year. In our final few months of grant programming we had a parent's night out at The Board Room Game Café, a taste of Passover program for young kids, and a bread pudding and pizza program for older kids at the end of Passover. We will finish our second year of grant programming the way we started the first and second; with a big Shabbat dinner for young kids and their families. Through this programming we have seen community involvement from young families significantly increase. One of our favourite stories to tell HGF staff is that at one of our programs we had a family who had only been in Halifax a couple of days but their friends told them they needed to come to PJ programming so they did! We are so grateful to have received this grant twice so that we could expand our young family programming and grow PJ Library out from just receiving books.

While JOLT was up and running this semester, I spent a lot of time with five teens; those who registered to participate in the Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program. From January until our trip at the beginning of May these teens participated in 9 educational sessions taught by four different educators and touched on various topics such as Europe before the Holocaust, the Holocaust in action, and what Human Rights (and human rights advocates) look like today. Another aspect of this program is service in your community which has participants complete 10 hours of volunteer work. The most hands-on part of this experience is the trip to Winnipeg that we took at the beginning of

May. Being from Winnipeg I was very excited to show these teens where I am from and be a tourist in my own city! Our itinerary was full of classic Winnipeg things such as the Legislative Building and Fort Whyte Alive (an outdoor education centre) as well as human rights activities such as the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and workshops at Winnipeg Harvest. From formal and informal conversations I had with the participants I know that they had very meaningful and educational experiences. 



LINDSAY KERR



ON THE COVER

The Shrine of the Book,
by Tom Forrestall



This beautiful, original watercolor **The Shrine of the Book**, 14" x 22", from the series 35 Days in Israel is available for purchase from the AJC: **\$4,100** framed (plus delivery). please contact Naomi Rosenfeld, AJC executive director, nrosenfeld@theajc.ca

The Shrine of the Book is a wing of the Israel Museum, Jerusalem. Its contemporary architecture houses and displays the ancient manuscripts the Dead Sea Scrolls, a collection of 800-900 documents, many containing ancient Biblical texts.

Tom Forrestall is one of Canada's most acclaimed and exciting realist painters. Forrestall was born in Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia in 1936. In 1965, he held his first solo show at Roberts Gallery in Toronto and has since continued to show in galleries and museums across Canada. He completed a large outdoor piece for Expo '67. He was elected a member of the Royal Canadian Academy in 1973.

ATLANTIC REGION CYJ EXPANSION AND KADIMAH CAMPERS PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL CONVENTION

BY **MARK KACHUCK** NATIONAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR,
CENTRAL REGION COORDINATOR | CANADIAN YOUNG JUDAEA

Since 1917, Canadian Young Judaea has remained one of Canada's largest and most vibrant Jewish youth movements. Over the past several years we have seen a resurgence in our year round programming. We run programs from coast to coast in Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax.

Our affiliate camps continue to sell out summer after summer. We are proud of the work that is being done to strengthen the future of our Jewish youth at Camp Kadimah, Camp Hatikvah, Camp Shalom, Camp Kinneret, Camp Solelim, Camp Biluim Canada, Biluim Israel and at Machane Lev. The impact of our year round work has not been lost here in Halifax. Gabi Schneider, a Halifax local, and daughter and granddaughter of CYJ alumni wrote about her recent experience on Machane Choref in Toronto, our National Leadership Convention.

CYJ has a huge impact in my life, it is the most amazing program I've been involved in and I am extremely grateful. Living in a small Jewish community can have many pros and cons. It's amazing in a way that anyone can get involved in any Jewish activity. Jolt Halifax has had a major impact on my life these past two years, we have been super involved in helping inside and outside the Jewish community. JOLT Halifax has brought the Jewish youth movement closer together enabling us to become true leaders.

Canadian Young Judaea (CYJ) has given me the opportunity to branch out and meet new people from different camps and cities across Canada. These past few years (2018 and 2019) I had the chance to go to Toronto for a winter camp called "Machane Choref". This program is based on implementing leadership ethics and teamwork techniques. On top of that I got to spend a weekend with many Kadimaniaks who I only see once a year and had the opportunity to meet and develop new friendships. It was fun to share ours and learn all of their camp traditions!

The opportunity to participate in JOLT and CYJ would not have come without Kadimah. Without camp I wouldn't have known about JOLT. The Rubini/Jacobson family has been involved with Canadian Young Judaea for several years and has been going to Kadimah since the camp was created. Many generations have been passed throughout the years. I have been going to camp for seven going on to eight summers. This summer I will be in CIT (Counselor in training program) and yet I can fully remember my first day of Giborim (8 years old). Kadimah



1



2



3

has modeled me to be a mensch and the person I am today. I have made so many lifelong friends that are like family to me.

Being one of the only Jews at my school has been tough but now because of JOLT, CYJ and Kadimah I have a great understanding of who I am and absolutely love sharing my story with people who aren't familiar with camp and our holiday traditions.

We look forward to bringing CYJ into the next 100 years with strong chapters from coast to coast. In the coming years we hope to bring back more regional programming to the Atlantic Region. If you would like to get involved, or would like to connect with us, please email mark@youngjudaea.ca.

PHOTOS: (1) 50+ Participants from Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax and CYJ's National Winter Leadership Convention, Machane Choref (2) JOLT Halifax participants filling purses for women's shelters in Halifax with beauty products, and personal care items (3) Photo from Camp Kadimah

CAMP KADIMAH NEWS



BY SARAH ATKINS, DIRECTOR & MICHAEL PINK AND MICHAEL SOBERMAN, CO-CHAIRS

The countdown is on and camp is less than two months away. We are busy getting everything prepared for the summer and putting the finishing touches on the staffing, the program and all the special moments for Kadimah 2019.

This summer we will be a completely full camp with over 450 campers and staff and we look forward to building upon our already strong and vibrant community. Our camp will host campers from across Atlantic Canada, the rest of Canada, the United States, Asia and Israel creating a diverse community that has built upon the foundations of Maritime hospitality and Jewish values.

As summer approaches, it is always nice to reflect on the impact that Camp Kadimah has had on so many young people. It has become a regular occurrence to hear from campers about the positive influence that Camp Kadimah has had on their identities as Jews and as human beings. Camp Kadimah has helped to shape the lives of thousands of people in its 75 years. To this end we would like to share with you a writing assignment that one of our campers, **Zev Davidson, a 9th grade student and camper from Riverview N.B.** submitted and then shared with us. This beautiful piece speaks to the feeling that so many have about Camp Kadimah and the lifelong impact it is having and has had on our lives.

Kol HaKavod Zev, we are so proud of you and thank you very much for sharing. We are looking forward to seeing all our campers and staff very soon for another safe, fun and inspiring summer in Barss Corner. 📸



KADIMAH TID-BIT FACTS

72 MARITIME CAMPERS ARE ATTENDING IN 2019

LAST 5 YEARS \$122,200 average scholarship dollars per year and 53% of Atlantic Canadians receive scholarships

2018: for campers receiving a SCHOLARSHIP, the average camper fee paid was \$ 2,432 (41% of total fee)

KADIMAH is one of the LEAST EXPENSIVE OVERNIGHT JEWISH SUMMER CAMPS in canada

2,4,6 WEEK PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

KADIMAH in the CITY EVENTS semi-annually

Opportunities to participate in CANADIAN YOUNG JUDEA programming, locally and nationally

One of the LARGEST SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS for jewish camp in canada

CAMP IS SO POPULAR THAT IT FILLS UP BEFORE THE END OF SEPTEMBER

MARITIME CAMPERS END UP BEING MORE INVOLVED later in life whether on campus, or in the community

While we share our East Coast hospitality, we gain CULTURAL INFLUENCES from toronto, the US, and Israel

CAMPERS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO NOT JUST MEET KIDS THEIR OWN AGE, BUT INTERACT WITH ALL AGES

ENTIRE CAMP COMMITTEE IS ALUMNI WITH ATLANTIC CANADIAN ROOTS ON A VOLUNTEER BASIS

MY KADIMAH HOME IS HERE

BY ZEV DAVIDSON

The first time I heard about camp must've been at the Riverview Aquatic Center sometime in 2011 or 2012. Me and my older cousin, Rhianna were waiting for our younger siblings to finish their swimming lessons. Rhianna was playing with some string, making a bracelet.

Rhianna explained that she was going into level nine and that she did her lessons at camp.

"There's a swimming pool at your camp?"

"No, we swim in a lake."

That's disgusting. Don't get me wrong, lakes are cool, but I think they belong on postcards and on the Discovery channel on TV. Call me old-fashioned, but I prefer to bathe where animals don't reproduce, lay eggs and defecate. Plus, I like the Aquatic Center. The water is always at a consistent, warm temperature, with heated changing rooms so you get warmed up after the temperature change when you leave the water. The lobby smells like chlorine and is always a little damp. Lakes are gross.

Rhianna continued to explain what went down at camp and from what she said, it seemed pretty generic: no electronics, boating, arts and crafts, sports and sleeping in cabins. There were two things she said about Camp Kadimah (kah-dee-mah) that made me a little uneasy. One, it's six weeks long, overnight in Barss Corner, Nova Scotia, and two, it's a Jewish camp.

I don't know when my parents signed me up or whether it was before or after hearing about it at the pool but what I do know, is that I was going. I don't think I was forced to go but I was definitely given a pretty strong nudge in that particular direction. I don't blame my parents. An entire summer vacation with one of your children in someone else's hands (especially considering that, that child was me) was probably a miracle for them.

Fast forward however many months since the Aquatic Center and we're putting our duffle bags in the back of whatever vehicle

Dad had at the time.

When I say 'our', I don't mean my younger brother Eli and me. I mean our Colombian exchange student who also happened to be a Jew. That sounds odd but apparently there's a decently large Jewish population of slightly fewer than 300,000 individuals in Latin America. His parents saw the camp video, extended his stay and enlisted him for camp.

Anyway, we hopped in the car and off we went. Camp started on July 1st, Canada Day. We drove down the day before and slept overnight in Halifax. I honestly barely remember the 30th. I vaguely remember eating out somewhere downtown but that's it. I was flustered; I wasn't going to see my family until visiting day in three weeks!

The busses were leaving at 11:00 so we didn't have to be at the Halifax forum until 10:30 so we skipped the mediocre hotel breakfast and went to Tim Hortons™ instead. My last time eating out for more than a month.

We drove to the Forum where two super tall guys who I would later recognize as Bradley Kwinta, the head of water ski and Mark Ciobotaru, a counsellor in my section, helped us carry our four enormous, overpacked duffle bags into the trailer to be delivered to camp.

The Halifax Forum drop off is really weird. On one hand, the kids are saying goodbye to their parents and it's sad and emotional, and on the other, it's a social event. Most of the kids at camp actually come from Toronto because their alumni parents are originally from the Maritimes and moved to Ontario later in life. Everybody else is from the Maritimes (excluding other parts of Canada, some Israelis, a few Americans and Miguel.) This is the one checkpoint in the Maritimes where kids can be dropped off for camp. In the midst of all the farewells and goodbyes, it's also a mini get-together for a decent portion of the maritime Jewish population.



I found that very insulting. I'm there hugging my Mom's leg like an infant and she's trying to introduce me to her friend from Cape Breton. I'm not going to see her for three weeks, like I care who Barry Carnat is. It's funny now but at the time I cared more about 'goodbye' than 'hi nice to meet you I'm Zev.'

The chaperones were signaling to everybody to make their final adieus before going on the buses. I kept holding on to Mom, my heart pounding, not wanting to let go. She gently pushed me off and hugged me, told me that she was proud of me and she loved me and said goodbye. I gave Dad the same procedure, a hug and "I love you" and then he looked me in the eye.

"Zev, just try it out. Go for a summer and if you don't like it you don't have to go back."

Dad told me to go with Rhianna and her brother, Bryson on the bus. We got to the busses where a short, freckled counsellor with a backwards red hat accompanied us. She asked Rhianna's and Bryson's name and let them on.

"What's your name?"

"Zev."

"Hi Zev, I'm Perri, I help out on the sail docks. Could I get your last name?"

"Davidson."

"Sorry bud, I'm afraid you're on bus over there." She pointed to the bus parked in front of this one.

"This is bus M-Z. You'd be on bus last names starting with A-L but I'll see you at camp."

I walked up to the other bus where they asked my name and checked off something on a clipboard and let me on. I took a seat close to the front on the side facing the

parents. All misty eyed and worried, I waved at my family until the bus took off.

When people say bus after the 3rd week of June until the Tuesday after Labour Day, I'm expecting a bus with comfy, slightly reclining seats and cool vibrant patterns on the back of the seat in front of you for you to look at to pass the time, not a school bus. Not only was it a school bus but it was a gross school bus with hard red seats where the back would pop in if you leaned on them and pop out if you didn't apply enough pressure to it. The backs of the seats in front of you had holes cut out with razor blades so you could see the yellow-gray foam inside and bad drawings made from permanent marker. I'm pretty sure these were the same buses that brought the first campers to Kadimah in 1943, when it was founded.

The chaperone was saying something about needing Graval, but I zoned out. One thing bugged me: I didn't know what a Jewish camp was. I know what sounds silly but how Jewish was this camp? We aren't a super Jewish family. We don't eat pork or shellfish but that's about it at home. We don't pray or anything and besides Hanukkah and Passover, we don't really celebrate anything outside the synagogue.

The synagogue happened to be where I didn't like being a Jew. The lights were kept off on Shabbos, they didn't stop praying in what seemed to be gibberish and they were way more kosher about their food. They had to pray over every saucepan, and along with the pork and seafood, you can't eat dairy and meat within a certain time frame of one another. Being a super Jewish Jew 24/7 is what bothered me.

There were some things to look forward to, though. At Kadimah, they have something called the Big Buddy-Little Buddy program, where a CIT is paired with one or two Gibbies. The youngest section at camp is for kids aged 7-9 is called Giborim (gib-oh-reem) called 'Gibbie' for short. Our Big Buddies acted as mentors and guided us and helped us feel more comfortable at camp. On Wednesdays, they had a Big Buddy-Little Buddy BBQ where we could cut the line and get our burgers before everyone else.

My big buddy was Jacob Green. He's a sweet guy from Vancouver and as a part of the program, sent me a handwritten letter giving me the scoop about Kadimah. Jacob has been a counsellor at camp for the past five

summers and he still gives me Sour Skittles every once and a while, a tradition he started with me in 2012. I didn't know him, but I was excited to see Jacob.

"Hi! I'm Dekel Lev. What's your name?"

A kid, no older than 12 or 13 jumped from the seat across from me and held out his hand. Dekel was a pale, freckled, pointy-chinned kid with blue eyes and short black hair. He was wearing a backwards flat top hat and a muscle shirt. Dekel was white, but he wasn't white, and he had an accent. I had just met my first Israeli.

I grabbed his hand and he vigorously shook my hand with his abnormally hot and sweaty one.

"Hi, I'm Zev."

"Oh Ze'ev, you have a Hebrew name." Ze'ev means 'wolf' in Hebrew, but my parents didn't want me to be dubbed Zeev, so Zev was sufficient.

