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THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS
B'NAI B'RITH COLLECTION
SAVE THE DATE!

Fred Schiffer
Lives in Photos

Fred Schiffer was a photographer like none other. From his arrival in Vancouver in 1958 until the time of his death in 1999, Schiffer snapped portraits of Vancouverites of all stature, including Arthur Erickson, Jack Diamond, actors and labourers, as well as many visiting celebrities including Louis Armstrong and Queen Elizabeth II. Malcolm Perry of The Vancouver Sun liked to call Schiffer “The Karsh of Vancouver,” though he was too humble to accept such a label.

For 25 years, Schiffer’s work has been boxed away, out of public view. Thanks to the support of all levels of government and many local foundations, the JMABC has spent the past year preparing the exhibit, Fred Schiffer: Lives in Photos, an exciting opportunity to showcase Schiffer’s life and work as part of the upcoming Capture Photography Festival in April and May, 2015.

Please join us for an Opening Reception:

April 16, 2015
8pm
MAKE Gallery
257 E 7th Avenue

~More Details to Follow~
Perhaps you have seen one or more episodes of the PBS television series “Finding Your Roots” with Henry Louis Gates Jr. Gates is a Harvard scholar who helps well-known “people discover long-lost relatives hidden for generations within the branches of their family trees”. The November 4th episode featured three prominent Jewish Americans: Alan Dershowitz, Carole King and Tony Kushner, all of whom “share not only a Jewish heritage but also a history of perseverance in the face of withering opposition”.

To discover the history of the subjects chosen for each episode, Gates has a team of genealogists who reconstruct the paper trail left by ancestors. This information, together with that of the world’s foremost geneticists who help to interpret DNA, allow us to go back thousands of years to learn the heritage of the people being studied.

Alan Dershowitz finds out that the first Hassidic synagogue in Brooklyn was started by his great-grandfather. Carole King confronts the discrimination her ancestors faced in America; and playwright Tony Kushner probes the history of the Holocaust to learn his ancestors’ fate and discovers that his great-grandmother, Cecelia Kushner, emigrated from Russia to Brooklyn eight years after her son, Tony’s grandfather, settled in Louisiana.

In BC we do not need to wait for a TV program to feature Jewish individuals. You don’t need to be a celebrity to have an interesting story and we are very fortunate to have the JMABC and its website to showcase the always interesting stories of Jewish individuals and organizations in BC. Last year, we completed over 40 oral history interviews and processed over 6000 photographs. Twenty-two people donated archival material. We had nearly 700 research requests and close to 100,000 website visits from all around the world.

The JMABC is clearly a valued organization and important for the continuation and telling of our unique stories. 2015 will be a notable year for us, with the upcoming debut of our new exhibit profiling the life and work of acclaimed portrait photographer Fred Schiffer. Between the 1940s and up until his death in 1999, Schiffer photographed each of Vancouver’s sitting mayors, as well as actors, business executives, and cultural figures in both Vancouver and Argentina.

WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO, AND HOW WE DO IT

We consider ourselves very fortunate to have three wonderful full-time staff who work out of our office rented upstairs in the Peretz Centre. At our AGM in November, we celebrated the working anniversary of our valued administrator Marcy Babins who has been with the JMABC for 15 years.

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING
- Walking tours of old Jewish Vancouver and the Jewish section of Vancouver Mountain View Cemetery.
- Intersections: discussions with local experts on topics relevant to the Jewish and general communities.

ARCHIVES AND PHOTOS
- The Nemetz Jewish Community Archives houses the archival records of BC’s Jewish organizations and many families.
- The Yosef Wosk Online Photo Library of the JMABC hosts our selection of digitized photographs.
- Admired Life - to be launched shortly - will allow families to make biographies of their deceased loved ones available online.

OUR WEBSITE AND ONLINE EXHIBITS (http://www.jewishmuseum.ca) continues to be a comprehensive record of our remarkable past with new exhibits added every year.

PUBLICATIONS
- The Chronicle newsletter is published three times a year.
- The Scribe, published annually, has become a much-in-demand journal. Last year’s issue, profiling local Jewish families who established themselves as furniture dealers in the mid-20th Century, was so popular that a second printing was necessary to meet demand.
- The next issue of The Scribe is in production and is scheduled for release in February, 2015. This issue will chronicle the history of Jewish scrap metal dealers in BC, told largely in their own words. Research has already begun for our 2016 Scribe, on the topic of BC Jewish clothiers. We consider ourselves exceptionally fortunate to have the very talented Cynthia Ramsey, owner and publisher of the Jewish Independent as our editor.

