



The Jewish Federation  
OF EDMONTON

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## **The Jewish Federation of Edmonton**

## **Resource and Information Manual**

“It is not your duty to complete the work;  
neither are you free to desist from it.”

Pirke Avot 2:19

## **INTRODUCTION**

This manual was compiled in order to provide information to volunteers and newcomers to the community who may or may not have extensive knowledge of the Jewish Federation, its role in our community and how it affects our own lives.

It is not intended to be a comprehensive study of the community, but rather to provide an understanding of the inter-relationships between local, national and international Jewish organizations and agencies.

# A Brief History of the Edmonton Jewish Community

By Debby Shoctor

Edmonton, Alberta was first incorporated as a town in 1892. At that time, there were about 700 permanent residents. Founded on the banks of the North Saskatchewan River on the site of the former Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Edmonton, it soon began to attract a growing populace. Abraham and Rebecca Cristall, Edmonton's first Jews, arrived in 1893. Their children, George and Rose, were the first Jewish children born in Edmonton. Abe became a successful businessman, and helped to bring more Jews over from his native Bessarabia. By 1901, there were 17 Jewish citizens in Edmonton. In 1904, Edmonton became incorporated as a city, and in 1905, Alberta officially became a province and the CN Railway arrived.

In 1905, William "Boss" Diamond came to Edmonton. He had come to join his brother Jacob, Alberta's first Jewish citizen (1889), in Calgary, in 1892. He set up in the clothing business in competition with Abe Cristall, but the two of them worked together to forge the foundation of Edmonton's budding Jewish Community. Together with eight other men they formed the Edmonton Hebrew Association in 1906. They hired Rabbi Hyman Goldstick of Pilton, Latvia to be Rabbi, Shochet and Mohel for both the Edmonton and Calgary Jewish Communities.

In 1907, Abe Cristall purchased land on the south side in the Forrest Heights neighborhood for a Jewish cemetery and the Chevra Kadisha, or burial society, was formed. In 1912, the foundations were laid for the community's first synagogue, the Beth Israel (Orthodox), on the corner of 95<sup>th</sup> St. and Rowland Road (now St. Boniface Catholic Church). Abe Cristall served as the first president, and William Diamond as the second, a position he held for 31 years. In 1912, the Edmonton Talmud Torah Society was founded, with classes being held in the basement of the Synagogue. In 1925, the Society erected its own building at 103<sup>rd</sup> St. and Jasper Avenue, and in 1933 it was incorporated as the first Hebrew day school in Canada.

In 1928, a second congregation was started in the basement of the Talmud Torah building, which later became the Beth Shalom congregation (Conservative). In 1932, it was formally organized and they engaged Rabbi Jacob Eisen, who became the first English-speaking Rabbi West of Winnipeg. Also at that time, the Peretz or New Yiddish School was organized and opened in a building at 10135-95 St. An offshoot of the Arbeiter Ring, or Worker's Circle, which started in Edmonton in 1922, it had its heyday in the early 1930s, but had to close in 1939 due to declining enrollment.

In 1938, just before the start of World War II, a 13-year old boy named Peter Owen became the only Jewish child let into Canada alone during the war years, by a special Order-in-Council of the Federal Government. He was sponsored by Edmonton Lawyer H.A. Friedman, and adopted by the family, eventually becoming a prominent lawyer himself and a permanent resident of the city. By 1941, Edmonton's population had increased to 93,817, and the Jewish population stood at 1,449. Of the 120 men and women from Edmonton's Jewish Community who served during World War II, eleven were killed in action. Their names are inscribed on the Cenotaph at the Jewish Cemetery.

The post-war years saw rapid growth in both the Jewish and general population of Edmonton. As a result, a new Beth Shalom Synagogue was built on Jasper Ave. at 119<sup>th</sup> St, in

1951. A new Beth Israel Synagogue building was constructed on 118 St. in 1953, as well as a new Talmud Torah Building on 132<sup>nd</sup> St. that same year, reflecting the population shift of the Jewish Community from downtown to (what was then) the West End.

In 1954, the Edmonton Jewish Community Council was formed as an umbrella organization for the community, and served as such for 28 years. On September 20, 1982, the Community Council merged with Edmonton United Jewish Appeal to become the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, which serves as the umbrella organization for the Edmonton Jewish Community to this day, and is affiliated with the Jewish Federations of Canada and North America, as well as the World Jewish Congress.

Alberta's booming oil-based economy brought increased Jewish and general immigration over the next two decades, with major influxes from other provinces in Canada, and from places such as Hungary, Russia and South Africa. From a Jewish population of 1,748 in 1951, the community grew to 2,910 in 1971 and to 5,430 in 1991. Today it stands at around 5,000.

The Edmonton Jewish Community Centre started at the Beth Shalom Synagogue, then moved to the Talmud Torah School, and finally purchased the old Hillcrest Country Club in the Rio Terrace Neighborhood in 1971, where it existed until it was sold in 2012.

All of these new immigrants brought with them the organizations which contribute to Edmonton's vibrant Jewish Community. Local branches of many prominent Jewish organizations exist in the city today including Edmonton Hadassah-WIZO, chapters of ORT and Na'amat, B'nai Brith and Emunah, all of whom were founded essentially to help the fledgling State of Israel. Local offices of the Jewish National Fund are located at the present Edmonton Jewish Community Centre on 156 St., as is the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta (JAHSENA). The Edmonton chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women was responsible for founding the City's Jewish Senior's Drop-in Centre (formerly the Golden Age Club) in 1954, which has a building off Jasper Avenue near the Beth Shalom, as well as Jewish Family Services, which serves both the Jewish and general communities.

The community's third congregation, Temple Beth Ora Reform Congregation, was founded in 1979, and incorporated in 1980. It rents space at the Chesed Shel Emes chapel of the Chevra Kadisha on 123<sup>rd</sup> St. In 1996, Congregation Beth Tzedec, a break away from Beth Shalom, incorporated and began to hold services at the Talmud Torah. They closed in 2016. Chabad Lubavitch arrived on the scene in 1991, and in 1993 a second Hebrew Day School, the orthodox Menorah Academy, was founded.

