

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST



JGSCV

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE CONEJO VALLEY AND VENTURA COUNTY

January, 2014

Volume 9 Issue 4

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

On December 15 over 80 JGSCV members and friends had the delightful experience of learning from Crista Cowan, the Barefoot Genealogist ©, from Ancestry.com talking on *Smarter Searching on Ancestry.com*. Crista is a repeat presenter and each time we learn more and more and her exuberance for the subject is contagious! . If time permitted, we could have gone on for at least another hour. Crista is always a big hit with JGSCV members and friends. Shaky leaf hints. Global searches. Database specific. Fuzzy. Exact. These are just a few of the ways to locate records on Ancestry.com. Crista showed us how you can search by person or location. You can use the Card Catalog to discover what is online before you begin your search. You can change your collection priority to focus on records specific to your Jewish ancestry and utilize the Daitch-Mokotoff Soundex. To read a summary of the program see page 6.

A highlight of the meeting was the annual membership renewal drive and Chanukah gifts/ for members—even though it was past Chanukah!. Crista randomly picked the winning names. See the winners on page 10. JGSCV thanks the following genealogy companies for contributing the prizes: Ancestry.com (worldwide subscription was the grand prize), Family Tree Maker, FindMyPast, Fold3.com, Legacy Family Tree, Newspapers.com, and Roots Magic. There were also genealogically relevant books as



Crista Cowan “The Barefoot Genealogist”© JGSCV’s December speaker

NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY, January 5th 1:30-3:30 PM

For The Sake Of The Children . . .

Historian Joan Adler discusses the subject of her book: Personal letters revealing Anne Frank’s father’s unsuccessful attempts to flee Holland.

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prizes. In the interest of time there was no '5 Minute Genealogical Hint' but it will return in 2014.

Nominating Committee Chairperson Hal Bookbinder, conducted the election for the six board positions. Five of the six board members with expiring terms were re-elected by acclamation: Jan Meisels Allen, Stewart Bernstein, Warren Blatt, Dorothy Drilich, and Allan Linderman. The sixth candidate, Israel "Issie" Perel has been serving as JGSCV's librarian for 2013. There were six open positions because the JGSCV board voted to expand the board to ten members. For continuity, we elect half the board every other year with board members serving terms of two years. In order to maintain this balance, I as president, agreed to run for a one-year term while the others will be elected to two-year terms. This will result in five open positions next year. It is my intention to stay on the board. I expect to be on next year's slate also.

Diane Wainwood volunteered to rejoin the Publicity Committee – thank you. We are back to our four committee members and Diane served on the committee previously. Thank you to Etti Hadar who served on the committee throughout 2013.

I am having a "senior moment" regarding the request for a program on Germany Pre WWI. I have scheduled the program with Roger Lustig for March and I would like to discuss specific interests. Whoever requested the subject please contact me at president@jgscv.org so we can discuss the program!

For those who have not yet renewed their membership, please do so now. A membership form is on page 15. We now have 63% of the number of members we had in 2013. This is comparable to last year's timing, but your dues allow us to plan ahead for the speakers, additions to the libraries, and other items to keep your society vibrant.

A list of books added to our libraries since July is on page 11. There is room for additional books at our permanent space in the Agoura Hills Library. If you have genealogically relevant books to donate please check our website first to see if we already own them.

At the suggestion of the board and with acclimation at the December meeting, we will hold country-specific Roundtable Discussions at our June meeting. More information on this is the spring.

Our January 5th program is *For the Sake of the Children: The Letters Between Otto Frank and Nathan Straus Jr.* with Joan Adler, Strauss Family historian. In 2007, a file of letters between University of Heidelberg roommates and lifelong friends, Otto Frank and Nathan Straus Jr. were found. The letters revealed for the first time that Otto Frank, diarist Anne's father, tried desperately to get his family out of war torn Holland in 1941, fifteen months before they went into hiding. Joan will also be selling the book at the discounted rate of \$25.00.

On behalf of the JGSCV Board of Directors, for those of our members and friends who celebrate Christmas, have a joyous holiday. For all have a happy, healthy and safe 2014.

Looking forward to seeing you on January 5th!

Jan Meisels Allen



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.

2014 dues are \$25.00 for a single membership and \$30.00 for a household unit. To join, please send a check in the appropriate amount 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.