VOLUNTEERS
We are always looking for volunteers and can’t say enough how appreciative we are of those who devote numerous hours to conduct oral history interviews, transcribe interviews, lead walking tours and other public programs, and assist with archival processing. Included among these is our dedicated Board of Directors which meets regularly to plot the JMABC’s future.

FUNDING
As a registered non-profit, the JMABC relies on the generosity of our members and supporters, including the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver and many local family foundations. Your support as a member has kept us hard at work for over 40 years. We hope you will consider renewing your membership, becoming a member, and/or increasing your contribution this year. If you know someone who would appreciate the work we do, please encourage them to become a member! All contributions can be sent in by phone, mail, fax or email.

Perry Seidelman
Ben Kopelow was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba on July 10, 1927. The family was raised in Central Winnipeg where his parents operated a chain of grocery stores. The close-knit Kopelow family was comprised of four sons and one daughter. From the age of 6, Ben was interested in theatre, and he appeared in a number of school and amateur productions, writing, directing and producing skits and plays from a young age. Ben also worked at the YMHA (Young Men's Hebrew Association) as a group worker in charge of teen town activities. Ben worked at the grocery store fulltime until his father decided to move the family to Vancouver in April, 1948. Upon arrival his father opened a Super Market on West Broadway which he operated until 1957.

In 1954 Ben married Dolly Halpern. Before long, they had two children: Gordon and Bryna.

From his earliest days in Vancouver, Ben wasted no time getting involved in the local theatre scene. He joined Repertoire Productions and the Vancouver Little Theatre Association, where he met his long-time associate Max Power. Both were aspiring actors and producers. Ben's first appearance was in Three Men on a Horse followed by Vancouver Little Theatre Association's production of Room Service (1953). He also played Harry Shapiro in Vancouver Little Theatre Association's 1954 production of Stalag 17 at the York Theatre.

"Max had been in Little Theatre as a teenager and he was also involved in, during the war at the St. John's canteen, performing with various people. And he got me involved, he invited me to a rehearsal of Three Men and a Horse that he had been cast in for Vancouver Little Theatre. And as it happened, I went and the rehearsal studio was on top of BC Collateral on Hastings and because the owner of that [Evans]... was a member of Vancouver Little Theatre and he gave us the upstairs to rehearse in... As it happened, one of the actors didn't show up and the director asked if I would read the parts so that they could block it, so they had somebody. So that's what I did. I really hadn't ever appeared in a scripted drama or comedy, stage drama. And, anyways, it was all an experience to me and Max would go 'Go ahead! Go ahead! You can do it! You can do it!' And Max had already been cast. And there was another chap there in the show, Dave Broadfoot... And after the rehearsal was over, the director said 'You know, I think you could do this part better than the guy we've got.' And I said 'Really? But I've gotta work.' And he says 'Well, we rehearse at night, you can work during the daytime.' What he didn't know was that I worked day and night. But, anyways, I wanted this so much that I said yes and went to rehearsals at 7 o'clock and then went back to the store and filled shelves until 1 o'clock in the morning after we finished rehearsals. So that was the start, Three Men and a Horse..."

In 1956 Ben Kopelow, Max Power and Doug Hellier formed The Barnstormers Theatre Company which produced a number of professional stage plays in the Georgia Auditorium and Queen Elizabeth Theatre. Among these productions were Stalag 17 (1955), The Diary of Anne Frank (1958), and Once More, With Feeling, as well as fashion shows, revues and melodramas, including A Night in the Nineties (1960) at The Cave Theatre Restaurant.

“We got the rights to The Diary of Anne Frank for Canada, Max and I. Max knew a fellow by the name of Doug Hellier, who I had met in Seattle and he would work with Charlie Nelson down on Hastings Street in one of the nightclubs. And he was a real PR type and really good. He had the Shirt And Tie Bar on Pender. Anyways, the three of us got Dorothy Davies to consent to direct it. We got Pena Schuster to come from Toronto to do Anne and we got a really great cast of people and we did The Diary of Anne Frank...After that, Max and I became very well known in the city and we were invited to do the first productions at The Queen Elizabeth Theatre.”

