



VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

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

Volume 4, Issue 12

September, 2009

President's Letter:

This month's newsletter will focus on the recent, excellent 29th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. The conference was co-sponsored by the IAJGS and the JGS of Greater Philadelphia. It was a great team effort! See pages 3-4 for highlights from the conference.

The IAJGS Board Officers are elected every two years on the odd years—the Directors are elected every two years on the even years. This the year the following officers were elected for two years:
Michael Goldstein, IAJGS President, (Jerusalem, Israel)
Michael Brenner IAJGS Vice President-Membership, (Las Vegas),
Joel Spector, IAJGS Secretary, (Cherry Hill, NJ)
Paul Silverstone, Treasurer, (New York, NY)

Our 4th anniversary will be celebrated on August 30th with our own JGSCV Board Member, Warren Blatt, Managing Director, JewishGen.org talking on "Jewish Given Names" and the Klutzmer Band - congregants of Simi Valley's Congregation B'nai Emet. Remember, we start 30 minutes later for this one meeting- at 2:00 p.m.! We hope that you will join us for this celebration. We would not be celebrating this anniversary if it were not for our members and Temple Adat Elohim's support by co-sponsoring our programs. Thank you all!

It is time to renew your membership in Ralph's Community Contribution Program. Ralph's requires everyone to renew every year around September 1st. If you are currently enrolled your current enrollment is good through August 31st. To renew, participants will be required to register for the new term at www.Ralphs.com starting September 1, 2009. This is required even if you registered only in June or July of this year. JGSCV has been receiving a quarterly check of approximately \$90 and that is only from 9 participants. Please, if you are enrolled, re-register, and if you haven't yet enrolled please do so starting September 1st - it is easy. Directions to enroll are listed on the JGSCV website www.jgscv.org under "notices". Even if you are only an occasional shopper at Ralphs your purchases will help JGSCV.

Remember that we will be having an election later this year and the Nominations Committee will be appointed at the next board meeting. If you have been a member for at least one year, think about joining the board. Your efforts will strengthen our society.

Looking forward to seeing you on August 30th! We will not be meeting in September due to the Jewish holidays.

On behalf of the JGSCV Board of Directors, have a very safe, healthy, happy and prosperous New Year.

L'Shana Tova!

Jan Meisels Allan

NEWLY ELECTED IAJGS BOARD



SEATED LEFT TO RIGHT: Joel Spector, Michael Brenner, Bill Israel STANDING LEFT TO RIGHT: Kahile Mehr, Jan Meisels Allen, Jackye Sullins, Paul Silverstone, Michael Goldstein, Daniel Horowitz MISSING: Anne Feder Lee

SEE PAGE 5 FOR MEETING NOTICES

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 special shelves 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 Fountainwood St., Agoura Hills, CA 91301. Obtain the new/renewal membership form on our website at www.jgscv.org by selecting the membership button.

NEW ADDITION TO TRAVELING LIBRARY

A new book in the traveling library is Judith Frazin's *A Translation Guide to 19th Century Polish Language Civil Registration Documents-Third Edition*. If you want to purchase your own copy, they are available only from the JGS of Illinois. Cost is \$41.00 (including postage). Checks made payable to The Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois should be sent c/o Judith R. Frazin, P.O. Box 637 Northbrook, IL 60063. Credit card orders are accepted at <http://tinyurl.com/nwosmz> Remember to include your name and home address as well as email address in case Judith needs to contact you.

JOWBR UPDATED

The JewishGen's Online Worldwide Burial Registry (JOWBR) has been updated and now includes more than 1.2 million records from 46 countries. Some of the additions include US National Cemeteries whose veteran markers include a Star of David; Iasi, Romania; Bathurst, Ontario, Canada; Krakow, Poland; Vitsyebk, Belarus. The database is searchable at <http://tinyurl.com/3c3y4n> A list of cemeteries included in the collection can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/4ye4dy>

NO RUSSIAN DATABASE AT JEWISHGEN

Phyllis Kramer's official JewishGen blog at <http://tinyurl.com/mzsog7> explains how Russian history is truly a product of the history of Poland, Lithuania, Prussia and Austria. And, since present day borders determine today's databases there are few Jewish records available for current day Russia.