In 1999, a new building for Edmonton Talmud Torah was erected on 175 St. in the Callingwood neighbourhood, and the next year, a new Beth Israel Synagogue was built around 169<sup>th</sup> street in Wolf Willow, reflecting a further westward shift in population. However, Our Parent's Home, a Senior's residence built by the community, opened its doors on Jasper Avenue next to the Beth Shalom Synagogue, in 2015.

In the fall of 2004, Edmonton elected its first Jewish mayor, Stephen Mandel. Stephen had previously served as a City Councilor, continuing a long tradition of Jewish City Councilors, including Dr. Morris Weinlos, Abe Miller, Helen Paull, Mel Binder, Tooker Gomberg, Michael Oshry and former MLAs Abe Miller and Karen Leibovici. There has always been a strong tradition of civic involvement in the Edmonton Jewish Community, with members serving on the

boards and executives of many local arts, cultural, educational and fundraising organizations, as well as in the Judiciary, including Associate Chief Justice Tevie Miller, the first Jew to hold that high office in the Province of Alberta. Bora Laskin, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, was also a born and bred Edmontonian. Jews have been involved in every aspect of Civic life in Edmonton, from the founding of the Citadel theatre, Canada's largest regional theatre by native son Joe Shoctor, to Jews who have served on the Boards of the Edmonton Symphony, Opera, Art Gallery and Concert Foundation, to Rexall billionaire Daryl Katz, who bought the Edmonton Oilers hockey team in 2008, and now owns the Edmonton Oil Kings as well. Jewish businessmen Moe Lieberman, Henry Singer and Joe Shoctor were instrumental in the founding of the Edmonton Eskimos CFL franchise. Broadcasting legend Cecil "Tiger" Goldstick, son of Edmonton's first Rabbi, was a trainer with the early sports teams in Edmonton before becoming a broadcaster and founder of Sports Central, a charity which provides underprivileged kids in the city with sports equipment. A park is named in his honour in the East End of the City, and his picture adorns the Edmonton Sports Hall of Fame on the City's main square. There are also streets in Edmonton named after notable members of the community, including Shoctor Alley, Arthur Hiller Way and Wershof Road, to name a few.

Other well-known Edmonton Jews include internationally acclaimed author and University of Alberta professor Dr. Henry Kreisel, and publisher and politician Mel Hurtig. Born and raised in Edmonton, Alberta. He is the former president of the Edmonton Art Gallery. In 1956, he opened a book store which later grew into one of the largest retail book operations in Canada, with three locations. His stores featured staging of plays, readings of poetry, and encouraged social interaction, and even permitting drinking coffee. After selling his stores in 1972, he established Hurtig Publishers. In 1980, he started the \$12 million dollar, comprehensive [The Canadian Encyclopedia](#), published in 1985. In September 1990, Hurtig published the five-volume *Junior Encyclopedia of Canada*, the first encyclopedia for young Canadians. He sold the company to McClelland & Stewart in May 1991.

Other prominent graduates and professors from the University of Alberta include Dr. James Shapiro, creator of the Edmonton Protocol treatment for Diabetes, Dr. Elliot Corday, prominent US heart surgeon, Dr. Ted Aaron, one of the inventors of antihistamines, and many others. Recipients of the Order of Canada from the community include Jake Superstein, Arliss Miller, Dr. Joe Shoctor, Prof. Jacob Masliyah, Prof. Norbert Morgenstern, Prof. Cyril Kay, Dr. Ted Aaron, Dr. Eric and Elexis Schloss, Drs. Irving & Dianne Kipnes, Dr. Anne Fanning Binder, Tiger Goldstick, Prof. Henry Kreisel, and Dr. Bernard Snell.

Much more information can be found in the files of The Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta (JAHSENA), which was founded in 1996 to preserve and promote the history of this vibrant Jewish Community.

## **The Contemporary Edmonton Jewish Community**

Today's Jewish Federation of Edmonton was established in 1982 with the merger of the Jewish Community Council and United Jewish Appeal. The Federation's vision defines its commitment to community building in collaboration with all Jewish organizations and institutions. Its goals are to ensure the continuity of Jewish life and values of Tzedakh, Tikun Olam and Klal Israel. The Federation is committed to the support of the State of Israel and acts as the voice of the local Jewish community within Edmonton and the surrounding region. The annual United Jewish Appeal campaign is the primary instrument for support of the Jewish Federation system of organizations and institutions.

Edmonton's Jewish community, of approximately 5,000 members, supports a number of local and national organizations as well. Locally, the community is home to a host of organizations, Synagogues, schools and services. These include: the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, Jewish Community Centre, United Jewish Appeal, six Synagogues or Houses of Prayer from Reform to Ultra Orthodox, two Jewish day schools, Jewish Family Services, Seniors Drop-In Centre, Camp BB Riback, Hillel Jewish Students Association, B'nai Brith Youth Organization, Hadassah-WIZO, Jewish National Fund, National Council of Jewish Women, Na'amat, Emunah Maccabi Canada, Jewish Archives (JAHSENA), and Beit Horim/Our Parent's Home (Seniors' Residence).

J-CORE, our young adult wing, catering to adults ages 25-45, is a wonderful addition to the Edmonton Jewish Community. Created in 2012, J-CORE continues to offer young Jewish adults educational, cultural, social and recreational programs, as well as programs for newcomers to the community. Additionally, J-CORE members are represented on the Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, as their voice is important to the community.

Our population includes individuals from all over the world, including the former Soviet Union, South America, South Africa, Israel, the United States and even Mexico. Edmonton is a draw to many professionals in the healthcare and university fields. Additionally, affordable housing, Jewish schools and a relaxed lifestyle make Edmonton a great place to live and raise families.