"Ze'ev, look how strong I got!" He pounded his chest and asked me to feel it. I didn't, obviously, but Dekel didn't seem to care.

He flexed his arm.

"Ze'ev feel my bicep." I didn't budge.

Somebody from further back in the bus yelled something at Dekel in Hebrew and he yelled something back. I assumed they were mocking him; he didn't look that strong and he was being quite loud. Dekel went and performed the same routine with someone else further back in the bus. I guess I wasn't giving him the attention he wanted. That made me laugh. Maybe camp won't be so bad.

The bus ride from Halifax to Barss Corner is only an hour but it felt so much longer. It might have seemed shorter if I brought a book to read but reading wasn't really my thing. As we approached camp, the people who recognized us approaching the campgrounds started singing what I would later recognize as the camp song "Our Kadimah Home is Here".

The bus took a sharp left turn and went down a short gravel road. Everybody on the bus was cheering and the two buses pulled up to a huge crowd of people. That crowd was made up of Staff and Counsellors in Training (CITs). The staff had their staff T-shirts on, and the CITs were holding up little construction-paper signs with the names of their little buddies on them. What I did next seemed pretty straightforward: find the guy who's holding the sign with the word 'Zev' on

it. Easy enough.

Well not so easy. The doors swung open and right away I was hit with what seemed to be a sound wave made up of all the combined cheers coming from both the inside and outside the bus. Everybody rushed out of the bus and I was sort of swept into the flow of people exiting the bus. The cheering only seemed to get louder as we got off the bus. Everybody was freaking out and hugging all the people they hadn't seen for a year, while the counselors desperately tried to identify and round up the campers in their cabins. Eventually I found Jacob. I knew what he looked like because my mom looked him up on Facebook when we got his letter. Jacob was 16 at the time, had a round head, short black hair and backwards flat top hat on.

"Hi Zev."

"Hi Jacob."

"How was the bus ride?"

"Really boring."

"Probably. Follow me Zev, I'll bring you to your staff."

As we walked to the huge, red barnlike building where everyone seemed to be going, Jacob told me that this was his third year at camp and that he only started coming when he was 14. He told me some things he had already told me in his letter, like the fact that he had a sister and that he lived in British Columbia, and things I didn't know like the name of the building we were heading into was called the Chadar (cha-dar but the CH sound is that guttural gurgly rolling sound).

"The what?"

"It's called the Chadar, it's where we eat. We're having sandwiches for lunch."

The first look at the Chadar is amazing. It's way bigger than it looks from the outside. The bottom wall is covered with signatures from countless former and present campers and staff. The part that is out of reach from people is covered in red, white, yellow and blue banners from the annual, four-day competition between for teams called Maccabiah (mah-kah-bee-ah) some of which date all the way back to 1954. The head staff sit at head table which is perpendicular to the rest of tables where the campers and general staff sit. All the campers sit with their sections from oldest to youngest except for CITs who sit across from the Gibbies.

I sat with Jacob. There were a few other groups of LBs and BBs sitting together with a staff member sitting here and there. The

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older kids sat at the tables further up in the dining hall in their respective sections. The excited buzz of old friends meeting up after a year apart filled the Chadar. I was about to sit down but Jacob indicated that I remain standing. The director, Jared Goldlust, got up to the podium said a few welcoming words and then waited for silence. Once everybody understood the cue to stop talking, Jared counted us down.

"Three, two, one."

Instantly, everybody started singing a prayer. Not a long, drawn-out super-prayer like I was used to in the synagogue, no. It was a fast-paced prayer that everybody clapped along to that was over in a heartbeat. Then we sat down and ate our food. That was easy!

"You're going to be sharing me with another camper, Zev," said Jacob.

"Huh?"

"His name's Aiden but he's only a two-week camper. He's from Toronto so he'll be arriving from the airport while you're unpacking."

We talked a bit and before you knew it, lunch was over. Jared went up to the podium and explained where the duffle bags were and needed to go. All I understood was that my staff would be carrying my bags and that I didn't have anything to worry about. He also told us that the Gibbies were to meet on the Chadar steps. I was about to head out when he asked a table to lead the closing prayer.

The Chadar exploded with cheers, some kids got up on the benches and were waving their arms. The closing prayer is a repeat-after-me style of prayer and they need a leading table to do it. Leading it was a fun thing to do and to lead the opening one of the summer, what a treat. Jared chose the loudest, most enthusiastic table and counted them down.

The whole thing was in Hebrew and everybody seemed to know the words with the exception of myself. This one was a little longer than the first one but still not as excruciatingly long as the ones at the synagogue. When it was done Jacob looked at me.

"You'll learn. Now come on, let's go meet your staff."

We were sitting on the steps. I sat with Jacob while the staff walked around looking for their campers. A counsellor came up to me. He was really tall and had short black hair.

"Are you Zev?"

"Yeah."

"Hi Zev, I'm Jake Spodek. I'm in your cabin with Jon-Jon, and Danny."

He pointed at three of the other staff roaming around. Jonathan "Jon-Jon" Goldfarb was a second-year staff with black hair, broad shoulders and a small nose. Josh "JJ" Jesin was tan, with blonde hair and blue eyes. He worked on the ski docks. Danny Shneer was short with spiked, light-brown hair and looked younger than Jacob.

"You're in cabin 32."

Jake pointed to a white, log cabin directly across from the Chadar.

"I'll go get your bags."

Cabin 32 is divided into two parts. Two halves with bunkbeds for the campers and singles for the staff are divided by a tiny bathroom. The bathroom, like most bathrooms at camp, was fairly disgusting. The toilet was yellowish with brown gunk on the hinges and permanent skid-marks in the bowl. The sink had one knob for temperatures: cold, cold and cold. Unlike the rest of the cabins at camp, the whole cabin was gross. It smelled terrible but most of us got used to it. It was the oldest cabin in camp, built 1968.

I know this sounds unbearable, but I was eight and, honestly didn't care. Most eight-year-olds, boys especially, aren't exactly cleanly anyway. The cabins are mostly bothersome for the staff and parents. I unpacked. Actually, I took everything out of my bag until my shelves overflowed, made my bed and put my toiletries in the horrendous bathroom. After everyone was done the overall messiness of the cabin only seemed to have increased but at least we had unpacking out of the way.

Everyone seemed to have finished unpacking except my bunkmate. David was on the bunk above me and he was a slow unpacker so JJ, who slept across from my bunk, asked me to help him. I climbed up the ladder of two-by-fours with un-sanded and still very square edges up to David Shteinberg's still naked mattress.

"Hi, I'm David."

"I'm Zev. JJ told me to help you."

We awkwardly shook hands.

"You know this is my third summer at camp? My parents signed me up when I was six. It's not bad though, you make friends and the staff are nice, sometimes."

We both laughed. I helped David cram all his belongings onto his minimal amount of

shelf space. Then our staff told us to go do our deeps.

"What's deeps?"

David explained you had to prove you didn't need a lifejacket to swim. He also told me if you tell them you're tired, you don't have to swim today. Although we still had to sit by the docks. I didn't mind. One day less in the lake.

We sat by the docks together, talking. David was a veteran. He knew everything and anything about camp. He told me about his favourite staff and activities and how tonight was pizza night because it was Sunday. We sat together for dinner. David even helped me clap along to the blessing. The pizza was ok. No hamburger on it, though. You can't mix meat and dairy. It was oily and by the time it got to us, room temperature. But for two hungry eight-year-olds, it really hit the spot.

The evening program was an introduction to all the senior staff. We sat and watched them as they ran on the old stage that looked like it would splinter under the weight of all the people. It was fun. Everybody was clapping along to the songs and all the staff and campers were super into it.

After that we ended the day with fireworks for Canada Day. I was next to David. We watched as the fireworks whistled, twirled and burst in a massive array of colors. They seemed to go on forever. I just sat there next to David; eyes locked on the smoky sky. Today was a good day; I belong here.

Maybe being Jewish wasn't that bad after all. And heck, my parents could wait. All that mattered were Jacob, David and all the amazing people I had yet to meet. Before camp, Judaism was boring. Kadimah gave meaning to being Jewish: services that were fun and inclusive, fun ways of appreciating Jewish culture through dance and song instead of books full of lines I couldn't read. I learned prayers through fun, piano and guitar-accompanied lessons instead of endless repetition.

Camp was and is still amazing. Before camp, being Jewish seemed like a chore. Kadimah gave meaning and appreciation for my religion and taught me what it really means to be Jewish. This summer, 2019, will be my eighth summer at Kadimah. I hope to become a Counselor in Training next year with a little buddy of my own. ☺

AN EVENING OF DRAMATIC READINGS FROM

The Montreal Shtetl: Making Home After The Holocaust

BY AMELIA WHITTAKER

On the evening of February 28th, I had the pleasure of participating as a reader for Zelda Abramson and John Lynch's recent book, *The Montreal Shtetl: Making Home After The Holocaust* (*Between the Lines*, 2019)

The event took place inside the Black Box Theatre at St. Thomas University in Fredericton. The event was organized by the Department of English's Drama Concentration, Theatre St. Thomas and the Canada Research Chair in Global and International Studies at STU.

Abramson and Lynch's book is a collection of interviews and other forms of evidence that outline the daily struggles of Holocaust survivors that settled in Montreal. The book draws from more than 60 interviews with survivors and hundreds of case files from Jewish Immigration Aid Services (JIAS) and other archival documents.

Abramson, an Associate Professor and Head of the Sociology Department at Acadia University, selected five representative stories for the evening of dramatic readings and Dr. Robin Whittaker, Associate Professor and Drama Advisor in STU's English Department selected students to perform the readings.

The evening commenced with John Lynch strumming on his guitar and singing a Yiddish children's song to the audience. The song was both sweet and melancholy, and it perfectly set the tone for the evening.

The five chosen stories were riveting because they not only touched on issues that were specific to Montreal in the 1940s and '50s, but the stories continue to resonate today in light of refugee immigration to Canada. The major themes of work difficulties, language barriers and cultural difference are still relevant. However, one point of conflict that was discussed in every one of the stories, and of which I was unaware, was the tepid relationship between the Holocaust survivors and the established and assimilated Montreal Jewish Community. For younger generations, it is difficult to imagine that fellow Jews, who had undergone such incredible hardships, were not embraced by the established community. For a clear understanding of this point, here is a section from the passage from which I read called, Theresa—*A La Mode*:

THERESA: The relationship between the immigrants and the Canadian Jews was very strange too. The Jewish Congress did a lot for the immigrants. They helped financially, they had so

many committees: they had JIAS, they had the Hebrew Free Loan Society, they had everything to help people in every aspect. Even cultural events. In my personal situation, we didn't need any financial help.[...] Socially there was zero help from the Jewish Canadians. This means there was completely no social integration. Nothing.

At that time, the Jewish Canadian community didn't want to talk about the Holocaust. It wasn't elegant. It wasn't nice. They didn't want to know. They had no interest.[...] There was no integration.[...] I didn't form any true friendships with Canadian Jews. When I think about it, I, most probably, didn't want to. Socially, I could not, nor could they. We lived parallel lives.

From the perspective of the established Jewish community in Montreal, Neomi Iancu Haliva and Carter Scott read the dialogue between "Estelle" and "Irving" called, *Restricted*:

ESTELLE: There were, however, some young people, older than we were maybe in their 20s we became aware of and we did not like them. They did not dress the way we did. They had their own style. They wore their coats over their shoulders which we thought was really creepy. They wore their fedoras differently than our fathers or brothers wore their fedoras.[...] We called them "mockys." Mocky means they were different. They didn't speak English and if they did, they eventually spoke with terrible accents.[...]

IRVING: [...] The immigrants who came across were referred to as "mockys," and if not mockys they were called, maybe slightly more polite, greeners; the inference was a green, unripe fruit.[...] When I first encountered "these" people, I felt that we had an obligation to them. That they had suffered terribly yet, amongst my friends, Jewish families and Jewish kids, there was a decided hostility towards them and I guess I was affected by my peers. I too used the same words, probably not גרענירג—greener, DPs possibly, but most certainly mocky.

The evening of readings brought to light many uncomfortable truths about the experiences of these survivors while living in Montreal. There were difficult discussions centered on the Catholic School System and the lack of French Language Instruction for the Jewish refugees. There was no desire to integrate the Jewish refugees into a Quebecois society, and as a result, most of the Jews ended up in the Anglophone community. To illustrate this point, Brennan Garnett read this piece, entitled *Miriam—Allez Chez Les Protestants*:

MIRIAM: Within a few days of arriving, my father took me to the local French school down the street from where we were staying. That made sense; I knew French and no English. He wanted to register me for school, and they said “*Bien, vous n’êtes pas catholique, vous ne pouvez pas aller à l’école ici*”—You are not Catholics, you cannot go to school here. They suggested that I enrol in College Marie de France, a private secular French school. My father said we could not afford private school, shrugging their shoulders, they said, “*Allez chez Les Protestants*,” Go to the Protestant School Board.

To be fair, the entire evening was not focused solely on the injustices enacted upon the Holocaust survivors in Montreal at this time. There were certainly joyful stories as well, and in the true tradition of the Jewish people these joyous stories focused around the first tastes of a new food. Madigan Downs read the part of Paul and relays this delightful story:

PAUL: [We arrived at the] Baron de Hirsch Institute on Jeanne Mance. It was a civilized environment, and the food was good. I still remember clearly our first morning—fantastic breakfast. There was cereal, eggs and coffee. I will never forget the grapefruit, ’cause

I’m still in love with grapefruit. I still eat grapefruit with the same pleasure as I did my first morning in Montreal. We had never seen grapefruit. In Europe, grapefruit didn’t exist in those days. Or, if it did, I don’t remember ever having one. So, we watched each other, trying to figure how to eat it.

Lucas Gutierrez-Robert read for the part of Paula and describes Paula’s first encounter with peanut butter:

PAULA: After we docked in Halifax and went through immigration, we were put on a train to Montreal, where we were supposed to change trains for Winnipeg. I still remember the train ride. On the train, eventually somebody came around and was serving sandwiches and McIntosh apples. My parents bought a peanut butter sandwich to give to my younger brother. The sandwich was made with this white bread, and European people don’t know from this bread. He took a bite of this bread, the peanut butter got stuck on the roof of his mouth and he almost choked. Back then, peanut butter was something we didn’t know about. But the apples were delicious.

Overall, the evening was a success. It was reassuring to see so many young people in the audience, keen to hear these stories from the survivors. After the readings, there was a lively question and answer period led by Dr. Abramson. A young man posed the final question of the evening, and his question brought together the issues of immigration and xenophobia in Canadian society, in the past and in the present. This was fitting as his question connected the stories in Abramson and Lynch’s book to the plights of refugees in Canadian society today. 5

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RESEARCHING THE JEWISH HISTORY OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

BY DR. JOSEPH B. GLASS, POWNAL PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Shortly after moving to Prince Edward Island, I looked for an Island Jewish history. A simple Google search directed me to the Atlantic Jewish Council website and a two-paragraph description of the Jewish presence on the Island (theajc.ca/history/the-jewish-community-of-prince-edward-island). The brief description cited Sheva Medjek's short history of Jewish PEI in her study the *Jews of Atlantic Canada* and background material provided by Joe Naylor z"l, who was elected the first president of the PEI Jewish community in 1993.