SHOPPING AT AMAZON.COM

When planning to shop at Amazon.com please remember to start at the IAJGS website www.iajgs.org and scroll down to the bottom of the home page to click on the Amazon.com logo. That will take you directly to the Amazon.com home page where you may continue shopping. You pay the same price as you would if you entered directly – no increase in cost – but IAJS benefits.

RED STAR LINE MUSEUM IN BELGIUM

The Red Star Line was a steamship company that transported thousands of European immigrants across the Atlantic between 1873 and 1935. Museum organizers are looking for individual stories and original photos that will bring personal history to the museum. If you or someone you know sailed the Red Star Line from Antwerp to settle in the US please email the museum redstarline@stad.antwerpen.be and advise them. The museum is scheduled to open in 2012 but the website can be visited at <http://tinyurl.com/mskujs>

INDEX TO NYC BIRTHS 1901-1907

An index to New York City births, 1901-1907, is now online on the websites of Long Island's German Genealogy Group <http://tinyurl.com/knljxx> and Italian Genealogical Group <http://tinyurl.com/lubsaf> When completed, the index will cover births from 1881-1909. Like so many other NYC vital records and naturalizations on those sites, volunteers under the leadership of John Martino compiled this new data.

Steve Morse has created a One-Step search tool for these records: <http://tinyurl.com/knl3vh>

Copies of the actual birth records can be viewed on microfilm at NYC's Municipal Archives or ordered from the Archives online or by mail. See <http://tinyurl.com/lpdbqj> The website notes, "Approximately 25% of all births prior to 110 were not reported to the city. Births often took place at home and the doctor or midwife sometimes failed to report the event to the appropriate civil office."

Microfilms of NYC birth records are also available at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City and can be ordered for viewing at local Family History Centers. To identify microfilm roll numbers, do a keyword search at <http://tinyurl.com/yz5hgh>

JEWS OF HARBIN, CHINA

For a thorough historical perspective and excellent PowerPoint presentation on this subject visit <http://tinyurl.com/abfwxg>

This year's IAJGS Board of Directors election was marked as the first time an Israeli, let alone someone from outside the United States was elected as President of the IAJGS. Michael Goldstein is the current president of the Israeli Genealogical Society.

The annual IAJGS awards were presented at the closing banquet:

IAJGS Lifetime Achievement- Joyce Field Retired VP, Research, JewishGen.org. JGSCV was one of several JGSs who nominated Joyce for this very deserving award. Mark Manson was the chairman of the Nominations Committee who presented the award to Joyce.

IAJGS Outstanding Contribution to Jewish Genealogy via the Internet, Print, Electronic Product—Harry Boonin for his books: *Jewish Quarter of Philadelphia: A History & Guide 1881-1930* (which is included in JGSCV's traveling library) and *The Life And Times of Congregation Keshet Israel. - The Story of the Synagogue at 4th & Lombard Streets, Philadelphia and its Surrounding Neighborhood.*

IAJGS Outstanding Programming or Project that Advanced the Objectives of Jewish Genealogy—JGS of Greater Boston for "creating and teaching an innovative seventeen-hour course at Hebrew College that moves students from the basics to finding ancestral records in Europe." Accepting the award was Heidi Ulrich, President, JGS Greater Boston.

IAJGS Outstanding Publication by a Member Organization of IAJGS— JGS, Inc. (NY) for their quarterly journal *Dorot*. Accepting the award was Linda Cantor, President, of JGS, Inc.

