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Glace Bay • we used to put onto them tak- tikum. So we never used to have any ready. Never had any. So when someone died we used to go to one of the stores and buy 5 or 6 yards of linen, the best white linen they had • and the women used to come into the house and sew it, the taktikum. A little different for the men and women. For women, we'd maik pants and a jacket on top like a shirt. But the men had an extra one-piece garment and over that he'd have a shirt. Three-piece for men, women two. Then we'd make • it wouldn't be a yarmulki (skull? cap) • just a cap out of the same linen. The women had one too. I'm not sure what it looked like because the women would dress the women themselves. We'd only do the men. And for a man we put the tallis (prayer shawl) down in the box, put him in, and wrap the tallis around him. And then for a pillow we'd make like a lit? tle sack. And when the gravedigger would dig the grave, we would go up to the ceme? tery and get earth and put it in this bag and tie it. And we would put that on the bottom of the casket • and that would be his pillow. But the earth would have to be from the grave. After the body is all prepared the C'hevra Kaddisha would open the top of the box and then put this underneath of him. Then we used to put a little stone on each eye, that he shouldn't have big eyes to see. Used to use little stones from the grave, or we could turn around and break a saucer and put a piece over each eye. And to keep them quiet, we would put a little piece o- ver their mouth too. They don't do that to? day. That was years ago we used to do that. A change I made, I found out that Sydney used to get the taktikum from New York al? ready made. I got a dozen suits • 6 for men, 6 for women. And we used to put it away, let it rot, you know what I mean • ?we shouldn't use it. But when we did have to use it, all we had to do was just take out a woman's or a man's. The undertaker always had 2 or 3 coffins of the type we used. If someone died in the hospital, say, I would go up there with 2 or 3 men from the C'hevra Kaddisha • and the undertaker would come up there with the Kearse. And we'd take them home and take care of them in the house. The undertaker would have the board, the big boilers and the dippers for the water. The C'hevra Kaddisha had all that stuff but it was kept at the undertaker's. The body would be placed onto a board and there'd be a place for the head to rise and • it would be like on horses, one~lower' so the feet were lower. When we wash them, we just fill the pitchers up and pour the water from the hair right down. Then we have like rags and we just dry them. We don't comb the hair, nothing like that. No lipstick. We don't do anything like that, even today. Just pure water, lukewarm water. The undertaker had nothing to do with this. The only thing he used was the hearse. Even today the undertaker does nothing, doesn't touch the body at all. Say they died during the night or 8 or 9 o'clock in the morning and we can turn a- round and get them ready by 2 o'clock in the afternoon • they're buried that after? noon. They don't keep them overnight. Then, if we do keep them overnight we have to keep people sitting with them all night. Again, if someone has to stay with the body, it's the C'hevra Kaddisha that stays there. Certain hours. Generally the family sits till 11, 12 o'clock. Then 12 to 3 two will sit. Then 3 to 6 a couple more would come



in and relieve them. Once the coffin was closed it's closed. Once the C'hevra Kaddisha prepared the body, the only time the coffin was opened was when we'd go to the graveyard for the lit? tle stones and the earth. We'd put the pil? low under his head. Then we'd put the top of the box on. And there would be round wooden pegs down and the box was sealed • not the family or nobody would see the body. Mrs. Green: Friends or women from the C'hev- ra Kaddisha prepare the home f6r when the mourners come back from the cemetery. They eovfer the mirrors and pictures so that you shouldn't see into it, because you're lia? ble to bring sadness to yourself. Nate: Af? ter the funeral, the family sits down at the table and friends or the C'hevra Kaddisha women serve the family and they have their lunch. Then during the next 7 days they sit Shiva. It begins right after the funeral. You're supposed to sit on little wooden benches, everyone from the family sits on these. You're not supposed to sit on a soft chair for 7 days. Mrs. Green: You keep your shoes off. You don't shave, you don't bath, you don't go out at all. And when you come from the graveyard, you have to wash your hands with water before you go in the house. Nate: You see, the body is supposed to be unclean. Mrs. Green: And you're not sup- .posed to wipe your hands. They keep the wa? ter at the door. Nate: And say you're an outsider and you go to your own home, you do the same thing before you walk into your CONTINUED NEXT PAGE A Photo Heritage of Nova Scotian Women From the exhibit "A Photo Heritage of Nova Scotian Women," collected and prepared by Cheryl Lean' Jennifer MacLean, and Diane .Tj' Phillips, of Reel Life. Communities wishing ' to display this exhibit should contact Tom Moinet, Travelling Exhibits Office, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, P. O. Box 2262, Halifax, N.S. The exhibit comprises 102 prints. For the small commxmity centre or fire hall, there is an edited version of 30 prints available.