The Barnstormers was disbanded in 1957 but Ben and Max continued to work as a comedy act, successfully auditioning as actors in 1957 for Theatre Under the Stars (TUTS). The two appeared in four TUTS productions: Annie Get Your Gun (1955 and 1960), Kiss Me Kate (1957), and Guys and Dolls (1961).
Ben had his finger in all corners of the local theatre scene, working with organizations including Totem Theatre, Vancouver Repertory Players, Burnaby Clef Society, CBC Radio and CBUT Television. Ben was also well known in business circles; he was associated with Roc Ventures Limited, managing the New La Salle Bowling Alleys, and was a member of the Vancouver Tourist Bureau and the Vancouver Board of Trade.

In 1959 Ben was appointed the Public Relations and Advertising Director and Promotions Manager for The Cave Theatre Restaurant and during the course of the next couple of years worked with such stars as the Mills Bros., Tony Martin, Jane Russell, Marie McDonald, Dennis Day, Tommy Sands, Johnny Cash, Jim Reeves, Ford and Hines, and many other showbiz personalities.

“Max and Doug came over. Doug said, ‘Look. Max has got his shoe store (which was on Granville, Fashion Bootery). I’ve got the Shirt and Tie Bar on Pender Street. I can’t get away. One of us has gotta go full time. Ken Stauffer at The Cave wants somebody part time to do PR and you guys get all the publicity in the world. You know everybody at The Sun and The Province and The Herald. You know Wasserman and Hugh and Les Wedman and Jack Richards – you know everybody!’ So anyways, they said ‘We’ll guarantee that you’ll make enough money...the same money that you would on the contract. We’ll guarantee it. If we don’t make enough money, we’ll pay...’

“That’s when the Barnstormers became a reality. I moved into The Cave. He gave us the office, the room behind the spotlight, up in the cave. And so, I started doing PR. And this was December 1959. And the first act I worked with was Johnnie Ray. Well, working at The Cave, I worked with virtually every big name of that era, of that decade. I was involved for ten years... publicity and advertising and booking...”

In September 1961 Ben established Pacific Show Productions Limited – an agency involving all aspects of stage and theatre production. Ben was the managing director with Max as his partner. Ben received the first franchise in BC to book and produce entertainment using American Guild of Variety Artists (AGVA) performers and also a franchise from the American Federation of Musicians.

“In about 1961, Ken and Jack Wasserman called me into the office. Jack had married Fran Gregory and he had followed her all down the west coast. She was in musical comedy. Anyways, they called me into the office and told me that the head of AGVA - American Guild of Variety Artists union – wanted a franchise agent in Vancouver. Who could they get? And Jack and Ken said ‘The only one we could think of would be Ben Kopelow.’ So when they called me in the office, Jack was there and the fellow from AGVA was there and they said ‘We think that you should be an agent. Start an agency.’ At that time, Jerry Lancaster, Barney Potts, Dal Richards – everybody was doing booking. All the band leaders were doing booking but nobody was really representing the artists. They

[Ken and Jack] said they would help financially and they’d get me started. Ken said ‘You still have the office and I still want you to do the PR as well.’ So, Pacific Show Productions was started.”

Ben produced and booked the following noteworthy productions: IBM Sales Conference – Vancouver (1968) Nassau (1969); Dawson City Gaslight Follies (3 years); Kelowna Regatta (4 years); Penticton Summer Theatre (3 years); Golden Garter Saloon Entertainment (Expo 67 Montreal); Kitimat July 1st Celebration (3 years); P.N.E. Water Safety Show; Victoria Exhibition (3 years); Rolf Harris shows (7 years); New Westminster May Festival (3 years); and over 500 major conventions in Vancouver.

While working to get Pacific Show Productions Limited off the ground, Ben continued on as Publicity and Public Relations Director for The Cave and doing publicity for Theatre Under the Stars.

After his retirement in 1992, Ben decided to nourish his interest in art. He enrolled in classes with watercolour artist Mona Goldman. Goldman commented on Ben’s love of colour and encouraged him to pursue more formal studies. He took an 8 week beginners’ art course at UBC. The professor was impressed by Ben’s passion for art and encouraged him to continue his studies. Ben enrolled in part time studies at Emily Carr University and, over the course of four years, received two years’ worth of credits in the study of art.

While painting, Ben shared studio space in the Dominion Bank Building with his daughter-in-law and her friends. All of them were capable artists in their own right and Ben learned a great deal from them.

