

Daily Announcements

Here is an array of daily announcements that can be used to convey interesting facts about the Jewish community in Canada and in Ontario. This is an easy way to participate in the celebration of Jewish Heritage Month and to contribute to cultural understanding.

1. The month of May is designated as Jewish Heritage Month by both the governments of Canada and Ontario. Throughout the month, there are many events and celebrations commemorating the ways that Jewish Canadians contribute to communities across the country. The month of May was chosen as, according to the Jewish Heritage Month Act of Ontario, “May is a significant month for the Jewish Canadian community. Israeli Independence Day (Yom Ha-Atzmaut) and Holocaust Remembrance Day (Yom Ha-Shoah), frequently occur in May, as do various Jewish artistic and cultural events.”
2. A Jewish person is someone who identifies culturally and/or religiously with Judaism and the Jewish community. Hebrew is a language used in ancient texts and as a modern language by many Jewish people around the world. The word *Shalom* is a Hebrew word used to say hello and goodbye. It also means peace.
3. Many Jewish people who immigrated to Canada in the early 1900s spoke the language *Yiddish*. This is a language made up of Hebrew and a German dialect. Many *Yiddish* words have become a part of our everyday language. Examples are the words “*mensch*” and “*chutzpah*.”
4. Did you know that Jewish people have been amongst some of Canada’s best-known actors and singers, including Drake, Leonard Cohen, Seth Rogan, and Howie Mandel?
5. 3 Jewish brothers in London, Ontario in 1918, founded Warner Studios, a motion picture company known for producing popular shows and movies such as *Bugs Bunny* and the *Harry Potter* and *Batman* film series.
6. There are many places around the Greater Toronto Area dedicated to a Jewish person in recognition of the service they provided their community. An example of this is the well-known Nathan Phillips Square. Nathan Phillips was the first Jewish mayor of Toronto and served from 1955 – 1962.
7. The comic book character *Superman* was first drawn by comic book artist Joe Schuster, who was born in Toronto. Joe Schuster was the son of Jewish immigrants. His father, Julian, came from the Netherlands and his mother, Ida, was from the Ukraine.

8. In August of 1933, during a baseball game in a Toronto park, Christie Pits, the city's largest recorded riot took place. An antisemitic group showed up at the game where one of the teams was made up of Jewish players, and displayed signs with swastika emblems resulting in a violent riot that lasted a most of the night.
9. Lorne Michaels (born Lorne David Lipowitz) was born on a kibbutz in Israel on November 17, 1944, to Florence (née Becker) and Henry Abraham Lipowitz. His family emigrated to Toronto, Ontario, Canada when he was an infant. He is Jewish. Michaels and his two younger siblings were raised in Toronto where he attended the Forest Hill Collegiate Institute. He graduated from University College, Toronto, where he majored in English, in 1966. Michaels was awarded the Order of Canada in 2002
10. Jewish people have a long history of serving Canada in many ways. Ezekiel Hart was one of the first Jewish citizens to serve in the Canadian military. He served in defense of Lower Canada in the War of 1812 and rose to the rank of Colonel. Herbert Grey was Canada's first Jewish federal cabinet minister and was the longest continuously-serving Member of Parliament serving over 40 years in the riding of Essex West, Ontario.
11. On June 5, 1832, Jewish citizens living in Lower Canada were given full civil rights under the Emancipation Act 27 years before the United Kingdom passed a similar law. This Act paved the way for Colonel Ezekiel Hart, son of the first Jewish settler Aaron Hart, to sit in the Legislature and take the oath of office in the name of his Jewish faith. Until this time, though Ezekiel Hart was lawfully elected to represent his constituents, he could not take the oath of office and sit in the Legislature since only the oath of Christians was recognized.
12. The first Jewish woman appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada is Rosalie Silberman Abella. She was born in a Displaced Persons camp in Germany after the Second World War. Her father, a lawyer, was a Holocaust survivor and assisted other survivors in the Allied Zone following the war. Rosalie Abella continues to serve on the Supreme Court of Canada today.
13. Calgary's iconic cowboy hat, which is now symbolic of the Calgary Stampede and is regularly given to visiting dignitaries, was made Smithbilt Hats, a company founded in 1918 by Jewish Canadian Morris Shumiatcher.
14. The man often described as the most important architect of the 20th century was born in Toronto. Frank Owen Goldberg, a Jewish Canadian otherwise known as Frank Gehry, is responsible for designing some of the most famous buildings in the world like the Spanish Guggenheim Museum, the Los Angeles Disney Concert Hall, and the Holocaust Monument in Ottawa.

