

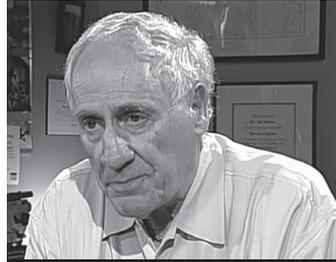
The Canadian Jewish News



MEL LASTMAN



SANDY HOFSTEDTER



PETER SILVERMAN



LEA HOCHMAN



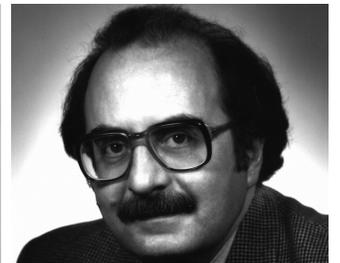
**RABBI
HOWARD JOSEPH**



JOHN SYRTASH



RENÉE UNGER



NAIM KATTAN



RABBI REUVEN BULKA



FAYE SCHULMAN

IN MEMORIAM 2021

The CJN's tales of 10 intriguing lives

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Mel Lastman, 88, remembered by a reporter and a rabbi

/ Ellin Bessner

Sue-Ann Levy was driving through Lake Worth Beach, Florida, on Saturday when the veteran Toronto journalist suddenly remembered that this was the community where the late former mayor of Toronto, Mel Lastman, used to own a vacation home.

A few hours later, Levy, who said she had a love-hate relationship with him while covering City Hall for the *Toronto Sun*, would learn of the flamboyant politician's death on Dec. 11.

"I thought of him as I was driving up, and of course, he died yesterday, so of course it was very bizarre for me," Levy told *The CJN*.

Levy chronicled Lastman's political career as the first mayor of the amalgamated "mega-city" of Toronto, beginning in 1997, and during his second term which ended with his retirement in 2003. While she acknowledged her stories were often critical of Lastman, she had "tremendous respect for him as a politician."

Lastman was born in 1933 and raised in the city's heavily Jewish immigrant neighbourhood of Kensington Market. The son of Polish Jews, Lastman began selling appliances at a store where his then-girlfriend Marilyn Bornstein worked on College Street. The couple married in 1953.

Two years later, Lastman founded the Bad Boy chain of furniture and appliance stores, which made him a wealthy man.

"Let's be honest here: he was a millionaire, he didn't have to run for politics but he did, and he was a tremendous city builder," Levy said, referring as well to Lastman's first 25 years in politics as mayor of the former Borough of North York.

With twice-weekly garbage pick up, and a development plan that brought over 100 condominiums and commercial buildings to the Yonge Street corridor, Lastman also gave his name to the municipal square and public space outside the civic building.

"He built up the downtown of North York, North York ran like clockwork, and he was very constituent-minded. A few politi-

cians now could learn from him," Levy said.

After ten terms in office in North York, Lastman won the election as mayor of Toronto in 1997, after Conservative premier Mike Harris forced six boroughs and cities to merge into one new large mega-city. It took a lot of skill to wrangle six cultures of six different cities, not to mention their former mayors.

"He had tremendous political insights and he saw the big picture," Levy said. "I had tremendous respect for him as a politician."

However, his legacy will always be marred by some of his more "outlandish" remarks while he was mayor of Toronto, including some that were clearly racist. When the city was bidding to host the 2008 Olympics, Lastman was scheduled to travel to Kenya for meetings with IOC decision makers. He told reporters that he was nervous about going, for fear he would be boiled alive in a pot and eaten by African cannibals.

"That would never fly [today] he would've been cancelled in a minute," Levy said, but adding that Lastman was in his late sixties at the time. She did commend him for marching in the city's Gay Pride parade in 2001.

"I wasn't out at the time, but I remember I was tremendously proud at the time for him doing that, but he said things that were outrageous."

In 2003, when Toronto was hit by the SARS virus that would kill 44 people, the World Health Organization warned people not to travel there during the outbreak. According to Levy, Lastman was worried about the impact on the city's image internationally.

"When he was on CNN during SARS and he was very upset that the [World Health Organization] had issued a travel advisory that people shouldn't come to Toronto and he said 'Who the heck is the WHO?'" Levy said, chuckling.

Although he had two sons with his wife Marilyn, who died in 2020, two men who claimed Lastman was their father filed a lawsuit against him, demanding compensation for leaving them in poverty.

The mayor was forced to go public after the bombshell revelation in 2000, and admitted that he had carried out a long extra-marital affair—14 years—with their mother, a former employee of Bad Boy.

Lastman never officially said they were his, but said he earlier paid Grace Louie \$27,500 in an out-of-court settlement if she would drop any further claim.

While some of Lastman's critics slammed him for throwing



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a lavish bar mitzvah party for son Dale, with 650 guests at the posh Royal York Hotel, Levy insists the mayor stayed in touch with the lived experiences of ordinary voters.

“He always had an eye to the little guy, and to people who were struggling and this is why I think he brought in that zero per cent tax increase [in his first three years in office],” Levy said.

Once when Lastman was being interviewed for a story, they went to a place where a bagels and lox were on the menu, which charged \$18 for a sandwich.

“And Mel said ‘this is outrageous’ that they would charge people \$18,” she recalled.

Lastman retired in 2003, and went back to work at Lastman’s Bad Boy, now run by son Blayne and a granddaughter, Samantha. It was apparently the senior Lastman who came up with the company’s trademark slogan “Who’s better? Nooobody!” that showcased father and son hamming it up in television and radio commercials.

“He was an excellent retail politician and he was a true salesman. He really was committed to selling Toronto,” Levy said.

There are still some pieces of furniture donated by Lastman’s Bad Boy in use at the Anshei Minsk. After an arsonist caused \$200,000 worth of damage in 2002 by setting off a fire in the Orthodox Jewish synagogue built in 1930, the Lastman family helped with some restoration and fundraising.

It was where the mayor had been raised—and even had his bar mitzvah.

“They have a very warm feeling towards the synagogue and towards the market and that unique period,” recalled Rabbi Shmuel Spero, who has been spiritual leader of the “Minsker” congregation for more than 30 years.

When the mayor heard about the late night fire, he wanted to help, Spero said. Aside from the donations, Lastman made sure law enforcement officials didn’t ignore trying to find out who did it. He also would pay visits in person, which Spero said were “very meaningful.”

Lastman would visit the synagogue a few times a year while marking the anniversary of the deaths of his parents, known as the *yahrzeit*—and took time away from his nearby office to attend the *Yizkor* memorial services on Jewish holidays.