Ben's passion for art took him beyond Vancouver. He travelled to Florence, Italy to attend a drawing course, and then to an estate outside Lyon, France, where a Capilano College professor teaches painting and drawing. In both cases, his wife Dolly came along to enjoy everything these cities have to offer.

Ben was forced to stop painting in 2010 when he was diagnosed with macular degeneration. Since then, he has volunteered as a practice patient for medical students at UBC. He also enjoys listening to audio books from the local library.
If you pass by the Jewish section of Mountain View Cemetery, at Fraser and 37th, you will notice something that has been absent for over 30 years. Rising up from the bushes that enclose the Jewish section you will see a brand new cast-iron archway - a replica of the one installed when the cemetery opened in 1892.

This archway is just one of many recent improvements made to the site as part of the three-year restoration project currently underway. Other highlights include the cleaning and stabilization of over 100 headstones; installation of markers for unmarked graves; pruning of the long-neglected hedge; the uncovering of old and augmenting new curbs and pathways; and construction of new amenities including a ritual washing basin, pebble basin, entry plaza, and a kohanim bench.

After months of work, construction is now nearing completion and the cemetery will once again be open for visitors early in the new year. This spring, consider joining one of the JMABC’s Mountain View Cemetery walking tours, which will feature a brand new script packed with newly discovered information.

Records indicate that approximately 450 Jewish people are interred in Mountain View Cemetery, yet when this project began in October 2012, only a smattering of information was known about many of these people. Concurrent with the restoration of the site, the Mountain View Cemetery Restoration Committee has recruited the assistance of the Jewish Genealogical Institute of BC to research and fill in missing information about these past members of our community. Their efforts have yielded impressive results. Otto E Bond, for instance, was known to be the first person to be buried in the cemetery in 1892, but little was known about him aside from his name. Today we know that he was a poet and quite the ladies’ man. Suspiciously, he was found dead in his Gastown hotel room with a revolver nearby.

The legacy of the Rosenbaum family has similarly been illuminated. In the 1940s, Minnie and Louis’s Deli at the corner of Granville Street and 14th Avenue was “the only game in town” for top-notch corned beef and thinly sliced tongue (served on a wooden paddle!). Reportedly, Louis was once offered $5,000 for his corned beef recipe. Naturally, he declined the offer.

Bill Pechet, the landscape architect has collaborated with Cornelia Hahn Oberlander on the restoration plans, and recently commented, “This work is like an archaeological dig, as we unearth the mysteries of people who lived and died in the early 1900’s.” It has certainly been exciting to uncover these mysteries, and even more exciting to slowly solve them.

There is still much work to be done. The latest initiative aims to place headstones on each of the graves of 80 infants interred in Mountain View Cemetery. This is just one of many opportunities for community involvement.

Community foundations, private family foundations, and individual donors have made significant contributions to the restoration project, and we are grateful for their generosity in getting us to this stage. The goal now is to not only fund the restoration work underway, but also establish an endowment fund to ensure future maintenance of the cemetery in perpetuity.

Stay tuned for details of the rededication ceremony planned for spring 2015.

If you are able to help, either with time or funds, please contact:

Shirley Barnett - Project Chair - sbarnett@dayhu.com
Myra Adirim - Project Administrator - myra.mvc@gmail.com
PUBLIC PROGRAMS

JANUARY

WED
21

INTERSECTIONS:
JEWBS BY CHOICE - WHAT WE CAN LEARN
ABOUT US FROM THOSE WHO CHOOSE US
with Rabbi Dan Moskovitz
at the JMABC - 6184 Ash St
7 pm - 9 pm
$5 suggested donation

SUN
25

GENEALOGY SUNDAYS
in partnership with the Jewish
Genealogical Society of BC
at the JMABC - 6184 Ash St
by appointment only
1 pm - 4 pm
FREE

FEBRUARY

WED
18

INTERSECTIONS:
BEING HEARD - IMMIGRANTS AND
ACCENT REDUCTION
with Andy Krieger
at the JMABC - 6184 Ash St
7 pm - 9 pm
$5 suggested donation

SUN
22

GENEALOGY SUNDAYS
in partnership with the Jewish
Genealogical Society of BC
at the JMABC - 6184 Ash St
by appointment only
1 pm - 4 pm
FREE

