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Accessing Collections – Online and Onsite

The Ottawa Jewish Archives came together as a grassroots idea in 1969. It was operating in earnest by the late 1970s with the support of the Ottawa Jewish Historical Society and the Ottawa Jewish Community Council – the predecessor of the current Jewish Federation of Ottawa. The Archives' holdings developed and expanded under the guidance and vitality of its first archivist, Shirley Berman, until her retirement in 1998. In 1999, the Ottawa Jewish Archives became an official agency of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa and moved to its current location in a purpose-built facility in Ottawa's Soloway Jewish Community Centre.

The Ottawa Jewish Archives continues to actively collect documents, photographs, recorded media, and ephemera that tell the story of Jewish community life in Ottawa from the 1890s to today. It operates under the mandate to maintain the collective memory of the Jewish community of Ottawa and the National Capital Region by gathering, preserving, and making accessible to all persons the material culture and documented historical record of the community.

The Archives provides a wide range of services, including internal support to Federation projects and initiatives; responding to external research and reproduction requests from individuals from the Jewish community, from wider Ottawa, and from national and international communities; educational services including facilitating lectures and presentations related to the history of the community; and mounting small exhibitions and displays on a range of topics, independently or through collaboration with other organizations.

The Ottawa Jewish Archives collects material in major thematic areas which include individuals, families, businesses, congregations, community organizations, and associations established and maintained by the Jewish community. The strengths of its collections are in its capacity to promote social histories that would otherwise be lost over time, and to preserve otherwise hidden narratives that trace and celebrate the worth of the Jewish community in Canada's capital.

The Archives Online

Through modernization and collections-accessibility projects over the past few years, the Archives has made its collections more available and open to the community at large. An important initial step was the listing of archival collection details on the Canadian Jewish Heritage Network website, starting in 2016. The most recent of these initiatives is Ottawa Jewish Bulletin Online – a digitization project with the goal of providing free universal online access to the Ottawa Jewish Archives collection of the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin*. The project was undertaken in the lead-up to 2017, Canada's 150th Anniversary of Confederation and the 80th anniversary year of the *Bulletin*.

Ottawa Jewish Bulletin

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TALMUD TORAH DINNER THIS SUNDAY EVENING

On Sunday evening, October 21, a sumptuous chicken dinner will be served in the Talmud Torah Hall to the men and women who are clever enough to provide themselves with tickets immediately.

This dinner, which is being sponsored by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Ottawa Talmud Torah will fire the opening gun in the annual campaign for the benefit of the TALMUD TORAH. Mrs. Leon Petegorsky and her loyal aides in the auxiliary are working assiduously to make this affair the huge success that it deserves to be.

Of course you realize how essential it is to maintain Talmud Torah. And without a doubt you like chicken. And assuredly the jovial good fellowship that will prevail at this function will make it an enjoyable evening long to be remembered. So make your reservations — buy your tickets at once. Talmud Torah which has supported the Jewish people at all times surely deserves the support of every Jew today.

A REQUEST

It is urgently requested of all who have occasion to call upon Rabbi Margolis to note the hours and days when he will be available: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from two to four o'clock in the afternoon—and by special appointment.

The Rabbi's residence is 275 Nelson Street, Telephone Rd. 778.

The Rabbi will deeply appreciate the community's adherence to these office hours in consideration of his other manifold duties.

INDUCTION PLANNED FOR RABBI MARGOLIS FRIDAY NIGHT FORUMS BEGIN NEXT WEEK

"ONEG SHABBAT" IDEA TO FEATURE PROGRAMS

Next Friday evening, October 29, will mark the inaugural of Friday Night *Oneg Shabbat* and lectures to be held weekly under the auspices of the Jewish Community Council. Starting promptly at 8.30, these Friday evenings will be featured by a half hour of appropriate Hebrew melodies in the form of community singing under the leadership of Cantor J. Rabin, and will be followed by a lecture on some interesting, provocative Jewish subject.

Rabbi Margolis, under whose general leadership these Friday evening functions will be held, will be the first speaker of the season. His topic will be: "The Rabbi In Israel—A Study In Personalities and Principles."

