



# VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

NEWSLETTER OF THE JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY  
OF THE CONEJO VALLEY AND VENTURA COUNTY (JGSCV)

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I remember being asked by a relative why I liked to study dead people. Genealogy is more than the study of one's dead ancestors — it is the anchoring of our heritage. We remember those who came before us in the Yizkor prayers that we just recited on Yom Kippur. We also honor and remember those before us by studying their lives. Finding new relatives, adding branches on our trees, enriches our lives. In the last few years I found four unknown cousins living within 20 minutes of me. Without the pursuit of genealogy this would not have occurred.

Through the JewishGen Discussion Group, [www.jewishgen.org/JewishGen/DiscussionGroup.htm](http://www.jewishgen.org/JewishGen/DiscussionGroup.htm) I was able to find one of my mentioned cousins. JewishGen also permits us to reach out to find our unknown relatives by listing the names and towns we are researching in the JewishGen Family Finder [www.jewishgen.org/jgff/](http://www.jewishgen.org/jgff/). Already one of JGSCV's new members contacted me after discovering on the Family Finder that we were researching the same small town in Poland.

We have had a remarkable response to our new JGS — for this we thank you. To be able to bring you programs that will help with your family research and learn about the lives and times of our ancestors, we need more dues paying members. If you are attending the meetings and receiving this newsletter and you are not yet a member of JGSCV, we encourage you to consider joining now. Dues paid now cover the period through the end of 2006.

Looking forward to seeing you at our November meeting.

### ADVANCE NOTICE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Sundays at Adat Elohim, 2 - 4 P.M.  
2240 E. Hillcrest Drive in Thousand Oaks

November 13, 2005: "Jewish Life in China During the Past Thousand Years; an Overlooked Genealogical Connection" presented by Werner Frank (see next page).

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December 4, 2005: "Putting Flesh on the Bones" presented by Ron Arons

## JGSCV's Second Meeting Topic: An Introduction to JewishGen Databases

On October 23, 2005 the Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV) held its second meeting at the site of co-sponsor, Temple Adat Elohim in Thousand Oaks, California. Once more interest in genealogy was shown by the local community with 75 individuals in attendance.

Our featured speaker was the well known figure in Jewish genealogy, Warren Blatt, vice president and editor-in-chief of JewishGen. Warren provided an overview of major databases found on [www.jewishgen.org](http://www.jewishgen.org), including such key resources as Jewish Family Finder, ShtetlSeeker, Family Tree of the Jewish People and Discussion Group Archives.

President Jan Meisels Allen thanked the members of Temple Adat Elohim for their willingness to support the start up of our organization by providing facilities for this meeting.

Sixteen additional new members signed up during this meeting which gives us a total 77 of paid up members. This level of participation assures us a viable organization that can now plan its future into 2006.

### TIPS OF THE MONTH

JewishGen's Holocaust Database includes a collection of databases containing information about Holocaust victims and survivors. It incorporates nearly 100 datasets with over one million entries. See [www.jewishgen.org/databases/Holocaust](http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Holocaust).

*Nu? What's New* is a free newsletter published biweekly by Avotaynu, Inc. and contains topical news related to Jewish genealogy. This excellent source of information is available by signing up on the Internet site [www.avotaynu.com/nuwhatsnew.htm](http://www.avotaynu.com/nuwhatsnew.htm).

# Learn About Four Jewish Migrations to China: From the Song Dynasty to W.W.II

Come to the November meeting of the Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County!\*

(\*and surrounding areas)

The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV), a newly-formed group, will hold a general meeting, co-sponsored with Temple Adat Elohim, on November 13, 2005 at Temple Adat Elohim 2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

## The Topic:

### Jewish Life in China During the Past Thousand Years

Do Jews have an overlooked genealogical connection?

Werner Frank, a founding member and newsletter editor of JGSCV, recently returned from touring traces of once Jewish life in China. He will present a unique historical look that encompasses China as a hospitable home to Jews, a haven for immigrants fleeing Nazi terror, and Jewish contributions to Chinese society during four Jewish migrations to:

Kaifeng- from Persia via the Silk Road (Song Dynasty);

Shanghai- from India and Iraq-the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century;

Harbin - the Russian Migration-end of 19<sup>th</sup>- early 20<sup>th</sup> century;

Shanghai- World War II -from Harbin, Austria, Germany, Poland



JEWES ARRIVE BY CARAVAN IN KAIFENG



CONTEMPORARY CHINESE JEWS FROM KAIFENG

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