



Jewish Immigrant Aid Services of Canada

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שמח כשר פסח

Chag Pesach Kasher V'Sameach

Dear Friends,

As Passover quickly approaches, I think it's important for all of us to look back at the history of our people, and to reflect on what this history means for us today.

Every year at this time, we remember the story of Exodus, and how Moses freed the Hebrews from centuries of slavery and oppression.

I want to share another story with you recorded at the Pier 21 Canada Immigration Museum. A Jewish family that survived the Holocaust was

on its way to Canada by sea. As they were approaching Halifax the father gathered the family and instructed them to forget they were Jewish as he didn't want anymore suffering or pain for his wife and children. The ship docked in Halifax, and after the family got off the ship the father saw an old acquaintance of his who he thought was killed in the war. He began asking him what happened and how he ended up in Canada. As they were engaged

in a conversation someone tapped the father on the shoulder and said: "You are Jewish, aren't you?" The man was quite surprised and wanted to know who that person was. "I am from the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society and we are here to welcome you to Canada and to help you settle". As the father returned to his family,

Canadian Jewish Community, assisting with immigration, and providing necessary tools for newcomers to begin a new meaningful life in Canada and become part of the Canadian Jewish Community. "Immigrants established JIAS so that JIAS could establish immigrants" has been the motto

of JIAS Canada for nearly 100 years, and its prominence in our mandate is very strong. I cannot stress enough the importance of this message.

As the economy begins to recover, we need your support

more than ever. JIAS Canada is only as strong as its volunteers, partners and supporters, so we are counting on you to help us help others.

On behalf of the Board and staff of



Victor Linetsky
President

JIAS Canada I want to wish you and your families Chag Sameach. May the story of Exodus and the memory of Moses's incredible determination, and the faith he had in our people be an inspiration to all of us as we take on the challenges of our time.

"We are a country profoundly shaped by the immigrant experience. And how well, we who are here now, build Canada for the future, will in no small measure, be shaped by how we address the cultural, economic and social challenge of immigrant integration into our broader society."
Senator Hugh D. Segal, CM
(Address to the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba Annual Luncheon 11.27.06)

he gathered them again and said "I made a big mistake when I told you to forget that we were Jewish. If this woman from the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society could tell from my back that I was Jewish, and if she could come here to help us, we can never forget who we are".

This moving story is an excellent example of what JIAS Canada has always represented to newcomers to Canada. Since its birth, JIAS Canada and its partners have served the

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Commemorating M.S. St. Louis At Pier 21

By Mila Voihanski, Executive Director, JIAS Canada
 On January 20, 2011 I was fortunate to attend a very moving ceremony of the unveiling of "The Wheel of Conscience", created by the world renowned architect Daniel Libeskind, which memorializes Canada's 1939 refusal of entry to the 900 – plus Jewish refugees on board the M.S. St. Louis and the "none is too many" anti-Jewish immigration policy. The historical monument is centre- piece of Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) national project which was generously sponsored by Citizenship and Immigration Canada to educate all Canadians about the incident and its' impact on the Canadian society. The Honourable Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multi-Culturalism brought greetings on behalf of the Canadian government and reflected on both past and present immigration policies. Daniel Libeskind addressed the group and talked about being inspired by the desperate plight of the refugees and their tragic destiny on the ship "M.S. St. Louis". "This work of memory will express the importance of eradicating the evils of hatred, racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism. It is this particular



(Centre) The Hon. Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism (L) Mila Voihanski, Executive Director, JIAS Canada, (R) Claudette Legault, Director of Program and Services, ISIS, Halifax at the unveiling of the "Wheel of Conscience"

CJC National President Mark J. Freiman commented "Daniel Libeskind's outstanding talent, creativity and vision as an artist, as well as his deep personal sensitivity towards the tragedy of the Holocaust and the refugee experience are reflected in the moment. 'The Wheel of Conscience' memorializes a dark chapter in Canada's immigration history; but it also offers a valuable forward-looking vision and a roadmap for ensuring a better future for all Canadians". It aims to educate and sensitize current and future generations about the importance of tolerance, understanding and diversity. It was also an exciting opportunity for me to meet Ruth Goldbloom, one of the founders of Pier 21. Ruth was very proud to be part of this new chapter in the life of the museum and the unveiling of "The Wheel of

Conscience". She "can't get enough" of the deep privilege she feels in being part of the creation of this landmark museum. "Now", she proudly told me, "there is a new chapter in its life. The Government has designated the museum a Crown Corporation. The renamed Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 was born in February 2011. This is the pinnacle of success for an idea that germinated from a rotting building on a waterfront, but which held so many stories of hope and redemption waiting to be told. Now the exhibit can be expanded to cover all immigrants who have come to Canada, to tell their stories, hear their voices and to help their families and all Canadians understand what Canada has meant for so many hundreds of thousands of newcomers".