WEBSITE DEDICATED TO ASHKENAZI LEVITE MEN

Levite status, like surnames and Y-DNA, is passed down through the direct male line and goes back many hundreds of years. As a result, Levite status and Y-DNA are uniquely well suited to Jewish genealogy.

There is now a website devoted to the genetics and the genealogy of these men -- www.LeviteDNA.org.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF 60+ PROMINENT GERMANS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

A new book has been published devoted to biographical sketches of over 60 prominent German individuals and their communities including our own Werner Frank and Eppingen. The book, *Juedische Persoenlichkeiten im Kraichgau* (Jewish Personalities of the Kraichgau), is available at www.amazon.de. ISBN: 978-3-89735-802-7. Edited and compiled by Michael Heitz and Bernd Roecker.

ADDITIONS TO GESHER GALICIA MAP ROOM

- Eastern Galicia Ethnographic Map 1939 – A demographic map of the ethnic populations of southwestern Ukraine (eastern Galicia) <http://tinyurl.com/nblw7qs>
- The web site of Harrie Teunissen and John Steegh – A presentation of “The Holocaust

in Contemporary Maps” as delivered last year at the international workshop “Geography and Holocaust Research” in Germany: <http://tinyurl.com/np8n58o>

- Jewish History on the Map <http://siger.org/jewish-history-on-the-map>

MOLDAVA VITAL RECORDS ONLINE

ROM-SIG has added more than 13,650 vital records to its database mostly from the city of Iasi but also including Bicaz, Botosani, Dorohoi, Falticenti, Harlau, Herta, Lespezi, Pascani and Podu Iloaiei. Help is needed to transcribe more records. If you can volunteer, please fill out this form:

<http://tinyurl.com/85ywx5>

1910 TARNOPOL CENSUS INDEXED

Gesher Galicia has completed indexing the 1910 Tarnopol Jewish Census with almost 14,000 names. The data will be added to the All Galicia Database in late January but qualified contributors will have early access. For information on the donation levels and the varying access each allows visit <http://tinyurl.com/p7mc9nz>



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

JGSCV will hold a general meeting, co-sponsored with Temple Adat Elohim on Sunday, January 5, 2014 at Temple Adat Elohim 2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

The Topic - For the Sake of the Children: Letters Between Otto Frank and Nathan Straus Jr.

In 2007, a file of letters between University of Heidelberg roommates and lifelong friends, Otto Frank and Nathan Straus Jr. was found. The letters revealed for the first time that Otto Frank, diarist Anne's father, tried desperately to get his family out of war torn Holland in 1941, fifteen months before they went into hiding. It enriches our understanding about the history of the Frank family and gives us greater insight into this tragic era. Nathan Straus Jr. was a member of the Straus family that owned Macy's Department store for over 100 years and was the Housing Administrator under F.D.R. Her book will be available for purchase for \$25.



Speaker: Joan Adler - Joan Adler is the executive director of the Straus Historical Society and an accomplished genealogist. The Straus Family is a prominent Jewish German family that, most notably, owned Macy's and Abraham and Straus. Family members have served in state and federal government positions. Famously, Isidor Straus and his wife went down on the Titanic in 1912.

The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County is dedicated to sharing genealogical information, techniques and research tools with anyone interested in Jewish genealogy and family history.

There is no charge to attend the meeting. Anyone may join JGSCV. Annual dues are \$25 for an individual and \$30 for a family. Join now for 2014!

JGSCV UPDATES . . .



“Venturing Into Our Past” invites members to share stories of their family history searches. JGSCV board member Allan Linderman recently uncovered some family history after being prompted by Steve Morse’s presentation at the November JGSCV meeting. Read the story on page 12. You can send your story to newslettereditor@jgscv.org



THE SCHMOOZING CORNER is open 20 minutes before all meetings. Come to the front right corner of the meeting room and look for the SCHMOOZING CORNER sign where Werner Frank, JGSCV founding board member, will be available to help with insights specific to your genealogical questions.



The traveling library is available 30 minutes before every meeting. JGSCV’s permanent collection is now kept at the Agoura Hills Library.

You can help JGSCV when you shop at Amazon.com by simply entering the Amazon site from JGSCV’s **home page**. Start at <http://www.jgscv.org> and scroll to the bottom to click on the Amazon graphic (like the one here).

This will take you to the same page you always start at – except JGSCV will receive a marketing fee at no cost to you.