## **The Jewish Community of Edmonton**

The following organizations and institutions, together, make up the Jewish community of Edmonton. As is often said of multi-faceted entities, “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

**The Jewish Federation of Edmonton** – The representative body of the community, acting on behalf of every individual in the community, regardless of his or her affiliation. Offices located at the Jewish Community offices, 100, 10220 - 156 Street, Edmonton, AB T5P 2R1 T: (780) 487 – 0585 [www.jewishedmonton.org](http://www.jewishedmonton.org).

**Edmonton United Jewish Appeal** – The central fundraising campaign of the Federation, raising funds for Israel, along with local and national beneficiaries. Offices located at the Jewish Community offices, 100, 10220 - 156 Street, Edmonton, AB T5P 2R1 T: (780) 487 – 0585 [www.jewishedmonton.org](http://www.jewishedmonton.org)

**Jewish Family Services** – The social welfare organization dedicated to serving the needs of the Jewish and general communities, and serving as the local agent for Jewish Immigrant Aid Services. Offices located at 100, 8702 Meadowlark Rd. T5R 5W5 T:(780) 454-1194 x223 F: (780) 482-4784 [www.jfse.org](http://www.jfse.org) [info@jfse.org](mailto:info@jfse.org).

**Jewish Seniors Centre** – Providing support, recreation, adult education, programs for Russian and Yiddish speakers, lunches and more! Located at 10052 – 117 Street, Edmonton, AB T5K 1X2 T: (780) 488 – 4241 [jdic@shaw.ca](mailto:jdic@shaw.ca) [www.jdic.ca](http://www.jdic.ca)

**Beit Horim/Our Parents' Home** – Senior's housing and assisted living facility, providing Kosher food and Jewish programming. 10112-119 St., Edmonton, AB. T5K 1Y9, T: (780) 988-5504.

**Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Northern Alberta** – The official Archival Agency of the Edmonton and area Jewish Community, (JAHSENA), collecting photos and documents of families and organizations, and promoting awareness of our history and culture. Located at the Jewish Community offices, 200, 10220 - 156 Street, Edmonton, AB T5P 2R1 T: (780) 489 – 2809 [jahsena@shaw.ca](mailto:jahsena@shaw.ca) [www.jahsena.ca](http://www.jahsena.ca)

### **Jewish Youth Groups**

Hillel / Jewish Students Association – University aged (780) 487 – 0585.

B’nai Brith Youth Organization – grades 9 to 12 (780) 487 – 0585.

Beth Shalom’s Kadima and USY – (780) 488 – 6333.

Temple Beth Ora’s NFTY – (780) 487 – 4817.

Beth Israel’s NCSY – (780) 488 – 2840.

### **Jewish Day Schools**

**Talmud Torah** – Jewish cultural education, Hebrew

Preschool through grade 9

Funded by student fees, UJA, and public school system

6320 – 172 Street, Edmonton, AB T5T 6H1 (780) 481-3377

[www.talmud.epsb.ca](http://www.talmud.epsb.ca) [geraldsorokin@talmudtorahsociety.com](mailto:geraldsorokin@talmudtorahsociety.com)

**Menorah Academy** – Jewish religious education, Hebrew, Orthodox

Private Preschool K-12

Funded by student fees and local family supporters

10735 McQueen Road, Edmonton, AB T5N 3L1 (780) 451-1848

[office@menorahacademy.org](mailto:office@menorahacademy.org)

### **Jewish Supplementary Schools**

Cheder at Temple Beth Ora – (780) 487-4817

Cheder at Beth Shalom – (780) 488-6333

Cheder at Beth Israel – (780) 488-2840

Cheder at Chabad – (780) 486-7244

### **Congregations**

Beth Israel – Modern Orthodox

131 Wolf Willow Road, Edmonton, AB T5T 7T7

(780) 488-2840. [www.familyshul.org](http://www.familyshul.org)

Beth Shalom – Conservative Egalitarian

11916 – Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5K 0N9

(780) 488-6333 [www.bethshalomedmonton.org](http://www.bethshalomedmonton.org) info@e-bethshalom.org

Temple Beth Ora – Reform

12313 - 105 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5N 0Y5

(780) 487- 4817 [www.templebethora.org](http://www.templebethora.org) tboffice@shaw.ca

Chabad Lubavitch – Ultra Orthodox

84 Westridge Road, Edmonton, AB T5T 1B6

(780) 486-7244. [www.ChaBadEdmonton.org](http://www.ChaBadEdmonton.org) chabad@shaw.ca

Kollel – The EDJGE – Ultra Orthodox

20 Wellington Crescent, Edmonton, AB T5N 3V2

(780) 452-6621 [www.edmontonkollel.com](http://www.edmontonkollel.com) edmontonkollel@gmail.com

**Camps**

BB Riback – Residential Summer Camp at Pine Lake (800) 267-2267 [www.campbb.com](http://www.campbb.com)

Gan Israel – Summer day camp run by Chabad Lubavitch (780) 486-7244

**Chevra Kadisha**

Traditional Jewish Burial Society

Cemetery: 7622 - 101 Avenue

Burial Chapel: 12313 - 105 Avenue

Tel: (780) 482-3065

Website: [www.edmontonjewishcemetery.ca](http://www.edmontonjewishcemetery.ca)

## **Sports**

**Maccabi Canada** – organization committed to the participation of Jewish athletes in Junior Maccabi Games, and International Affiliate with local Jewish Community Centres.

Contact: Dani Uretsky (780) 487-0585 or daniu@edjfed.org.

**Edmonton Jewish Hockey League** – recreational hockey during the winter months for Jewish Adult Males Contact: Dan Moser, daniel2moser@gmail.com.

