

### **Lt. Adele Johnson (Billinkoff)**

Born February 22, 1914, Adele Billinkoff trained as a nurse and enlisted in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps in 1942, becoming an officer and serving for nearly two years overseas, including over a year in combat zones in the Southwest Pacific. After the war, she returned to Winnipeg and was living at 163 McAdam Avenue through the 1950s and 1960s; she later married Jack Johnson and relocated to the Aleutian Islands and the United States, where she continued her nursing work.

# Thank you for joining us today!

**For more historical information, photos, and info about how you can get involved, visit [www.sevenoakshs.ca](http://www.sevenoakshs.ca)**

# Seven Oaks Historical Society

*proudly presents*

## Matriarchs of Matheson & McAdam



### **Dr. Sheila Gelber (Portigal)**

Born in Winnipeg around 1934, Sheila Gelber excelled at St. John's High School, earning straight A's and 100 percent in chemistry. She became one of only two women in her University of Manitoba medical class in the early 1950s and pursued pathology. By the early 1950s, she was living at the Portigal family home 190 McAdam Avenue while studying medicine before moving to Montreal for postgraduate training, where she met her husband, lawyer Nahum Gelber. She went on to build a long career as a physician while raising a family.



**We meet the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm at the Bleak House Centre, 1637 Main Street. Everyone is welcome.**



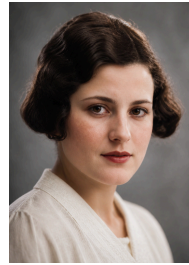
*A look at the women who shaped this North End neighbourhood*

### **Hosted by Kenneth Ingram**



## Evelyn Luella Ames (Moore)

Born in 1889 in Manitou, Manitoba, Evelyn Ames was a pioneering home economist who transformed rural women's education through Manitoba's Extension Service, creating a "local leader" model that expanded women's skills, leadership, and economic independence during the Great Depression. By the mid-1930s, she was living at 70 Matheson Avenue while carrying out this work across the province, later becoming Supervisor of Home Economics and being inducted into the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame.



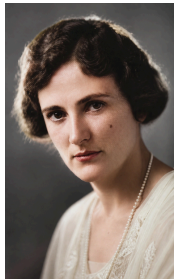
## Dora Sheinker

Established in the early 20th century, the Jewish Orphanage at 123 Matheson Avenue was a key North End institution, but by the 1930s, a shift from institutional care to foster homes led to its closure. By the 1950s, the site became Rosh Pina Synagogue, reflecting changing community needs. In its final years, women played key roles, including cook **Nina Karp** and nurses **Bella Nurenberg** and **Dora Sheinker**, who left in 1935 while Nurenberg remained through the orphanage's last phase.



## Evelyn Blankstein

Born in Winnipeg in 1913, Evelyn Blankstein was among the early women architects in Manitoba, graduating from the University of Manitoba in 1935 at a time when very few women entered the field. She built a long career specializing in architectural glass, contributing to storefronts, theatres, and commercial buildings that helped shape mid-century Winnipeg. By the 1950s, she was living at 141 McAdam Avenue while established in her profession, and also became one of the first women with full membership at Glendale Golf Club.



## Ruth Matheson

Born in 1911, Ruth Matheson was a Winnipeg educator who rose to become a school principal at a time when few women held leadership roles, helping open pathways for women in education. She was also active in the Scottish cultural community as a contralto performer at festivals across Canada.

From early adulthood, she was living at 114 Matheson Avenue while building her teaching and leadership career in Manitoba schools and later teaching in England in the 1950s.



## Esther Freada Silverman (Schorr)

Born in 1897 in Dayton, Ohio, Esther Silverman was the wife of Isadore Silverman, founder of Silverman Jewellers. After his death in 1951, she became president of the company and led it at a time when few women held such roles, while raising five children and preparing them to take over the business. By the late 1950s, she was living at 132 Matheson Avenue with her family and was active in organizations including Hadassah and B'nai B'rith Women while continuing her business leadership for several more decades.



## The Honourable Susan V. Devine

Born in 1950, The Honourable Susan V. Devine entered the legal profession in the 1970s when women were still rare in law and was called to the Manitoba Bar in 1976. By 1986, she was living at 156 McAdam Avenue, and in 1988 she was appointed to the Provincial Court of Manitoba, part of an early generation of women judges reshaping the judiciary; she was later awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002 for her contributions. She also played a leadership role nationally through the International Association of Women Judges, helping build networks for women in law.