The entire Community is invited and urged to set aside Friday evenings for spiritual and intellectual enjoyment. Bring your friends to the synagogue; make your appointments there; give one seventh of the week to a really happy expression of Jewish Sabbath idealism.

A REGRET

The staff of the OTTAWA JEWISH BULLETIN have endeavoured to include a report on the activities of every Jewish organization. Due to conditions beyond our control it has been impossible to do so. We tender our sincerest regrets to those organizations whose reports we have omitted. To insure publication of a report on the activities of any organization full details should be mailed to Mr. L. Harry Goldman, 185 Augusta Street, Ottawa.

Elaborate preparations are being made for the Induction Ceremonies of Rabbi William Margolis, recently elected spiritual leader of the United Jewish Community of Ottawa. This function, which is the first of its kind ever to have been celebrated by the entire Jewish Community here, will take place on Sunday, October 31, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon in the Adath Jeshurun Synagogue on King Edward Avenue.

Rabbi Margolis came to Ottawa after having established a noteworthy record of leadership in Jewish affairs in New York City. He played an important role in most of the significant national Jewish movements, and his induction as the Rabbi of the United Jewish Community of Ottawa is evoking great interest in the United States and in Canada.

An impressive program has been arranged under the leadership of Mr. A. J. Freiman, President of the *Vaad Hatzet*. Others who are expected to participate will include: Rabbi Leo Jung, spiritual leader of the Jewish Centre in New York, and professor of Ethics at Yeshiva College; Rabbi Herbert S. Goldstein, spiritual leader of the Institutional Synagogue in New York, and President of the Rabbinical Council of America; Rabbi Zvi Cohen of Montreal, leading Canadian Orthodox Rabbi; Rabbi Herman Abramowitz of the Congregation *Shaar Hashomayim* of Montreal; Mr. William Weiss of New York, national president of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregation of America; and Mr. Samuel L. Sur, secretary of the Rabbi Isaac Elehanan Theological Seminary.

Cantor J. Rabin, assisted by the Adath Jeshurun Men's Choir, will conduct an appropriate musical program.

The *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin* is Ottawa's longest-running Jewish newspaper; its first edition printed on October 22, 1937. The *Bulletin* has since become the voice of the Ottawa Jewish Community, its leaders, and its organizations. It has educated, informed, entertained, consoled, at times aggravated, and moreover unified its readership; strengthened religious and ethnic identity; served as a forum for generations of Jewish thought; and has chronicled the development of a small immigrant community into a vital group contributing much to Ottawa life.

Currently, 924 issues from the publishing years 1937 to 2009 are accessible online for free, and an additional 135 issues from 2010 to present will be added to the digital library in 2017. Cover-to-cover scanning was completed at the Internet Archive Canada (IAC) Regional Digitization Centre in Toronto. As part of the scanning process, the IAC uses Optical Character Recognition, or OCR, a technology that enables the content of scanned documents to be word searchable, which greatly increases the collection's research potential. The IAC will host the digitized *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin* collection on its publicly-accessible digital library for perpetuity, and digital issues will be added as they are published. The digital collection may be accessed at www.archive.org/details/ottawajewisharchives. The project was funded by the City of Ottawa Heritage Funding Program 2016 and by the Ottawa Jewish Historical Society.

The *Bulletin* collection is an unmined treasure of the Archives which was only accessible through on-site consultation before this digitization. Now anyone with an internet connection can access the news, stories, columns, features, editorials, and advertisements that document the cultural, social, and civic growth of Ottawa's Jewish Community. This allows for local, national, and international access to the depth and richness of our Ottawa's Jewish heritage and history as recorded through the city's primary Jewish newspaper.

The project also has great potential to leave an impact on children and youth within the Ottawa Jewish Community School Board and the Public School Board, as access to the collection may allow students and educators to use this previously 'hidden' and underutilized collection of local newspapers to inform and supplement their local history curriculum.

The Archives Onsite

There is still more to be discovered within the Ottawa Jewish Archives storage vault. Among the first items to be digitized as part of a successive digitization project made possible by Library and Archives Canada's Documentary Heritage Communities Program is a 74-page album entitled "Photographs of Jewish Pogrom Orphans of Ukrania, saved and brought to Canada in year 1920-21 through the efforts of Mrs. A.J. Freiman." The album is part of the Ottawa Jewish Archives' modest collection of materials related to the Lillian and Archibald Freiman family, and was given to Mrs.