Malcolm Stern Grant: The Stern Grant provides funding to encourage institutions to pursue projects, activities and acquisitions that provide new or enhanced resources to benefit Jewish genealogists. This award is funded by the voluntary \$1.00 contribution individual JGS members contribute when paying their annual JGS dues. JGSCV members generously contribute to the fund every year.

The 2009 Stern Grant of \$2,500 was awarded to: "Shamir" a non-profit organization based in Latvia (www.shamir.lv) for "The Guide to Jewish Materials Stored in the Latvian State Historical Archive". The grant will help in preparing an overview of existing materials about the Latvian Jewish Community that are in the Latvian State Archive.



Joyce Field Being Awarded Lifetime Achievement Award by Committee Chairman Mark Manson

Some major announcements from the conference:

Ancestry.com's Expansion of its Jewish Family History Collection

Last year Ancestry.com announced its inaugural into Jewish records with cooperative agreements with JewishGen.org and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (<http://www.jdc.org>). This year, Ancestry's Gary Gibb, Vice President of Content, announced an expansion of the Jewish Family History Collection on Ancestry.com with the addition of two more partnerships: American Jewish Historical Society (<http://www.ajhs.org/index.cfm>) which maintains millions of records that bear witness to the contributions of the American Jewish community to life in the Americas from the 16th century to the present; and Miriam Weiner's Routes to Roots Foundation <http://www.rtrfoundation.org/> an internationally-known firm that specializes in Jewish research in the archives of five Eastern Europe countries: Belarus, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland and Ukraine for online access to more than 200,000 Jewish records.

The Routes to Roots Foundation was established in 1994 and its database includes a town-by-town listing of surviving documents in the archives of the aforementioned five countries (and some entries from Romania and Russia). Each database entry includes: town name, district, region and country where town is currently located, type of documents available for that town (more than 20 different types of record groups), name and location of repository with the data, years available for each record group, archive file numbers for each entry and a link to the repository that has the data.

Additionally, Ancestry.com will receive and post on their website, 1,200 images from cities and towns in the above five countries As part of this licensing agreement, Ancestry.com received 26 different books from Miriam Weiner's library which will be indexed by name and the indexes will then be available on the Ancestry.com website. Some of these books date back more than 100 years and include names of residents, taxpayers, voters, bank account holders in Poland, etc.

The American Jewish Historical Society was founded in New York City in 1892, its holdings include 20 million documents, 50,000 books, paintings and other objects that bear witness to the remarkable contributions of the American Jewish community to life in the Americas from the 16th century to the present.

(Continued on page 4)

Documents that have been digitized as part of this relationship include six remarkable collections:

Brooklyn Hebrew Orphan Asylum Records, 1878-1934 - applications for admission; and discharge ledgers.

Selected Naturalization Records, New York City, 1816-1845 - declaration of intention for New York County; contains name, age, birthplace, nationality, place of emigration, occupation and place of intended settlement.

New York Hebrew Orphan Asylum Records, 1860-1934 - applications for admission; and discharge ledgers.

Industrial Removal Office Records, 1899-1922 - records of Jewish families and individuals who were assisted in moving from harm's way in various countries.

Selected Insolvent Debtor's Cases, 1787-1861 - approximately 2,000 cases, some containing an inventory of assets.

Selected Mayor's Court Cases, New York, 1674-1860 - 6,000 selected briefs that include summons, complaints, affidavits, and jury lists.

Ancestry.com will also launch two new collections from JewishGen, including Lithuania: List of Donors of Charity from HaMagid (1871-1872), the Persian Famine donation list printed in the Hebrew newspaper HaMagid, and Hungary: Jewish Census (1848), a survey of Jews in Greater Hungarian countries including Hungary, parts of Slovakia, Croatia, Ukraine and Romania, among others.

The three collections: Jewishgen.org, American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and Miriam Weiner's Routes to Roots Foundation remain free to access on Ancestry.com as long as they are on Ancestry.com. The American Jewish Historical Society collection is a premium collection and requires a subscription to access.