Sensing that the Jewish presence on PEI was more significant and more complex, I started to investigate. I was curious as to what life was like for Jews who resided on the Island, particularly before improved access with the opening of the Confederation Bridge in 1997. I wanted to know how Jews dealt with life cycle events, festivals, holidays and fast days, and with religious practices in and outside the home. I was also interested in knowing why no synagogue had been established and why no Jewish cemetery had been consecrated.

As an academic researcher in historical-geography, I applied research tools and methodologies utilized in previous research projects to investigate the history of the Jewish population of PEI.

The starting point was Louis Rosenberg's classic 1939 demographic study, *Canada's Jews*. His statistics quantified the Jewish population by religion, by origin or race, as well as certain characteristics of gender, age, marital status, occupation, mother tongue, etc. Library and Archives Canada's collection of enumeration pages for Canadian up to and including 1921 revealed the names of most Jewish persons listed in the census summaries. With their names in hand and some basic details, further searches in public archives, libraries, local histories, genealogical resources, and newspapers revealed additional details, incidents, and stories of the Jewish presence.

This material was supplemented by oral histories and interviews conducted with descendants of Jewish Island residents and locals who interacted with Island Jews. Some visual material has also been located which provides portraits of the Jewish inhabitants and their different physical, social, cultural, and economic environments.

I would like to thank a long list of members of the Jewish community, archivists, librarians, descendants of Jewish Island residents, local historians and researchers, local informants, and others who helped in the identification and collection of research material. I will thank them by name in the book on the history of the Jews of PEI.

There are two difficulties in researching the Jewish history of PEI.

In many other Jewish communities, institutional and organizational historical records often provide information on their history and development. In PEI no such records exist for the study period. Secondly, with limited Jewish continuity on the Island and years of Jewish out-migration, potential informants are dispersed through the Maritimes and far beyond. There are, for example, a few unsolved mysteries such as Angela Finlay whose origin or race was listed as Jewish and her religion as Roman Catholic in the 1901 census. She was born in Port of Spain, Trinidad in 1874 and her occupation was nurse. She was married and living with her in-laws in Vernon Bridge. No other references to her have been located.

Preliminary findings have revealed that the Jewish presence in Prince Edward Island was greater in number and more active economically, socially, and culturally than previously presented. The Jewish population was spread across the Island from O'Leary to Souris with the largest concentration in Charlottetown. The wealth of information about the Jewish population and life in PEI justify the creation of a monograph, like those published on the Blacks, Lebanese, and Chinese, on PEI. In the meantime, a short history of the Jews of PEI is presented in two parts; the first until World War One and the second continues after the war through World War Two, until the early 1950s. Essential details of Jewish presence and life are provided. Some individuals and families are highlighted but not all Jewish residents are discussed.

SHORT BIO:

Dr. Joseph B. Glass received his doctorate from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He has authored books and numerous academic articles on topics relating to the historical-geography of late Ottoman and British Mandate Palestine and to Canadian and American Jewish migration to Eretz Israel until 1948. His book *From New Zion to Old Zion: American Jewish Immigration and Settlement in Palestine, 1917-1939*, was reprinted in 2018. *Sephardi Entrepreneurs in Jerusalem: The Valero Family 1800-1948*, written together with Prof. Ruth Kark, was awarded best monograph on Turkish economic and social history by the Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Centre. Dr. Glass is currently researching the history of the Jewish presence on Prince Edward Island.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE JEWISH PRESENCE ON PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND UNTIL 1945—PART 1: UNTIL WORLD WAR I

THE FORERUNNERS

The earliest Jewish presence identified was Joseph Levi. Mentioned

by name in the 1861 PEI census enumeration page for Princetown Royalty (later Malpeque), he appeared as the only Jewish person in the 1848 and 1855 colonial censuses. Born between 1801 and 1816, Levi never married. He was a tailor from England. He lived in Princetown, the county seat, for at least thirteen years (1848 to 1861) and was known locally given the size of the community, 385 in 1861. What brought Joseph Levi to the Island and Princetown in particular, and later to leave is not known.

Gene Autumn from Crapaud discussed professionals in Charlottetown in the early 1850s and explained: "Our Town had four or five doctors and one dentist; four or five lawyers and one Jew." No mention was made of the Jewish man's name or any other detail.

The first known Jewish peddlers were the three Cohns—Aran, Julius, and Samuel—who were on the Island during the mid-1870s. They had lived in Saint John and later in Halifax and looked for opportunities in PEI. They obtained PEI hawker and peddler licenses, with beast, i.e. horse. Where and what they peddled is not known. These men left the Island and do not appear to have returned. In Halifax in the late 1870s Julius' occupation was auctioneer, dry goods clerk, and commercial traveler and Samuel's occupation was auctioneer, jeweller and watchmaker.

The 1881 census of Canada did not list any of Canada's 2,455 Jews living in PEI. The 1891 census listed one Jewish man, Frank Rossin, a forty-nine-year-old, French-born physician who lived in Summerside with his American-born Roman Catholic wife. He died in Charlottetown in 1895 and was laid to rest in the New Glasgow Protestant cemetery. Locals expressed their appreciation for his medical services and devotion. His gravestone read in part "erected by friends in commemoration of his many kind deeds and unselfishness in the use of his wonderful skill in alleviating the suffering of his fellow creatures."

(See image 1)

UNTIL WORLD WAR ONE

An increased Jewish presence began in the early 1890s with sixteen Jewish men arriving to conduct business during the decade. They obtained provincial peddlers' licences with some men returning for several years and five men making PEI their home. They were listed by their birthplace or country of origin (Russia, Germany, East Prussia, Poland, and Romania), by their residence in Canada (Saint John; New Glasgow, NS; Halifax; and Montreal), and/or their address in PEI (Charlottetown, Summerside, Murray Harbour, and Alberton). At least fifty-five Jewish men obtained PEI peddlers' licences between 1893 and 1913 and their stays lasted from one season, through several years, to the rest of their lives.

(See image 2)

Hyman Jacobson (b. May 14, 1870, not to be confused with Himan Jacobson of Saint John, b. March 20, 1870) lived in Souris in the late 1890s until 1901. The town was an important shipping and fishing port in on the Island's the north-east coast and had a population of 1,140 in 1901. He was a clerk in the employ of Ida Isaacson of Saint John. The nature of her business has not been uncovered. He integrated into local society and was elected an officer of the Souris Court of the Independent Order of Foresters. Isaacson's

If you have family histories, letters, documents, photographs, and any other materials relating to family members who had lived or worked in Prince Edward Island and are willing to share this material for the purpose of research on the early Jewish presence on PEI, please contact me at josephbglass@yahoo.com



1

<div>Royal Gazette</div> <div>PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY. VOL. XXIII—NO. 19</div>					
CHARLOTTETOWN, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, MAY 9, 1896.					
List of Licensed Peddlers in Prince Edward Island.					
Expiration of License	Name of Peddler	Address	Age	With Horse & Wagon or on Foot	No.
May 2	Abraham Golden	Charlottetown	32	On foot	209
May 11	Simon Brag	St. John's, Prince's Bay	30	On horse & wagon	209
May 12	J. & M. Kennedy	do	do	do	209
May 13	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 14	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 15	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 16	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 17	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 18	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 19	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 20	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 21	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 22	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 23	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 24	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 25	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 26	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 27	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 28	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 29	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 30	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 31	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 32	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 33	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 34	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 35	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 36	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 37	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 38	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 39	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 40	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 41	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 42	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 43	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 44	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 45	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 46	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 47	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 48	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 49	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209
May 50	Simon Brag	do	do	do	209

2

28	76	81	Block Louis	M	Head	M	9 May	1870	30	Germany
29			" James	F	Wife	M	25 Jan	1877	24	"
30			" Charles	M	Son	F	16 Feb	1895	5	United States
31			" Helen S.	F	Daughter	F	12 Jan	1893	3	P.B.
32			" Annie C.	F	Daughter	F	10 July	1900	7	P.E.I.
33	77	82	Golden Myer	M	Head	M	25 April	1875	25	Austria
34			" Lena	F	Wife	M	7 June	1877	23	"
35			" John	M	Son	M	26 Oct	1897	1	"
36			" Ida	F	Daughter	F	25 Oct	1900	4	P.E.I.

3

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 Eye strain causes inflammation, swollen and itchy eyelids, headache, dizziness, constipation, heartburn, nausea, sleeplessness, nightmare, cornea, St. Vitus dance, epilepsy, nervousness and even insanity. It can only be cured by stopping the strain with properly fitted glasses—Our experience, our best instruments and scientific method enables us to do satisfactory work; call and see us, no charge for examination.

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 Dr. Epstein of the above firm will be at Messrs. Clark & Arling's Jewellery store Summerside from the 19th to the 21st of this Dec. month.

4



5

PHOTOS: (1) Tombstone of Dr. Frank Rossin, New Glasgow—Courtesy of Alexander Egorov, 2018 (2) List of Peddlers' licences including four Jewish men (Abraham Golden, Mier Golden, Jacob Chen, and Simon Brag [Baig])—Source: Royal Gazette, 9 May 1896, Prince Edward Island Provincial Archives and Records Office (PARO) (3) Section of a 1901 census enumeration page for Charlottetown showing the Block and Golden families—Source: Library and Archives of Canada, Census of Canada, 1911 <http://data2.collectionscanada.ca/1901/z/z003/pdf/z000123432.pdf> (4) Advertisement for Silverston and Epstein, *Charlottetown Guardian*, December 15, 1910, p. 5.—Source: IslandArchives.ca at University of Prince Edward Island, <http://islandnewspapers.ca/islandora/object/guardian%3A19101215-005> (5) Editorial staff of the [Prince of Wales College] College Times in 1937, Sylvia Block, top right—Source: College Times, May 1937, p. 18, <http://vre2.upei.ca/pwc/fedora/repository/pwc%3A2002-018>

office was located in the Allan L MacDonald Building on Main Street. According to local lore, the business was accessed through a side entrance and the side street became known as Hebrew Street.

The sojourn of one Jewish peddler ended in tragedy. Joseph Simon, born in Russia in 1861, traversed the Island on foot from 1897 and then with horse and wagon from 1900. In January 1901, he was thrown from his sleigh into a ditch along the main road near Summerville. Heavily loaded with junk, the sleigh ran over him killing him instantly. He had been in Canada four years and was well-known to Saint John's Jewish community. He was survived by his wife and six daughters in Russia. Joseph's remains were buried in the closest Jewish cemetery—Shaarei Zedek Cemetery, Saint John.

Three early Jewish peddlers were joined by their wives and children—Albert Golden in Pinette, Meir Golden and Louis Block in Charlottetown—and they had more children in PEI. In 1901, Charlottetown, the provincial capital, economic centre, and largest city had a population of 10,718.

(See image 3)

Albert and Meir Golden's families left in the first years of the twentieth century. Louis Block, a well-known junk dealer and his wife raised their family on the Island. He was joined by his brothers Israel and Abie who made Charlottetown home for their families. Israel and Abie were also junk dealers. Israel left for Boston in 1920, Louis passed away in Charlottetown in 1934 and Abie died in Charlottetown and was buried in New York where his daughters and wife's family resided. All the second generation of the Block family left the Island except Maurice Block (See part 2).

Moses Jacobson, his wife Ida and their two sons arrived in the early 1900s. He transitioned from peddler to junk dealer, in essence, from nomadic to sedentary. The family lived in Charlottetown where daughter Lillian was born. In the 1920s Ida ran a grocery store and newsstand. The Jacobsons remained on the Island until the mid-1930s.

The Chary family lived in Summerside at the turn of the century. Harry (Aaron) and his wife Rose were born in Russia and migrated to the U.S. Their second son Herman was born in Summerside in 1900. Harry was listed as a trader in 1901 but no mention was made of what he traded. By 1905 the family was in Campbellton, New Brunswick, and in Winnipeg in 1915.

Jewish settlement continued until 1914 with more Jewish families arriving and more Jewish business ventures opening. Along Queen Street, the main commercial street of Charlottetown, Max Israel, his brothers, and Samuel Matz opened a dry goods store; the Hoffmans operated National Clothing, a men's and boy's clothing store; and Drs. Kemp Epstein and Max Silverston ran an optician's office.

Dr. Leo Frank stood out among the Jewish residents. Born in Lithuania in 1881, his family moved to Scotland and subsequently to the United States in 1895. He had various occupations including law clerk, real estate speculator, promoter, jeweller, and medical supply salesman. In 1915 Frank purchased a 27-acre property in Southport, across the Hillsborough River from Charlottetown. He established Rosebank Fur Farm and specialized in the breeding and raising of silver black fox.

(See image 4)

Local newspapers reported on Jewish religious observance. The

Patriot in 1908 stated that, "The Jews of Charlottetown are now concluding the celebration of the Feast of the Passover, which [...] lasts for eight days. Unleavened bread, as prescribed on [sic] the Mosaic law is eaten during the continuance of the feast, and many reminders of Israel's exodus from Egypt were introduced." In 1912 the *Charlottetown Guardian* reported: "Members of the Jewish Nationality in Charlottetown celebrated the beginning of the Jewish New Year on Sept. 12, the new year entering after sunset Sept. 11th."

The Jewish population the Island was at its largest, at over forty persons. However, the Jewish population did not organize and establish the basic institutions of a Jewish community—a synagogue and cemetery. Over the years some Jewish residents travelled to Saint John and Moncton to celebrate Passover and the High Holidays.

A Jewish wedding was held in 1913. An engagement announcement for Ida E. Hoffman of Charlottetown and Meyer A. Ducoffe of Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, appeared in the *Canadian Jewish Times*. The nuptials were held at the home of the bride's parents, Charles and Nellie Hoffman, on Pownal Street. The *Charlottetown Guardian* underscored that this was the first Jewish wedding in PEI and treated it as frontpage news. Rabbi Herman Benmosche of the Hazen Street Synagogue in Saint John came specially to perform the ceremony. The couple settled in Charlottetown, and Ida gave birth to two sons—Roland Norman and Eric. The latter died in his sixth month. In 1916, the Ducoffes left PEI.

(See table)

During World War One some Jewish residents closed their businesses and moved with their families to other parts of Canada. The economic downturn due to the war, a drop in demand for luxury furs, and other factors led to financial difficulties for many Island residents.

PART 2—AFTER WORLD WAR I TO THE 1950S

BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

The interwar years saw little change in the size of the Jewish population. Most of the second generation, born either in PEI or having arrived at a young age, left the Island in their late teens and early twenties. When they were growing up in Charlottetown, they studied in the Protestant educational system at the West Kent School and most continued their studies at the Charlottetown Business College or Prince of Wales College. Many of the Block children were recognized for their academic achievements. For example, a 1936 advertisement for the Business College referred to "Miss Beatrice Block, the clever daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. Block of this city, who now holds a very responsible position in New York City—having won EIGHT [medals] IN ONE TERM." With relatives in New York and Boston, most of these young Jewish women and men moved to these cities where they found employment and opportunities to meet eligible Jewish marriage partners. Some young Jewish men attempted to develop their own businesses. In the early 1920s, Moses Jacobson's son Joe ran a livery stable. Later he and his brother, Herman (Hyman) obtained peddlers' licences, but they left for New York in the mid-1920s.