Freiman's son, Lawrence, on the occasion of his bar mitzvah in 1922, by Montreal's Mr. Harry Hershman.



Album page 2 "Photographs of Jewish Pogrom Orphans of Ukrania, saved and brought to Canada in year 1920-21 through the efforts of Mrs. A.J. Freiman." Ottawa Jewish Archives. I0021. Archibald and Lillian Freiman Family Fonds. (1-1224-05).

Lillian Freiman was unquestionably the most prominent Jewish woman in Canada during the interwar period. In addition to forwarding Jewish causes, she forged ties with all Canadians through community service. In 1935 she was awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE), the first to be conferred upon a Jewish Canadian.

She was born in 1885 in Mattawa, Ontario, the fifth of eleven children to parents Pauline Reiche and Moses Bilsky, who was Ottawa's first Jewish settler and became the city's pre-eminent Jewish citizen. Charitable work was a part of everyday life for the Bilskys and this ideology paved a natural path for Lillian toward volunteerism. She and her husband 'Archie' Archibald Jacob Freiman worked tirelessly for the cause of Zionism and would become a power couple in Canadian Jewry.

Even though she was not yet thirty years old at the outbreak of World War One, Lillian established herself as a civic leader in Ottawa and worked tirelessly for the Great War Veterans Association, the forerunner of the Royal Canadian Legion. She also aided the war effort through work with the Red Cross. The Red Cross sewing circle which she began in her home, evolved into the Disraeli Chapter of the Daughters

of the Empire (IODE). At the same time she volunteered with the Ottawa Juvenile Court, served as treasurer of the Ottawa Welfare Bureau, president of the Ottawa Girl Guide Association, the Ottawa Day Nursery, the Perley Home for the Incurables, and as vice-president of the Ottawa Institute for the Blind. She was also active in the Ottawa Women's Canadian Club, Institut Jeanne D'Arc for Catholic Girls, the Protestant Infant Home of Ottawa, the Ladies Auxiliary of Adath Jeshurun Synagogue, and the Ladies Auxiliary of B'nai Brith. Her greatest contributions came toward the end of World War One and immediately afterward, when Lillian turned her energy to the plight of Jewish women and children.

In 1920 a campaign launched in Montreal to bring immigrant orphans from the Ukraine to Canada. These were children who had lost their parents in the pogroms of 1919. She convened a conference of the city's Jewish community leaders where it was decided to bring over as many orphans as possible. She then traveled to cities across Canada to make an appeal on the orphans' behalf. She had planned the campaign with Montreal's Harry Hershman, a representative of the People's Relief Committee and a prominent member of the Jewish War Orphans Committee of Canada. Together, with the support of the committees, they succeeded in settling 146 Ukrainian war orphans in Canadian homes in 1921.



Album page 3 "Photographs of Jewish Pogrom Orphans of Ukrania, saved and brought to Canada in year 1920-21 through the efforts of Mrs. A.J. Freiman." Ottawa Jewish Archives. I0021. Archibald and Lillian Freiman Family fonds. (1-1224-06).

That this was accomplished through the efforts of a few dedicated Jews, and by the agency of an ethnic constituency held at arm's length from the Canadian community at large, presents a revealing dimension of Canada's immigration and social history – a dimension that has yet to be acknowledged outside of ethnic circles.

The inscription in the 'Jewish Pogrom Orphans of Ukrania' photo album reads: "Presented to Lawrence Freiman on the occasion of this Bar Mitzvah as a remembrance of the splendid undertaking of his mother and in the hope that he may grow up to follow the noble example set by his mother, and to be a credit to her and to all Israel. By Harry Hershman, Montreal February 4th 1922."

Although a digital copy of this entire album is available to offsite researchers, the contents of many more as-yet non-digitized collections await researchers who are able to visit Ottawa to conduct hands-on research on the premises. Collection descriptions can be researched in advance through the Canadian Jewish Heritage Network website at <http://cjh.ca>.