To search through all the new Jewish record collections and Ancestry.com's entire Jewish Family History experience visit

<http://www.ancestry.com/JewishFamilyHistory>

Update from JewishGen.org

Warren Blatt, Managing Director of JewishGen.org (and founding member and board member of JGSCV) gave an update on what is happening at JewishGen.org. There are 450 databases on JewishGen and the JewishGen Family Finder has over 800,000 genealogists and 400,000 town names included.

Jewishgen.org has a new website design- the first phase is the home page which include simplicity, easy login, news and announcements feature and appearance and functionality.

JewishGen has added the new Beider-Morse Phonetic Matching System (BMPM) to its site to make searching easier as it is improved over Soundex as it determines the source language with fewer "false positives" matches.

The Latvian State Historical Archives have Jewish birth, marriage and death records online and in a few months those records will be added to the JewishGen databases.

News From Jewish Records Indexing-Poland (JRI-PL)

Those researching their Polish roots will be delighted to learn that JRI-PL has made substantial progress toward a new agreement with the Polish State Archives (PSA) to restart the indexing and ordering project that was halted when a new PSA archivist was appointed about 2 years ago. Stanley Diamond, President of JRI-PL stated at the conference: "While we are cautiously optimistic that a new agreement will be in place by January 1, 2010, we have only just received a draft agreement from the Polish State Archives and that there are many points to be clarified and negotiated. This could well result in time-consuming exchanges and lead to a delay in resuming both the indexing of records and the order-processing system."

News From Miriam Weiner's Routes to Roots Foundation

In addition to Miriam Weiner's Routes to Roots Foundation Eastern European databases included on Ancestry.com's Jewish Family Collection as mentioned above, her website (<http://www.rtrfoundation.org/>) has a new image exhibition comprised of a collection of images consisting of both antique postcard views and current photographs of towns and cities throughout countries in Eastern Europe. The images are in a database searchable by town name and this database is continually being expanded from the large collection of images in the Miriam Weiner archives. Also recently added, is a unique collection of Judaic postcards (including synagogue images) which have been added to this database from Europe and South Africa. For a listing of new databases and repositories added to the website go to: <http://www.rtrfoundation.org/news.shtml>

The keynote speaker was Father Patrick Desbois, the distinguished French priest, author, and humanitarian and best known for his work in searching for and uncovering mass graves in the Ukraine and for his book, *The Holocaust by Bullets*. In a serendipitous coincidence, the same evening as the opening session, the National Geographic Channel was premiering a documentary, "Hitler's Hidden Holocaust" where Father Desbois was featured. This documentary is a revealing look at WWII mass killings that set the stage for the more notorious death camps [This documentary will be shown at JGSCV's annual Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration on April 11, 2010].

Next year the IAJGS conference will be hosted by our sister JGS, JGSLA. Mark the dates: July 11-16, 2010 at the new JW Marriott at LA Live downtown LA.

Future JGSCV Meeting Dates Through June 2010

Meetings are held Sunday's 1:30-3:30 pm* at
Temple Adat Elohim 2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks

*Note Two dates are on Monday evenings

No meeting in September due to Jewish Holidays, Meeting dates through June 2010 are below- they include 2 Monday nights and the remainder on our usual Sunday afternoons starting at 1:30 p.m. As programs are confirmed they will be announced.

*October 5, 2009 Monday Evening 7:00-9:00 p.m. Dan Brown, Dean, Moorpark College, Holocaust instructor and author. "Remembering the Victims: The Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Project" - Dean Brown will examine his work with Stephen Spielberg's "Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Project" and more.

November 8, 2009 Sunday 1:30-3:30 p.m. Rabbi Shimon Paskow "Searching For Jewish Treasures" - Shimon Paskow, Rabbi Emeritus of Temple Etz Chaim in Thousand Oaks has spent a lifetime looking for Jewish history in books and manuscripts.