(See image 5)

Maurice Block, who was born in Charlottetown in 1909, worked for his father Abie, then partnered with him, and eventually took

over the family junk business and expanded into other ventures. For example, in 1946, he was also a Goodyear Tire dealer. He constructed a two-storey brick building at 156 Kent Street and on the upper face was inscribed "1950 Block Building." In 1938 Maurice married Sarah Jake from Moncton. The couple had two children, a daughter Beverly in 1939 and a son Marven in 1941. Maurice and Sarah passed away in Charlottetown in 1994 and 2005 and both were laid to rest in the Jewish cemetery in Moncton where Sarah's parents had been buried.

After the war, Leo Frank sold valuable silver fox pelts in London, England and New York and breeding pairs in Japan. In 1919 one of Frank's high-quality pelts fetched \$850. He successfully promoted his ranch and the PEI silver black fox industry with his ranch appearing in film and photographs. He ceased operations in 1944 and remained in Charlottetown until 1958. During his time in PEI, Dr. Frank fostered significant business and social connections with prominent fox breeders, businessmen, and politicians. His name frequently appeared in the press as a contributor to various charities. Leo Frank married Columbia University educated Ruhamah Scheinfeld in Montreal in 1935. She contributed to the Island's cultural life and wrote a regular column in the Guardian.

(See image 6)

There were new arrivals. Born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1893, Max M. Cohen graduated from the Royal Academy of Music in London. An accomplished pianist and violinist, he immigrated to Canada in 1913 and moved to Charlottetown in June 1921. His performances were well-reviewed in the local press. He died in December 1921 and was buried in the People's Cemetery in Charlottetown.

Most new arrivals were seasonal residents with many coming from Saint John. This reflected improved transportation between the mainland and the Island, as well as on the Island. They acquired peddlers' licences and travelled across the Island in their trucks. Some men specialized in the exchange of linoleum squares for hooked rugs produced in rural areas. Foreign-born Jewish fathers were joined by their Canadian-born sons. Morris Kashetsky of Saint John and his two sons Max and Hyman conducted business in PEI during the 1930s and 1940s. They spent many summers based in Kensington purchasing and bartering for hooked rugs and other products. They were known as "mat men." Hyman Kashetsky, an antique shopkeeper in Saint John, opened a small antique store in Kensington which operated in the summers through to the early 1950s.

(See image 7)

Joe Jochelman was also based in Kensington from at least 1931 until 1947, for at least part of the year. He was a store keeper in Saint John in 1921. On the Island, he was a cattle dealer, he owned silver fox, and a race horse. He was joined by his son Hymie in the late 1930s. Sam Levine resided in O'Leary in the 1940s and 1950s. He was a cattle dealer who purchased from farmers in western PEI.

A few Jewish men put down roots on the Island. Based in Albany, Max Cope arrived in the late 1920s and engaged in peddling, buying hooked rugs, and junk dealing. He lived on the Island until his death in 1957. Benjamin Benjamin was a frequent visitor to the Island from 1916 into the early 1920s. He crisscrossed the Island hawking and bartering. In 1924 he married a local Christian woman, the widow Georgie Smith, they settled in Charlottetown and had a son

An Appeal for Information about Jews in the military stationed on PEI during World War II

If you have information detailing the stay of Jewish men and women in the military who served in Prince Edward Island, such as letters, photographs, family histories, memoirs and any other materials, and are willing to share this material for the purpose of research on the early Jewish presence on PEI, please contact me at josephbglass@yahoo.com

CENSUS YEAR	RELIGION	ORIGIN OR RACE	POPULATION OF PEI
1891	1	n.a.	109,078
1901	17	17	103,259
1911	36	38	93,728
1921	18	21	88,615
1931	19	20	88,038
1941	18	25	95,047
1951	26	21	98,429

TABLE: Jewish population of PEI by religion and origin, 1891-1951

Source: Census of Canada, 1891-1951



PHOTOS: (6) Stereoscope photograph of Leo Frank holding a domesticated Silver Black Fox, Rosebank Fur Farms, Southport, PEI—Source: Keystone-Mast Collection, UC Riverside, California Museum of Photography, <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/kt009nb6j9/?order=2&brand=calisphere> (7) Jewish mat men on PEI in the 1940s with Max Kashetsky in the middle—Source: Courtesy of Herzl Kashetsky, Saint John (8) Sydney S. Shulemson of Montreal, in an Avro Anson aircraft, No. 1 General Reconnaissance School, RCAF in Summerside, PEI,—Source: Library and Archives Canada / C-000719



BURNSIDE

LAW GROUP

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Joseph JeBailey, B.A., LL.B

Derek B. Brett, B.A., J.D.

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named Harry. Benjamin left PEI in 1925 and returned in 1931. He operated two second-hand stores in the centre of Charlottetown until his death in 1951.

WORLD WAR TWO

The war significantly but temporarily changed the composition of the Jewish population. Training bases for the Royal Air Force (RAF) and Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) were established in Charlottetown, Summerside, and Mount Pleasant. The number of Jewish members of armed forces on the Island varied with most staying for a few months of training as pilots, navigators, and bombardiers. Some remained for longer periods working as trainers and instructors. Twenty-four servicemen and one servicewoman have been identified to date. Their number was certainly greater if in 1945 twenty Jewish airmen participated in a Purim celebration organized by members of the Block family in Charlottetown. The few permanent Jewish residents hosted the Jewish servicemen in their homes for Shabbat and holidays.

(See image 8)

The one woman was Ruth Friedman of Montreal, a wireless operator who was stationed in PEI for part of the war. Four servicemen were joined by their wives in PEI. For example, Lewis Jacobs from England was a technical officer in the meteorological department at the Royal Air Force school from December 1940. His wife Kathleen arrived in July 1941 and she passed away in December that year at the age of twenty-seven. She was laid to rest in the Jewish cemetery in Moncton.

Two Jewish airmen died while serving in PEI. Airman 2nd class, English-born Norman Yaffe died in an accident in 1943 and he was buried in the Moncton Jewish cemetery. Sergeant Sam Levine of Montreal was a student pilot at No. 9 Service Flying Training School at Summerside in 1941. He was the lone occupant of a Harvard trainer which crashed off Point Prim on the south coast in November 1941. His body was recovered in the spring and he was buried in Montreal.

During the war four Jewish doctors set up their practices. These men were born in Central Europe and educated in Vienna and Strasbourg. Dr. Israel Rachmel and Dr. Max Shapiro left Europe before the outbreak of the war. Dr. Sydney Bandler was interned in Buchenwald following the German annexation of Austria in 1938 and his wife arranged for his release. The family fled Austria and made their way through Italy, France, Spain, and Portugal and were granted passage to Canada.

There was an urgent need for doctors in PEI since many local doctors enlisted in the armed forces. Dr. Shapiro opened a practice in Borden in 1940 and later moved to New Glasgow. He left PEI in 1951 and was given a very warm send-off by residents of the New Glasgow area. Dr. Bandler practiced medicine in Alberton from 1941 to 1954. He was very well respected and was among the founders of the West Prince Hospital. When his son, Martin, who had graduated Dalhousie University medical school, received an internship in New York, his parents joined him. Dr. Rachmel arrived in 1942 and he was appointed to the staff of the P.E.I. Hospital. He ran a private practice specializing in gynecology, obstetrics, and pediatrics. He passed away in 1980 and is buried in the Floral Hills Cemetery in

PEI. Dr. Frederick Siebner was from Czechoslovakia and graduated from the University of Vienna in 1926. He had a three-year contract with the PEI government. During his tenure he served Tyne Valley and the nearby communities. He married in 1946 and they moved to upstate New York in 1947.

A fifth doctor arrived in 1948, Dr. Edward Kassner. Born in Vienna, he completed his medical studies at the University of Vienna in 1937. Following the German occupation in 1938, he fled Austria, and reached England. He was considered an enemy alien and was interned and then transported to Canada where he was imprisoned in an internment camp for two years. He worked in Montreal and in 1948 he and his Island-born wife Irene, nee Roper, moved to Souris where he practiced until his retirement in 1977. They raised three children—David, Rachel, and Richard. He was elected president of the Medical Society of P.E.I. in 1962. Dr. Kassner's medical practice impressed Rachel's career choice and she is a physician in Charlottetown.

By 1951 the Jewish population was 21 by origin or race and 26 by religion. The number of Jews remained steady from 1921 to 1951. There were births and deaths as well as in-migration and out-migration. The Jewish population was concentrated in Charlottetown with some Jewish individuals and families spread across the Island. Without a critical mass of Jews, no synagogue or Jewish cemetery was established. During the 1960s and 1970s, there was an increased Jewish migration to the Island and the beginnings of organized Jewish activity. ❸

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Thank You and Farewell!

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Atlantic Jewish Council, it saddens us to announce the resignations of two of our current board members: Nancy Cohen, who has represented the community of Moncton to the AJC board for the last 10 years, and Ernest Schleichkorn, who has represented the Jewish community of PEI to the AJC board for the last 4 years. Both Nancy and Ernie have recently moved to Ontario—Nancy and her husband Ivan have moved to Brockville to be closer to family, and Ernie has moved to Ottawa for work.

Both Nancy and Ernie have been an integral part of their individual communities, our larger Atlantic Canadian Jewish community, and the operations of the AJC for the last several years. Their contributions will always be valued and remembered. Nancy and Ernie's hard work, commitment, and dedication to the foundational values of the AJC are worthy of admiration. They will both be greatly missed and filling their shoes on the AJC board will be a difficult task.

On behalf of everyone here at the Atlantic Jewish Council, we would like to say a hearty thank you and yasher k'oach to Nancy and Ernie. We wish you the best of luck in your new adventures!

Sincerely,
Naomi Rosenfeld
Executive Director, AJC

Marilyn Kaufman
President, AJC



NANCY COHEN moved to New Brunswick in 1983 when her husband Ivan was hired as a Professor of Classics at Mount Allison University.

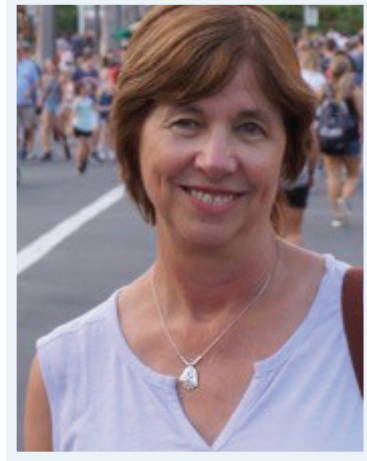
Both Nancy and Ivan quickly became active members of Tiferes Israel Synagogue in Moncton. Nancy joined the shul's sisterhood, eventually becoming the recording secretary, and could often be found in the shul kitchen helping prepare food for special events. When her children were young she organized activities such as storytimes and puppet shows during the high holidays and codirected several Hannukah plays put on by the Hebrew school children.

Nancy has always enjoyed writing, and for many years wrote the Moncton report for Shalom Magazine. When a new volunteer was needed to organize the community's annual Holocaust Memorial Service, Nancy agreed to take over, and she has been at the helm of this committee until this year. Her contact with the Atlantic Jewish Council while organizing this program and writing for Shalom led

to her becoming the Moncton community representative. She particularly enjoyed the biennial conferences since it was a great opportunity to meet other AJC reps from all over Atlantic Canada, make new friends and discuss ideas and problems particular to Jewish communities in Atlantic Canada.

Nancy and Ivan's three children Aaron, Aviva and Daniel (known at camp as DC) attended Camp Kadimah, with Daniel starting there at age 6, and they all went on to become Kadimah staff. Nancy has fond memories and pictures from many visitors days, and is thankful all of her children were able to spend their summers at this amazing camp that played such a huge role in shaping their Jewish identity.

Nancy and Ivan have moved to Ontario to be closer to their children, two grandchildren and other family members, but are sad to



leave their home in the Maritimes and the wonderful friends they made. "We really grew to love Atlantic Canada" she says. "I will particularly miss sunset walks on Parlee Beach on summer evenings and the warm feeling of kehillah during Shabbat services at Tiferes Israel. We'll certainly be back to visit, and who knows, maybe someday I'll be one of those bobbies taking an afternoon nap on a camper's bed during Visitor's Day at Camp Kadimah." 5

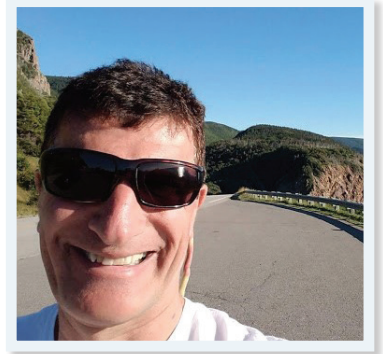
Reflections from ERNEST SCHLEICHKORN: I really enjoyed my 3 terms on the board and got to meet some interesting people.

While pursuing some UJA fund raising training, drove 4 hours to go water skiing for 5 minutes (LOL). Being in camp Kadimah and getting a tour by Naomi, it really brought me back to my Jewish roots.

Raised money for UJA and the JNF. Much easier being helpful in different organizations in the Maritimes as you are counted on. You have a big footprint. In a large population centre, if you aren't involved there's plenty of other people to step up.

While in the Atlantic region I was on 5 boards and I volunteered where I was needed. Some organizations I gave my time to & various new things I tried:

- PEIJC director
 - o Advocate for trying new things
 - We now had an event with the Muslim community
- AJC Rep from PEI
 - o Raised money for UJA
 - o Wrote interesting community articles for PEI Region.
- Holocaust Dissertation for YOM Hashoa
- Rosh Hashanah—sounding Shofar for our little Shul. (I possess a 4 foot Yemenite Shofar)
- Atlantic Director for JNF
- Triathlon PEI Board of Directors
 - o Coach
 - o Participant
 - o Official
- Cycling PEI Board of Directors
 - o Mountain/Road Bike Coach
 - o Participant
 - o Official
- Organized a pick up Hockey league in Summerside (The GM)



When I left the Maritimes, I had to resign from many boards.

BTW: I had a Bar Mitzvah at 43. Rabbi Mendel Blum from the Ottawa Torah Centre told me when I was up doing an Aliyah, this is like doing your Bar Mitzvah again and I stated that I never had one. He then told me: "It is Never to Late".

So on a philosophic note: You can accomplish all your dreams.—Ernie 5

P.S. will definitely miss the East coast. Especially the commute. From 5 minute commute to 45 minute in bumper to bumper traffic.

PEI NEWS

BY ERNEST SCHLEICHKORN

The year started off sadly with the passing of Dr. Sol Feldstein (age 94). Born in New York, Sol moved to PEI and lived here with his family for over 40 years. Feldstein had earlier pursued a career in engineering, before his personal journey led him to psychology. He will be best remembered for his work at the QEH with psychiatric and pain patients. A memorial service will be held on June 1, 2019 at 6 pm at the Malcolm Darrach Community Centre, 1 Avonlea Dr., Charlottetown.