He would call the rabbi in advance, arrange to sponsor a substantial table of refreshments for the congregation, and then Lastman would have his driver deliver him to the synagogue on the designated day.

“He’d tell me he was coming to *Mincha/Maariv* (the early-evening dual prayer service) and then he would say ‘I want to put on a nice spread,’ they call it a *Kiddush*,” Spero said. “When he would come, he would spend time, he wouldn’t rush out, he would shmooze, about his growing up in that area.”

As far as the rabbi knows, Lastman celebrated his bar mitzvah in the synagogue, a few months after the end the Second World War. Seven years later, it was where he had a special pre-wedding-day blessing known as an *aufruf*.

“We were all proud that his roots were in Kensington Market, his roots were in the Anshei Minsk, and he was an example of those Jewish immigrants to Toronto, who really received, and, in their growing up in Toronto had a great love for the city and really gave back.”

The last time the rabbi visited with the elderly Lastman was in January 2020, during the shivah after the death of Lastman’s wife. Although he told The CJN he had hoped to call on Lastman’s sons, the funeral notice says the family is observing this week of mourning privately.

“Now Mel is moving on to the next world,” Spero said of Lastman, describing him as a man who lived a life of purpose, raised a family, and affected the community. “Our prayers are with him and he should be well received.” ■

Sandy Hofstedter, 97, was a Holocaust survivor who helped build Toronto

/ Ron Csillag

Sandor “Sandy” Hofstedter, a Holocaust survivor who came to Canada and played a major role in Toronto’s post-war expansion with H&R Developments, died in Toronto on Dec. 4.

He was also remembered as a generous but unassuming philanthropist when it came to Jewish causes and charities, both here and in Israel.

H&R Developments became one of the largest integrated real estate developers in Canada, encompassing thousands of residential, industrial and commercial projects in the Greater Toronto Area. Hofstedter’s sons, grandchildren and other loved ones would go on to run or work in different divisions of the company.

H&R had nine companies in its corporate family and generated \$40 million (USD) in annual sales, according to an undated company profile by Dun & Bradstreet.

“H&R has built thousands of homes across Ontario, so there’s a pretty good chance that you or someone you know has lived happily in an H&R-built home,” stated another corporate profile, in 2013.

Hofstedter was a major donor to dozens of Jewish educational, health care, and religious causes, most notably as an early developer of Ner Israel Yeshiva in Thornhill and as a founder of Clanton Park Synagogue in Downsview.

He was born on Aug. 18, 1924 in the Hungarian town of Mezokovesd. His father, Zev, was a wine merchant and community leader. Following Germany’s invasion of Hungary in March 1944, the clan was shipped to the Mauthausen concentration camp in modern-day Austria, where Hofstedter made boots for Nazi soldiers.

Most of the immediate family survived and found itself at war’s end in a displaced persons camp in Torino, Italy. At the time, Jewish business and labour leaders from Canada had been dispatched to find refugees in the DP camps and bring them over under programs for needed tailors, garment workers and furriers. In the fall of 1948, Hofstedter, his new wife Aranka (Kicsi),

his brother Imre, and two uncles, Bill and Danny Rubinstein (the “R” in H&R), arrived in Halifax, ostensibly as furriers.

Representatives of the largely Jewish Canadian Fur Workers’ Union presented the fresh arrivals with a choice of three cities that had a fur industry. Some chose Montreal but many saw it as too daunting because of the need to learn two languages when the newcomers didn’t even know one. Winnipeg was regarded as too cold and remote. As Hofstедter family lore had it, Toronto sounded like Torino, so the destination was settled.

They learned enough from earlier arrivals to work in the fur business, even knowing to tell more rotund customers: “Of course it fits. It’s not supposed to close.”

But after being robbed at gunpoint of \$25,000 worth of furs while on the road selling to Hungarian fruit farmers in the Niagara region, Hofstедter had had enough of the business, and sold eggs off the back of a bicycle for a short time.

“When the idea of leaving the fur business to go into real estate came up—and that’s what everybody was talking about—I think he was the first one to really say, ‘this is what we should be doing.’ The uncles followed and joined in,” recalled Hofstедter’s son George in Ron Chapman’s recent documentary *Shelter*, about Jewish immigrants to Toronto who built affordable, quality housing.

Hofstедter was the youngest of the three and “spoke the least bad English,” so he became the frontman for the business, Robert Eli Rubinstein, Bill’s Rubinstein’s son, told Chapman for the same film.

H&R Developments was founded in the early 1950s and built its first homes in Toronto’s Bathurst-York Downs area, where the Jewish corridor was developing. Just before the Hungarian revolution of 1956, Hofstедter’s father, Zev, emigrated to join the family in the new business.

The elder Hofstедter was “a tough, strong businessman,” George went on. He warned his son and the others: “You’re not going to make money. Every time Mrs. Schwartz doesn’t like the colour of the wall, you repaint it for her. You’re not going to make money doing this. You know, you’re being too nice to the homeowner.”

The trio barely broke even. Hofstедter “really learned by the seat of his pants,” his son George recounted. Undaunted, the operation built homes and rental units in Scarborough and Etobicoke.

In H&R’s early days, Hofstедter formed relationships with other Jewish developers, like Joe Berman, Eph Diamond and the Reichmann family.

In 1960, Hofstедter and Simon Mintz founded Baif Developments, which is credited with the initial site developments of several Toronto landmarks, including the Yonge-Eglinton Centre, and completed master-planned residential communities in Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Newmarket, Oakville, Toronto, Whitby, Mississauga, Markham, and Brampton.

Each of the Hofstедter sons would go on to run a division of the company: David oversaw the industrial arm, the commercial sector was run by Thomas, and George ran home building. Residential development was done by Hofstедter’s son-in-law, Mark Mandelbaum, who later struck out with partner Barry Fenton to form Lanterra Developments, specializing in high-rise projects in downtown Toronto.

In 1996, the family rolled their commercial assets into a publicly-traded real estate investment trust called H&R REIT, whose

portfolio includes retail, office, and industrial properties, with total assets of \$13 billion.

Hofstедter’s philosophy was straightforward, said his grandson, Zev Mandelbaum: Live a life of meaning.

“My grandfather never did anything just to do it. He did everything with meaning and purpose. Everything,” said Mandelbaum, president and CEO of Altree Developments.