**Edmonton Jewish Baseball League** – recreational baseball during the summer months for Jewish adult Males.

## **Jewish Service Organizations**

Beth Shalom Women’s League: Contact (780) 488-6333

Eemunah Women (Mizrachi) Contact: (780) 487-6591 edmonton@emunahcanada.org

Hadassah-WIZO (Women) Contact: (780) 444-6985 info@edmonton.chw.ca

Na’amat (Pioneer Women) Contact: (780) 444-9444 naamatedmonton@yahoo.ca

National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) Contact: (780) 487-2901  
ncjwc.edmonton@gmail.com

ORT Canada Contact: (780) 483-1781

## **\*Israel-Based Fundraising Organizations**

Canadian Friends of Hebrew University – raises money for Hebrew University, Jerusalem  
– (780) 487-0585 edmonton@cfhu.org

Jewish National Fund (JNF) – Office: (780) 481-7881 jay@jnf.ca

State of Israel Bonds – provides investment opportunities in Israel: (780) 491-0034

Canadian Magen David Adom (800) 731-2848 info@cmdai.org

## **News Providers**

Edmonton Jewish News – the only monthly print newspaper (780) 421-7966  
ejnews@telus.net

Edmonton Jewish Pipeline – a privately-run weekly email newsletter (780) 481-8535  
[albertajewishpipeline@shaw.ca](mailto:albertajewishpipeline@shaw.ca)

J-FED E-weekly – Jewish Federation of Edmonton’s weekly e-newsletter (780) 487-0585  
[daniu@edjfed.org](mailto:daniu@edjfed.org)

Ha Kol – the newsletter of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton (780) 487-0585,  
[talt@edjfed.org](mailto:talt@edjfed.org).

Heritage/Yerusha Newsletter of JAHSENA, published three times a year.  
Historical/Heritage content. (780) 489-2809, [jahsena@shaw.ca](mailto:jahsena@shaw.ca)

### **Kosher Food**

**Café Levi** – Kosher restaurant in West Edmonton Mall, located on Europa Boulevard. Dairy.  
(780) 443-8235

**Bliss Baked Goods** – Kosher, Dairy and Nut free. 10710-142 Street, Edmonton, AB T5N 2P7.  
Phone: 780-453-0101

**Fantasyland Hotel** – Kosher large event hosting and catering at West Edmonton Mall’s hotel.

### **Groceries:**

Sobey’s Lewis Estates - Kosher packaged groceries and some frozen products including meat.

Andy’s Valleyview IGA - Kosher packaged groceries and some frozen products including meat.

Various Safeway stores including Callingwood Safeway and Superstore (west end) – Kosher packaged groceries and some frozen products including meat.

### **Catering:**

Catering by Ed (Eddie Yedgarova) [stylecentral@shaw.ca](mailto:stylecentral@shaw.ca)

Planet Pareve (Daniella Drisdell) [planetpareve@shaw.ca](mailto:planetpareve@shaw.ca)

Bojena (Beth Shalom and Drop-in Centre) [info@e-bethshalom.org](mailto:info@e-bethshalom.org)

Lauran Baram : [laurenbaram@gmail.com](mailto:laurenbaram@gmail.com).

## **The Jewish Federation of Edmonton**

The ideals that motivate the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, are the precious heritage of our Jewish people. Our parents and grandparents brought these ideals to this country and we are charged with keeping them alive to hand on to our children and grandchildren. We embrace the values of Klal Israel and Tikkun Olam.

United and diverse, traditional and innovative, giving and accepting, the Jewish Federation of Edmonton celebrates the uniqueness of its members, and like a family, cares for its own.

### **Jewish Education**

Some people think of education as preparation for life; for the Jewish people, education is life. We preserve our Jewish heritage by keeping the flame of learning glowing. Jewish education is not restricted to day schools. Instead, the Jewish Federation supports educational programs for both children and adults through educational program support for teen activities and adult programs and speakers.

### **Community Building**

Every Jew can make a contribution. The Federation works to provide meaningful ways to put people's skills and talents to work on behalf of the Jewish people as a whole. It unites with others to combat prejudice and speak out for justice on behalf of all people. Through its Community Relations Committee, the members of the Federation reach out to others for understanding and tolerance, and stand when they see injustices in their own society.

### **Heritage**

Through the Program Committee and Holocaust Education Committee, the Federation promotes Jewish culture and heritage. There is great joy to be known in discovering and living Jewish life in its fullness. Jewish Film and Dance Festivals, Heritage Days, PJ Library, Holiday celebrations, Holocaust Education, Yom Ha Shoah and Remembrance Day programs – all of these and many more, help us to remember.

## **Cultural**

In a small community, one must strive even harder to maintain and promote one's culture. The Jewish Community offices house the most extensive collection of Holocaust resource material in the city. The celebrations of Jewish holidays and Holy Days, traditional and modern, are opportunities for all members of the community to come together. The Jewish Film Festival, P2G, a partnership with the Northern Galilee, and participation in Edmonton's Heritage Days, as well as the celebrations of Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut allow the Federation to showcase the best of Israel and to provide the general Edmonton community insight into Israel's myriad accomplishments and positive aspects. [www.jewishedmonton.org](http://www.jewishedmonton.org).

## **United Jewish Appeal**

United Jewish Appeal (UJA) is the fundraising arm of The Jewish Federation of Edmonton. It is charged with the responsibility of raising funds for distribution to Edmonton's Jewish Community beneficiaries, national partner agencies and Israel.

Operations of the United Jewish Appeal include staffing, developing marketing material, advertising, administrative work and committee work surrounding Jewish philanthropy in Edmonton.

UJA is also responsible for ensuring that national and Israel contributions are directed to Jewish Federations of Canada - United Israel Appeal (JFC-UJA). In addition, UJA is in charge of the coordination of community missions to Israel in consultation with JFC-UJA.

The Jewish Federation of Edmonton directs any and all surplus dollars to support our partner agencies and to start new programs, and to increase allocations to our beneficiaries if the Budget and Allocations Committee finds that needs merit such increases.