Don’t forget to sign-up or renew your Ralph’s Community Contribution Program. JGSCV receives significant contributions from Ralph’s when you use your Ralph’s Card and have chosen JGSCV as your participant organization. See “Notices” at the JGSCV website www.jgscv.org.

The June 1 program will be roundtables on country-specific research. If you have expertise in a particular area please let Jan know that you are interested in volunteering to lead that country-research table.

Start planning to attend the 34th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy July 27-August 1, 2014 in Salt Lake City. www.iajgs2014.org. JGSCV’s own Hal Bookbinder is the main Co-Chair of the conference and JGSCV members Jan Meisels, Debra Kay Blatt and Warren Blatt will be at the conference.

If you enjoy and are enriched by JGSCV programs, please remember to renew your membership or join for the first time. JGSCV dues help defray the costs required to develop such a full schedule of fertile programs and speakers to enhance your genealogical research and experience. A form is on page 13 and on the website www.jgscv.org

“Venturing Into Our Past” © is the newsletter of the Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley (JGSCV). All rights reserved. Any article may be reproduced with prior notification and attribution.

Highlights From:

Smarter Searching on Ancestry.com

By Jan Meisels Allen

Crista Cowan, “The Barefoot Genealogist” © from Ancestry.com excited and inspired our over 80 attendees on December 15 with her program on *Smarter Searching on Ancestry.com!* Crista is always a VERY popular presenter at JGSCV and this year was no different. Her engaging presentation and willingness to answer questions during the presentation was very well received. AND, her agreeing to stay 30 minutes after the program to answer more of the members and attendees questions is very much appreciated! Crista connected to the Ancestry website for a “live” presentation giving the best demonstration of how to use the website.



Crista began her presentation with telling a story about the late UCLA Coach John Wooden who lived in Thousand Oaks. He would ask the new team members to correctly put on their socks—now these jocks thought it was a joke—but such a simple basic task

was important—if the socks were put on correctly the athlete would not get a blister—

without a blister the athlete can run and play without pain or possibility of infection. What does this story have to do with Ancestry and genealogy? Everything! As we need to review our basics periodically. How many of us have returned to some brick walls or other “unsolved” mysteries in our research after a long period and applying some basic genealogy concepts we see the same information in a different light and may be able to chip away at that brick wall!

Ancestry.com has 12 billion historical records, 55 million family trees and 2.7 million subscribers across all their brands. In addition to the subscription sites Ancestry.com genealogy site, Ancestry DNA, Genealogy.com, Archives.com, Newspapers.com and Fold3, Ancestry also owns two free sites: rootsweb.com and FindAGrave.com. Ancestry has digitized all passenger lists available through the [US] National Archives as well as Canadian passenger lists, border crossings (from Canada into the U.S) and more. Crista recently reviewed the Mexican border crossings database for anyone who was listed as Hebrew or speaking Yiddish and found 19,000 names.

The naturalization index, is just that: an index. It does not contain the actual naturalization papers. What it does provide is a link to where the researcher may learn more and the database provides a description where the information was obtained and where to write to get more information, Crista also reminded the audience

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that passengers may sometimes be listed in newspapers. If you are having trouble finding someone by searching passenger lists, you may wish to look at newspapers from the port of entry for the time frame you are searching. Ancestry.com has historical newspapers on their website in addition to the Newspapers.com site. While some other free sites may have some of the same information that is not always the case. For example, the Ellis Island website has passenger lists for ship arrivals from 1892-1924 for free access. However, the Ancestry.com site provides the passenger lists from 1892-1957 and New York Passenger lists from 1820 -1957 which encompasses Castle Garden (pre Ellis Island), as well as later Ellis Island passengers.

Crista discussed vital records and that in the US most states did not require them until the early 1900's, whereas England started their vital records in the mid 1830's.

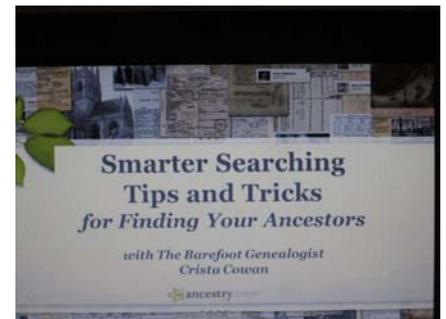
Other types of records found on Ancestry.com include historical maps, postcards, historical war and conflict images, US and International flags and maps and the yearbook collection.