MARCH

WED
18

INTERSECTIONS:
TOPIC & GUEST TBA
at the JMABC - 6184 Ash St
7 pm - 9 pm
$5 suggested donation

SUN
29

GENEALOGY SUNDAYS
in partnership with the Jewish
Genealogical Society of BC
at the JMABC - 6184 Ash St
by appointment only
1 pm - 4 pm
FREE

APRIL

THU
16

FRED SCHIFFER: LIVES IN PHOTOS
EXHIBIT OPENING
at MAKE Gallery - 257 E 7th Ave
8pm - 11pm
FREE

SUN
26

GENEALOGY SUNDAYS
in partnership with the Jewish
Genealogical Society of BC
at the JMABC - 6184 Ash St
by appointment only
1 pm - 4 pm
FREE
Andrew Hinton
ARCHIVES ASSISTANT
Since September 2014, I have been processing and cataloging the collective records of the Vancouver B’nai B’rith Hillel Foundation. Up until its accession by the Jewish Museum and Archives of BC, the collection was kept in a basement where it was at risk of water damage. Thanks to Hillel’s generosity, the collection was donated to the Jewish Museum and Archives of BC where it could be safely housed and made accessible so that future generations could learn of the history of Hillel in Vancouver.

The collection includes documents from the founding of Hillel Vancouver in 1947 to 1998, although it focuses predominantly on the period 1970-1995. It is a fascinating collection that documents the programming and outreach activities of Hillel and the inner financial and administrative workings of the Foundation. Also quite evident in the collection are the personalities of three of the Foundation’s executive directors - Daniel Siegel, Mordechai Wosk, and Zac Kaye - that emerge from extensive correspondence. The collection sheds light on the important roles that Hillel played in Vancouver’s Jewish community, as well as its relationship with movements of national and international importance. It will prove to be a valuable resource for researchers and anyone with an interest in this important Jewish organization.

It is an absolute pleasure to work on this project at the Jewish Museum and Archives of BC. Having recently completed a graduate level degree in Library and Information Science, it is great to have this opportunity to strengthen my skills through hands-on experience in the archives field. This project is also a wonderful opportunity to become more familiar with the Jewish community of Vancouver. I am incredibly grateful for the Young Canada Works Program which has made it possible to have this opportunity to work with the great people of the Jewish Museum and Archives of BC and to help make a great historical collection accessible to the public.

Claire Unger
RESEARCH ASSISTANT
I am a cultural studies student from Vienna, Austria and am currently enrolled in a working holiday program, which allows me to stay in Canada for ten months. During my studies I had the opportunity to work as a research assistant on an exhibit titled “The Righteous – Choosing of Courage”, which was hosted by the Friends of Yad Vashem in cooperation with my university. I researched and wrote biographies of featured non-Jewish Austrians who helped Jewish people during WWII.

While in Vancouver, I knew that I wanted to do something related to my education. Therefore, I had the idea to volunteer at the Jewish Museum and Archives of BC.

Currently I am helping to prepare an upcoming online exhibition on Vancouver’s Jewish furniture industry between the 1930s and the 1980s. This research draws on the 18 oral interviews conducted by volunteers between 1983 and 2013, which informed last year’s issue of The Scribe.

Through my research, I have been astonished by people’s street smarts and their “bounce-back-ability”. Louis Averbach’s family left Russia in 1920/21 due to political difficulties and settled in London, Ontario. Even as a nine-year-old boy Louis wanted to help support his family so he started to work as a junk dealer with his father. Later, he went into the fruit business and eventually joined his father-in-law’s furniture business in Vancouver in 1940. Louis Averbach’s talent and dedication helped turn Belmont Furniture into one of Vancouver’s most prestigious furniture businesses of its time.

When Fanny Donner lost her husband at a young age, she was left to raise four children all by herself while continuing to run the family’s furniture store in Kenora, Ontario. A fire in 1944 force the Donners to close shop and move to Vancouver, where Fanny built the business from nothing to become one of the biggest names in Vancouver’s furniture industry.

This exhibit will tell inspiring and remarkable stories of past and present community’s members. I am looking forward to continuing to work on the project.
Christina Pasqua
RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Christina Pasqua is a recent graduate of the MA in Religion and Public Life at Carleton University and is now a volunteer for the Jewish Museum and Archives of British Columbia, under the direction of Michael Schwartz.

