



VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

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

Volume 4, Issue 1

October 2008

BEGINNING OUR FOURTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Seventy-five JGSCV members and friends helped celebrate our 3rd anniversary. Thank you to all who have worked to make JGSCV a reality and a special thank you to Temple Adat Elohim, without whose support as program co-sponsor, we could not bring you the wonderful programming each month.

On September 7th we were entertained with wonderful music from Poland, Romania, Russia and the Ukraine by "The Klutzmer Band", all congregants of Simi Valley's Congregation B'nai Emet: Irwin Cohen, Gail Demirtas, Bob and Barbara Poehls and JGSCV founding member and board member Frank Tessel.



KLUTZMER BAND ENTERTAINS

Our speaker on *Jewish Surnames* was JGSCV's very own founding and board member Warren Blatt, managing director of JewishGen.org an affiliate of the Museum of Jewish Heritage. Warren's fascinating slide presentation in pdf format will be placed on the JGSCV website under previous meetings, handouts.

Warren dispelled several myths:

Myth 1. There are Jewish Surnames.

Truth: One can't tell if someone is Jewish by their surname.

Myth 2. Everyone with the same surname is related.

Truth: Many people with the same surname are not related.

Myth 3. Names were changed at Ellis Island

Truth: No names were changed at Ellis Island. The manifest was made out at the port of embarkation and the names had to match the manifest.

Myth 4: Most Surnames are meaningful

Truth: Jews were required to have surnames starting in the early 1800's. They were based on patronymics/metronymics; toponyms, occupations, personal characteristics, Kohen/ Levite status and rabbinical surnames. Surnames were not bought!

JGSCV has started its annual membership drive for 2009. Joining or renewing now will provide membership through December 2009. See page 4 for a membership form or print one off the website (www.JGSCV.org).

We look forward to seeing you at our October 5 meeting for roundtable discussions. Bring your questions and talk to others studying the same areas and subjects. See page 3 for the list of roundtables-and some more will be given that are not yet listed.

Five of the board member positions are completing their terms and we will hold elections later this year. The nominations committee members are: Hal Bookbinder, chairman, Warren Blatt, board representative and Ellen Kossoris general member.

On behalf of the JGSCV Board of Directors, have a very healthy, happy and prosperous New Year... .
L'Shana Tova!

Jan Meisels Allen

FOR SCHEDULE OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS, SEE PAGE 3

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL CYCLE FOR 2009 BEGINS NOW, SEE PAGE 4

ABOUT JGSCV.....

The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County meets once a month, usually on a Sunday. Meetings are oriented to the needs of the novice as well as the more experienced genealogist. Members share materials, research methods and ideas, as well as research success or failures. Members have access to the JGSCV library located on a special shelf at the Agoura Hills Public Library. Members also receive our monthly newsletter which is circulated by email.

2009 dues are \$25.00 for a single membership and \$30.00 for a household unit. To join, please send appropriate amount in check made out to JGSCV and addressed to Helene Rosen at 28912 Fountain wood St., Agoura Hills, CA 91301. Obtain new membership or renewal forms on our website at www.jgscv.org by selecting the membership button.

Remember, signing up beginning October 2008 provides membership valid for all of 2009.

CALL FOR HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

The Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People in Jerusalem is a remarkable resource for data and historical information about our ancestral towns and our ancestors. The Central Archives is looking for personal or family correspondence written from Eastern Europe to relatives in the United States, Israel or elsewhere. These are important sources for historical research, especially for the years preceding the outbreak of World War II, but also for other periods. Many people holding such letters have sentiments with respect to these manuscripts and may be unaware of their historical significance.

The Central Archives is very interested in collecting such material, in the original or photocopy. Do you have any of these historically significant items? Are you willing to deposit them or copies of them with the Central Archives? I hope some of you can help. If you can, send your materials directly to the Central Archives, care of Hadassah Assouline. Here is their contact information: **THE CENTRAL ARCHIVES FOR THE HISTORY OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE**

Location: Hi-Tech Village 3/4,
Giv'at Ram Campus,

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Postal Address: POB 39077,

Jerusalem 91390

E-Mail: archives@vms.huji.ac.il

Website; <http://sites.huji.ac.il/archives>

BEIDER AND MORSE CREATE A NEW INDEXING SYSTEM

Alexander Beider and Stephen P. Morse have collaborated to create a new indexing system based on phonetics. Gary Mokotoff predicts it will eventually replace the Daitch-Mokotoff (D-M) Soundex System for large Internet databases.