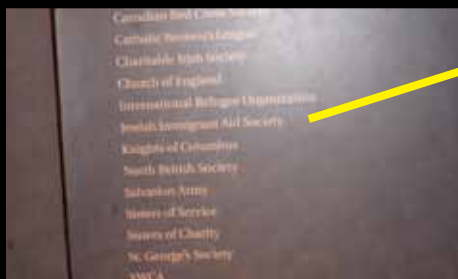


The Wheel of Conscience

Both Ruth and her husband, Dr. Richard Goldbloom, have been honoured with the Order of Canada and Ruth has received many other prestigious awards recognizing her humanitarianism and volunteerism in fields of academia, medicine and law to name but a few. She has received accolades and awards too many to mention but her crowning glory and the achievement of which she is most proud is the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21. Please see Barbara Held's interview with Ruth Goldbloom on page 5.



Daniel Libeskind, Architect of the "Wheel of Conscience"



Jewish Immigrant Aid Society

story which is imbedded in a dynamically moving memorial".

From the Pier 21 plaque

A LONG ROAD TO FREEDOM

By Greg Ptashny, Calgary

With the strong leadership from Moses, brilliant guidance and generous sponsorship from the Almighty, it took forty years for the Jewish 'emigrants' from Egypt running away from the oppression and slavery to reach the Promised Land and become truly free people.

Every Jewish family has its own Exodus story. For some, it is the story of grandparents who ran from pogroms in Russia; for others, it is the story of the grandparents who survived the Holocaust in Europe. For Alex and Michael Linetsky, who came to Canada with their parents from Ukraine as teenagers, it is their very own life experience. Their family story is fascinating, but not unique.

Massive Exodus of Jews from the Soviet Union began in mid 70th. Thousands made Calgary their home. Most of those immigrants overcame initial difficulties and adjusted well to the life in the democratic society and free market driven economy. However, integration of those former Soviet Jews into the mainstream Jewish Community life did not go as well. Language barriers, cultural differences, as well as the gap in expectations between the newcomers and the local Jewish organizations, combined with a number of other obstacles such as job demands all played a role in complicating the integration.

In 2009 JIAS Canada acknowledged the issue and saw the opportunity.

JIAS Opportunity for Leadership Training: Leadership Bridging Cultures (JOLT) was launched. In Calgary, the JOLT initiative received an enthusiastic support from the Jewish Federation and was executed by the Jewish Family Service. The goal of JOLT was to train a carefully selected group of Russian speaking Jews with leadership potential and to facilitate their transition to active roles on boards of the local Jewish organizations.

Michael and Alex Linetsky were among those few JOLT "chosen people." The program was skilfully facilitated by Ivan Zendel and coordinated by Irena Karshenbaum. "I was not sure at the beginning if this program is right for me or if it will

addition, the graduates have decided to stay as a group to engage more Russian speaking Jews in the Jewish community life.

In 2010, the group that consisted of the first graduates of JOLT 2009 supported several events run by the Jewish Family Service. They also sponsored a Russian Movie Night at the Calgary Annual Jewish Film festival at the Beth Tzedec synagogue. Alex Oykman, who at that time was still a student of the JOLT 2010 program, offered his help in promoting the Russian Movie Night. His contribution was essential to the success of the event. In addition to being one of the major sponsors of the Russian Jewish Night at the Calgary Annual Jewish Film festival, Edith Dimant has hosted a dinner for Jewish newcomers to Calgary.

Most recently, JOLT 2009 and 2010 graduates have decided to join forces and officially register their new organization. Michael Linetsky was elected President, Alex Oykman - Vice President and Alex Linetsky - Secretary. The group is working on selecting a good name for this new organization and finalizing its ambitious plans for 2011.

By promoting JOLT, JIAS Canada has planted the seeds

and the first results are clearly encouraging. It will take some time for the group to expand and for the results of their outreach efforts to grow in scope. Michael, who is still in his 30s, is smiling: "Even the oldest guys in our group did not live in Canada for 40 years. And I am not Moses, but we will succeed."