December 6, 2009 Sunday 1:30-3:30 p.m. Steve Morse, "A Hodge Podge of Lesser Known Gems" - This is a sequel to the Potpourri talk Steve gave to JGSCV last December. Plus Annual Chanukah Party

January 10, 2010 Sunday 1:30-3:30 p.m. TBA

*February 1, 2010 Monday evening 7:00-9:00 p.m. Ron Arons, "Mapping Maddness" - Ron returns with a new program to educate and amuse us. Maps are important for genealogy- to better understand where towns were -some have changed due to changing borders.

March 7, 2010 Sunday 1:30-3:30 p.m. TBA

April 11, 2010 Sunday 1:30-3:30 p.m. Yom Hashoah Day (Holocaust Memorial Day) "*Hitler's Hidden Holocaust*" produced by the National Geographic Channel - Woven together with harrowing testimonials from survivors, witnesses and experts, this one-hour documentary presents how Nazi soldiers planned, documented and carried out the same routine: Go into a town, round up Jewish families, take them to a ditch and shoot them, often in front of curious spectators. *Hitler's Hidden Holocaust* brings this gruesome chapter to light through the work of Father Patrick Desbois, a Roman Catholic priest, who traveled back to some of the known killing sites across Eastern Europe.

May 2, 2010 Sunday 1:30-3:30 p.m. TBA

June 6, 2010 Sunday 1:30-3:30 p.m. TBA

Programs are subject to change -check JGSCV website www.jgscv.org for any updates

29TH IAJGS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON JEWISH GENEALOGY

JGSCV MEMBERS PARTICIPATE

JGSCV was well represented at this year's IAJGS conference—we had 10 members attending and some were speakers:

Jan Meisels Allen gave a program on how to do programming for Jewish Genealogy Society leaders and spoke at the IAJGS Presidents Annual Meeting on the year's activities for Public Records Access Monitoring Committee that she chairs.



Ron Arons gave a new presentation Mapping Madness (which he will give to JGSCV at our February 1st meeting); The Internet Beyond JewishGen & Steve Morse's Website and was part of a most amusing evening: Jewish Genealogy Game Show Night.

Debra Kay Blatt gave a computer workshop on “An Introduction to JewishGen” and the workshop on “Ancestry/JewishGen: The Dynamic Duo: Computer Workshop”. Along with Warren Blatt, Debra gave a lecture on “Using Pre-1826 Polish Parish Records in Jewish Research”



Warren Blatt gave several additional presentations: JewishGen 2009 (along with JewishGen.org's vice president, Michael Tobias) and his presentations on “Jewish Surnames” and “Jewish Given Names” which is the topic of JGSCV's August 30 program.

Hal Bookbinder gave two presentations: “The Changing Borders of Eastern Europe” (which he gave to JGSCV several years ago) and “Practicing Safe Computing.”

Sonia and David Hoffman gave their presentation “Town-Wide Research: Recreating your Ancestral Shtetl” which they gave to JGSCV last March.

Also attending the conference were Barbara Levasseur, Helene Rosen and Sharon Rosenthal. This was Barbara's first conference!

JGSCV WELCOMES NEW MEMBER MARION WERLE

JGSCV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jan Meisels Allen, President
Warren Blatt, Member Education
Dorothy Drilich, Secretary
Fred Land, Treasurer

president@jgscv.org
education@jgscv.org
secretary@jgscv.org
treasurer@jgscv.org

Stewart Bernstein, Member-at-large
Debra Kay Blatt, Information Chairman
Werner Frank, Member-at-large
Helene Rosen

stewart@jgscv.org
information@jgscv.org
werner@jgscv.org
membership@jgscv.org

Allan Linderman, Newsletter Editor newslettereditor@jgscv.org
Raya Sagi, Librarian: librarian@jgscv.org Frank Tessel, Cemetery Project: frank@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