Try the new Beider-Morse Phonetic Matching System at <http://stevemorse.org/phonetics/beider.php>. The site allows you to search four major surname books published by Avotaynu:

- *A Dictionary of Jewish Surnames from the Kingdom of Poland*
- *A Dictionary of Jewish Surnames from Galicia*
- *A Dictionary of Jewish Surnames from the Russian Empire: Revised Edition*
- *A Dictionary of German Jewish Surnames*

When searching for a surname, the site produces results in both the Beider-Morse Phonetic Matching System and the Daitch-Mokotoff Soundex System.

WALDHEIM CEMETERY SOCIETY LIST

Steve Lasky has compiled a list of the societies that own burial plots at the major Chicago area Jewish Waldheim Cemetery in Forest Park, Illinois. When applicable, the name of the town and/or country that is associated with a particular plot is added. About half of the society plots at Waldheim are associated with a particular town and/or country in Eastern Europe. At least forty are associated each with today's Poland and Ukraine, eighteen with Belarus, twelve with Lithuania, three with Moldova. See www.museumoffamilyhistory.com/cp-waldheim-cemetery-societies.htm

A RICH SOURCE OF GENEALOGICAL DATA

The Douglas E. Goldman Jewish Genealogy Center at Beth Hatefutsoth - the Museum of the Jewish Diaspora in Tel Aviv, Israel, has a computerized database containing many family trees from all over the world. Check out the "Family Tree of the Jewish People" as well as the graphic "Gallery of Family Trees. And, there is much more.

You can upload your own GEDCOM file directly to the website or send it as an attachment in an e-mail.

See www.bh.org.il/Genealogy



Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County* (JGSCV) (*and surrounding areas)

The JGSCV will hold a general meeting on Sunday, October 5,
2008 at Temple Adat Elohim 2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand
Oaks,
1:30-3:30 p.m.

Note earlier start time!

"Roundtable Discussions"

Experienced members of JGSCV will lead small groups of like-minded attendees who will discuss and help on areas of interest: American Research, JewishGen, German Research, Getting Started With Your Research, Polish Research, Lithuanian Research, How to Write Your book and more. There will be two 45-minute sessions enabling everyone to participate in two areas of interest at the roundtables. Our traveling library books will be available for these discussions. This is a perfect way to meet others interested in the same geographic areas and research subjects as you!

Meeting co-sponsored with Temple Adat Elohim

There is no charge to attend the meeting. Anyone may join JGSCV.

For more information contact information@JGSCV.org

See: www.JGSCV.org or call Jan Meisels Allen @ 818-889-6616

Future JGSCV Meeting Dates

**All Meetings are held at Temple Adat Elohim
2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks**

November 10, 2008 (Monday at 7:00 PM): Jon Entine speaking on "Abraham's Children: Race, Identity and the DNA of the Chosen People"

December 8, 2008: (Monday at 7:00 PM): Steve Morse speaking on "One-Step Web pages: A Potpourri of Genealogical Search Tools"

January 4, 2009 (Sunday at 1:30 PM): Ron Arons speaking on "The 'Musical' Chicago and all that Genealogical Jazz"

February 8, 2009 (Sunday at 1:30 PM): Arthur Benveniste speaking on "Secret Jews: History and Culture of Crypto-Jews"

Subsequent meetings: March 1, 2009; April 5, 2009; May 3, 2009; June 7, 2009

2009 Membership Renewal Form

Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV)

2009 Annual Dues:

Dues paid now are good through December 2009!

Check one:

Single \$ 25.00 _____ + \$1.00** Family* \$30.00 _____ + \$2.00**

*family defined as two people living in the same household

** \$1 per person is a voluntary donation to the IAJGS Stern Award, granted annually when it recognizes institutions for outstanding work in the creation and availability of resources for Jewish Genealogy.