## **Community Agencies**

### **The Aviv Dancers**

In 2009, Sari Uretsky Leung established The Aviv Dancers, a performance dance troupe, to appear at the Israel Pavillion during Edmonton's Heritage Days. The troupe has grown over the years to become part of the Edmonton Folk Arts Council, performing at the annual Family Day and Canada Day concerts, along with numerous other shows throughout the year, such as Yom Ha'atzmaut and the Multi-faith celebration at City Hall. The Aviv Dancers have even travelled to other cities to perform. Moreover, in 2011, the troupe launched Festival Hatzafon, or Festival of the North, the only Israeli dance festival in the Province of Alberta. This annual showcase and celebration of Israeli dance encompasses performances by the Aviv adult troupe, the Mayim teenage troupe and Rikud Academy (the children's dance school at Talmud Torah), as well as the troupe's adult and recreational dance classes which take place at the Lecky School of Dance.

### **Beth Israel Synagogue**

The Jewish Community of Edmonton was formally organized in 1906 when a meeting was held at the Boyaner Home. The first action taken by the committee was to hire Hyman Goldstick as rabbi. The growth of Edmonton Jewish Community continued with the opening of the orthodox Beth Israel Synagogue in the fall of 1912, at the corner of modern day 95<sup>th</sup> Street and 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue and was the first synagogue built in Edmonton. Prior to its construction, the Edmonton Jewish community had been holding religious services in a variety of locales, including private residences. In 1952, Beth Israel Synagogue moved to a new, larger site on 119<sup>th</sup> Street and 102<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. In 1984, plans were made to move the congregation even farther west to the corner of 170<sup>th</sup> Street and 69<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The new building at this site was completed in 1999. Members of the congregation have been active in almost every Jewish organization in Edmonton. The Synagogue also operates a women's auxiliary for female members of the congregation called the Beth Israel Sisterhood, which fundraises for the synagogue. Notable Rabbis include Rabbi A. Pinsky (Rabbi at Beth Israel from 1912 – 1933) and Rabbi A. Postone (1940-1968). The current Rabbi is Daniel Friedman. [www.familyshul.org](http://www.familyshul.org).

### **Beit Horim/Our Parents' Home**

Beit Horim is a non-profit society whose objective is to provide living accommodations and assistance in an atmosphere allowing for the observance of the Jewish faith and culture to Edmonton Seniors. This project was begun in 1995. The first president of the society was Peter Owen, but the project was begun by Shelley Alexander and Len Dolgoy, who first tried to

institute a facility for Jewish seniors in the Edmonton General Hospital. To date they have collected considerable funds and opened their facility next to the Beth Shalom Synagogue on Jasper Avenue. This project was completed in the summer of 2015.

[www.ourparentshome.com](http://www.ourparentshome.com).

## **BBYO Edmonton Chapter**

In 1924, Sam Beber of Omaha, Nebraska conceived the idea of an international Jewish youth organization that would give Jewish teenagers a greater understanding of Jewish history and Judaism in general. In 1925, based on Mr. Beber's suggestions, the B'nai Brith convention approved the creation of the BBYO (B'nai Brith Youth Organization). BBYO is segregated by gender with boys belonging to AZA (Aleph Zadek Aleph) and the girls to the BBG (B'nai Brith Girls). In 1930, AZA Chapter 21 was founded in Edmonton, and in 1942, it changed its name to the Mandel Bloomfield Memorial Chapter, after a former member who died in the Second World War. In 1964, a second AZA chapter, Ben Zvi, was formed in Edmonton. The Ben Zvi chapter surrendered its charter in 1967. The first BBG chapter in Edmonton was organized in 1943 and was called the Lillian Freiman Chapter. It later changed its name to Yad L'Yad. Now there is a second chapter called Ahava. Overall financial support for BBYO was provided by a regional board of directors. Funding came from B'nai Brith regionally and from each individual community until the mid-1990s, when it became a fully autonomous organization. BBYO admits children ages 14 -18 and regularly sponsors educational activities, sports, and community service projects, among other various events. Edmonton BBYO members often attend regional conferences and occasionally travel to Starlight, Pennsylvania to attend BBYO international summer programs. Locally, the program is run by the Jewish Federation of Edmonton and by the BBYO regional director, presently based in Calgary.

## **Beth Shalom Synagogue**

In 1928, a group of members of Beth Israel Synagogue, unhappy with the overcrowding of the synagogue during High Holiday services and with the blessing of the synagogue, began holding separate services in the Talmud Torah School building. In 1932, the congregation was incorporated as Beth Shalom Synagogue with Jacob Eisen as the congregation's first rabbi. In 1950, after considerable discussion, sod-turning took place for a new synagogue building at 11916 Jasper Avenue. In 1951, services and activities began in the partially completed Beth Shalom building. Once the building was completed, it housed the synagogue along with a new Community Centre Association, a library, a theatre, and two full kitchens. With the founding of a Jewish Youth Centre and then a Jewish Community Centre in Edmonton, many of the

activities that had taken place in the synagogue moved to the new facilities. In February 1980, an arson attack on the synagogue resulted in over \$300,000 in interior damages. Beth Shalom Synagogue is a conservative synagogue and a member of the Association of Conservative Synagogues of America. They have a Women's League chapter and run the only Judaica shop in the City. The current Rabbi is Rabbi Kliel Rose. Email them at [info@e-bethshalom.org](mailto:info@e-bethshalom.org).

## **Chabad Lubavitch - Edmonton Chapter**

Chabad Lubavitch is a worldwide outreach Chassidic organization dedicated to the strengthening of Jewish identity through outreach and public programming. The word Chabad is a composite of three Hebrew words, which translate to Wisdom, Understanding and Knowledge. Lubavitch is a city in Russia. Until his death in 1994, Chabad Lubavitch was led by Rabbi Menachem Schneerson of Brooklyn, New York. In 1997, there were 2,000 Chabad Rabbis serving the whole of the Jewish Diaspora. Chabad Lubavitch of Alberta is based in Calgary with a chapter in Edmonton. The Edmonton chapter operates a Chabad house for study and worship, offers educational opportunities to interested Jews, raises funds, and publishes a newsletter. Since its founding in 1991, the Edmonton chapter of Chabad has been led by Rabbi Ari Drelich. [Chabad@shaw.ca](mailto:Chabad@shaw.ca), (780) 4-TORAH-4.