Ancestry.com also includes content contributed by its members: about 55 million items and growing. However, as Ancestry does not validate what the member contributes some of the information may not be accurate. If you are not a member of Ancestry you may still post a family tree on Ancestry.com, however as a non-member you may not search others family trees.

Ancestry.com allows free access to about 600-700 databases, including the Ancestry.com/Jewish collection www.ancestry.com/jewish . Through their partnership with JewishGen many of the databases on JewishGen are also available on Ancestry.com. As the two organizations have different search mechanisms, try and search on both as you may get different search results. In addition to JewishGen, Ancestry includes in their Jewish collection records from, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the American Jewish Historical Society and the Miriam Weiner Routes to Roots Foundation.
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While access to the JewishGen and Miriam Weiner Routes to Roots Foundation are free (meaning you don't have to have a subscription to Ancestry to access the information) the others are premium and they require a subscription. Additionally, Ancestry has collaborated with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to index 70 million records—in three years they have indexed three million. These records themselves will not be placed online due to sensitivity and restrictions however, the indexes being created are searchable for free and anyone can order a copy of the original record from the museum. If you would like to volunteer with the indexing for the World Memory Project click on the tab marked "collaborate" or go to <http://community.ancestry.com/awap> .

Crista discussed the difference between public and private trees on Ancestry.com. Living people with a birth date of 100 years or less are hidden from anyone other than the person who entered the data. Family Tree Maker is owned by Ancestry.com. A person can have their tree both on their home computer as well on Ancestry.com (Ancestry has a free mobile app) and you can synchronize the data on both online and on the home computer. In a public tree anyone can view a tree but no one is able to change any of the information.



With a private tree, only people the tree owner invites may view the tree. The owner may invite someone to be an editor enabling them to make changes to the tree. Non-Ancestry members can build a tree on Ancestry but they can't initiate contact with others. Library editions of Ancestry.com do not include access to build a family tree, but you can still search public trees of others. If you are using the library you cannot attach a record. If you have Family Tree Maker at home send yourself an

email from the library computer with the record or copy it to a USB drive and attach it at home.

We were reminded that the 'shaky leaf' shows hints, not certainties. Crista recommended that the users focus on actual records to create hints before relying on shaky leaf hints.

In discussing search techniques, Crista informed us that 50 percent of searches come from a tree. Ancestry has "smart filtering" where you can turn off the search results if you have already found them. The suggested records list is built on what other people attached for the same person. This gives you the opportunity to see who else attached the same records by checking on related content. Check on the user name or profile of the same person in the trees. If they are a current member check on their name and you can retrieve their profile.

Crista suggested using the advanced form when conducting a search. She noted that Ancestry is in the process of retiring "old search" due to stability issues that would require massive code rewriting to accommodate retaining the old search feature. We were shown how to use wild cards "*" which replaces multiple characters and a "?" that replaces a single character. Two musts: the search must be marked exact and must have three consecutive letters somewhere in the chain you are searching. Another search hint was to avoid using the exact birth year as the data is captured from the original sources in varying ways. For example, one does not know when the census was taken in relation to a birth date, etc. Another suggestion was to avoid checking off exact "city" as censuses only use states, sometimes the person gave the next big town to them as the place rather than a small hamlet and boundaries between countries and states have changed over time.

The collection priority default is "all". Therefore, you may wish to change that to country specific or *Jewish* which uses the Daitch-Mokotoff soundex system. We are limited to choosing only

one collection priority at a time. To overcome this limitation we may wish to do two searches, one by location, for example New York and the other by Jewish. As the collection last selected "sticks", the next search will start with that one unless you physically change it.

A helpful hint was when going through the search results, go to records and click on databases and right click the mouse to open it in a new tab so you won't have to redo your search!

The card catalogue has 31,463 databases. Therefore one needs to filter the search. For example, for the filter on naturalization, if you check off the country i.e. US and then the state i.e. New York you are left with a manageable 26 databases to search.

In doing a search scroll down to the map and check on country. That will give you the specific databases for that area. For example, if you checked United States- New York, the NY census would appear not the US (federal) census. If you are researching an area that back in history had a border change- look at both places. For example parts of what are now West Virginia previously belonged to multiple other states.