Additional voluntary contributions:

Library Acquisition Fund \$ _____ Programs Fund \$ _____

(suggested minimum voluntary contribution for either fund \$5.00)

Make check out to: JGSCV

Mail to: Helene Rosen
28912 Fountainwood st.
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

Name (Print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____

Day telephone _____ Evening telephone _____

E-mail address _____

(This is very important as all communication is done by e-mail!)

REMINDER TO REGISTER

Ralphs Community Contribution Program will support JGSCV through your purchases of goods at Ralphs markets, and at no cost to you. Please register for this community outreach program by following the steps outlined on our website: www.jgscv.org and click on "notices."

Now whenever you shop at Ralphs, JGSCV will receive a percentage of what you spend.

USCIS LAUNCHES NEW GENEALOGY FEE-FOR SERVICE PROGRAM

August 13, 2008 was the launch date for the USCIS new genealogy fee-for-service program. This program was reported in the August 2008 *Venturing Into Your Past*. The website for this program is: www.uscis.gov/genealogy (if you go to the www.uscis.gov, which is constantly changing you, may have difficulty accessing the correct area).

The fees for requesting the documents:

Per index request \$20.00

Per record/file request; From a microfilm \$20.00; From paper file \$35.00

Please read the frequently asked questions (FAQs) before completing the form. To access the form click on the right hand related links: "How To Make a Genealogy Request". There are two forms. At this time the forms: Form G-1041 for an index search or Form G 1041A for a records request, must be printed off and mailed to the address given on the site. It is anticipated that forms will be able to be electronically submitted in early 2009. When completing the forms, give ALL the information you have. Read the directions carefully. If you don't provide what is requested you may have to reapply with paying a second application fee. The G 1041A form for record copies requires you to include one (or more) different file number(s) (for example an Alien (A) number or naturalization certificate number). Remember, the VISA number on the passenger manifest is not the VISA number for USCIS purposes. You may already have the certificate number if you have the court naturalization records or the original certificate.

The types of records available under the USCIS Genealogy program are:

Naturalization Certificate Files (C-files) from September 27, 1906 to April 1, 1956

Alien Registration Forms from August 1, 1940 to March 31, 1944

Visa files from July 1, 1924 to March 31, 1944

Registry Files from March 2, 1929 to March 31, 1944

Alien Files (A-files) numbered below 8 million (A8000000) and documents therein dated prior to May 1, 1951

Continue to file Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests for:

Files of living subjects

Naturalization records after April 1, 1956

Visa records for immigrant arrivals on or after May 1 1951 in A files

A files above 8 million and documents dated on or after May 1, 1951

Registry documents after May 1, 1951

Alien registration files on or after May 1, 1951 (in A Files)

As with any new records service, it is anticipated that the program at first will be swamped. Therefore, you may wish to wait a few weeks before submitting your form.

The reason the USCIS must charge for the documents and any search for the records is due to other regulations by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB rule from 1993) all government offices are required that user fees recover the full cost of services provided. USCIS is also mandated to charge a fee to recover the full costs of providing research and information due to the Immigration and Nationality Act. If the USCIS does not find the records you are requesting you will NOT receive a refund. The charges are for the staff time whether or not the search is successful.

More information is available in the final rule, which was published May 15, 2008