## **Camp BB Riback**

Established as Camp B'nai Brith in 1955, Camp BB Riback located at Pine Lake, in Central Alberta (near Red Deer), offers the only summer resident camping experience in Alberta for Jewish Children.

Every summer, caring and enthusiastic counsellors offer a wide variety of creative programs for over 300 kids in grades one to ten. Campers and staff come from all over Canada as well as some from the United States and overseas.

Camp BB continues to offer new program ideas that blend Judaism with current trends and fads. Whether hiking in the mountains, riding horses, zip lining down the rope course or making beaded bracelets, each child can be assured that the fun will carry into the evening with energy filled programs. Traditional Jewish blessings are said for every meal and weekly Shabbat services unite the camp in prayer. To end Shabbat, the camp organizes a special Havdalah service. Older campers participate in regular discussions where Jewish issues are discussed in-depth. Campers leave camp with a stronger sense of what it means to be Jewish in the modern world.

Research shows time and again that one of the most important and influential factors ensuring continuity of Jewish identity is through the attendance of our children at a Jewish summer camp. [www.campbb.com](http://www.campbb.com).

### **The EDJGE – Edmonton Kollel**

The EDJGE (Edmonton Jewish General Education) is an independent, non-profit institution, whose purpose is to provide an exceptional Jewish learning experience for Jewish men and women of all backgrounds and affiliations. They sponsor programs including Kosher Event Organizing, Weekly Classes, Father's and Son's Learning, Lunch and Learn, Weekly Shabbat Kiddush, Private Tutoring, Family Events, Kashruth Service and Shabbat Hosting. Contact them at [edmontonkollel@gmail.com](mailto:edmontonkollel@gmail.com).

### **Edmonton Chevra Kadisha Burial Society**

In 1907, land was purchased in the East end of Edmonton for a Jewish cemetery by Abe Cristall, and the Edmonton Chevra Kadisha was founded. As all the members of the Edmonton Chevra Kadisha were male, in 1920, a female Chevra Kadisha was begun to perform ceremonies for deceased women and to sew burial clothes. Around 1910, the Edmonton Chevra Kadisha began an association with Connelly-McKinley Funeral Home to provide hearses and transportation to the cemetery. Chevra Kadisha is a volunteer organization which follows the Jewish tradition of recognizing the egalitarian nature of death by burying all deceased Jewish members of a community in a white shroud and an unadorned coffin. Chevra Kadisha members prepare bodies for burial at the Chesed Shel Emes chapel near downtown Edmonton and conduct services at the cemetery's chapel. Edmonton Chevra Kadisha serves all denominations of Edmonton's Jewish Community.

### **Edmonton Hadassah-WIZO**

The Hadassah-WIZO Organization of Canada was founded in Ottawa in 1917 as a Canadian Zionist Women's organization by Lillian Frieman, the first National President. In 1921, the organization formed an alliance with the Women's International Zionist Movement, founded the previous year in London, England, under the leadership of Rebecca Sieff. In 1926, Canadian Hadassah-WIZO became a sponsor of the Hanna Maisel Shoshat Agricultural School at Nahalal. In 1937, Recha Freier founded the Youth Aliyah movement to rescue Jewish Children from Europe during World War II, and Hadassah-WIZO became a supporter of Youth Aliyah projects. These have included the Hadassim School, Nehalim, Hofim (a school specifically designed to

integrate new Ethiopian immigrants), the Moseenson School at Magdiel, Netanya Technological High School, and Ben Yakir Youth Village. Since 1953, Hadassah-WIZO has supported Assaf Harofe Hospital near Tel Aviv, and in 1990, it affiliated with Hadassah International to become the sole representative in Canada of Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. Over the years, additional projects have been added to the roster of institutions in Israel supported by Canadian Hadassah-WIZO, including day care centres, women's shelters, schools, and other projects. In Edmonton, the organization known as the Daughters of Zion officially decided to change their name to Edmonton Hadassah-WIZO on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 1921. In 1947, Edmonton became a council city of federated chapters. The first council president was Becky Bloomfield. The various chapters over the years have included: Ami Chai, Ner Tamid, Ariel, Aviva, Golda Meir, Sybil Dlin, Shalom, Yahel, Yonah, Or Hatsafon, and Anna Frank. Throughout the years, the group has engaged in many fundraising activities including the annual Hadassah Bazaar or rummage sale, the annual Youth Aliyah fundraising dinner, Medical Services Tea, Games Day, and Mah Jongg tournaments. The money raised in Edmonton goes to Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW) projects in Israel, including the Alberta Day Care Centre in Ramat Hasharon.

### **Emunah Mizarchi Edmonton**

Beginning in the 1930s, small groups of women formed the first Mizrachi Women's Chapters in Winnipeg, Ottatwa, Montreal and Toronto. In 1942, these groups combined to form the Mizrachi Organization of Canada at the founding convention held in Toronto. At the same time, Hapoel Hamizrachi chapters were active in many Canadian cities. In 1961, the two organizations combined, and now include 40 chapters coast to coast. In 1977, EMUNAH, the World Religious Zionist Organization was created, of which Mizrachi became a part. EMUNAH supports over 150 organizations throughout Israel, caring for about 10,000 children and youth. The Edmonton chapter was organized in 1950 by the first president, Mania Rodnunsky. Its primary fundraising activity in Edmonton is the Mo'ess Chittam Tea, which raises money to buy matzahs for needy families at Passover.

### **Hillel of Edmonton**

The largest Jewish campus organization in the world, Hillel provides opportunities for Jewish students to explore and celebrate their Jewish identity through its global network of 500 regional centers and Hillel student organizations.

Hillel's mission is to enrich the lives of Jewish students so that they may enrich the Jewish people and the world. Hillel actively seeks to engage Jewish students on their own terms: to provide them with opportunities to participate in Jewish activities that are meaningful

and appealing to them. Students are empowered to take responsibility for their Jewish identity, whether they wish to participate in a community service project, express themselves artistically, participate in a social event or engage in informal Jewish learning.