Upper row: Issak Kreyner, Gennady Koffman, Galina Kofman, Esther Ptashny, Elena Braverman, Leonid Braverman, Greg Ptashny, Tatyana Oykman, Alexander Oykman; **Lower row:** Leonid Novosselsky, Michael Linetsky, Alex Linetsky, and Lev Khitrine; **Not present:** Ida Gelt, Eugene Gaber., Anna and Jakob Gelt and Edith Dimant

bring the desired results for the community"- recalls Michael. In reality, the results exceeded the most optimistic expectations of its organizers, participants and sponsors. JOLT graduates have joined local organizations, and assumed active roles on the boards of those organizations. They are making a positive contribution to the Jewish Community life in Calgary. In

My New Life In Halifax

Note: Vadim & Tamara Daiman and their two children Lily (13 years old) and Nikol (4 years old) arrived in Halifax in the summer of 2009.

Lily participated in the AJC Shalom Halifax Sunday Program for Newcomers and quickly became a leader, assisting the teachers with projects. The Daimans are keen to participate and volunteer in the Jewish community.

By Lily Daiman

I've been living in Canada for a year and a half, and I'm really happy to be here.

When I came to Canada I went to Bedford Junior High school 7th grade. The first couple of months at school were a little bit difficult, because it was hard for me to understand in classes what the teachers said, but a good ESL teacher helped me to improve my English and is still helping me a little. The classes are fun and interesting, the people are really nice too and fun to be with. But if you want to know how many people are newcomers are in my



The Daiman Family

school? None! I can say that I'm the only one who speaks Russian and Hebrew but that's fine, on the bright side I learned English pretty fast. My parents are having lots of fun too, we live in Bedford and the place is really quiet and the people are really nice! It was a little bit hard to find where to live and to pick a job, but with all our wonderful friends, and our Jewish Community,

and ISIS that helped this dream to come true, we are very thankful to them. When I came here I started going to the Jewish Community program for newcomers every Sunday and it was so much fun! I mostly helped my art teacher Rita, and it was tons of fun. We learned about the holidays, talked in Hebrew of course, and the events there are amazing!

We are very happy to be here, and will be continuing taking a part in our Jewish Communities life.

Article by: Edna LeVine, Atlantic Jewish Council, Halifax

Yachad Mentorship Program in Winnipeg

By Merrill Shwaid B.A., JC&FS, Winnipeg

Yachad, the Hebrew word for together is a suitable name for a new JCFS Winnipeg initiative. The Yachad Mentorship Program is aimed at maximizing opportunities for employment and community integration of Jewish immigrants to Winnipeg. It will bring together Jewish immigrants to the community with established Jewish community members currently working in similar/related occupational fields. It is hoped that the mentorship relationships will help build professional contacts for newcomers, supportive relationships and a sense of community caring and togetherness.

Typically, the primary factor which predicts a smooth resettlement process and stable integration into daily community life is the quick securing of financial stability through employment. There is a high correlation between the securing of stable long-term employment and a successful immigration process. With financial stability families are able to focus on building strong social connections and affiliating and becoming part of a greater supportive community.



Group attend Yachad Mentorship Program

JCFS is encouraging people in the community to consider becoming YACHAD MENTORS. Professionals with experience and knowledge of the labour market will hopefully



come forward and help support Jewish newcomers. Contact Carina Blumgrund the JCFS Yachad Mentorship Program Co-coordinator, can be contacted at (204) 477-7444 blumgrund@jcfswinnipeg.org for further information on this exciting new initiative

An Interview with Ruth Goldbloom

Almost ten years after the Rev. Karen Toole wrote an editorial in the Winnipeg Free press following a visit to Pier 21, her words still move Ruth Goldbloom each time she reads them. Ms. Goldbloom keeps a copy of the paper close at hand along with the speech her dear friend Rosalie Abella gave at the opening of the museum in Halifax in 1999.

What made a woman, brought up in the small Jewish community of New Waterford, New Brunswick, wife, mother of three and grandmother of seven; someone involved in so many charitable causes that its impossible to name them all in one short article, become passionate about an old rat-infested derelict building in Halifax Harbour?



Ruth Goldbloom,
Order of Canada

Ruth's grandparents had come to Cape Breton in the early 1900 to escape the pogroms in Russia. Her mother was 13 at the time. She told me the story of how her grandfather, a pedlar, stranded in a freak winter storm, had been taken in by a kind family. When he was finally able to return to his own family he proudly announced that he could now speak English. Ruth's grandmother asked him to thank their neighbours who had been so helpful in his absence. When he started to talk to them they all realised that the language he had learned was not English but Gaelic.