His grandfather’s advice was not to chase pleasure, which is fleeting. The message was, “do things with purpose and meaning. He was always about trying to help people, not just by giving a cheque, but actually giving advice. Twice a week, he would host open houses and write cheques for anyone who needed it in the community. People would line up.”

Hofstедter “really built Toronto,” his grandson said.

“Yiddishkeit is what it is in this city because of him,” eulogized another grandson at Hofstедter’s funeral. “Torah flourishes in the city, and has for many decades, because of him.”

Hofstедter was buried in Israel. He was predeceased by his wife, Aranka. He is survived by his second wife, Irene; sons George, Thomas and David (founder of Dirshu International, whose goal is to strengthen and encourage Torah study); a daughter Lindy Mandelbaum; 28 grandchildren; and more than 100 great-grandchildren. ■

‘Watch it, buddy!’ Citytv’s consumer reporter legend Peter Silverman, 90

/ Ron Csillag

Peter Silverman, a tough-as-nails consumer reporter whose fight-for-you ethos brought justice to many aggrieved people who’d gotten the shaft, died in Tweed, Ont. on Oct. 7.

The protean Silverman was a journalist, advocate, soldier, and academic. His huge appetite for adventure led him to work as a foreman with a crew laying a railway line in Newfoundland and Labrador. While in England, he drove a bulldozer during construction of the M1, Britain’s first four-lane highway. He was one of the workers extending the London Underground, where he lost a finger saving a crewman’s life, recalled his death notice.

“He believed in *tikkun olam*, the Jewish philosophy that you were put on earth to repair the earth and help others,” his wife, Frances Burton, told Toronto’s CityNews.

“He was a triumph,” Burton told The CJN, “a good golem.”

To Toronto news watchers, Silverman was doubtless best known as host of “Silverman Helps,” a widely viewed *CityPulse* newscast segment in which he went to bat for consumers who’d been misled, lied to, gouged, or outright swindled by assorted scammers and had lost all hope. The popular segment ran from 1989 to 2008.

It received more than 20,000 complaints a year, and according

to one unscientific estimate, 95 percent of them were resolved on behalf of consumers wronged by business and bureaucracy.

It wasn't always easy. Over the years, he encountered many hostile characters, doors slammed in his face, shoving, threats, yelling—even a man who came at him with a bulldozer.

One segment emerged as legend. In 2007, Silverman responded to several complaints about an optician on King Street West who would sell fake designer frames at a premium; promise free eye exams, then say it was only with the purchase of frames, and engage in threatening and abusive behaviour, including calling police on customers.

When Silverman showed up for answers, the optician pushed the door open violently and began throwing punches, with the reporter's fists raised in defensive posture and his body absorbing the few blows that landed.

The episode went viral on YouTube and was broadcast on CNN, with Silverman, then 75, winning plaudits for standing his ground.

But it was another segment that led to the catch-phrase with which he would become closely associated. Following an encounter with one especially combative business owner who pushed him out the door, Silverman turned and snapped: "Watch it, buddy!"

"If you say the name Peter Silverman, how many people would say to you, 'watch it buddy!'" recalled longtime former Citytv legal affairs reporter Lorne Honickman, who went on to practice law in Toronto. "It could be one of the greatest clips of all time. That was Peter."

As a young reporter at Citytv, Honickman encountered "a true original" in Silverman: A PhD, a published writer, and a business reporter for the station. "A character," Honickman added. "He was also the toughest person."

There are so many "iconic" memories of Silverman, Honickman said he could go on for "hours and hours."

But in the end, "we all wish that when we die, if people talk about us, they would say 'he or she left a legacy.' Not all of us will get that. But Peter can and should be spoken of that way. He does leave a legacy."

Twitter was alight with condolences. Silverman was "an incredible person, broadcaster and former CityNews ombudsman who in his off-hours, worked to help people whose stories he knew couldn't get to air," tweeted CP24 reporter and anchor Cristina Tenaglia.

Silverman was Tenaglia's first boss at Citytv, she said. When she visited him in August, she found his memory waned at times, but then he told her, "you're a wonderful woman but you drive us **** [sic] crazy sometimes."

Peter Guy Silverman was born in Montreal on July 5, 1931, to English-born Aubrey Silverman and Blanche Wiener, who was born in France.

He was too young to serve in the Second World War and was rejected by the Royal Canadian Air Force for lacking 20/20 vision, so he went through the Canadian Officers' Training Corps in Alberta over several post-war summers.

He graduated from Montreal's Sir George Williams University

in 1953 and spent several years in England, where he worked for the Institute of Race Relations and served with the British Army Emergency Reserve, reported his alma mater in its condolence.

From 1957 to 1963, Silverman was a captain in the British Army's Para Engineers.

"He was then trained by the SAS (Special Air Service) and sent to fight in Cyprus," relates a colourful family death notice. "He survived being wounded in battle, only to become a paratrooper with the Royal Engineers Airborne. He couldn't fly planes, so he jumped out of them."

Back in Canada, he earned a master's degree in history from the University of British Columbia and a PhD from the University of Toronto on British naval policy in the Far East from 1919 to 1942. For a time, he taught history at UofT's Scarborough campus.

In 1967, he was among thousands of young foreign volunteers who poured into Israel during the Six-Day War, a time he detailed in a 7,700-word memoir. From 1968 to 1972, he served with the Governor General's Horse Guard.

Silverman kicked off a career in broadcast journalism in 1974, when he joined Global Television, where his reporting exposed Ontario puppy mills, which led to changes in legislation. He wrote and hosted *Code 10-78*, a crime re-creation series. He moved to *CityPulse* in 1981 as a business specialist, using his expertise gained from his time spent in the worlds of advertising and marketing in Canada and England in the 1960s.

Among the "Silverman Helps" stories that meant the most to him, his family noted, were exposing a fraud in which money meant for the installation of an elevator for disabled children at the Driftwood School was diverted. After his story, the elevator was installed free of charge.

Following his involuntary departure from Citytv, he hosted a short-lived phone-in show on Toronto radio station Newstalk 1010.

Silverman lent his personal support to a variety of charitable causes, including the Aphasia Centre, Canadian Human Rights Voice, Habitat for Humanity, Save a Child's Heart Foundation, Ve'ahavta, and the Peres Center for Peace & Innovation in Israel.

In 1993, he aided in the construction of a bridge in Ethiopia to help farmers sell their crops and allow trucks to cross town.

"I do this because I have an obligation to do it," Silverman told the Toronto Star at the time. "I have certain skills, so why not utilize them?"