A longtime summer guest to PEI, Ilana Clyde and her husband Phil decided to spend even more time on PEI. Ilana who is a children's Hebrew teacher in New Jersey is setting up a class to teach Hebrew to members of our community and to a local United Church Minister who wants to learn Hebrew. Ilana and Phil were also dancers with an Israeli dance troupe in Israel for many years.

Purim was held this year at the home of Rosalie and Don Simeone. Rosalie and Don, after living on the Island for over 30 years, are moving to Winnipeg this summer to be closer to their children and grandchildren. Rosalie and Don have been so much a part of the Jewish community here and Rosalie has been a key organizer of the annual Yom Hashoah event since its inception on the Island. The Purim party was very well attended and the purim play that Rosalie and Ilana Clyde put on with local cast members was very amusing.

Ernest Schleichkorn, another long-time resident (16 years) of the community, has also left the community. Ernie was our Atlantic Jewish Council representative and UJA fundraiser for many years. Ernie also gave the presentation at the Yom Hashoah event last year as he had many family members who were lost in the Holocaust. Ernie left for Ottawa for employment opportunities.

The tragedy of the killing at the mosque in Christchurch Australia this year was memorialized by the Muslim community in Charlottetown with a large gathering at the Charlottetown cenotaph. Leo Mednick, President of the PEIJC, gave a speech against

violence and in support of the Muslim community. Despite the not so welcome Palestinian messages on display it is still important to stand against religious violence and to establish good will with our neighbors.

The community Passover seder this year was well attended with 57 community members and guests. We were fortunate to have a young child Amalia Hoerusting, whose family are newly arrived from Brazil, who was able to say the 4 questions in Hebrew thanks to the training by Ilana Clyde our community Hebrew teacher.

The local mosque also held an open house in April and invited members of the Jewish community to attend. Guides explained some of the workings of the mosque and our community Israelis had a great time communicating in Arabic.

Beverly Mednick, Dr. Alhadi Abusneena President of Muslim Society PEI and Ilana Clyde

Yom Hashoah presentation was given by Rick Schneider a resident of PEI. Rick is originally from London, England and has been living on PEI with his wife Jo and three children since 2005. He is a lecturer of Environmental Studies at UPEI. Rick shared the story of his grandfather Alfred's internment as a British civilian in Germany during WWII. As a British citizen his grandfather was subject to the Geneva Convention, even as a Jew, and was not sent to a concentration camp. He survived and returned home to England after the war. 5

HERE ARE A FEW EXTRA SHOTS OF THE YOM HASHOAH



MONCTON NEWS

The 2018 YMCA of Greater Moncton Peace Medal presented to Joannie Sichel

BY CATHY DONALDSON YMCA DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Created in 1987, the Peace Medals have been granted annually to individuals or groups, who—without any special resources, status, wealth or position—demonstrate a commitment to the values of P-E-A-C-E (participation, empathy, advocacy, community, empowerment) through contributions within their local, national or global community.

What some might view as an old scrap of fabric, Joannie Sichel sees as the makings of a cloth bag that could help a local family bring home food from the food bank. A shrunken wool sweater? Joannie imagines warm mittens or other cozy items that could be donated or sold to a deserving cause. What about a YMCA community garden plot left untended and overgrown? Useless? Not to Joannie. To her, that patch of soil would be an excellent opportunity for someone to learn skills that could help them provide food for themselves. For more than 40 years, Moncton resident Joannie Sichel has contributed this caring vision and creative abilities to a wide variety of area groups, from the YMCA of Greater Moncton, CAFI (Le Centre d'accueil et d'accompagnement francophone des immigrants du Sud-Est du Nouveau-Brunswick), the Moncton Public Library, local food banks and soup kitchens, and many more. Joannie is a connector, a motivator and someone who sees an opportunity in everything, everyone and every situation. She has tirelessly given of herself to engage others and involve them in community-building activities. Folks at the YMCA perhaps know Joannie best as a long-time member of the YMCA Community Garden. She is an ambassador for the garden and makes sure

anyone new to the space feels welcome. She has opened up about her personal struggles with mental health issues and explained how the garden is a fantastic therapy, a place where people can do far more than grow produce; a place where they can share stories and learn from each other. Among the multitude of other initiatives blessed by Joannie's energy and talent is the Christmas Mitzvah that she helped start 35 years ago, an event that continues to this day. Joannie discovered that local soup kitchens experience a gap in their services during the Christmas holidays because they like to give time off to their dedicated volunteers. Inspired by an article she'd read in a Toronto newspaper, she gathered members of Moncton's local Jewish community who adopted the idea of filling in for those volunteers, ensuring the soup kitchens could stay open during the winter holidays. The idea was a winwin for the community: not only were the regular volunteers thrilled to have time off to celebrate, members of the Jewish Community had something very worthwhile to do during the Christmas period. It was also special for the Jewish children to feel a sense of belonging. Joannie's many other contributions include her involvement for more than 30 years with organizing Moncton's Holocaust Memorial Service, an event that helps people to remember and be educated about the tragedy of war. The service has included survivors, legion members, veterans and churchgoers of all denominations. Meanwhile, Joannie has sat on the board of the Moncton Public Library and helped raise funds to buy new books. She is also a natural teacher. For more than 10 years, Joannie and her husband have helped the children of their new Canadian neighbours with their French homework. (They also continue to serve as their surrogate grandparents). She also taught classes in sewing, recycling fabric, baking and LifeWriting for seniors at Moncton's



Tantramar Seniors' college. When CAFI came calling last summer, Joannie volunteered and taught sewing classes for new teenage immigrants. She also supports the PEDVAC Foundation in Port Elgin and made visits to the Veterans' Health Centre, supported by her therapy dog Mollie. For many years, she also passionately helped the University Women's Club book fair, whose proceeds provided scholarships to mature female students as well as to young female graduates. Most recently, Joannie has helped to collect sewing machines for distribution to local organizations including the YMCA and CAFI. With those machines and fabric she has collected for years, Joannie has offered classes to newcomer women and youth. As well, she has created bags for the Early Childhood Family Resource Centre in Dieppe so its young participants could leave with a bag and book. Joannie believes that by working together, people can have a big impact on their community. She embodies this philosophy. Her impact is evident across our region—from the organizations she has aided, the relationships she has created, the funds she has raised, the skills she has shared and the people she has positively affected. Joannie Sichel has truly helped to make this a stronger, more resourceful community. 🌟

Reprinted with permission from YMCA of Greater Moncton. Credit for the photo: Daniel St. Louis.

REPORT FROM THE SAINT JOHN JEWISH HISTORICAL MUSEUM

BY KATHERINE BIGGS-CRAFT, MUSEUM CURATOR

The Saint John Jewish Historical Museum has organized a number of successful events over the past few months. On Sunday, January 27th, we participated in International Holocaust Remembrance Day with a showing of *Who Will Write Our History*. A capacity audience of 100 people attended this event and watched the film in silence as the events unfolded in the Warsaw Ghetto. Everyone was intrigued by the stories of the brave men and women who created, collected and buried the documents and photographs which recorded ghetto life. As the audience made its way back into a late winter afternoon, they shared their comments on what they had seen and reflected on the importance of this story of the Holocaust.

On Monday, April 29, we welcomed child Holocaust survivor, Andy Réti to Saint John, accompanied by his wife, Judy. The story he shared was entitled "The Ring of Love". He reminded his audience that "Every Holocaust survivor's story is a love story; the love of life, the love of family and the love of freedom." When he was two years old, he and his mother and grandmother were sent to live in a ghetto while his father and grandfather were sent to a forced labour camp. In time, his grandfather was able to escape, but his father could not. Réti credits his survival to the incredible courage, resilience and sacrifices of his mother and grandmother. They were liberated on January 18, 1945 by the Soviet Red Army, just as they were on the brink of starvation. Andy's mother was able to keep the ring that her husband had given her by hiding it in her son's diaper when they were being rounded up and relocated to the ghetto. She wore the ring on her necklace for many years and that ring is now worn by her son when he shares their story.

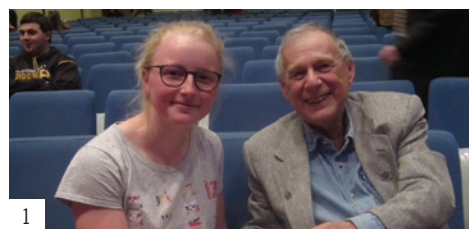
Two books—*An Ordinary Woman in Extraordinary Times* by Ibolya Grossman and *The Son of an Extraordinary Woman* by Andy Réti—were combined in 2016 and published by the Azrieli Foundation. Complimentary

copies of these books were made available to those who attended the program in the Synagogue and to area schools.

The story was presented to an overflow crowd of 160 people in the Shaarei Zedek Synagogue. Mr. Réti also shared his story with more than 1200 area high school students in six schools. His presentations were successful and unlike many other speakers we have had, he engaged directly with the students by asking them questions. He also shared how his Jewish experience led him to participate in biker culture, as part of Jews on Wheels and impressed them when he pulled on his leather vest, headband and sunglasses. During the stop at Hampton High School. Andy and Judy Réti had time to stop at the John Peters Humphrey sculpture and reflect on his contributions to the writing of the UN Declaration of Human Rights in 1947.

The Museum presented its Seventh Annual Spring Variety Concert on May 9th. For the first time we arranged for several members of the local Jewish community to share their musical talents with the audience. Ari Snyder and three other members of the newly formed Fundy Chamber Ensemble (David Dow, Christopher Reibling and Phyllis Knox) performed classical pieces as well as two pieces composed by Ari Snyder. Ludmilla and Alexei Izvekov performed pieces by Bach and Ukrainian composer Mykola Lysenko. One of their students, Amit Friling, joined them on a piece by Dvorak. We were also pleased to have Adam Washburn perform one of his own songs, *Best Days*, to contribute a much more contemporary piece. The audience was very pleased with the array of talent and particularly that within the Jewish community.

The museum has embarked on a lecture series entitled *Judaism in Context*. Over the four Sundays in May, Dan Elman has shared his thoughts and ideas on four themes: When Religion is Negative: The Pitfalls of Belief,



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PHOTOS: (1) Andy Réti with student (2) Andy Réti in synagogue (3) Andy and Judy Réti at the John Peters Humphrey sculpture in Hampton, NB (4) Andy Réti (5) Adam Washburn (6) Ari Snyder (7) Dan Elman

SAINT JOHN NEWS

BY SUSAN ISAACS LUBIN

Our Saint John Community was fairly active over the winter. Hebrew School continues every Sunday. We have three classes—with 15 students in total. We have 5 students in level Gimel, 4 in level Beth and 6 in level Alef. Aside from their regular lessons, they have been learning about various holidays—Tu B'Shvat in February, Tu B'Av (the Jewish Valentine's day), Family Day, the Holocaust and Independence Day.

We have a Bat Mitzvah this summer—Elianna Davis, daughter of Nathan and Candace Davis, and granddaughter of Gary and Lana Davis, and Ron and Sandra Levine. Mazeltov to the families.

Purim was celebrated with the reading of the Megillah, and children and parents alike dressing in costume. A raffle draw was held. A fun evening for all.

A community Seder was held for Pesach. Approximately 60 people attended. The Seder was held at Meenan's Cove Beach House. Ari Snyder conducted the Seder, and songs and good food was enjoyed by all. This could become an annual event.

The Museum had their annual Yom Hashoah event at the Synagogue. This event is open to the greater Saint John Community, and as usual, was crowded. 📍

The Eternal Triad: A Discussion of Symbols Throughout History shared by all religions, The Myth Dream: The History of Prophets and Messiahs, and The Anatomy of Cults: Culture and Holocaust. His perspectives have been welcomed by an engaged and interested audience and who have been challenged and interested in the information presented. The audience has included historians, scholars, local clergy and Jewish community members. The lectures have been recorded and once edited will be made available.

On May 14th, we welcomed Dr. Andrew Theobald for the launch of his book *Dangerous Enemy Sympathizers: Canadian Internment Camp B, 1940-1945*. His book uncovers a little-known story of New Brunswick history when an internment camp was opened near Ripples, NB in 1940 and became the home of Jewish men who had fled Nazism. After 1941 the camp housed Nazi sympathizers and prisoners of war. He read from the book and autographed copies of the book for audience members.

The Museum will hold more events in the fall of the year including the presentation by Dr. Robert Katz entitled *Were the House Still Standing*, which tells the stories of the Holocaust survivors who settled in Maine, the Fifth Annual Saint John Jewish Film Festival in late October and a book reading by Natalie Morrill of her book *The Ghost Keeper* in partnership with the Lorenzo Society at UNB Saint John.

The summer exhibits include: Immigration, Preparing for the Sabbath, From the Cradle to the Grave, Holocaust Survivors in Saint John, Open for Business, and Family Stories. Visitors also see the Shaarei Zedek Synagogue.

The summer season will run from May 14th to November 1st with the Museum open from Monday to Friday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. During July and August, hours will expand to include Sunday afternoons from 1:00 to 4:00. There will be more than 80 cruise ships docking in the city from May to October bringing between 200 and 4000 passengers each. The museum welcomes visitors from near and far—if you are in the city over the next few months, take some time to drop by and reconnect with familiar and new stories. 📍

FREDERICTON NEWS

We were extremely fortunate in that winter storms for the most part, did not interfere with our winter activities.

We have made efforts to expand Holocaust education within the broader community utilizing resources made available to us from members of the communities within our region.

In January we observed International Holocaust Day with an interfaith viewing of the film documentary, *Who Will Write Our History?* One could hear a pin drop as the film came to a close. We all sat in silence for a few moments, such was the impact this film had upon us. Seeing and hearing what our fellow Jews in Warsaw had lived through... the cruelty, the atrocities, the dehumanization and the plans for the Nazi regime to exterminate them....all this they had recorded on paper, their way of fighting back against German Nazi propaganda...all this and more through a "Jewish lens".

A number of book launches were held, all having to do with, in some way, the events of the Holocaust. Dr. Zelda Abramson, Associate Professor at Mount Allison University launched her book, co-authored with John Lynch in Fredericton in February. Dr. Robin Whittaker, the head of the drama department at St. Thomas University hosted her. He had arranged a number of readings from her book, *The Montreal Shtetl, Making Home after the Holocaust*, to be presented orally. Another book launch will be held May 13th at the Provincial Archives. written by Andrew Theobald, *Dangerous Enemy: Sympathizers*. It relates the events which led Jewish refugees fleeing to England from Nazi Germany to living as POW's in Ripples, NB.

Holocaust Remembrance Day was held at and in partnership with the Capital Community Church at the end of April. The guest speaker was Any Reti, an Hungarian

Continue on page 32

Continued from page 31

child Holocaust survivor. He left us with this thought. *We must always have hope and the worst thing that one can do in the midst of growing antisemitism is not the show of hate toward others, but the indifference.*

Thank you to Dr. Israel Unger, Pastors Woodward and Leaman and their committee for organizing the ceremony.

