

Origins: A Family Memoir

Report to the Langara Research Committee

From Rachel Mines, Department of English

I would like to thank the Committee for granting me \$3000 in research funding to allow me to carry out a two-part family memoir project as follows:

- to research and write a scholarly biography of my mother, probably the only Holocaust survivor who was a Canadian citizen by birth, for publication in an academic journal; and
- to create a website, of a high academic standard, about the Jewish community of Skuodas, Lithuania, its life and character between the world wars, and details of its destruction in the Holocaust.

I am happy to report that I have successfully carried out both parts of this project.

I have completed a draft of my scholarly biography which is now in the hands of two colleagues for review and feedback before I revise and submit it for publication later this spring. I have attached a copy of the draft for the committee to examine if desired.

The website, *Shtetl Shkud*, is online at <<http://shtetlshkud.com>>. I used my research grant, in addition to the costs of research itself, to fund translations of the following works (see “Of Interest” on the right of the home page):

- Hana Shaf-Brener, *Testimony on the Murder of the Jews of Shkud, Lithuania* (Hebrew to English)
- *Memorial Book of Skuodas* (Hebrew and Yiddish to English)
- *Jews in the Memory of Skuodas People* (Lithuanian to English)

Research funding was also used to translate the family information chart under “Families” and for translation of parts of the *Memorial Book of Skuodas* and the site’s Welcome and History pages into Lithuanian (see the top bar): a total of about 230 pages translated in all.

The website is not yet complete, in the sense that I plan to add information to individual families on the “Families” page and to create an online community with the blog and a Facebook page. I would also like to contact educators and researchers in Lithuania with an aim to using the site for Holocaust education there. Now that the site has grown to an appreciable size, thanks to Langara’s support, those plans are feasible.

I anticipate that both the article and the website will help to promote Langara’s reputation as a scholarly institution, and I plan to use both as the basis for lectures (in and outside the classroom) and possibly conference presentations.

Again, I would like to thank the Research Committee for helping me to realize my projects.