She is currently expanding on the Strathcona & Gastown walking tour by revisiting the oral interviews collected by the Jewish Museum and Archives of BC. She has also drawn data from early publications of the Jewish Western Bulletin and various texts written by Cyril Leonoff. Her research goal is to learn more about the leadership of Jewish women in Vancouver’s early history, particularly in founding and sponsoring various community organizations (i.e. educational or cultural institutions). By elaborating on the contributions of these prominent figures, she hopes to provide the walking tour with a more complete story of Vancouver’s Jewish pioneers and the generations that followed.

Her research has shed light on Canada’s history of multiculturalism and how the interdependence and communication between various ethnic and religious communities in Vancouver became necessary to live and thrive in a burgeoning city. Of particular interest is how these communities, despite being geographically separate from their ethnic and linguistic roots, continue to practice and preserve their traditions to varying degrees—an endeavour that speaks strongly to the contributions made by the early Jewish community during Vancouver’s formative years into the present day.

Christina is honoured to be a part of this project and looks forward to the work she will accomplish over the coming months.

CURRENT PROJECTS

B’nai B’rith fonds - One of the largest collections we have in the Nemetz Jewish Community Archives. This collection is also one of the oldest we have in the archives. The oldest material in this collection is a minute book from 1886-1915 from the Victoria Lodge No. 865, International Order B’nai B’rith. Thanks to one of our dedicated volunteers, Naomi Caruso, and archives intern, Andrew Hinton, we have completed processing the B’nai B’rith fonds, thereby ensuring the long-term preservation of this collection. Now that this collection has been fully processed and catalogued, the finding aid has been made available online. The last step will be to digitize some of the material from this important collection and make those digitized images available online as well. Stay tuned for an update in the next Chronicle.

Congregation Emanu-El fonds - Another large collection, two years in the making, is now in the final stages of completion. The collection has been completely re-housed and preserved and a full finding aid made available online. Thousands of images and documents have also been digitized and we are in the final stages of making all the newly digitized material available online. Although there are many more documents to be uploaded, you can already view thousands of images and documents from this collection online: https://www.flickr.com/photos/jewishmuseum/collections/72157646574328104/

Thank you to Jordan Stanger-Ross, Associate Professor of History at the University of Victoria who taught a public history course in this recent fall semester. One of the projects that was available to the students of this class was the creation of this online database of digitized material. A big thank you to the students who made this project possible: Will Archibald and Alexis (Ali) Leriger de la Plante. It is also important to thank the slew of JMABC volunteers and past archives assistant Caleigh McEachern who worked tirelessly on organizing, processing and cataloguing this collection. Lastly, a very warm thank-you to the University of Victoria Archives who very generously digitized the minute books on our behalf.
COMPLETED PROJECTS

Thanks to the Young Canada Works program, we were able to hire an archives intern, Andrew Hinton, who has completed processing the Vancouver B’nai Brith Hillel House fonds. The Vancouver B’nai Brith Hillel Foundation fonds [ca. 1947-1998, predominantly ca. 1978-1995] consists of approximately 3 metres of textual records and other material relating to the administration and operations of the UBC Hillel House. The finding aid is now available online.

UPCOMING PROJECTS

Thanks to the Diamond Foundation we will be hiring an archives assistant in January to work on the Community Life Online Project. A number of collections have been processed to date, but are not yet fully available for research online. In today’s digital world, we now have the capacity to bring these collections’ content online through uploading the collection’s finding aid online and through digitization of photographs and documents and uploading those online. However, this is a very-time consuming and costly step which also requires the right software to enable us to accomplish this task. Therefore, the Community Life Online Project will enable the archives assistant to utilize our brand new web-based archives software AtoM (Access to Memory) to upload many archival collections’ finding aids and digitized content online, including: B’nai Brith fonds; Bogoch family fonds; Congregation Emanu-El fonds; Nemetz family fonds; Royal Canadian Legion, Shalom Branch, No. 178 fonds; Morris Soskin and Rose Hyams collection; and the Toft family fonds.

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Since our last publication, we have conducted 5 new oral history interviews: Yolanda Babins; Ben Kopelow; Beverley Kort; Fred Swartz; and Mark White.