Hillel advocates on behalf of students to ensure a safe environment for Jewish youth on Campus. Last year, with 200 undergraduate students, programs included: Shabbat Dinners, movie nights, special guest speakers, Israeli visitors, social and recreational programs and Jewish cultural activities. Local synagogues and community families also host students for holidays and for special holiday meals. Know an out of town student? Hillel will find them a home for any holiday meal. Any student may participate in Hillel: no membership is required. Hillel is committed to a pluralistic vision of Judaism that embraces all movements.

### **The Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta** **(JAHSENA)**

Jahsena was formed as a non-profit Society in 1997 by founding President Uri Rosenzweig. The organization's first project was to publish a book about the history of the Jewish communities in Northern Alberta. The book, titled, "The First Century of Jewish Life in Edmonton and Northern Alberta: 1893 to 1993," was published in 2001. After the publication, the materials collected during the book's writing were set up by Archivist Debby Shoctor. Institutional membership in the Archives Society of Alberta followed. Two documentary films were subsequently produced by second president Dan Kauffman, entitled: "From Pedlars to Patriarchs: A Legacy Remembered," (2004) and "Bittersweet Memories: The War Years," (2007). The mandate of the organization is to protect and preserve the Jewish Heritage of Edmonton for generations to come. The Society belongs to the Association of Canadian Archivists, the Alberta Museums Association and the Association of Canadian Jewish Archives and Museums. It has won awards from the Edmonton Historical Board and the Archives Society of Alberta. [www.jahsena.org](http://www.jahsena.org).

### **Jewish Family Services**

**Jewish Family Services** continues to encourage Jewish communal assistance for:

- Services to Jewish refugees and immigrants from the former Soviet Union and elsewhere;
- Services to adults and children with psychological or social problems , as well as physical illness;
- Services to Holocaust survivors and their families ;

- Services to the elderly and to their caregivers; and
- Services to individuals with addictions and other illnesses (including AIDS) and to their families.
- Bereavement Services

**Among its most important activities, the JFS:**

- Advocates for Jewish families and the greater community in Edmonton
- Reinforces efforts to sustain and enhance the quality of services and Jewish family life.
- Provides consultation, executive search services, as well as information and resources on programming and administration, including resettlement.
- Conducts and sponsors conferences, small group education and training opportunities.

**Jewish Family Services** serves families experiencing divorce and remarriage, intermarriage and a variety of other family-related circumstances, including responsibility for aged parents, along with holocaust survivors and the second generation.

JFS agencies receive funds through the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, United Way, client fees, governmental sources, grants, membership contributions, and endowments. [www.jfse.org](http://www.jfse.org).

## **Jewish National Fund, Edmonton Office**

In 1901, the Jewish national Fund (Keren Kayemeth L'Israel) was established to purchase and develop the land of Israel on behalf of the Jewish people to prepare for their return to their homeland. There has been a JNF presence in Edmonton since 1930 when Charlotte Wershof became secretary and chairman and began raising funds. Since 1954, the primary fundraising event for the Alberta office of the Jewish National Fund has been its annual Negev dinner. Each year, the JNF holds black-tie dinners in Calgary and Edmonton and selects a prominent member of the community as the dinner's honouree. The JNF also raises money through the selling of tribute cards and the collecting of change in blue boxes. All funds raised are then turned over to the JNF office and sent to Israel. Much of the money sent to Israel is used to plant trees and irrigate land. [www.jnf.ca](http://www.jnf.ca).

## **Jewish Senior's Drop-in Centre**

The Golden Age Club was organized under the auspices of the National Council of Jewish Women. Mrs. Rae Miller founded the Edmonton section, which originally met at the Beth Shalom Synagogue. Operating funds came from membership fees, annual donations by the NCJW Economy Shop and the annual Angel's Ball. By 1970, the group ceased being an exclusively NCJW project and became the Jewish Senior's Drop-in Centre, under the presidency of Hy Baltzan. At that time, the group purchased an apartment building located at 10052 – 117<sup>th</sup> Street. It used the basement for meetings, and rented out the apartments on top for revenue. Jewish Family Services became involved, eventually sponsoring programs for new immigrants. For a time, the Centre was also a beneficiary of Edmonton United Jewish Appeal. In 1992, a grant was obtained from the Provincial Community Facilities Enhancement Fund, and that, together with private funding, allowed the demolition of the old building and the construction of a new one on the same site. The newly-named Jewish Drop-in Centre, under the presidency of Alice Abells, opened its doors on May 16, 1993. The Centre provides programming for seniors including adult education, holiday and birthday celebrations, excursions, bridge, Mah Jongg and Bingo, and Mameloshen (Yiddish) Club. The Centre provides support, recreation, adult education, programs for Russian and Yiddish speakers, lunches and more! Located at 10052 – 117<sup>th</sup> Street, Edmonton, AB T5K 1X2 (780) 488 – 4241 [jdic@shaw.ca](mailto:jdic@shaw.ca)

## **Edmonton Menorah Academy**

Edmonton Menorah Academy, a private religious Jewish school, opened its doors in 1993. It was first located in West Edmonton Mall, but later moved to a decommissioned public school building at 10735 – 144<sup>th</sup> Street. The first principal of the school was Rabbi Shmuel Herman. A fully accredited Alberta Education Private School, Menorah offers education for students from pre-school through grade 12. Hebrew language and prayer are emphasized, and after grade 3, classes are segregated. Kosher lunches are served at the school daily. The school is funded by private tuition. [www.menorahacademy.org](http://www.menorahacademy.org).

## **Na'amat Canada Edmonton Council (Pioneer Women)**

Na'amat Canada is a women's Zionist organization initially founded in Israel in 1921. Its original name was Moetzet Hapoalot (Council of Working Women). The North American sister organization was originally called Pioneer Women, then Pioneer Women/Na'amat, then Na'amat Pioneer Women, and ultimately Na'amat Canada Inc. The first Edmonton chapter of Pioneer Women was named the Esther Kramer chapter when it opened in 1931. Other chapters followed, including Chanita, Kanot, Aviva, B'not Shalom, Rae Sorokin and Tikvah. Presently, Na'amat Edmonton has approximately 100 members in five remaining active chapters.