In 1990 Ruth was given an honorary degree by Dalhousie University in recognition of her extensive charitable work in health, education, and for cultural institutions. Wondering what to say in her address to the students, she came across an article on CBC radio about a small Nova Scotia fishing village which had awoken one morning to find a boatload of turbaned men dropped off on their shores. The fisherman telling the story related how he had mustered help from his fellow villagers to welcome these gentlemen into their homes, make them peanut butter sandwiches and help them in any way they could as, bearing in mind the biblical story of Abraham welcoming strangers, there could, he reminded his fellow fisherman, be an angel amongst them. Ever since that day the Sikh immigrants who finally found their way to Toronto, have made a point of helping the villagers whenever they are in need.

Hearing this story reminded Ruth of her grandparents, and perhaps for the first time she began to think about the challenges facing those arriving in a new country where the language, dress and culture are unfamiliar. She made this the theme of her address at Dalhousie that day. In the audience was John P. LeBlanc, the last remaining Immigration Officer at Pier 21, the Halifax point of arrival

Pier 21 is a symbol of what this country is made of: the people it admitted, what those people did with their admission, and how the rest of the country made room for them."

Rosalie Abella, "Pier 21:
A Tribute to Beginnings" June 30, 1999

from 1928 to 1971. As the first President of the Pier 21 Society he was anxious to see the former immigration shed become a monument to those who had passed through its doors. He invited Ruth to join the Board.

Over the next few years Pier 21 became Ruth's obsession. She threw herself into the project with gusto as the ideas grew, from a plaque on a wall to a museum worthy of those who had passed through Pier 21's gates in search of a new life. The only thing holding up progress was funding.

In 1998 the G7 met in Halifax. At the end of the two day meeting Prime Minister Jean Chrétien announced that the legacy the Summit would leave to the city of Halifax would be \$4.5 million funding for Pier 21, shared between the Federal, Provincial and City Governments – the only proviso was that the monies had to be matched by the Museum.

This set Ruth off on a frenzied search for funds, criss-crossing the country with the help of Air Canada, as door after door was opened for her. With her charm, enthusiasm and passion for the project who could refuse her?

On July 1 1999, Canada Day, the Pier 21 museum was opened and Madam Justice Rosalie Silberman Abella, who had promised from the very beginning to be the keynote speaker, rearranged her schedule to be at the opening. There was not a dry eye in the house as she told her story, and that of the 500,000 who landed at the Pier. "This country" she said "is full of tenaciously grateful immigrants and their descendants who bloomed in Canada's field of opportunities, nourished by its generosity and strengthened by its idealism. This triumphal triumvirate of opportunity, generosity and idealism is what this Pier stands for – Canada's best self."

When I finished speaking to Ruth in Florida she was on her way to play a round of golf. She has achieved so much in her life, been involved in so many different aspects of charitable work "with the energy of someone half her age" it is said. She is truly a role model to all of us. She feels fortunate to be in a position where she can devote her time to charitable causes. Canada is fortunate that her grandparents made their way across the ocean and that now their story can be included in the Museum of Canadian Immigration at Pier 21.

Ruth Goldbloom was interviewed by Barbara Held



Ruth Goldbloom, OC at Pier 21

Say Yes to Success!

By Jeni Adler, JFS, Edmonton

Employment is often an issue for newcomers. Along with the lack of suitable jobs in Alberta, we noticed that many of our clients had a cultural knowledge gap of the Canadian employment scene. This manifested especially clearly in the unwritten rules of a Canadian interview. Many of the highly qualified individuals we see get the interview, but not the job.

As a result we decided to offer a course called: "Not succeeding in job interviews? Imagine being able to communicate your true potential!"

The objectives of this program are as follows:

- to identify concepts and skills for successful interviews
- to build personal awareness and increase your comfort in job interviews



Jeni Adler, Community Worker, JFS, Edmonton

- to find personal strengths, a sense of optimism and empowerment
- to support you through your difficulties, confusions and fears
- to "reframe" your experiences, find clarity and focus on moving forward

The course includes sessions on effective verbal and non-verbal communication patterns and styles; immigration and identity issues; an arts based process designed to increase awareness and focus on strengths; extensive interview practice and feedback (including videos).

We are currently delivering the second course of three this year. We have ten women in our group and five waiting for the next group! Our hope is that we will be able to continue to offer this free course as an integrative tool.

YES, I want to help Jewish immigrants live a better life in Canada

I understand that my contribution will help JIAS expand its important local and national programs.

Here is my contribution of: \$1000 \$500
 \$360 \$180 \$100 \$72 Other _____

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I would like more information about activities at JIAS o
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