Thank you to all of our oral history interviewers and to those hard-working individuals who work on oral history transcription. We are always looking for more volunteers. If you are interested in getting involved, please email archives@jewishmuseum.ca.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS AND ARCHIVES’ HOLDINGS

- Sarah (Shirley) Ehrman via Lucy Laufer – 25 black and white original photographs (ca. 1949-1950) of Habonim members.
- Mollie Korsch – material belonging to husband Leonard (Len) Korsch, her father Louis Sier and other family and community members, including: trophies; Magee High School yearbook (1937); ZBT Fraternity pin; Masonic ring; bar mitzvah booklets; and photographs.
- Ben Kopelow – scrapbooks, photographs, theatre programs and scripts, memorabilia and ephemera documenting Ben’s work in entertainment, acting, and as an agent for booking and producing club dates, theatres and night club shows. Also includes photographs, documents and ephemera from Ben’s wife Dolly (nee Halpern).
- Bernie Simpson – original documents and articles regarding Bernie Simpson, C.M. (more material to come)
- Dvori Balshine – material from her time as the Director of Development at Louis Brier Jewish Aged Foundation as well as other material from her time working in the Jewish community in Vancouver (more material to come).
- Bill Gruenthal – material from Bill’s personal and working life (more material to come).

As always, we would like to thank all of our donors for their continued support and interest in the Nemetz Jewish Community Archives. If you have something you would like to donate, please email archives@jewishmuseum.ca.
A VISIT TO THE ARCHIVES

“
This is the meaning of existence; to reconcile liberty with service, the passing with lasting, to weave the threads of temporality into the fabric of eternity”

— George Bernard Shaw?

There is something magical about our archives. Everyone who visits feels it. Sited in one of the commercial buildings at the edge of Richmond, lies this place: The Nemetz Jewish Community Archives. Most of you will know that our organization is the guardian of this trove. I was lucky enough to visit the archives, using the excuse that as newly elected treasurer of the JMABC, I should at least try to become familiar with our most valuable treasures.

It is difficult to visit the Archives if your time is limited. The urge to dip into any of the many boxes and fonds is hard to resist, and once in, it is even harder to get out. So I tried to be disciplined about it. Before my first dip, I did a short orientation walk-about, and then I asked our archivist, Jennifer Yuhasz, to give me a quick lesson in archiving. (By the way, “archives”, with the s, is the usual spelling. “To archive” is the process of placing something into an archives. I have no idea what the plural form of archives is. I am a scientist Jim, not a grammarian.)

Our Archives contains documents, photographs, audio-visual material and much more, all related of course to the history of Jewish BC. While Jennifer is telling me about the distinction between “Fonds” and “Collection”, I think about the skill, dedication and resources it takes to run an archives. The facility is of course temperature and humidity controlled. The shelving has been carefully designed for archival purposes. But beyond that, Jennifer has designed and implemented a professional indexing system. She has also processed or supervised the processing of many thousands of items.

If you were to visit the Archives, you would enter an open area with incoming material on one side and a researcher space with table and chairs on the other. To your right, a small office with the usual office stuff. But it is the rest of the place that I came to see. Off the entrance area are two large rooms and a corridor. This corridor will lead you to an additional six rooms plus a large open area at its far end, all filled with material.

Look at the picture to the left. The smaller grey boxes contain material that has been processed: that is, the material has been assessed, classified, entered into the database and so on. The bigger white boxes are placed in the right rooms, but are otherwise unprocessed. Jennifer estimates that a qualified person working full time would need at least five years to process the boxes we currently have. Of course, in this time more material will have arrived, so the work is ongoing. Digitizing the collection – that is scanning the material and making it available online – is another story altogether.

I am sure that astute readers will, by now, be ready to call me on the mis-attributed quote at the lead of this story. While I was randomly treasure diving in the room called “Public Records” I came across a pamphlet entitled “Suggested Quotations for Sisterhood Speakers”. It was part of the Speakers Training Department of the Woman’s League for Conservative Judaism (undated). The sentiment was just so appropriate for my mission. This pamphlet was in box 2 (of five) of unprocessed material labeled “Beth Tikvah Congregation”.

Now before I am accused of criticizing the writer of this pamphlet, I want you to know that the mistake is shared (by me and the pamphlet author). The quote I saw in the pamphlet was not attributed, but it was on the top of the page, followed immediately by a short attributed quote by George Bernard Shaw. All the remaining quotes on the page were attributed too, so it was easy for a reader to think that the first two paragraphs were part of a single quotation by Mr. Shaw. (A shout-out in my next article to the first reader who can correctly identify the real originator of the quotation.)