For Tu B'shevat celebrations, the chedar children were given bags of fruit. On Passover, a seder for the Jewish community was held at the Synagogue. Saturday night an interfaith seder was held.

Thank you to Rabbi Goldman, Shaindy Goldman, Kelly Newman and Seth Chippin for their assistance. Appreciation goes out to the Knights of Columbus who helped with preparations, serving of the meal and clean-up. Thank you to Dr. Sandra Beyers and Dr. Scott Ronis for their initiative to reach out to both Jewish students and faculty on the UNB and St. Thomas campuses. They managed to have two successful get-togethers this season.

The beginning of May, Rabbi Goldman kicked off his Jewish book club. The first book in this venture is *St. Urbain's Horseman* by Mordechi Richler. Good use is made of local and regional libraries.

More recently, May 9th, we celebrated Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's 71st birthday. Mijal Ben Dori, on loan from JAFI (Jewish Agency For Israel) accompanied by Veronica, presented Israel: A Soundtrack. It was an intricate collage of Israeli artists' song/dance film clips interspersed with Mijal's oral narration of Israel's history. The program illustrated the social impact music had on Israeli society and vice versa recording the highs and lows of Israeli life. However, we were left with the feeling of Tikva, Hope....we must always have hope.

Condolences to Shelley and Josh Stephens and the Budovitch and Stephens families on passing of her husband, Byron Stephens, (z'l). ❧

CAPE BRETON NEWS

BY SHARON JACOBSON

"Do Not Say We Have Nothing" is the title of a book by Madeleine Thien. It is about China—but this phrase says so much about life in general.

Passover this year in Cape Breton was sparse. Many people "Were" away and "Go" away at that time of year, which brings me to the title of a story I shall call "Mitzvah Moe".

When Moe Lief found himself without a Seder to attend, he went about creating one for the family and friends who found themselves in similar circumstances. He brought the holiday to Uncle Louie Allen and Barbara Nathanson who live in the Parkland Retirement facility. It provided a very small room big enough for 8 people.

The other guests were: Barbara and Herman Nathanson's sons Alan and Sheldon, (Herman is residing on 4 North at Glace Bay General Hospital) Louie's sister Faye (Tootsie) David, Joan and Frank Elman (just back from the winter retreat) and of course Moe. Ralph Medjuck and Enie Lief could not be there as they were not well.

So they all sat down together to remember the Exodus; not only the Exodus from Egypt but, subtly, Cape Breton as well...

Before they left Cape Breton, Shayna and Darren Strong provided dishes, cutlery, a Matzoh cover, and battery candles (due to fire restrictions) for the Seder. Chef Moe catered the meal: Chicken soup with knedlach, (Enie's recipe no doubt?) Sweet & Sour Brisket, Roast Chicken in matzoh meal, Roast potatoes seasoned with Thyme, oh, and "gribenis" Moe's speciality.

(Please excuse my spelling—I think Otto Correct was also sitting at the table.) Shayna had made Chrain for the Seder plate out of a root horseradish grown in her uncle Leon Dubinsky's garden. I believe there was Chocolate, Coconut, and Almond matzoh for dessert. A strategic phone call was made to Barrie Carnat at his family Seder in Toronto, to aid with the prayers and blessings over wine for Shabbat and the Holiday!

It was a tale of 2 cities reaching out and joining together...No wonder the Red Sea parted long ago. Such Ruach!

Do not say we have nothing...

A moyel in San Francisco, when explaining the variety of Jewish communities in the city, said there are 2 things he discovered. No matter what background or beliefs were followed, Jews seemed to feel it important to follow the laws of circumcision and to attend Seders...hmm...interesting.

AROUND THE TOWN NEWS

We wish Sylvia Karrel and Bella Shore a speedy recovery. Both were hospitalized with pneumonia. Both ladies are in their late nineties!

Joan Elman also found herself unexpectedly at CBRH due to an accidental fall requiring hip surgery.

We have strong women. Do not say we have nothing.

Inez Schwartz who has been cruising through the winter, reported she enjoyed reading while on the High Seas, Stanley Jacobson's emails in which he was enlisting volunteers for Shul attendance...with a very dry, pragmatic, ironic yet fatherly tone.

Indeed Allan Nathanson suggested offering Air Miles!

25 for Shabbat, 50 for Purim, 75 for Passover and 100 for the High Holidays!

Well, we did introduce Salami Saturdays for Alan's enjoyment as well as a few others...

Brings to mind Al Jolson, who could have gone to Shul humming:

"I'd walk a million miles (to Shul) for one of your smiles and... Sa-la-A-A-Mi."

Well we try...

Do Not Say We Have Nothing, if not a sense of the sublime in humour?

A very important annual event is The Holocaust Memorial Day. Diane Lewis is instrumental in the organization of Sydney's program. It included an invocation by Father Patrick O'Neill, a candle lighting of 6 candles, each candle representing one million of 6 million Jews, the Mourner's Kaddish read by Martin Chernin, and the Brookland Elementary Choir performing Free To Be Me and We Rise Again!

This year, Ellin Bessner was the guest

speaker, as she had been the Yom Hashoah guest speaker throughout the Atlantic provinces. Her book, *Double Threat* deals with Canadian Jews, The Military, and World War 2. Canadian Jewish soldiers faced anti-Semitism not only from Nazi Germany but within the ranks of the armed forces and from doubting politicians.

She presented slides and provided information some of which was quite surprising as was the fact that only 3 young people out of approximately 1000 students in a Toronto high school recognized Anne Frank.

Bessner also provided copies of the *Canada Times*, this one titled *Remembers*.

It is a Veterans' Week Special Edition that highlights historical moments of Canadians in service of their country. Sydney Shulemson from Montreal trained as an RCAF pilot. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Order and the Distinguished Flying Cross for his courage and innovative techniques. Out of some 50 sorties, he is believed to have taken out at least 13 enemy vessels. He was one of the most decorated Jewish Canadian servicemen of the Second World War. He was made an instructor. He did not receive a Promotion...

There were 2 events that day, the other was a parade in Sydney commemorating The Battle of Britain. Thus, we had a smaller but very interested group who attended from the local community that day.

As history moves on we see one kind of understanding transform into another...

I sense people are becoming aware of the rise in anti-Semitism, what with the shooting of Jews in a San Diego area synagogue, a Democratic Congress woman alluding to "the Benjamins" and of course the New York Times Cartoon...


Recently, Bret Stephens, An American journalist, editor, and political commentator responded to a statement about Jews and criticism on the *Bill Maher Show* stating that we do not object to criticism; we object to demonization!

Do not say we have nothing... yet one does feel vulnerable...

As I write this article today, I realize it is Mother's Day. I recently discovered in my closet a small box left behind by my mother. It contained an assortment of pins. It says so much about her (and my father) and many of their generation. Inside the box were 2 Magen Davids, one inscribed with Zion in Hebrew letters, a Life Member pin for Hadassah Wizo, a tie clip adorned with a siddur whose cover moved to reveal the 10 commandments, a Youth Aliyah Guardian pin, 2 Canadian Hadassah Wizo president pins, a National Membership Award pin for Hadassah Canada, and 3 other designs of Canadian Hadassah Wizo pins. There were also Nova Scotia tie pins. My father always flew 3 flags from a flagpole at our cottage on the Mira River. The Canadian, The Nova Scotian and the Flag of Israel.

It was a natural response for my mother to serve her Jewish community. She did not think twice.

My father was braver than I think I would be today in these times. He did not demur when identifying himself as Jewish.

With a generation like this behind us...Do not say we have nothing. 

PHOTOS: (1-3) Beautiful Day! (4) Ellin Bessner (5) Tootsie (6) Magen David Hadassah Wizo pin and Tie Clip (7) Joan Elman (8) Seder (9) Frank Elman (10-11) Kiddush with special guests Ellin Bessner and Naomi Rosenfeld (12) Seder



NEWFOUNDLAND NEWS

News from the far east **BY RABBI CHANAN AND TUBA CHERNITSKY**

It's been a while since the last *Shalom* magazine and many events have happened since!

February started off with a smash and a bang. Beginning with a Friday night Shabbat meal for students from Memorial University's Hillel. We enjoyed some lively discussions over a traditional Friday night meal.

Continuing with "Kids in the Kosher Kitchen" where the children learned how to make their very own homemade Challah. We learned how to knead the dough, shape the loaves into six braids, and took home beautiful Challahs. The last installment was before Purim, by far the most attended. The children made delicious rainbow homentashen.

The weekly Torah classes have been gaining momentum, we meet every Wednesday night to have a text-based discussion connected to the weekly Torah portion. Come and join us as we delve into the deeper meaning of the weekly Torah portion.

Wanted to just hang out on a Saturday night? February 9th we had our first adult social. We enjoyed a cozy evening, listening to people from the community share "TED" talks with us, while enjoying soups and salads. A shout out to our speakers, Brenda Rishea, Dean Barnes, and Aaron Shachner. We must have schmoozed the night away. Looking forward

to the next one.

This year we had a Chinese themed Purim party, with costumes, decorations and Chinese food to boot. As usual we began with the traditional Megillah reading, followed by the Chinese buffet. After we were done feasting we enjoyed a reptile show brought to us by Jelly Bean Entertainment. Some just watched while others touched and took selfies with the different reptiles.

The weeks leading up to Pesach were busy delivering shmurah Matzah to the local community.

The Seder itself was beautiful, with some new faces in attendance. Thank you to everyone who made the community Seder a success! We started off the Seder with inspiring stories and lessons from Pesach.

We came together again on the last day of Pesach to eat some Matzah and drink 4 cups of wine, to wrap up the holiday and bring the inspiration we got into the daily grind. We look forward to a fabulous Shavuot ice cream party on Sunday June 9th. ☺

We are open 24/7. If you are coming to visit please let us know and we will be happy to meet you. For more information you can reach us at 709-341-8770 or through e-mail at chabadofnewfoundland@gmail.com. For discounted rates on hotel reservations, check out our website at www.chabadNfld.org.

REPORT FROM BETH EL SYNAGOGUE

BY BARBARA GRANDY

1. AGM

In March of this year, Beth El held an AGM. A new executive was elected: President: Dr. Michael Paul, Vice-President: Dr. Emmanuel Haven Treasurer: Dr. David Wright. We re-iterated our policy that we would provide a welcoming environment to any Jewish person who wishes to come to our service. We are an egalitarian Conservative synagogue davening in Hebrew.

2. WEBSITE

It was decided that we needed to create a website for the synagogue and Dr. David Wright along with his wife Christine did a great job creating this website. We can be reached at: www.bethelnl.com

3. PASSOVER

This year we celebrated Passover with 2 seders which proved to be very enjoyable.

4. HIGH HOLIDAYS

In June, we are going to start planning for the High Holidays and we will be assigning tasks to each member. Last year at Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we had several visitors to the city attend the services.

5. SCHOOL VISITS

Beth El continues to have students from the various schools visit the synagogue. They range in age from 6-18. We are committed to these school visits because we feel strongly that they promote better understanding of the Jewish religion and thus more tolerance.



THE JEWISH COMMUNITY HAVURA OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

BY KATHERINE SIDE

The Jewish Community Havura meet every second week for Shabbat Services and on holidays and special occasions. Community members celebrated Purim this past spring, with a party, festivities, with hamantaschen for all, and mishloah manot for the many children in attendance. Many thanks to the community members who coordinated this event and helped to make the evening a success, including the reading of the Megillah. A chag sameach was had by those who attended.

We celebrated Passover with community members from across the island. Jewish Community Havura Treasurer and Board member, Brenda Rishea worked especially hard to ensure that the matzah arrived and was distributed to our members and to members of other communities on the island.

With continued support from the Atlantic Jewish Council, the Jewish Community Havura hosted the Holocaust Memorial Service on Sunday, May 5th. The theme of the service was *Voices Not Forgotten: Poetry from Victims and Survivors*.


The service included a tribute to Philip Riteman (1922-2018), who survived Aushwitz, Birkeneau, Sachsenhausen, Oranienburg, Dachau, and Landburg and who settled in Newfoundland. Philip Riteman received an Honourary Doctorate from Memorial University and the Order of Newfoundland and Labrador, and was well-known for his public education about the Holocaust, with schools, churches and universities. The service also included the voices of poets, Avrom Sutzkever, Yitzhok Katzenelson, and Chava Rosenfarb.

The event was a community-wide effort, guided by a committee and it attracted participation and attendance from members of other communities, from many members of the public, and including Her Honour, Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador, Judy M. Foote, P.C., O.N.L., and

His Honour, Howard Foote.

There are a couple of upcoming events in which the Jewish Community Havura will participate, including the 14th Annual Multi-Faith Symposium on Spirituality, hosted by the Hindu Temple, in May 2019, and the Jewish-Christian-Muslim Dialogue's public discussion of the topic, "Religion in an Age of Anxiety" in October, 2019.

As well, we look forward to a spring bar mitzvah and the annual backyard picnic for all our members.

We continue to meet together as a community throughout the summer and we welcome visitors. If you're visiting our whales and icebergs, find yourselves in St. John's, Newfoundland, or if you're planning to move here, please contact us through our website, www.havura.org or by email info.havura@gmail.com, or by telephone, 709-834-7866. 

PHOTOS: (1) Purim party 2019, Jewish Community Havura of Newfoundland and Labrador, St. John's, Newfoundland, March 23, 2019. Photo: Brenda Rishea (2) Jewish Community Havura of Newfoundland and Labrador, President, Dr. Steven Wolinetz. Holocaust Memorial Service, St. John's, Newfoundland. May 5, 2019. Photo: Brad Gibb (3) Jewish Community Havura of Newfoundland and Labrador. Holocaust Memorial Service, St. John's, Newfoundland. May 5, 2019. Photo: Brad Gibb (4) Her Honour, Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador, Judy M. Foote, P.C., O.N.L., and His Honour, Howard Foote, Holocaust Memorial Service, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, May 5, 2019. Photo: Brad Gibb (5) Jewish Community Havura Shabbat Service, May 3, 2019. Photo: Katherine Side



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THE GREATEST JEW OF THE 20TH CENTURY

BY RABBI DAVID ELLIS, AJC REGIONAL CHAPLAIN

Who would be your candidate for this title? Everyone would have their own opinion.

Those oriented toward Israel would mention David Ben Gurion, Golda Meir or Menachem Begin. One with a religious interest would cite Joseph Soloveitchik or Abraham Heschel. Some might well say Freud or Einstein.

I however would choose someone else. Someone probably not known to you. Yet his credentials are massive for the title.

I am talking about Harry Austryn Wolfson, 1887-1974, professor of Jewish studies at Harvard University for nearly fifty years.

Why Dr. Wolfson? The story starts here in the Maritimes.

Whenever I have gone out to Cape Breton, Sharon Jacobson, one of the best read persons in our communities, always asks me about Jewish philosophy. What does Martin Buber or Maimonides say about this? What does Freud say?

Or—she often wonders about another Jewish philosopher, Baruch Spinoza, a Jew of Spanish ancestry who lived in Amsterdam in the 17th century. So I do the best I can.