Crista is on the Ancestry.com You Tube station weekly with hints on how to use Ancestry. You can go directly to the You Tube hints at: <http://ancestry.me/TBGVids> , or you may also access it directly from the bottom of the Ancestry.com homepage under the section entitled Follow Us. Crista may be reached at ask@ancestry.com.

Crista will be at the 34th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in Salt Lake City and you can hear her there again—she is definitely worth a second, third or fourth time as there is always something new to learn from the Barefoot Genealogist©!

Records Access Update

By Jan Meisels Allen

As many of you know I chair the IAJGS Public Records Access Monitoring Committee [PRAMC] and also represent IAJGS as their voting member to the Records Preservation and Access Committee [RPAC]. While my vocation before retirement and the world of genealogy was as a lobbyist, I am privileged to work on records access for the greater genealogical community as without access to records we are not able to do our family history research.



Earlier this fall I was asked by the editors of *Avotaynu* to write the lead article for the Fall 2013 issue on records access. The article was a collaborative work of the members of the PRAMC and I am delighted to work with this exceptional group of people:

Teven Laxer, David Oseas, Ken Ryesky, Paul Silverstone, Joel Spector and Catherine Youngren. Each of us has unique talents that we bring to the table. The committee has lobbyists, a law librarian, lawyers and wordsmiths on the committee. Sometimes issues arise with literally only hours to reply and they are used to my midnight emails of we need to act on this “now”. The article has been published and our Society copy of *Avotaynu* is in our permanent library at the Agoura Hills Library.

JGSCV’s webmaster, David Oseas has posted the article to our website for easy access. You may read it by going to: www.jgscv.org and click on newsletter and it is the top link.

There are three issues that are currently confronting the genealogical community—some affect those only researching in the United States while others affect the international genealogical community. One of the issues, access by the public and genealogists changed dramatically this week when unexpectedly the bi-partisan budget bill included limiting access to the Death Master File which we know as the commercial version, the Social Security Death Index [SSDI]. Section 203 restricts access to the Death Master File (DMF) to certified individuals under a new program established under the Department of Commerce. This section also establishes a new user fee to cover the cost of certification that is projected to raise \$517 million over 10 years. You can read the bill at: <http://tinyurl.com/kpksqp4>

Pages 32-37 cover this issue.



2014 IAJGS CONFERENCE IN SALT LAKE CITY

More information is available at <http://www.iajgs2014.org> . Save the date: July 27-August 1, 2014. Subscribe to the blog for more information as it becomes available: <http://blog.iajgs2014.org/> . The call for papers is now open through January 15 : https://conference.iajgs.org/2014/abstract_submission.cfm See page 13

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2013 JGSCV CHANUKAH MEMBERSHIP DRIVE PRIZE WINNERS

The annual JGSCV Chanukah Membership Drive included exciting door prizes for 10 lucky JGSCV members. December speaker Crista Cowan randomly picked member names for a stimulating selection of genealogical prizes. See the results below.



Mike Markowitz
The Lost



Jane Lovitts
Fold 3
Subscription



Tammy Williams-Anderson
Roots Magic 6.0



Robert Zaas A
True Story of a
French Jewish Spy
in Nazi Germany



Ronna Katz
Legacy Family
Tree 8.0

PRIZE WINNERS NOT SHOWN

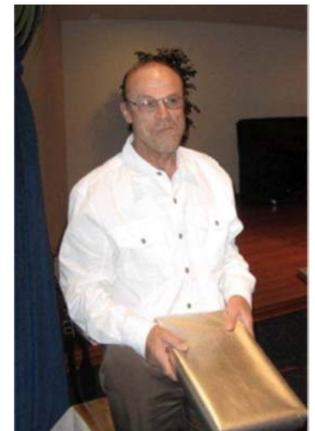
- David Oseas-
World of Our Fathers
- Julie Smith
Family Tree Maker



Ellen Husted
Newspapers.com
subscription



Joanne Cadis
Find My Past
Subscription



GRAND PRIZE WINNER
STEW BERNSTEIN

Ancestry Worldwide
Subscription

Library Update

Since the last report in July 2013's newsletter the following books have been added to the JGSCV library. If you have genealogically-relevant books that you would like to donate, please contact Jan Meisels Allen at president@JGSCV.org. The books in the traveling library are categorized A, B, C or D. Those without a letter categorization are in our Permanent Library. The majority of our books are now housed at the Agoura Hills Library, a branch of the Los Angeles County Public Library. A full list of all of our permanent and traveling library holdings may be found on the website: www.jgscv.org.