15. Many Canadian entrepreneurs from Jewish immigrant families worked hard to build small family businesses into thriving major companies. People such as Murray Koffler of Shoppers Drug Mart and Isadore Sharp, co-founder of the Four Seasons Hotel.
16. Jennifer Podemski is an award-winning Film and Television Producer and Actor born and raised in Toronto, Canada. Of mixed First Nations and Israeli decent, Jennifer began her acting career as a teen. Her career blossomed when she was cast as Pique in CBC's *The Diviners* followed by a starring role in Bruce McDonald's *Dance Me Outside*.
17. Every year, in the weeks leading up to November 11th, Canada's Remembrance Day, people purchase and wear red poppies sold by the Royal Canadian Legion to honour fallen Canadian soldiers. Did you know that the co-founder of the Royal Canadian Legion was a Jewish philanthropist named Lillian Bilsky Frieman, lovingly nicknamed The Poppy Lady?
18. Cecil Hart was one of the finest cases of greatness in Canadian hockey. Head coach of the Montreal Canadiens, Hart led the team to two Stanley Cup Championships. Cecil inherited a passion for hockey from his father, Dr. David Hart, who donated the Hart Trophy to the NHL in 1923. Given to the player judged most valuable to his team, the trophy was later replaced with the Hart Memorial trophy in 1960, in commemoration of Cecil.
19. The first Jewish Canadians settled in Halifax in 1750, a year before the city would be established as a fort. When Jewish people fled persecution in Russia during the late 1800s, many settled in Maritime communities. Smaller communities with mines, like Glace Bay, had large amounts of Jewish mine workers who later opened stores and other businesses.
20. Temple Emanu-El in Victoria, British Columbia is the oldest still functioning synagogue in Canada. It was built in 1863. Some of its notable members include Lumley Franklin, who was the first Jewish mayor in Canada and Samuel Schultz who was the first Jewish Canadian appointed as a judge.
21. William Shatner, OC (born March 22, 1931) is a Canadian actor, author, producer, director and singer. In his seven decades of television, Shatner became a cultural icon for his portrayal of Captain James T. Kirk of the USS *Enterprise* in the *Star Trek* franchise. He has written a series of books chronicling his experiences playing Captain Kirk and being a part of *Star Trek* and has co-written several novels set in the *Star Trek* universe. He has also written a series of science fiction novels called *TekWar* that were adapted for television.

22. The first Jewish congregation in Ontario still exists today and continues to hold services. It is located on Bathurst Street south of Eglinton. It is called Holy Blossom and it was formed in 1856.
23. Faibish Bay in the province of Saskatchewan is named after Lance Sergeant Jack Faibish of the Royal Canadian Artillery who died in service in 1944. Boys of Major Lane in Toronto is named after six Jewish teenagers who grew up on the same street and served together in World War Two.
24. The first significant wave of Jewish immigrants to make Canada their home arrived with General Jeffery Amherst in 1760. Most of these Jewish settlers emigrated from the United States and settled in urban centres, the majority in Montreal.
25. Jewish Canadians have had an indelible impact on Canadian public policy over the 20th Century and to the present day, with significant public service from – to name just a few – David Lewis, Herb Gray, Irwin Cotler, Rosalie Abella, Marshall Rothstein, and Canada's first Jewish Finance Minister – Joe Oliver.
26. You probably know Paula Abdul as a judge on the X-Factor. What you might not know about her is that she is Jewish! You don't believe us? We couldn't believe it either. Abdul's father was born into the Syrian-Jewish community, while her mother grew up to Ashkenazi parents in Manitoba, Canada.