He also did humanitarian work in Nicaragua, Honduras, South Africa, and Rwanda after the genocide there.

He authored two books on child welfare: *Who Speaks for the Children?* and *Voices of a Lost Generation*.

Among several prizes for his reporting, he was nominated for a second Gemini in the Best Reportage category for the optician story. The Toronto chapter of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners presented Silverman with an award in recognition of his fraud-fighting in 2006.

He was inducted into the Order of Ontario in 2009.

Silverman is survived by his wife, Frances Burton; twin daughters, Alexis and Leah; and three grandchildren. ■

Lea Hochman, 100, was a Holocaust survivor who spoke about faith and miracles

/ Dan Horowitz

Lea Hochman, a Holocaust survivor who dedicated herself to teaching about the horrors of antisemitism and the importance of faith, died in Toronto on Aug. 6.

Hochman (nee Zimmerman) was born in Pohorce, a small town in Poland with only nine Jewish families.

“My mom would often say that she ‘hid in plain sight’ during the Shoah, relying on her ability to pass herself off as a Gentile. She used to refer to herself as an actor without a script,” said Sheila Lampert, the youngest of Hochman’s three daughters.

“She did not have a change of clothes for 17 months. She realized later that if she had been able to change, she would have lost the piece of matzah that was sewn into her clothes. She credits the blessing from a rabbi who gifted the matzah for helping save her and her brothers, Israel and Hersh. They were the only ones who had the precious matzah and the only family members that survived.”

During the war, Hochman travelled from farm to farm. While she was never paid for her work, she received food and a place to sleep, usually in the barn.

She met and married her husband, Abraham Hochman, who had survived in Siberia, in a displaced persons camp in Germany. The couple travelled to Israel via cattle boat in 1949. Two of their daughters, Ada and Shosh (Susan), were born in Israel.

In 1959, the couple immigrated to Montreal to join Lea’s brothers. Life was hard. They did not speak English or French, lived in a tiny apartment and worried every month that they would not cover the rent.

“Then my mom became pregnant,” Lampert said. “She was very angry at God. All she wanted was a few more dollars for the necessities of life. Instead, God sent her a baby? On top of that, she was told it was very likely that her child would be born with special needs and was advised to terminate the pregnancy. At the last moment, she told my father, ‘If God is sending me this baby now, perhaps this is the child that will bring me a sip of water in my old age.’”

That baby turned out to be Lampert, who, as executive director of Reena Foundation, supports the very population her mother was advised to avoid.

Hochman taught herself to sew and helped provide for the family. She became known for the beautiful hand-beaded gowns she created.

After her husband died in Montreal in 1989, she moved to Toronto to be with her daughters.

Proof that it’s never too late to contribute to society, Hochman started a public speaking career when she was in her late 80s, educating Jews and non-Jews about her experiences in the Shoah.

Her first speaking appearance took place at Toronto’s Crestwood Preparatory College as part of an initiative that included videotaped interviews with individuals who shared their war-time experiences.

“I want to leave the legacy for people who don’t believe that something like that existed,” Hochman told The CJN at the time. “I am very happy that I was able to come today and to let some other kids see that if you are very anxious to survive, you’ll do anything for your survival. If one child learned anything today, I’ll be happy.”

Hochman spoke at schools, synagogues, to students going on the March of the Living, and to anyone who wanted to listen, Lampert said.

“Her topic was always ‘The Miracles of ha-Shem.’ She was living proof that miracles exist. She wanted to impart the importance of hope to the next generation. She was worried. She saw that although we live in a time of so much material wealth, people appear unhappy and unappreciative of all the blessings God has bestowed upon us. She wanted people to have emunah—faith that even during dark times, we need to perform mitzvahs and just hold on. Things happen for a reason. She had lived through so much, so when she spoke, her message resonated.”

Hochman’s efforts to educate today’s generation about the horrors of antisemitism, intolerance and hatred did not go unnoticed. In 2012, she was honoured by Ontario premier Dalton McGuinty and the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem. Lampert also received a condolence call from Premier Doug Ford when Hochman died.

A testament to her optimistic outlook on life, when she was shut in by COVID, Hochman saw an opportunity.

“She liked to say that ‘nothing ever bad happens without something good,’” Lampert said. “The way my mom saw it, Zoom gave her the opportunity to speak to people all over the world.”

Her last speaking date was just three weeks before she died.

Hochman was also an author, working with a volunteer from the Azrieli Foundation to record and ultimately transcribe her stories. It was never published as a book but is available online.

“My mom felt it was very important to record it for the next generation even though it was a painful process for her,” Lampert said.

Last year, with all the COVID restrictions, Lea shared her fear with one of her favourite students that she would not be able to hear the shofar for the High Holidays.

That was the catalyst for Shofar on the Corner, an initiative of Chabad and Jewish Youth Network, to allow people to hear the shofar safely and close to home.

This year, the program is dedicated in Hochman’s memory.

“My mom was my biggest role model,” Lampert said. “She taught me that it is important to make a good name for yourself. Never turn down the opportunity to do a mitzvah. Never look for honour. Be humble and honour will find you.”

Hochman was buried in Montreal and is survived by her three daughters, nine grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren. ■

Rabbi Howard Joseph, 80, led Montreal's Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue for 40 years

/ Janice Arnold

Rabbi Howard Joseph, who led Canada's oldest Jewish congregation, the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue in Montreal, for four decades during which he succeeded in fostering harmony among its diverse members, died on Aug. 12 after a long illness.

He was also widely respected within the modern Orthodox movement, as well as in broader society for his interfaith work.

When the young *New Yorker* was entrusted with the spiritual leadership of the Spanish and Portuguese in 1970, he followed in the footsteps of Rabbi Solomon Frank, a towering figure in the Montreal Jewish community.

He was facing a congregation, founded in 1768, in rapid transition from having been predominantly Ashkenazi for many years, despite its origins, to a majority Sephardi. And that was not one community, but several, notably Iraqi, Lebanese and Moroccan, each with their distinctive practices.

Rabbi Joseph, who was Ashkenazi, from the start was "respectful and receptive to other traditions. He understood that there is more to Judaism than one's nationality," the synagogue website states. Upon his retirement in 2009, he was named rabbi emeritus.

He is being remembered for his open-mindedness, compassion, humility and deep scholarship. The love he engendered among congregants did not fade over the years. Peacemaking is his most enduring legacy, his family believes.