Adventure In Freedom 300 Hundred Years of Jewish Life in America Oscar Handlin McGraw Hill NY 1954

California Jews Ava Kahn, Marc Dollinger ed Brandeis University Press Lebanon NH 2003

Cattle on the Conejo J.H. Russell The Ward Ritchie Press 1957

French Children of the Holocaust A Memorial Serge Klarsfeld ed. Susan Cohen, Howard Epstein, Serge Klarsfeld NY University Press NY 1996

Habima Raikin Ben-Ari Harold Clurman Thomas Yoseloff, NY 1957

Holocaust-Era Assets A Finding Aid to Records at the National Archives at College Park, Maryland Compiled by Greg Bradsher National Archives, Washington DC 1999.

Images of America Agoura Hills Susan Pascal Arcadia Publishing S.C. 2013

Images of America Jewish Albuquerque 1860-1960 Naomi Sandweiss Arcadia Publishing S.C. 2011

Instant Yiddish Fred Kogos Citadel Press NY 1967

Secrets, Sorrows, and Survivors: Aron Rosenstein's Russian Letters for His Son 1889-1923 Carolyn Rosenstein Gateway Press Baltimore, MD 1997

The Ghetto Anthology Roman Moglianski American Congress of Jews From Poland Los Angeles CA 1985

The Litvak Legacy Mark . Ozer XLibris 2009

The Levy Family and Monticello 1834-1923 Saving Thomas Jefferson's House Melvin I. Urofsky Thomas Jefferson Foundation Monticello Monograph Series 2001

The Promised City New York's Jews 1870-1914 Moses Rischin Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA 1978

Tracing Your Eastern European Ancestors Moorthead Publishing Canada 2013 (Category B)

One More Brick Out of the Wall – With A Little Nudge From Steve Morse

*“Venturing Into Our Past” invites JGSCV members to submit stories of their genealogical journey. The following is written by JGSCV board member and newsletter editor **Allan Linderman***

Irving Rock has never been to a JGSCV meeting. He has never been to a genealogy meeting of any kind. Yet, our November meeting led to taking down another brick from the wall that hides his past.

On April 7, 1956 I carried the wedding rings down the aisle at my cousins’ wedding at the Elsmere Catering Hall in the Bronx. I was six years old. Bernice, the daughter of my mother’s oldest sister – my first cousin – married Irving. As far back as I can recall, they’ve always been married. As far back as I can recall, Irving has always been my cousin.

There were lots of first cousins growing up on Walton Ave. in the Bronx back in the day. My mother’s family included 7 brothers and sisters and most of them lived on the same street or nearby. Bernice is my G-d mother we always had a close bond even though more than 11 years separated us. She shares a common family history with my other first cousins and me. On the other hand, Irving had a much different upbringing. And his first name was Icek.

Icek Rak was born in Sokolov Podlaski (Poland) in 1932; not a good time or place to be a Jew. With 8 children, his parents Abe and Dora struggled

mightily. Of course, those simple family struggles paled in comparison to the larger, more robust political issues that grew out of Nazi Germany.

Most of the first 15 years of Icek’s life were spent evading the Nazi’s. My first cousins and I never knew anyone who lived in Europe in the World War II era. Our family was fortunate to have come to America during the great migration in the early 20th century. Irving’s stories were always fascinating: catching rodents for food; the value of a sewing needle for clothes; the cattle cars; slicing his feet running barefoot over newly trimmed reeds in a forest. In 1965, I was returning home from playing basketball late one afternoon when the street lights went dark. I realized ALL the lights on ALL the streets were dark. No lights inside the compact apartments; no traffic lights. When I got to Bernice and Irving’s apartment (my family’s second home in our apartment building), I learned there was a ‘blackout’ throughout all of New York City. What I remember most about that day was Irving arriving home from work and seeing his family and mine sitting at the kitchen table in the dark. Next thing I knew, he was holding a round tin and filled it with cooking oil. Then he lit it and, *voila!*, we had light. “How did you learn that?”, we asked. “You learn a lot of things in Europe”, he said.