Originally, the members worked to raise money for schools, community centres, training farms and day care centres in Israel. These funds were raised through door-to-door “Tag Days”, Child Rescue, Spiritual Adoption and Adopt-a-Child Campaigns, dinner dances, casinos and an annual Mother’s Day Tea or Brunch. In 1954, the Edmonton Council of Na’amat became the governing body of all the chapters, organizing larger community-wide events. Today, fundraising efforts support the Tel Aviv Shelter and Counseling Centre in Israel. Besides fundraising, Na’amat sponsors social action programs on topics such as the plight of Syrian Jews, freedom for Agunot (divorced women), family violence prevention, legal issues and abortion. Na’amat holds national triennial conventions in various Canadian cities, and in Israel.

### **National Council of Jewish Women Edmonton Section**

The parent organization of the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada was founded in 1893 in Chicago, as a result of the first meeting of the Jewish Women’s Congress, held as part of the World’s Fair in September, 1893. After the meeting, the group was incorporated as the National Council of Jewish Women, under the presidency of Hannah Solomon. The National Council of Jewish Women Canada was founded in Toronto, Canada in 1897 by Meldola de Sola, wife of a prominent Montreal rabbi, who encouraged the members of the Ladies Montefiore Benevolent Society to take up the NCJW banner. Originally started in Edmonton ca.1917 as the Ladies’ Aid Society, under the leadership of Mrs. H.A. Friedman, the group undertook activities such as settlement of new immigrants and volunteering in hospitals during WWI and the 1918 flu epidemic. In 1920, the group adopted the banner of the National Council of Jewish Women to continue its efforts. It helped to establish the Edmonton Talmud Torah Hebrew Day School, raised funds for drought-stricken Saskatchewan farmers and assisted in founding the Jewish Welfare Society (later Jewish Family Services). NCJW also started the Golden Age Club (later the Jewish Drop-in Centre). Over the years, its programs and services focused on education, orphans and youth housing, seniors and the settlement of new immigrants, mental health and civil liberties. The Edmonton Section launched a study of the Emotional Needs of Children in Hospitals in the 1960s which resulted in changes to hospital regulations, removing the restrictions on visiting hours for parents of hospitalized children. In the 1970s, the Edmonton Section was a major force in the establishment of kindergartens within the public school system in Alberta. It also collaborated with the University of Alberta, the Junior League of Edmonton and local and provincial government in establishing the Norwood Headstart program, a pilot community development project to demonstrate the value of pre-school education and parental involvement. NCJW has collaborated with the Women’s Emergency Shelter, worked on initiatives for the Block Parents Program, funded the volunteer program and library at the Winnifred Stewart School and has participated regularly in the Citizenship Court. Edmonton

resident Thelma Rolinger served as National President of the NCJW of Canada from 1973-1974. The current President is Jodi Zabłudowski.

## **ORT, Edmonton Chapter**

ORT, originally known as Organization for Rehabilitation through Training, was founded in St. Petersburg in 1880 to help impoverished Jews in the Pale of Settlement, giving them training in vocational and agricultural skills. After World War I, ORT spread to Eastern and Western Europe and then to North America. At some point ORT's name was changed to Organization for Educational Resources & Technological Training. The Edmonton chapter of ORT was formed in 1972 with Elaine Bookhalter as the first president. The Edmonton chapter met monthly to listen to speeches and presentations and to raise funds for ORT's charities. By the 1980s, the Edmonton chapter of ORT had exceeded 200 members.

## **Talmud Torah**

The oldest Hebrew Day School in Canada, Talmud Torah offers an integrated program of Judaic and Secular studies in a Hebrew-English bilingual setting focused on excellence in learning and achievement. Talmud Torah provides challenging opportunities for each child to learn and grow as an individual in a safe, respectful environment. An emphasis is placed on Jewish culture and religion, as well as responsible citizenship. A cooperative partnership between staff, students and parents is valued and necessary in achieving high levels of student success.

### **SCHOOL COMMUNITY PROFILE**

Talmud Torah School provides Hebrew-English bilingual programming for students from kindergarten to grade nine in a Jewish learning environment. Parents, organized through the Talmud Torah Society/ School Council, are very actively involved in the life and fabric of the school. On November 25, 1997 Talmud Torah began full instruction in its new facility in the West End of Edmonton (south Callingwood).

Parents and staff continue to work together in ongoing Program development to ensure the combined program of Hebrew and English meets the needs of the students and parents. This community of learners will continue to review its Mission/Vision statement as an important part of the process in achieving excellence.

In 1975, the Talmud Torah Society formed a partnership with Edmonton Public Schools. At this time the Province of Alberta Department of Education was exploring means by which private schools could become associated with existing public school boards. In September,

1975, an understanding was reached between the president of Talmud Torah Board of Directors and the superintendent of the Edmonton Public School Board , whereby the public board would fund Talmud Torah's secular component. This arrangement continues to the present time. [www.talmudtorahsociety.com](http://www.talmudtorahsociety.com).

## **Temple Beth Ora**

Temple Beth Ora was founded in 1979 as a reform synagogue, and in 1980 it was incorporated and Beit Sefer classes began. The congregation initially met at the home of Alexis and Shawn Gold and then moved into the Jewish Community Centre as the congregation grew. Services were held in the Colonial Lounge and the gymnasium at the JCC. The congregation was initially led by student Rabbis until 1988, when the first ordained resident Rabbi, Joseph L. Melamed, was hired. In 2003, the congregation was led by Rabbi Lindsey bat Joseph and had 85 family member units. Later came Rabbi Carmit Harari, and then Rabbi Moch. The synagogue had a home at the former JCC in Rio Terrace, but now rents space from the Chevra Kadisha in the Chesed Shel Emes located at 12313 -105 Avenue. [www.templebethora.org](http://www.templebethora.org).