"I still remember the day about 50 years ago when my dad came home thoroughly enthused from a meeting of the S & P search committee for a new rabbi and exclaimed, 'We just interviewed a young American rabbi who has a fine mind, an engaging personality, and a kind manner, and brings with him a wife who is smart, charming and gracious. These two will make a dynamic duo,' recalled Mark Rosenstein.

"In the ensuing years, my wife Bluma and I learned just how prophetic were these words."

The wife was Norma Baumel Joseph, a longtime professor in Concordia University's religions department and an activist for Jewish women's rights, as well as a former CJA columnist. They were married for 56 years.

Former synagogue member David Kaufmann, now living in Toronto, says Rabbi Joseph "led our synagogue with quiet diplomacy and wisdom, never an easy task with a diverse congregation" that wanted to maintain the traditions of the historic Spanish and Portuguese, established by British Jews, while welcoming new arrivals from the Middle East and North Africa.

"In very large measure, Rabbi Joseph was the catalyst for the growth and success of our synagogue, and his wisdom and quiet determination fostered a respect among the many communities that has withstood the test of time."

After completing a master's degree at Yeshiva University in Hebrew literature, Rabbi Joseph was ordained in 1964 at the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary under Rabbis Joseph Soloveitchik and Samuel Belkin.

Among his communal positions, Rabbi Joseph was chair of the Religious and Inter-Religious Affairs Committee of Canadian Jewish Congress, president of the Canadian Christian Jewish Consultation Committee, and of Christian Jewish Dialogue of Montreal.

He was a member of the Rabbinical Council of Canada's beth din for conversion.

In 1973, he began teaching in Concordia's then religious studies department as a visiting lecturer. He also taught over the years at the Université de Montréal, Université Laval, State University of New York in Albany, and Yeshivat Har-Etzion in Israel.

Rabbi Joseph was the author or contributor to a number of books, and wrote many articles.

He was a fitness buff and, in his day, was a standout on the synagogue's baseball team. Jogging and swimming continued as favourite pastimes until he suffered a stroke almost 10 years ago.

Rabbi Marc Angel, author and retired after decades as spiritual leader of New York's Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, eulogized Rabbi Joseph as "personifying the qualities of the ideal modern Orthodox rabbi."

Rabbi Joseph, he said, was "distinguished by his wisdom, kindness, elegance, deep commitment to his congregation and society at large."

Besides his wife, Rabbi Joseph is survived by their four children, Leora, Josh, Ami and Naphtali and their families. ■

Lawyer John Syrtash, 68, helped ease the way of Jewish divorce

/ Ron Csillag

John Syrtash, whose legal career spanned four decades and who played a major role in revamping Canadian laws to help Jewish women navigate the shoals of religious divorce, died in Toronto on Aug. 1 of a heart attack.

A specialist in family law and civil litigation, Syrtash laboured for years to effect amendments to Canada's Divorce Act and Ontario's Family Law Act to make it easier for Jewish women to obtain a *get*—a religious divorce decree.

The work began in 1985, when he met with rabbis and lawyers

to lobby for changes to Ontario's family law system. That, in turn, set the standards for alterations to federal divorce laws five years later, recalled Norma Joseph of Montreal, an expert in the get and a fellow pioneer in how Canadian law was changed to recognize and accommodate it.

"We all understood that we were trying to remove barriers for women's religious remarriage, and that the issue was one of competing values," Joseph told The CJN. Syrtash "stood side by side with us in the fight for women's rights in the Jewish world and in the general human rights environment"

Syrtash joined the Coalition of Jewish Women for the Get to lobby Ottawa for changes. While marriage was governed by provincial law, rules for divorce were under federal jurisdiction.

The advocates ran up against "multiple issues of freedom of religion, the government's obligation to preserve and protect, the unified legal system of Canada, and the unique position of multiculturalism in Canada," Joseph recalled.

"John knew these challenges from the legal and political perspectives, and he stood shoulder to shoulder with us."

Syrtash, Joseph, and the late Rabbi Reuven Bulka testified before parliamentary hearings in Ottawa. All political parties agreed with their recommendations. The amendments to the Divorce Act, which prevented recalcitrant Jewish (and Muslim) husbands from using a religious divorce as a bargaining chip in civil proceedings, passed unanimously in 1990.

"John was a key resource throughout the process, always a welcome colleague," Joseph said.

Syrtash's success led to an invitation to Israel in 2005 to address members of rabbinical courts, the prime minister's office and justice ministry officials to present the Canadian model on the get. "Canada to the rescue of Israel's *agunot*," proclaimed an optimistic headline in the *Jerusalem Post*, using the word for women who cannot remarry Jewishly without a get and would remain *agunot* ("chained").

Syrtash explained that before the Canadian law was amended, either spouse could use the get as leverage to extort money, benefits or child visitation rights from the other side, as was often the case in Israel, and still is.

He told the Israeli officials that the Canadian changes worked because most rabbis accepted them as procedural rather than punitive.

Syrtash was also asked by the Canadian government to provide recommendations on amendments to Canada's spousal and child support laws.

Syrtash was recalled as a "consummate gentleman and intellectual and an absolutely lovely and kind person to work with" by his firm, Garfin Zeidenberg LLP of Toronto, where he conducted a family law mediation and arbitration practice.

"He cared passionately about his clients and their children caught in the throes of litigation," the firm noted.

John Tibor Syrtash was born on June 4, 1953 in Budapest to Imre and Judith Syrtash. Like many Jewish families, the clan fled the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 and decamped to Holland, then came to Canada the following year.

Syrtash studied English at the University of Toronto and law at Queen's University. He transferred to UofT's law school after his mother died, and was called to the bar in 1981.

In the mid-1980s, Syrtash was a founding member of Beth

Avraham Joseph of Toronto synagogue in Thornhill.

He authored *Religion and Culture in Family Law* in 1992 and a humorous collection of short stories about Toronto-area Jewry, *A Calendar of Northern Fables*, in 2016. For decades, he was a well-read columnist on family law issues for *The CJN* and *The Lawyers Weekly*, and was widely quoted in media on family law issues.

"He only saw good in people. He never complained, never saw fault, never had a bad word for anyone," Orly Katz, his partner of 13 years, told The CJN. "He hated confrontation, even though he practiced family law. He sought unity. He was a unifying force."

Indeed, in the beginnings of COVID in spring of 2020, Syrtash had advice for quarantined couples experiencing cabin fever. Consider, he counseled, Rabbi Nachman of Breslov, who taught that if you have a negative thought, like resentment or annoyance, then force yourself to think positively. Don't lash out. Keep cool.