In 1947 Icek and most of his family wound up in Bad Reichenhall, a Displaced Persons Camp in Munich. By 1949 they were on their way to America and a new family name: “Rock”. I’ve offered to use my limited genealogical tools to help re-construct Irving’s life. He doesn’t object



but hasn't shown much interest. I don't know if it is too painful or if he just doesn't want me expending energy on his behalf. I search for his birth records and those of his siblings when I take a break from researching my parents' genealogy. So far, the ship manifest for his ocean crossing only includes staff. But, I have been able to give him a copy of his Naturalization documents, for which he was grateful.

Steve Morse's presentation at the November JGSCV meeting reminded me that I hadn't used his 'one step' website in a while on Irving's behalf (www.stevemorse.org). Doing so helped me find his registration card from Bad Reichenhall (and those of his family). Irving and I thank you, Steve. I promise to return to the site more often.

CLOSED		Munich	
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE - IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE			
Last Name	RAK	File No.	14991
First Name	Icek	Sex	m
Address	Bad Reichenhall #1.2/39	Opening Date	July 11/47
Birthdate	VI.7.54	Birthplace	
Nationality:		In transit from:	
Present	at	Former	Polish
Occupation:		Accompanied by	Abe, Dora, Schaje, Leiby Wolf , Chaim, Bela
Present		Former	
Country of destination	USA	Closing Date	DEC 1947

34th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy

The 2014 IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy will be held in Salt Lake City July 27-August 1. The website is open and the call for papers is out. See: <http://conference.iajgs.org/2014/>. Registration will open in late December. However, you may make your hotel reservation at the conference rate now.

As the conference will start one day shy of the 100th anniversary of the start of World War I, the conference is planning a major focus on the impact of the War on the lives of our ancestors, whether they served in the armed forces of any of the nations involved in the conflict, suffered the impacts of fighting through the heartland of Jewish Eastern Europe, emigrated to another county because of the war and its aftermath, or were otherwise touched by the conflict. All registrants will be encouraged to share family

stories and pictures from the World War One era. These stories and pictures will be compiled into an online volume which will provide a unique resource for genealogists and historians. Please gather your stories and pictures to be ready to upload them once Registration opens in late December.

JGSCV's own Hal Bookbinder is the lead co-chairperson for the conference and I am on the conference committee—you will be hearing a lot about this exciting conference and with Salt Lake City so near, I hope many of you will take advantage and attend this great conference!



JGSCV Meeting Dates Through June, 2014*

At Temple Adat Elohim

Sunday, January 5, 2014 1:30-3:30 PM "For the Sake of the Children: The Letters Between Otto Frank and Nathan Straus, Jr." Joan Adler, Executive Director, Straus Historical Society reveals Otto Frank's letters to his friend in his desperate attempts flee Holland more than a year before his family was forced to hide.

Sunday, February 9th 1:00-5:00 PM "Assisted Research Day"

At LA Family History Center. Only current members. May join at the door.

Sunday, March 2nd 1:30-3:30 PM Program "A Hundred Germanies—A Hundred Jewish Histories—German Jewish Genealogy Pre World War I"

Roger Lustig, research coordinator for GerSIG and researcher and genealogist specializing in the history of German Jewry

Monday, April 7th 7:00-9:00 PM "The Sephardic Community in Los Angeles"

Arthur Benveniste discusses growing up in the LA Sephardic community.

Sunday, May 4th 1:30-3:30 PM "Yom Hashoah" (Holocaust Memorial)

Program TBD

Sunday, June 1st 1:30-3:30 PM Program "Roundtables" featuring country-specific tables with experts leading each table

*All programs subject to change. Check website www.jgscv.org

JGSCV MEMBER BENEFITS

- Annual assisted research afternoon at the Family History Library
- Members-only emails from the president announcing special events and free opportunities with Ancestry and other genealogical organizations and other items of genealogical interest
- Use of the traveling library at president's home – with an advance appointment
- For the first year of membership, JewishGen's Warren Blatt will assist with one concise question per month. He won't do your genealogy but with well thought out questions, he can help you on your genealogical journey.
- NEW! Members-Only Workshops on valuable genealogy tools
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2014 Membership/Renewal Form
Jewish Genealogical Society of the
Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV)*

*Member of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS)

www.JGSCV.org

Dues paid now are good through December 2014

Date _____

Check one:

This is a New Membership _____ Renewal _____

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 application to: Helene Rosen,
28912 Fountainwood St.
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

Name (Print) _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zipcode + 4 _____

Day telephone _____ Evening telephone _____

E-mail address _____

Talents that you have to share (accounting skills, language skills, computer skills, translation, etc.)