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-10651.pdf>

Theresienstadt Victim Database - including Death Certificates

The web site www.holocaust.cz, which is primarily designed for Czech education purposes, has added a database of victims of the Theresienstadt concentration camp. Although much of the data seems to be similar to what can be found in Yad Vashem's Shoah database, there's an important addition. For many of the victims who died in Theresienstadt you can now see a digital image of their death certificates (*Todesfallanzeige*). Access at <http://www.holocaust.cz/cz2/victims/victims>. The web page is in Czech only. Google has a utility that will automatically translate web pages from Czech to English, at <http://google.com/translate>. The web site indicates that the Theresienstadt death records are copies of records held in multiple volumes in the Czech National Archives in Prague. Most records contain the individual's birth place, occupation, citizenship, last address, address in Theresienstadt and a cause of death. There are also boxes for the names of the decedent's parents and the names of relatives living in Theresienstadt, along with their address and dates of birth. Information on the individual's last marriage, such as date and place and number of children from the marriage may be included in a few cases. Even though the death certificates were filled out in German, many names are listed in Czech in the database. You also have the option of searching by birth date or last residence. If the name contains any diacritical marks, such as an umlaut, search for the name without the mark (i.e. Lo"wenstein would be Lowenstein, not Loewenstein). Very few records, mostly those with surnames starting with A or B, have digital images of other records attached. These are most often passport applications, which also contain photographs. These applications are apparently stored in the National Archives in Prague as records of the Prague Police Headquarters (*Policejní reditelství v Praze*).

Alex Calzareth, Wantagh, New York

GHETTO THERESIENSTADT Der Aeltestenrat		195.		Sterbemetrik	
T O D E S F A L L A N Z E I G E		27/11/42		Nr. 3875	
Name bei Frauen auch Mädchenname Weil		Vorname Josef		Tr.Nr. 11/3/165	
Geboren am 23./10.1884 in Teubitz, Böhmen		Boz. Teubitz			
Stand verh. ver. Oberpostkontrolleur		Religion		Geschl. männl.	
Staatszugehör. D.R.		Heimatgemeinde Wien			
Letzter Wohnort /Adresse/ Wien					
Wohnhaft in Theresienstadt Gebäude Nr. A II				Zimmer Nr. 41	
Name des Vaters Abraham Weil		Beruf		letzter Wohnort	
Name der Mutter /Mädchen/ Barbara Weil					
Sterbetag 29./8.1942		Sterbestunde 3 ³⁰		Sterbeort THERESIENSTADT	
Genaue Ortsbezeichnung /Gebäude, Zimmer/ A II / Z 41					
Verwandte Name		Trp.Nr. bezw. Wohnort		Wohnadresse bei Gatten u. Kindern Geb. Dat.	
in Theresienstadt		Weil Elise 17/3/166		A II - Z 41 Gattin	
in Pro-tekto-rat					
Tag d. letzt. Eheschliessung 1899		Ort d. letzt. Eheschliessung Wien		Zahl d. Kinder aus letzt. Ehe 2	
Art des Personalausweises Kompart		Nr. 402492		Ausg. 17/11/39 stellt von Pol. Wien	
Behandelnder Arzt Dr. Glaser Paul					
Krankheit/in Blockschrift/ MYODEGENERATIO CORDIS - Nervenachtschwäche					
Todesursache /in Blockschrift/ DEBILITAS CORDIS - Herzschwäche					
Todesbeschau durchgeführt von Dr. Schmitz Karl		Tag u. Stunde d. Todesbeschau 29./8. 1942 3 ⁴⁰			
Ort der Beisetzung		Tag u. Stunde d. Beisetzung			
Theresienstadt, am 29./8. 1942					
Der Totenbeschauner: [Signature]		Der Amtsarzt: [Signature]		Der Chefarzt [Signature]	

Example of a *Todesfallanzeige* (death certificate) issued in Theresienstadt

- We welcome new members: Donald Bing, Judith Forusz, Paula Gould, Allan & Carole Linderman, Judi Morningstar

JGSCV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Jan Meisels Allen, President | president@jgscv.org | Stewart Bernstein, Member-at-large | stewart@jgscv.org |
| Warren Blatt, Member Education | education@jgscv.org | Debra Kay Blatt, Information Chairman | information@jgscv.org |
| Dorothy Drilich, Secretary | secretary@jgscv.org | Werner Frank, Newsletter Editor | newslettereditor@jgscv.org |
| Fred Land, Treasurer | treasurer@jgscv.org | Helene Rosen, Membership | membership@jgscv.org |
| Frank Tessel, Cemetery Project | | frank@jgscv.org | |

Raya Sagi, Librarian: librarian@jgscv.org
Mailing address: 6052 Hackers Lane, Agoura Hills, CA 91301 Phone: 818-889-6616
Website: www.jgscv.org David Oseas, Webmaster: webmaster@jgscv.org