"When your partner grabs the remote for the sixth straight time, make a joke of it," he wrote for the *Canadian Jewish Record*. "Then lie, if necessary. Explain how much you enjoy that Serbian cooking show rather than the reruns of your favourite Raptors games."

In other words, "stop worrying about the little things and soon you will realize that there are no big things."

Syrtash is survived by his partner, Orly Katz; a brother, Peter; children Josh, Elana, and Jeremy, and five grandchildren. ■

Renée Unger, 78, queen of the salad dressings

/ Ron Csillag

Renée Unger, whose gourmet salad dressings have graced veggie and tickled palates for a generation, died in Toronto on July 3.

A "fabulous" cook, as her obituary pointed out, she launched a successful business by making all-natural salad dressings for family and friends in her home kitchen. In 1985, she and her husband Arnie created Renée's Gourmet Salad Dressings. The couple and their daughters conducted in-store tastings, selling at first to small grocers like The Kitchen Table and Sunkist Market, then to Rabba's Fine Foods and Mr. Grocer.

The products acquired boutique status when they appeared at Holt Renfrew and Pusateri's. Word of mouth, so to speak, boosted sales, and soon, the dressings hit the shelves of Loblaws, A&P-Dominion (now Metro), Sobeys and other large chains.

By 2005, the company was enjoying \$44 million in annual sales. At the time, Renée's was the largest maker of refrigerated dressings in Canada, with 68.5 percent of the market.

In 2006, by which time there were about 30 flavours under the Renée's Gourmet brand, the family sold the business for

an undisclosed amount to Heinz Foods of Canada (now Kraft Heinz) and Unger continued to be involved in the development of new products.

“Renée’s vision was to see her salad dressing on every family’s table, and we work hard every day to fulfill that vision,” said a statement from Kraft Heinz sent to The CJN. According to the food giant, Renée’s Caesar is “by far” Canada’s favourite variety.

The family agrees. Caesar is the most popular—and it’s available in four flavours: Regular, Light, Mighty, and Parmesan Vinaigrette—followed by Greek, Ranch, and Poppy Seed.

Unger “revolutionized” the salad dressing industry and was a “worthy competitor” to actor Paul Newman’s line of dressings and sauces, Bonnie Stern, cookbook author and food maven, told The CJN. “I had a great deal of respect for her. She really was ahead of her time—an entrepreneur, a woman, successful and hardworking,” Stern said. “She set a standard and an idea for people who followed suit.”

Unger was born in Toronto on Dec. 11, 1942, the youngest child of Faye Shankman, an immigrant from Odessa, and Albert Mendelson, who was born in England to Romanian parents. After majoring in mathematics at the University of Toronto, Renée went on to earn a teaching degree and taught for several years. After teaching full time, she started her family and worked part time substitute teaching and selling jewelry. She also opened her own designer clothing store.

Cooking was her way of relaxing. In the evening, she read cookbooks and was always thinking of something new or interesting to make. School lunches for her daughters consisted of salads, with homemade dressing poured into old film canisters.

The Ungers were members of Beth Tikvah Synagogue, where Renée made her dressings and cooked for the sisterhood years before her products were launched.

“I was fascinated by presentation and taste,” she recalled in a 2009 magazine profile. “I found out at a young age that I was one of those people who is a super taster. I have a very sensitive palate—I know when something’s good or something’s off. With every blessing, there’s a curse. When I went into restaurants, I could tell when they had just cleaned the utensils or washed the floor, so there’s a downside to my heightened senses.”

In the winter of 1984, Unger bottled some of her poppy seed dressing and labeled it, “From the Kitchen of Renée.”

“We gave them out and about three weeks later, people started to say they wanted more,” she recalled in Canadian Business in 2008. “I’ll never forget one girl at the bank who said, ‘I’ll pay anything.’ That was like a light bulb went on. I remember going home that night and saying to Arnie that this is going to be a good business because there is nothing else like it. I went to bed that night and I saw my bottle on tables.”

That winter, she made her first large batch of poppy seed dressing while her husband hammered together wooden crates to carry the bottles. “After much research, our mom and dad

knew there was a market out there for their dressings,” recalled their daughter, Lori Unger-Gutmann. Caesar, Greek, and Blue Cheese came next, and Renée never looked back.

The couple opened a plant in Toronto in 1987 and expanded to another in 1993, employing at one time 100 people. A divorce and a cash crunch around this time slowed Unger down, but not much.

Recalled as feisty and headstrong, her business sense came from her gut. “If it feels right, I do it,” she said flatly. “One of the things entrepreneurs have that others don’t: they don’t wait to hear about the trends through statistical data. They themselves drive the trends.”

After establishing her line, the company branched out to make sauces, dips and dressings with fruit (“Ravin’ Raspberry” was one). “We were 20 years ahead of what other food companies were doing,” she told Canadian Business Journal.

So what was her secret? Simple. “We absolutely taste better,” Unger pronounced. “The ingredients are healthy for you, and we’re at a level that no one else is at. You can see this in our sales.”

Unlike conventional dressings sold on grocery store shelves, her line is still made with fresh ingredients, with no preservatives or additives, and is sold in the produce section of food stores. “That product positioning next to fresh vegetables was also key in increasing sales,” the *Globe and Mail* noted in 2005.

Just as importantly, she never changed the recipes. “You start changing your formulas, and then you’ve lost the reason customers are buying the product,” she reasoned.

She was a savvy businesswoman, to be sure, but was also “extremely eccentric and marched to the beat of her own drum,” said her daughters.

“She never followed the norm and was a true leader. She never cared about race, social status, or background; everybody was equal. When she asked you how you were, she sincerely was interested in the answer and everything else you had to say. Our mom listened intently and gave every person her full attention. She always had the innate ability to make those around her feel special, as if they were the only person in the room.”

Her plainspokenness was legendary. “The funny thing was that after you walked away, you actually thanked her for telling you like it is and you actually learned from it,” her children recalled. “You came out a better and wiser person for having known her.”

Unger’s philosophy, her children noted, was perhaps best seen in her inscription in United Jewish Appeal’s Book of Life, a program that recognizes donors who leave a charitable legacy through the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto:

“Be a mensch in life, in business and in community. This is what my mother taught me and what defines my Jewish identity.”