But then—at the Beth Israel book club some months ago, a fiction work was being reviewed which had Spinoza as part of its theme. So I said, I did major in philosophy at college, and I read Spinoza—but I am just not that familiar with him now. Give me a few months to do some homework.

The book I had known about for many years but had never read was Professor Wolfson's book on the philosophy of Spinoza. It is an imposing 800 page book I had always been afraid of because of its length. But I decided to have a go at it.

From the beginning I could see Professor Wolfson as a scholar of pure genius. Analyzing Spinoza, taking his language and arguments apart, citing authors who influenced him, summing up the chapters.

Spinoza is a particularly difficult philosopher to understand because his works are highly encrypted. They do not make sense read straight-forwardly. They only become readable once you know the works Spinoza had in mind as he was writing—usually those of Aristotle, Maimonides and Descartes but others as well.

So Professor Wolfson carefully, page by page, takes Spinoza's philosophy apart, and puts all the pieces back together into a coherent system, whether you agree with it or not (Wolfson ultimately did not.).

It has been many, many years since I read anything so brilliant. But then—I stopped reading it. Why?

In his Spinoza book, Wolfson keeps referring over and over again to his work on Philo, the Hellenic Jewish philosopher from Alexandria in Egypt, who lived just before the Christian era and who was an influence on early Christianity. So I decided, I am going to read these philosophers Wolfson writes about in order.

So I checked out his 900 page, two volume work on Philo, from the School of Theology library. Again, a work of absolute masterly scholarship.

Professor Wolfson was born in Poland, then Russia, and studied in European yeshivas before coming to America and settling in Cambridge. He studied at Harvard as a student and continued as a professor.

I would challenge anyone to find a scholar with greater talents. He knew every language of the ancient world—classical and New Testament Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic, Latin and Arabic. For modern scholarship he knew French and German. From the old world, he would have also known Russian, Polish and Yiddish.

His pages go through thousands of sources—Greek philosophy, the Bible and Talmud, medieval works. Each book chapter has hundreds of footnotes. These would have been all put together by him—long before the days of computers, data banks, google searches and the like.

The word was, that Professor Wolfson was always the first one to come to Harvard's library every morning, and the last to leave in the evening.

And yet his writing, unlike so much university writing in our time—it is so utterly lucid. The vocabulary is simple and not academic. Every chapter is precisely organized—here is the question and its parts, here are the sources, here is my analysis of them, here is the summary and conclusion.

Thus if someone knew some simple basics

of Greek philosophy—Plato and Aristotle—and the Bible, they could easily follow Professor Wolfson's account of Philo. Philo comes out being one of the outstanding philosophers, critically evaluating Greek and Hebrew ideas but always being faithful to the Jewish tradition. He would set a precedent for the study of philosophy and religion for the next millennium.

So after completing Wolfson's work on Philo, I have moved to his next work—a 600 plus page work on—the Church Fathers!! There are special lengthy chapters analyzing the origins of the concepts of the trinity and the incarnation!!

But why would a Jewish scholar write on such topics? First of all, because all of the church fathers started with a reading of Philo's works. Sometimes they would accept him, sometimes distort him or otherwise modify his teachings. Then all would have been familiar with the Sepuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures.

And it shows Professor Wolfson's complete commitment to Jewish tradition. Our sages said—the truth, no matter where the source. So an examination of Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Augustine and hundreds of other sources is not in contradiction to Jewish understanding. It shows how our Jewish writings influenced others.

And so—after his work on the Church Fathers, I have on my reading list two of his books on medieval Arabic philosophy, which includes Maimonides. Then—I will come back around to his Spinoza book again and understand it much better. Spinoza's philosophy, though somewhat from Jewish sources, ends up being a repudiation of Jewish, Christian and Muslim philosophy as it was known.

So why do I call Professor Harry Wolfson the greatest Jew of the 20th century? As a Jewish scholar, there would be very few who could compete with the breadth of his expertise.

But for our times the religious discussions are chaotic, fragmentary and uninformed. Both within our Jewish tradition and those of our neighbours. We “know” why we are right. We “know” that someone else is wrong, even if we have not read the claim. Our proofs are

Continue on page 37

COMMUNITY—FOR BETTER OR FOR “WORSE”

BY RABBI YOSEF GOLDMAN, SGOOLAI ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE, FREDERICTON



Imagine, if you may, a city in Canada, specifically in the Maritime Provinces, without any non-Jews?! This is something most of us have never contemplated before, right?

The reason I propose this very strange question, is because I am trying to find out answers to some very existential dilemmas. How would a Jewish community behave? What meaning will we find in our every-day living, especially when it comes in conflict with our diverse religious beliefs? And here is the most troubling question: do we even care?!

It has been proven by scientists and philosophers, alike, that human-beings are a ‘social creature’. It is said that if we were alone on island in the south Pacific without any human interaction, we will surely die. The thing is, that this cannot be said about any other creature in the world! How is it that the (maybe/presumably) smartest living animal in the world, cannot take care of itself for a lengthy amount of time? Even Moses (and other Prophets) only survived for 40 days and nights alone!

During this time of year it is a very ancient & good custom to study the Ethics of our Fathers (Pirkei Avot). With this learning from our Sages, we get some understanding (and even answers) to the questions we raised above. The second Mishnah reads as follows: “Shimon the Righteous... would say ‘on three foundations the world stands: on the Torah, on Service, and on Acts of Loving-kindness’”. Let us imagine that, like Greek mythology, the entire world is supported by three pillars; but, unlike Greek mythology, these are not animals or giants, but, rather, morals & ethical

behaviour. The non-Jewish people have morals & ethics, and, make no mistake, they are very good people, but their ethics do not stem from the same source that we as Jews have. Without the study of Torah, and the ‘communal Service’, our acts of loving kindness mean (almost) nothing! A three foot stool cannot stand on one (or even two) feet! Maimonides, our greatest philosopher and writer of the Mishneh Torah (the first complete Codex of the Jewish Law) says in the Laws of Charity (Chapter 9 Halacha 3): “we NEVER once saw a Jewish community/congregation that did not have a Tzedaka Box (collection)”. In fact, I heard from Rebetzin Dasberg, a Holocaust survivor, that not even once did a Jew steal from a fellow Jew anything during the six horrific years of the Shoah, she was once accused of giving a piece of bread to someone she believed needed it more than herself, and was sentenced to lashes as a result of her kindness!

The Talmud in Tractate Bava Bathra (7b & 8a) gives a list of obligations for the citizens of a Jewish city, in order to make sure that all the people’s needs are met. This includes a wall for protection, with a proper door & lock, water cisterns, and a soup kitchen. But, our Sages add, if there are study halls (Yeshivahs for boys, and nowadays, I believe, for girls as well) and Synagogues where people pray & study Torah all day long, they are exempt from certain communal collections—specifically, those aimed at keeping the city and its people safe. However, they are not exempt from collections for the physical welfare of their neighbours—i.e. health, clothing & food!

Because of this very long exile from the Holy Land, we have forgotten some of these

true ideals, so we become (sometimes) influenced by “human” ideas and ethics. Jews throughout history have taught the Nations how to be more ethical, in fact, in the UN building in NYC the lobby wall is covered with the famous verse from Isaiah (2:4): “and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks” in Seventy! different languages! Unfortunately, when they don’t have our faith in Hashem as their basis for this idea—they decide (based on very selfish motives) where to send Peace keeping officers, and where not to get involved or care! I don’t understand much about world politics, but it is very apparent (to me) that the blood bath that has been going on for more than 20 years in the Congo, and about 12 years in Darfur, is no different than other places where the great nations of the world did intervene!

Let us go back to our true faith in Hashem and establish strong & healthy communities that overcome our differences when it comes to real Jewish values of AHAVA (love), ACHVA (fellowship), SHALOM (true peace) VE'RE'UT (friendship)! Amen! ☺

Continued from page 36

on the level of sound bites, tweets, false news and canned positions.

What religion has a source and a model, which it can use to look at the foundations and development of all religions? How vitally needed is such, in our times of systematic ignorance and confusion about religion. This is what Harry Wolfson gave us.

So I would see the project of our day for all religions to examine where they came from, what challenges and influences they faced,

what concepts were formed, whether they were done so correctly or not, whether they still make any sense.

In this way I would see the work of Professor Wolfson’s clear, sterling scholarship of varying religions, as a prelude to our interfaith discussions today. I can think of no one else from the last century who makes such a model for the Jewish community. The portents of Dr. Wolfson’s work are enormous and not yet realized. ☺



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FROM FREEDOM TO SLAVERY!

BY RABBI YAKOV KERZNER, BETH ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE, HALIFAX

We have just celebrated the Festival of Freedom by tirelessly working to rid our houses of the smallest traces of chametz, slaving in the kitchen to create non-chametz dishes out of a greatly restricted list of ingredients, force feeding ourselves an abundance of matzah and bitter herbs and sitting in shul for hours on end with lengthier than usual prayers. The upside of this much heralded Holiday is the opportunity to spend precious time with close and sometimes distant relatives which in the eyes of some is a greater burden than the aforementioned list. If you are relieved that the holiday is finally behind you, beware that six weeks later we celebrate Shavuot, a holiday with very few rituals and obligations. A Holiday that, our Rabbis tell us, commemorates the receiving and acceptance of the Torah on Mount Sinai by the Jewish people; thus, rounding out our obligations and requirements to a mere 613 Commandments. This is the Jewish idea of freedom!! Why the celebration?

The Mishna in Tractate Makkot tells us that G-D wanted us to be meritorious in His eyes; so, he gave us many mitzvot. This is generally understood as affording us an opportunity to load up on good deeds. That way, we come to our Creator after our years on Earth

with a heavy load of mitzvot that tip the scales in our favor. But what about all those missed opportunities? Don't they count against us? What about all those negative commandments that we allowed ourselves to transgress? Won't they malign us in G-D's eyes?

Maimonides interprets this Mishnah differently. "If you perform even one of the 613 mitzvot properly with pure intentions out of love, then you will inherit the World to Come." Instead of accruing positive checkmarks to present to G-D at the end of our sojourn on Earth, Maimonides sees each and every mitzvah as providing a chance for improvement, an opportunity to focus on a mitzvah that you relate to and allow it to enhance your life. In his other writings, Maimonides emphasizes the utilitarian purpose of mitzvot. They are presented as a prescription to develop your character, inculcate correct beliefs and to enhance your relationship with G-D through emulation of G-D's apparent traits. Mitzvot create a roadmap to become a fuller, more complete human being and to encourage your self identified personality traits to intensify and develop to their fullest potential. The Torah offers us a toolkit that affords us the opportunity to create a balanced, fine tuned individual. External "commandments",

like a doctor-imposed diet, can offer us the required push to move us along a desired and beneficial path.

Shavuot, therefore, has no associated rituals. No prescription of particular mitzvot to be done at a particular time. Rather, we accepted a Torah at Sinai that presents us a smorgasbord of offerings designed to create an environment where personal growth is not only possible but extremely likely. Our only "obligation" is to ourselves, to learn what the Torah offers. True "freedom" is not an anarchic life of momentary pleasure but a consistent, determined effort to become our ideal self, our personal best.

The above is why when asked to define the word "Mitzvah", we often avoid the correct translation of "commandment" and loosely translate it as a "good deed". They are not "obligations" but "privileges". Our only obligation is to ourselves, to take advantage of the many privileges the Torah puts at our disposal to constantly develop into better human beings and, by extension, a greater and more perfect community. 5



JUMPING INTO SPRING

BY RABBI CHANAN CHERNITSKY, DIRECTOR, CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF NEWFOUNDLAND

(I hope that when you read this article you are feeling the beautiful spring weather if not summer !)

There's something quite unusual about the holiday of Passover we just celebrated. It has to always fall out in "chodesh ha-aviv" (the month of Spring), as the Torah says (Deuteronomy 16:1) "Keep the month of spring".

In fact, the Torah tells us 3 times that Pesach takes place in spring.

There is no other instance in which we consider the weather as a factor when arranging our calendar. There are other considerations such as making sure that Rosh Hashana or Pesach don't fall out on certain days of the week, but there are no other

weather considerations taken into account other than Pesach falling out in the spring.

What's the message behind this? What difference does it make to us and what difference did it make to the Jews then, in which month they left Egypt?

The Jewish nation endured 86 years of back breaking labour (Though they were in Egypt for a total of 210 years, only the last 86 years were they enslaved). They would have been happy to be freed anytime of the year.

With this, the Torah is teaching us a beautiful lesson:

The fact that Hashem took us out of Egypt is no novelty. We are his nation and He's our father. Of course he has to take care of us and

free us! Even the fact that the Jews had manna from heaven and Miriam's well to provide them with water doesn't raise an eyebrow. He's our father! He has to take care of us and make sure that we have everything we need. The novelty is that He took us out in the spring, a time when the weather is nice and it's comfortable to go outside. Why is that a novelty? Because he didn't have to take us out then, but he loves us and "goes out of his way" for us.

This is what we celebrate on Pesach, the special relationship we have with Hashem.

Have a healthy summer. 5



SHALOM

BY RABBI RAYSH WEISS, PH.D. RABBI, CONGREGATION SHAAR SHALOM

Shalom. This is the name of this magazine, and also the theme of my contribution this season. Shalom—which we use to say hello, goodbye, and peace—is a word filled with potential, promise, and blessing, but it can also be tinged with a certain sadness. Writing my final entry for Shalom Magazine as a Haligonian rabbi is a very bittersweet experience for me. As I reflect back on these last three years serving this very special community, I think about the flood of blessings and transformative experiences I have been privileged to have here with you.

Part of what made these years so meaningful for me and my family is the strong sense of identification and connectedness which characterizes Haligonian Jewry. Just recently, when we were blessed with the birth of our second child, we were so touched by the range of Jewish (and non-Jewish) Haligonians who came to welcome our little one so thoughtfully. We were of course deeply grateful and moved by the presence of members of the Shaar, and we were also moved to see members of the Beth, Chabad, as well as unaffiliated community members present. In other communities, this would be less likely

to happen, but we came to understand that the birth of a Jewish child represents a true source of communal joy here in Halifax. We will always carry this idea and cherish what such strong identification means.

Looking back, I am grateful for the diverse participation in our annual Halifax communal beit midrash, where Jews of all backgrounds united to learn together, and, again, marvel at what a special Jewish connection we enjoy here. Again, this would not be possible elsewhere—to overcome denominational and cultural differences to prioritize and celebrate the ideas and values that make us Jewish.

I would like to leave you with two transitional traditions which have always spoken to me but resonate with me especially strongly at this time. The first is what we traditionally say upon completing a tractate of Talmud. We announce that we will return to it; we say to the tractate that, while we have completed our learning, this is not a final goodbye: “Hadran alakh,” we will return to you. How much more applicable this statement is to the relationships we form in life. Putting a volume down for a moment does not signal the end of the relationship and impact of that text. All

the more so, in the sphere of human relationships, we always return to each other, no matter where we might be situated geographically.