I want to end this article by showing one more picture that I just loved. This one also came from an unprocessed box in the Public Records room: part of a number of scrap-books that I really want to spend more time studying. (see photo on opposite page, top left). Anyone know who made these charming drawings?

There is so much to say about the Archives, but I promised to keep it short. If the editor permits, I would like, from time to time, to unearth a particular treasure in our Archives and report on that.

This is your intrepid reporter, Michael Levy, on a rainy day, just off the Steveston Highway in Richmond, British Columbia, signing off.

Michael Levy is the Treasurer of the JMABC
ARCHIVAL PROCESSING EXPLAINED

As Michael Levy alluded to in his article, “A Visit to the Archives” (page 11), the process of bringing new items into the Archives is surprisingly complex. As a public service to help increase our members’ understanding of what happens in the dark depths of the JMABC Archives, we present here a step-by-step illustration of the steps involved. For a more detailed explanation, please join our Archivist, Jennifer Yuhasz on one of her frequent Archives Tours. Call the office to book a private tour today!

1 DISCUSS WITH DONOR

2 CREATE A FINDING AID

3 UPLOAD FINDING AID TO JMABC WEBSITE

4 CATALOGUE THE DONATION

5 SORT & CLEAN MATERIALS FOR TEMPORARY STORAGE IN ARCHIVES

6...

7...

8 CATALOGUE THE DONATION

9 UPLOAD FINDING AID TO JMABC WEBSITE

10...

11...

12...
2 SIGN THE DEED OF GIFT

3 MOVE MATERIALS TO THE JMABC

6 SEEK FUNDING FOR FURTHER STEPS

7 PROCESSING (REHOUSE ITEMS INTO PROPER FILES & BOXES)

10 SEEK FUNDING FOR DIGITIZATION

11 DIGITIZE & UPLOAD FILES TO JMABC WEBSITE
Please help us identify the members of our community in the photo above. This photo of Habonim members circa 1950 comes to us from Sarah (Shirley) Ehrman via Lucy Laufer. If you know who any of these folks are, please let us know! Contact us at: (604) 257-5199.

And thank you to everyone who helped us identify our last mystery photo (at right), of the new Executive of Lions Gate Lodge B’nai B’rith, Vancouver, BC; January 1954. Collection: Jewish Western Bulletin fonds. Jewish Museum & Archives of BC; L.12168.

The executive of Lions Gate Lodge B’nai B’rith for 1954 was installed at the annual banquet and dance held recently. Members of the new executive are seen left to right (seated): Harold Lauer, Gordon Slutsky, Chuck Kemp, Jack Sparton (president), Ace Hersh, Murray Belkin, Bill Kolberg; (standing): Josh Abramson, Sam Gordon, Murray Turner, Gerry Grad, Irving Grad, Harry Connor, Max Powell, Maurice Lifchus and Al Foreman.

You can find the original article from the January 22, 1954 issue of the Jewish Western Bulletin online at: http://multiculturalcanada.ca/node/542683
TRIBUTES

MAZEL TOV
Esther Caldes, in honour of her special birthday. Joice Myers
Chris Friedrichs, in honour of Ellen’s marriage. Joice Myers
Gordie Katz-Nelson, in honour of his special birthday. Irene and Mort Dodek
Kay Levey, in honour of her birthday. Pauline Babins

SYMPATHY
Jana Abramson, in memory of her mother, Marie Lipa. Lucy Lauffer
Caron Bernstein, in memory of her nephew, Lucas Austin. Sandra and Norman Miller
Gordon Brandt, in memory of his grandfather, Jozef Brandt. Michael Schwartz, JHS Board and staff.
Robert Golden, in memory of his father, Sid. Noemi and Bill Gruenthal
Susan Lipsett, in memory of her husband, Morley. Noemi and Bill Gruenthal
David Schwartz, in memory of his nephew, Lucas Austin. Sandra and Norman Miller
Harry Turner and Rick Tossell, in memory of Eunice Tossell. Joice Myers
The Zbarsky Family, in memory of Lamie. Esther Caldes

WITH APPRECIATION
Roger at Dressew. Esther Caldes
Alisa Franken. Elana Bick

DONATIONS

NEW MEMBERS

NEW WEBSITE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS
Many thanks to the following supporters whose generosity is allowing us to create and maintain a new, much needed website. Work on the site is underway and we look forward to debuting it later this year. Stay tuned for a very special launch event.