Unger is survived by her daughters, Alysse Unger Luepenn, Lori Unger-Gutmann and Karen Unger Burstein, and 11 grandchildren. ■

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Iraqi-born writer Naim Kattan, 92, brought cultures together in Quebec

/ Janice Arnold

Naim Kattan, the Iraqi-born Jewish writer and cultural mediator, is being eulogized for his immense literary output and promotion of dialogue, in particular, between Jews and francophone Quebecers.

Kattan, an Officer of the Order of Canada and Chevalier of the National Order of Quebec, as well as France's Légion d'Honneur, died in Paris. In his later years, he divided his time between Montreal where he had lived since 1954 and Paris, where he studied literature at the Sorbonne.

Born in Baghdad in 1928, Kattan published more than 30 books, consisting of novels, stories, poetry and plays, in French, his adopted language after his native Arabic. His most recent work appeared only a few years before his death.

Having escaping rising Arab nationalism in Iraq only to find France intellectually stimulating but rather inward-looking, Kattan often said he felt reborn in multicultural Montreal with its possibility of shaping an open, tolerant society.

Soon after he immigrated, Kattan became active with the new Cercle Juif de la langue française, an initiative of Canadian Jewish Congress to foster understanding between Jews, few of whom then were French-speaking, and the Quebec majority. Kattan founded its publication *Bulletin*, a groundbreaking platform to further that cultural exchange.

The gregarious Kattan, recognizable by his handlebar mustache, became a friend and collaborator of some of Quebec's leading writers and thinkers, and was a common figure on its social scene.

He is still best known for his debut novel, the 1975 *Adieu Babylon* (later translated as *Farewell, Babylon*), the first of a semi-autobiographical trilogy capturing the vibrant 2,500-year-old Jewish community and cosmopolitan city in which he grew up, a world that would soon come to an end.

Throughout his writing, identity, exile and the search for belonging and love were frequent themes. Kattan's companion of some 30 years was Annie Goldmann, the French-Jewish sociologist of cinema, who died last year. He fell ill in June, exactly a year to the day of her passing.

In addition to his fiction, Kattan's literary criticism and essays appeared in publications in Canada, France and elsewhere. He was a regular contributor to the influential Montreal newspaper *Le Devoir* for decades.

He also taught at the Université du Québec à Montréal and was, notably, a researcher for the landmark Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism in the 1960s whose report set the course for the Canada of today.

From 1967-1991, Kattan was head of the writing and publishing division of the Canada Council for the Arts and later assistant

director, playing a key role in the development of Canadian literature, both English and French.

The Council hailed him as "a man of letters and a great promoter of culture."

Many of Kattan's works were translated into English. In 2015, the Canadian publisher Guernica Editions put out his 1991 novel *Farida*, the story of a Jewish woman, a cabaret singer, in Iraq before the Second World War.

His longtime friend, the former publisher Jacques Allard, said Kattan was compelled to write, up to his final brief illness. He often would say that, despite his voluminous oeuvre, he could not stop putting his thoughts on paper, "otherwise, he would have nightmares."

When Concordia University gave him an honorary degree in 2006, Jewish studies professor Norma Baumel Joseph lauded Kattan as an "influential shaper of our pluralistic society."

"Today, more than ever, he bridges the history of our civilization with its heartbreakingly distant potential. It is our great good fortune that he made that long ago choice to make his home in Montreal."

The writer's son, Emmanuel Kattan, a Columbia University professor, said that, although his father had spent his last couple of years in Paris, his wish was to be buried in Montreal "in the country that welcomed him more than 60 years ago." ■

Rabbi Reuven Bulka, 77, was a blessing for us all

/ Benjamin Shinewald

Shortly before we landed in Halifax, Rabbi Reuven Bulka opened his wallet and I saw, inside it, a photograph of an older man. "Was your father also a rabbi?" I asked. "No," he replied, "My father was a rabbi. I'm also a rabbi."

It was quintessential Bulka: Humble, warm and meaningful, with a hint of wordplay thrown in.

I barely knew him then. Fresh into a new job at Canadian Jewish Congress, Rabbi Bulka, who co-chaired CJC, had just hired me. Now he, his wife and I traveled to Nova Scotia to participate in the Atlantic Jewish Council's 2008 convention. When we left a couple of days later, I felt like I had known him my entire life.

That's probably why, when my mother subsequently became very ill, I turned to Rabbi Bulka for a shoulder to cry on. It was a natural thing to do, not only because he has a PhD in logotherapy, but also because he was an astonishingly compassionate and kind human being.

So many of us have Rabbi Bulka stories but they all follow the same arc: how Rabbi Bulka was there for us in good times and bad; how Rabbi Bulka said precisely the right thing to bring a smile to our faces; how Rabbi Bulka made us feel hopeful, energized and strong just when we needed it most.

So here's another one: a few years after our Halifax trip, I found myself in a job search that was far longer and harder than I ever imagined. After many months, I finally thought I saw light at the end of the tunnel, with three jobs suddenly coming my way at once. And then, in a horrible blow, all three fell through, and I was devastated. Naturally, I called Rabbi Bulka.

"I'm not sure I can take anymore of these near misses," I lamented. "They're not near misses, they're near hits!" he replied. And in an instant, I saw things differently. Even if they fell through, going further down the hiring process meant I was getting closer to concluding my search successfully. With just a few words and his trademark enthusiasm, the Rav completely changed my perspective.

He was right, of course. A short time later, I found a terrific job. Even today, whenever anyone I know is looking for work, I tell them my Rabbi Bulka story. The beat goes on.

The sheer breadth of Rabbi Bulka's contribution is breathtaking. Beyond his pulpit at Ottawa's Congregation Machzikei Hadas and his leadership of CJC, he hosted TV shows, wrote newspaper columns, authored dozens of books and founded and edited academic journals. He gave the annual Remembrance Day benediction at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, donated blood 369 times and championed interfaith dialogue. He founded Kind Canada and Ottawa Kindness Week, chaired the Trillium Gift of Life organ donation network and led a capital campaign for a hospice. And that's just a partial list. No CV could do the man justice.

I thought of this dizzying array of selfless leadership when I put a Hanukkah-themed stamp on an envelope. I barely noticed it, but on the back of the package, a message from Canada Post read "Special thanks to Rabbi Reuven P. Bulka, C.M.," before going on to add three prominent Jewish organizations. It's as if the Rav is a Jewish organization unto himself.

In the months before his death on June 27, after a battle with pancreatic and liver cancer, Rabbi Bulka continued to live his irrepressible positivity.

Talking to CBC Radio in January, he reflected on his career and his life and concluded, "you don't take anything for granted. The blessings of life are blessings that we should be grateful for."