The second transitional tradition which feels especially appropriate this time of year, as we transition into the summer season, is the travelers’ prayer, *tefillat haDerekh*. The travelers’ prayer is traditionally recited upon taking a journey and asks G-d to guide and protect us on our journey, for us to curry favour in the hearts of those who meet us, and to help orient our hearts to do good in this world. When I was a child, I had a teacher from Israel who would always carry a keychain with this special prayer dangling from his pants’ pocket. When we asked him why, he explained that we are always on a journey, no matter where we are or what we’re doing.

Taken together, these two transitional traditions come to teach us that, while the road of life presents us with infinite, unexpected twists and turns, we should always orient our hearts towards what is good and remember that we always return to each other. Shalom and hadran alakh, Atlantic Canada. 3



COUNTING THE OMER AND MAKING IT COUNT

BY CHANA YAGOD, DAUGHTER OF RABBI AND REBBETZIN YAGOD, CONGREGATION TIFERES ISRAEL, MONCTON, NB

Today is the 25th day of the Omer, the process of counting the days up until Shavuot. We started with the first day of the Omer and will end in the 49th, the 50th day being Shavuot itself.

The Omer ties the holiday of Pesach to Shavuot and interestingly, it also connects to Purim because Mordechai made an Omer, barley-based offering.

In mystical teachings, the 50 days refers to the levels of spiritual purity. (That’s a much longer discussion.)

Through the 49 days, we count up from 1 to 49—normally a countdown is saying “we have so many days left until the awaited event.” But in the Omer, we say “today is this number day, which is this many weeks and days inside the Omer.” Which means we are actually counting up! Wow! Who ever heard

of counting up in a countdown? But that is precisely it: we are counting up because each day is building on the previous, like building a building or climbing a set of stairs until we reach the very top, and this makes us grow and become stronger. And that’s exactly what the Omer is: we climb a stair each day, or add yet another layering brick to our building that we’re working on, because we are reconstructing our souls, and in a sense, we are doing mass renovations on our inner selves.

Shavuot is then like the grand opening of that house we built, when we can take joy in all the work we’ve done to get to this point and share it with others. We put in effort all these days, and we accomplished something real, we’ve made something of ourselves. It’s the greatest feeling. We can then use that fresh space to connect to Hashem, G-d, in

the most unique and original way, with the intense freshness and clarity of a restart achieved by weeks of effort, building, and inner growth made with great strides. Such were the strides of Ruth, whom we will read about on the holiday coming up, who converted to Judaism when she determined to leave behind her Moabite ways and follow Naomi to Israel.

In a way, we are essentially converting ourselves as well: from old ways we were formerly used to and, through a new pathway forged by our efforts, into a vastly new and better version of our true inner selves, now radiating light and warmth.

Shavuot is this such holiday of light and warmth from Torah, and it is meant to infuse us with it. It is the light we are always aiming

Continue on page 40

A MOMENT OF SILENCE

BY RABBI MENDEL FELDMAN, CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF THE MARITIMES



Saturday morning, the final day of Passover, my colleague in Poway, CA, Rabbi Yisroel Goldstein, had a day that began similar to mine and to that of countless Rabbis around the world. He led the morning services and directed the Torah reading, all while welcoming Jewish people of all backgrounds into his congregation.

On Shabbat and Holidays, it is tradition to read a “Haftora”, a portion from the Prophets relevant to that day. On the last day of Passover, we read from Isaiah (10:32-12:6) about the future redemption. We read the prophet’s vision that there will come a time when “a wolf shall live with a lamb, and a leopard shall lie with a kid; and a calf and a lion cub and a fawning [shall lie] together, and a small child shall lead them.” We read about a future that we hope and pray will become a reality very soon.

It was then—as he concluded the recitation of the Haftorah—when his holiday

tranquility was brutally disrupted by evil, violence and hate.

People often wonder how to respond and what can we do to counter this hate?

Rabbi Goldstein took the lead and showed us how to respond. He put into practice the message of the Lubavitcher Rebbe of blessed memory, to fight darkness with light. In every interview he asked all listeners to do a Mitzvah. He asked men to put on the tefillin that he cannot lay on his bandaged arm. He asked women to light Shabbat candles in memory of his dear friend Lori Kaye, who can no longer bring that light into her own home.

Alongside steps that are being taken to stop these attacks in their tracks, there are things that our society can and must do, to prevent this evil from fostering in the first place.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson OBM gave a talk (1975) addressing the spiritual and moral crisis in

America. The Rebbe said “There can be no doubt that the intent of the Founding Fathers was to preserve religious freedom, not to deny it; to preserve religious equality, not to wean the nation away from G-d, G-d Forbid. Yet, for some, the spirit of the Constitution on

Religious Freedom has come to mean freedom from religion instead of freedom of religion. Juvenile delinquency and crime have become so rampant as to pose a serious threat to society. Clearly a child that is raised without fear of G-d in his heart, will have no fear or respect for a police officer”.

Subsequently, the Rebbe strongly promoted and advocated that every school begin its day with a moment of silence. A moment of silence is permitted in public schools, since it is not a religious service or exercise but... an opportunity for silent meditation and reflection. The Rebbe advocated for this cause because he believed that every single child can be trained to develop an appreciation for life, even if they are not getting an education that overtly addresses these values.

In this moment, students can think about their life’s mission, contemplate the value of life (their own and others), and reflect on a Higher Power and purpose in life.

We fight evil, with good. We fight hatred, with love. We fight ignorance, with education. We fight darkness, with light.

Let us hope and pray that very soon we merit the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophesy, and reach the era in which “there will be neither famine or war, envy or competition, for good will flow in abundance... for the land shall be full of knowledge of the Lord as water covers the sea bed.”

Continued from page 39

for as we climb. Step by step, day by day, we are getting closer and closer until on the 50th day, Shavuot, we reach the light. What happens when you walk into the light? It becomes part of you.

Wishing you only the most beautiful and immense blessings and may you too merit the joyous discovery of transforming your own soul into a veritable, shining gem.



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WHY I WILL NO LONGER PUBLISH IN THE *CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN*

BY HENRY SREBRNIK

Readers of Shalom may recall my article of 2015, regarding attacks on me by an anti-Zionist bully. Well, it recently happened again.

So, unless I receive an apology, I will never write for Prince Edward Island's main newspaper again. Here's why:

On January 23, the *Charlottetown Guardian*, which had been the venue for these assaults, published an opinion piece by the same person, Richard Deaton, entitled "Sue Me, You Zionist Goons." Deaton has written numerous attacks on Israel and Zionism in the *Guardian*. I was one of the "goons" referred to in this inflammatory headline. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines the term "goon" as "a man hired to terrorize or eliminate opponents." It conjures up images of a street brawler or criminal, not a university professor with a reputation to uphold. It is also a threat, as who knows who might take it upon themselves to "silence" such a nefarious character.

The Deaton piece crossed a line—the headline, the tasteless Nazi analogy, and the naming of individuals went against all journalistic ethics. Since virtually every member of the organized PEI Jewish community—and this doesn't include Deaton, as he has never participated in any of our activities—supports the continued existence of the State of Israel, I guess this makes all of us "Zionist goons." So the *Guardian* has insulted all of us. It was also beyond disappointing to me that the *Guardian* allowed such a vicious attack on a regular contributor to the paper, one in which I have published almost 500 columns over the years. I should have stopped writing for the *Guardian* in 2015 when Deaton commenced his personal vendetta against me. Instead, I was persuaded by a number of people—including many *Guardian* readers who spontaneously contacted me—that my articles are informative and have a large following.

BUT NOW—WELL, ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.

I don't care about the ravings of Richard

Deaton—as it happens, the article of mine he referenced in his screed, "The Many Faces of Anti-Semitism," was a reasonable and judicious analysis of growing anti-Semitism on both the left and right in the United States, and was in fact published, not in the *Guardian*, but in the Dec. 10 issue of the Summerside Journal Pioneer.

A few days later, *Guardian* managing editor Wayne Thibodeau, in response to a concerned member of the PEI Jewish community, addressed the decision in the following letter:

"There is no question that Israeli politics is divisive and it has created a firestorm on our opinion pages, especially between Mr. Deaton and Mr. Fegelman" (the other person attacked by Deaton).

"Mr. Deaton's letter was carefully vetted. In the letter, he asked to respond to Mike Fegelman, executive director of the group, Honest Reporting Canada.

"That being said, in hindsight, a more tactful headline could have been chosen for the letter.

"We are more than willing to offer you equal space to respond to Mr. Deaton and The *Guardian's* decision to publish his letter.

"It's never an easy decision to decide what to print and what to censor. We want to facilitate discussions which are important to our readers."

This reply actually made things worse. In other words, the article didn't just slip by through carelessness or inattention. The editors actually approved this vicious attack and deemed it fit to print. And if it was meant as a reply to Mike Fegelman, why was Deaton allowed to include me as a "Zionist goon?"

I know for a fact that there were letters to the editor criticizing Deaton's ridiculous rant; the *Guardian* refused to publish them. I have, though, received many personal e-mails from people aghast at this.

"These kinds of personal attacks on private citizens are completely out of line and should never be published," wrote one member of our Jewish community. "It's so

sad and alarming!" said another.

A former consultant to the Halifax-based office of a national Jewish organization said, "I thought that the tone of Deaton's letter was absolutely shocking and that the *Guardian* made a gross error in judgement in publishing it. In any event, I am simply writing to express my support for you, and to encourage you to keep up your excellent work."

Naomi Rosenfeld, executive director of the Atlantic Jewish Council in Halifax, sent this message to the Prince Edward Island Jewish Community's Facebook page on Feb. 7:

"Hi Everyone—I want to make sure you know that the AJC and CIJA [the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs] are well aware of the recent outrageous article in the PEI *Guardian* attacking Henry and the history of the publication of these sorts of inappropriate personal attacks and anti-Israel rants. We are taking this matter very seriously and currently doing some research to help plan our next steps. But we need your help."

I spoke to Rosenfeld a day later and she promised that the Council would take action in this matter.

In an article published on March 14 in the Canadian Jewish News, "Columnist Quits After Being Called 'Zionist Goon'," she elaborated, saying the Atlantic Jewish Council was "shocked and disappointed to see the types of op-eds that the P.E.I. *Guardian* has published, especially the inflammatory and misleading piece of Jan. 23, entitled Sue Me, You Zionist Goons. We are in touch with the leadership at the *Guardian* to ensure that this sort of misinformation is not published in the future."

Can anyone imagine an op-ed piece with such vulgar and intemperate language, and the singling out of private citizens, ever being published in a newspaper of record like the *Globe and Mail* or the *New York Times*? Of course not. Yet the *Guardian* served as an enabler for someone spewing hate. ❧

Henry Srebrnik is a professor of political science at the University of Prince Edward Island

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Continued from page 4

over its 71 years, evidenced by Israel artists' words set to music. The influence of music from Eastern Europe gave us our collective community, followed by a well established military. The evolution of music made Israeli society reflect on what it means to be an Israeli and further brought us joyful renditions of songs with the reunification of Jerusalem, Through the 1980's and '90's we see the darker tones in music when there was the war with Lebanon and the first Intifadah. By the end of the 1990's we see Israeli music taking an upswing as the country gains prominence on the world stage with its high tech industry and many startups as well as a successful peace process with Jordan. In 1998, for the first time, Israel won the International Eurovision Song competition and went on to win it 3 more times. There were more ups and downs, the second Intifadah, the unilateral withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Gaza Strip in 2005. "One of the most popular songs of 2002 was Tikva, "The dream will die out if we lose hope". Music became the precursor of social trends, and we see that as time marches on, Israel moves philosophically from "solving the

Palestinian conflict to managing the conflict". The program was very well received by audiences and we thank JAFI (Jewish Agency for Israel) for sponsoring it for us. Mijal will be presenting in St. John's, NL in the autumn.

Fredericton and Saint John are the centres for another book launch (May 13th, 14th respectively) featuring author **Andrew Theobald's** book, **Dangerous Enemy: Sympathizers** It tells the story of the internment camp in Ripples, N.B., the site and library replica (Minto) which can be found an hour from Fredericton. Here, German Jews fleeing Nazi Germany to England were housed as POW's. As an aside, when the inmates called for kosher food, Fredericton answered the call.

As we look to other events happening in **Israel and Canada**, we have recently witnessed hundreds of rocket attacks against Israel from Hamas controlled Gaza killing four Israelis and injuring many others. This had officials from Egypt and the UN scrambling to intervene to restore calm. Israeli elections are over and Benjamin Netanyahu is being asked to form a government for the present.

Birthright missions are continuing to go to Israel, and there will be 8 participants attending from Halifax. Premier McNeil of NS will be going on a trade mission to Israel shortly as well. So we carry on in spite of recent tragic events.

The **secular legislation bill in Quebec** put forth by CAQ is causing much concern among some groups. The bill is based on principles of separation of Church and State. A number of groups were making presentations before the national Assembly this past week. Many see this as an infringement on individual freedoms and all Federal political parties have criticized it.

CIJA continues to provide our region with security assessments of our Jewish institutions and training for personnel. As well, it is clear we are leading the way in a bipartisan manner to combat online hate. The World Jewish Congress partnered with UNESCO on a project to address the ever widening growth of antisemitism. They have put together an educational website **AboutHolocaust.org** and Canada has sponsored the first phase of the accompanying guidebook. The second phase will be sponsored by the WJC. In view of the growing tolerance to the acceptance of anti-Semitic tropes, we must

be prepared to be vocal, expose, condemn and respond to those who perpetuate hate. Recent events in Poway, California, where Jews were attacked on Pesach eve is once again a sad reminder that we must remain vigilant. I will be attending the World Jewish Congress North America Conference in Ottawa next week where a number of global issues affecting Jewish communities will be discussed. Antisemitism ranks high on the list.

We are pleased to say that we have expanded our **PJ library program** geographically as far as Labrador and the age for eligibility has increased.

The **Jewish Federations of Canada (JFC)** is reviewing strategies and ways to be an inclusive national organization relevant to all Jewish communities. I continue to take part in the Small Community Regional Forums where local community ideas and concerns are shared and discussed with our counterparts across Canada.

Rabbi Ellis as the chaplain for AJC, continues his weekly interfaith meetings with various clergy and has guest lectured at the universities a number of times on Judaism. He also continues to liaise with our provincial prisons.

Camp Kadimah is geared up for another season. An information session will be held near the end of May.

We continue to seek creative ways to bring people together as part of the local, regional, national and international Jewish collective, trying to make our programs cost effective and utilizing human resources who may be living near or in the midst of our communities. Basic technology is a great way to interact with small groups. Book clubs, bridge clubs, computer clubs, bowling parties, chess clubs, healthcare informative talks, recipe exchanges with sampling, financial planning, gardening, basketball games, field trips, inter-city, inter province....the list is endless.

Reflecting back on our history, the determination made, is that we Jews as a people are resilient and embrace life. We have a richness of culture and tradition, a common language and a moral code by which we live. Be respectful to others. Value one's reputation for it is priceless. This the legacy of our forefathers and it is inter generational as we move through time and unifies us a people.

We have lost a number of our community members and on behalf of the Atlantic Jewish Council Board I offer their families our condolences. ❧

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