Rabbi Reuven Bulka was a blessing for us all. For his enormous contributions to our country, our community and ourselves, we are infinitely grateful. ■

Wartime photographer Faye Schulman, 101, captured lives of the partisan resistance

/ Ron Csillag

Faye Schulman, for decades an outsized presence in Holocaust education whose survival as a partisan photographer in the forests of Poland was the stuff of Hollywood, died in Toronto on April 24.

Schulman will be remembered "for her remarkable story, courage, and resilience," said Rachel Libman, manager of public programs at the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, who worked closely with her when the centre presented Schulman's "Pictures of Resistance" exhibition at the Miles Nadal JCC in 2011.

"I will also remember her openness, warmth, and kind smile, framed by her neatly combed white hair and blue jacket with its medals pinned to the chest," Libman said. "She leaves behind a tremendous legacy of resistance, creativity, continuity, and above all, survival."

Faigel "Faye" Lazebnik was born into a family of seven children on Nov. 28, 1919 in the eastern Polish town of Lenin (not named for the Bolshevik revolutionary but for Lena, the daughter of a wealthy aristocrat). The town was on the shore of the Sluch River; the Soviet Union was on the other side.

She learned technical skills and how to operate a camera from her older brother, Moishe, who opened a photo studio in the family home to make ends meet. "I remember spending hours in the darkroom as a young girl, developing negatives," she wrote in her book, *A Partisan's Memoirs: Woman of the Holocaust*, published in 1995.

In August 1942, Nazi troops killed 1,850 Jews from the Lenin ghetto, including Faye's parents, two sisters and two younger brothers. They spared only 26 people that day—"useful" Jews, like a carpenter and a tailor. Among them was Faye for her photographic abilities.

"The Germans ordered Faye to develop their photographs of the massacre," says a biography at the Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation. "Secretly, she also made copies for herself."

One day, she developed a photograph of a mass grave of Jews who had just been murdered. Peering closely at the print, she recognized members of her own family. She hid the negative in a box of photo paper to assure it would remain safe and unseen.

Schulman fled to the dense forests that surrounded the town, where she joined the Molotava Brigade, a partisan group comprising mostly escaped Soviet Red Army POWs, almost all men and non-Jews, who carried out frequent guerrilla missions. Faye was deputized as a nurse.

"She knew nothing of medicine, but quickly got over her

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squeamishness”—to the point where she performed open-air surgeries on an operating table made of tree branches and using vodka to numb pain, even lancing her own infected flesh, says the recently published *The Light of Days: The Untold Story of Women Resistance Fighters in Hitler’s Ghettos* by Montreal-born author Judy Batalion.

She was barely into her 20s. “I had lost my youth in a painful way,” Faye reflected, as Batalion relates.

She was able to retrieve her old photography equipment during a raid on her hometown in which she happily participated, and over the next two years, used her clunky German camera, a Photo-Porst Nurnberg Compur, to take dozens of pictures that captured a rare side of partisan activity—of camaraderie and a sense of purpose.

She developed the photos by creating a makeshift darkroom with blankets, and while on missions, she buried the camera and tripod for safekeeping, said the American Society for Yad Vashem in a tribute.

She made prints by placing the negative onto the light-sensitive photographic paper and holding it toward the sun.

She gave her fellow fighters the photos. “They treasured their pictures and respected me for it,” she said in a 2009 interview.

But all the while, she had to conceal her Jewish identity from the violently anti-Semitic Soviet partisans in her brigade. On Passover, she ate only potatoes.

Going through the mountains of records and photos left behind, Schulman’s grandson, Michael Tward, said that “as many photos (we saw) and stories we heard, it’s just an absolute drop in the bucket compared to what we’re finding.”

Among them is a treasure trove of pictures of her hometown, Lenin, before the war. They show her family leading normal lives, smiling, out for a stroll, frolicking on a beach.

“That’s one of the things that’s so shocking because before the war, she obviously had no idea what was about to happen,” Tward said.

Schulman’s wartime images—those she took herself and those taken of her—are significant, said Doris Bergen, a historian of the Holocaust at the University of Toronto.

“They show the many faces of armed resistance. Those faces belonged to women and men, to Jews and non-Jews, to hardened, somber people who look older than they could possibly have been, and to attractive youths with dazzling smiles and sparkling eyes, like Faye,” Bergen wrote in an email.

The photos are also important as material objects, she added.

“They speak to the conscious efforts of partisan resisters to create a record and communicate their message. Why else would a young photographer with no military training be a valued member of a partisan unit? Schulman’s photos show partisans as they wanted to be seen.”

For example, one photograph in Schulman’s memoirs shows four bodies in open caskets, surrounded by a group of mourners all facing the camera. The caption reads, “Harmony in death. Jewish and gentile partisans buried in one grave, 1943.”

“Arranging, taking, developing, preserving, and showing this image demonstrated, or at least imagined, solidarity between Jews and non-Jews against a common enemy,” Bergen noted.

Another shows Schulman resplendent in a leopard print coat and matching cap, aiming a rifle—expertly, it appears—with a splendid winter forest behind her. “This is my ‘new’ automatic

rifle,” reads her caption. “I really had to practice how to shoot this one.”

Schulman’s partisan photos live on in books, exhibits, commemorative events, and websites, “where they illuminate the existence and vitality of Jewish resistance to the Holocaust.”

After liberation, Faye married Morris Schulman, also a Jewish partisan. The couple “enjoyed a prosperous life as decorated Soviet partisans,” according to the Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation, but wanted to leave Poland. They lived in the Landsberg displaced persons camp in Germany for the next three years and immigrated to Canada in 1948.

Following the war, Schulman didn’t allow herself to experience the joy she felt before the Holocaust, out of a sense of guilt, said Tward. “She decided it was not fair for her to enjoy music. She cried herself to sleep every night.”

Only towards the end of her life did she reconnect with that old joy, singing Russian and Polish songs, he said.

Schulman spoke publicly about her war experience for decades. “Sometimes (the) bygone world feels almost more real to me than the present,” she wrote, as Batalion’s book relates.

Schulman is survived by two children, Sidney and Susan, six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

“I want people to know that there was resistance,” she once said. “Jews did not go like sheep to the slaughter. I was a photographer. I have pictures. I have proof.”

She never parted with her rugged camera. “It has so many memories and so many stories and so many things happened,” she said once. “This camera has seen everything.” ■

More passings The CJN covered in 2021

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