



# 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

The JGSCV was privileged to have Peter Landé talk on the International Tracing Service (ITS) records that are now available at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington, D.C., the only depository in the U.S. for these records. Currently only the index cards are available. The existence of an index card indicates that records on a particular individual are available, although such "back-up" records may not be accessible at USHMM for the next several years. To obtain and digitize these records and put them into a useable database is very costly. The information from the ITS is on 50 million cards, representing some 17 million people. Many of the records are post World War II. The agreement to open the ITS archives to the 11-member countries of the International Committee of Swiss Red Cross, which manages the ITS, prohibits the records from being posted on the Internet. People may contact the USHMM if they cannot personally visit the Museum (see article page 2). Priority is given to survivors and families of victims and survivors.

Peter explained that most of the records are for Central and Western Europe. As example, the ITS records do not cover records for those who were taken to and shot in Belarus, or moved east to Russia and the Ukraine. Peter also reviewed availability of other collections.

Another opportunity for information is access to Letters of Inquiry to the ITS by researchers seeking data on missing people from WWII. Direct query to ITS is necessary for such letters of inquiry that are older than 25 years. These letters could have genealogical value if the person sought by the inquirer was related to a researcher.

Peter is a volunteer at USHMM, authoring a List of Lists, an inventory of thousands of sources of survivors.

He emphasized for researchers "not to give up," leaving with us the unique "From Auschwitz to Buchenwald Transport List" that is now in our traveling library. Peter praised JewishGen.org for their volunteer indexers without whom many of the Museum's collections would not have a searchable database.

As a special added delight, Ron Arons, past speaker and founding member of JGSCV, attended the meeting and sold signed copies of his recently published book: *The Jews of Sing-Sing: Gotham Gangsters and Gonuvmim*.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer. Starting with our September meeting, we are moving up our meeting start time to 1:30 PM on Sundays. Remember our November and December meetings are being held on Monday evenings at 7:00 PM. We look forward to seeing you at our September 7 meeting, which is our third anniversary!

Jan Meisels Allen



Checking a database with speaker Peter Landé



Author Ron Arons offers book to Phoebe Frank

**FOR SCHEDULE OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS, SEE PAGE 3**

## 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.

2008 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](http://www.jgscv.org) by selecting the membership button. Send changes in your contact information to: [membership@JGSCV.org](mailto:membership@JGSCV.org)

## USHMM OFFERS ITS INFORMATION

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has begun receiving digital images of the documentation at the International Tracing Service (ITS) in Bad Arolsen, Germany. To date, the Museum has received the first installment of about 18 million digital images of arrest, camp, prison, ghetto and transport records. The Museum is committed to making the information in these records accessible to Holocaust survivors as rapidly as possible. Over the next two years, the Museum expects to receive more than 100 million digital images of archival material from the ITS.

For instructions on accessing this data see:

[www.ushmm.org/remembrance/registry/services/?tr=y&auid=3706951](http://www.ushmm.org/remembrance/registry/services/?tr=y&auid=3706951)

## PHOTO ARCHIVES AT YAD VASHEM

Some 130,000 images from Yad Vashem's Photo Archives are now searchable in an online database. The largest archive of its kind in the world, the images in it include photographs of the ghettos, deportations, slave labor, the camps, liberation and more. These photographs represent an invaluable asset to historians, educators, writers, filmmakers and the public at large. Additional detailed information is easily available via a Google map that automatically opens, showing the location of the places mentioned in the caption. The search mechanism is very strong, allowing for a variety of parameters to delineate one's interest. See [www6.yadvashem.org/wps/portal/photo?lang=en&homepage=true?WT.mc\\_ev=EmailOpen](http://www6.yadvashem.org/wps/portal/photo?lang=en&homepage=true?WT.mc_ev=EmailOpen)

## FINAL RULE ON USCIS CHARGES

Two years ago the US Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS), formerly called the INS, proposed rules to establish a fee-for-service genealogy program. The final rule was published in the Federal Register on May 15, 2008. You may view/download the final rule at: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-10651.pdf>

The final rule goes into effect on August 13, 2008. The reason for the rule was to streamline and improve the process for acquiring genealogically relevant historical records of deceased individuals. Due to the demand for documents requests under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) took months, if not years, to complete. As a result of the comments made to the proposed rule the amount per index or record/file request (from a microfilm) will be \$20 and for a textual record \$35.

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) which requires that all government offices must 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.

The types of historical records available under the new program are: Naturalization certificate files (C-files) from September 27, 1906-April 1, 1956 (from all federal, state, municipal courts and more); Microfilmed 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 numbered below 8 million and dated prior to May 1, 1951. More information on each of these is contained in the final rule. To request records under this new program, a special form must be used: Form G-1041 for index or Form G 1041A for records request.

Once the program begins, requests may be submitted electronically on the electronic forms through its site <http://www.USCIS.gov> When requests are made online then payment must be via a credit card. When submitting a written request, the only form of payment accepted is a cashier's check or money order in the exact amount. As genealogical request information may only be obtained on deceased individuals, the subject is presumed dead if their birth date is over 100 years old. For those less than 100 years of age information (primary or secondary document- such as death record, published obituary, etc) must be provided to the satisfaction of the USCIS that the individual is indeed deceased.



Next meeting of the Jewish Genealogical Society  
of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County  
(\* and surrounding areas)

(Note that there will be no July or August meeting)

The JGSCV will hold a general meeting, co-sponsored with Temple Adat Elohim, on Sunday, September 7, 2008 at Temple Adat Elohim 2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks, 1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**NOTE THE EARLIER STARTING TIME**

## JEWISH SURNAMES

Warren Blatt, Managing Director and Editor-In-Chief, JewishGen.org

The history of Jewish surnames - their origins, types, and etymologies. Learn when they were first used in various countries, how they developed, and their transformation upon immigration. This presentation will dispel several common myths about Jewish surnames. Discover which Jewish surnames are the most common in the U.S., Eastern Europe and Israel, as well as sources for learning more about your surnames.

Also: The Klutzmer Band (yes, Klutzmer), playing Eastern European music

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.

For more information contact [information@JGSCV.org](mailto:information@JGSCV.org), See: [www.JGSCV.org](http://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**

We will NOT meet in August 2008 since many of us will be attending the IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in Chicago.

Our future schedule is as follows: September 7, 2008; October 5, 2008; November 10, 2008; December 8, 2008; January 4, 2009; February 8, 2009; March 1, 2009; April 5, 2009; May 3, 2009; June 7, 2009

## Shem HaKodesh: A Jewish “Genetic Code”

Werner L. Frank

My Hebrew name is Yehudah ben David. Recently my third cousin once removed on my mother’s side was ill and I said a *misheberach* at shul on his behalf. His Hebrew name is David ben Yehudah. I then recalled that Yehudah was quite a popular Hebrew name in my mother’s family, the Shem HaKodesh (holy name) that is first pronounced at the *Brit* of a male child, subsequently used to call a Jew to the Torah for an *Aliyah*, and also named as the *Chatan* in the marriage *Ketubah*. I therefore took a quick look at the direct descendant chart for both myself and my cousin David Blum as shown herewith:

### *Descendants of David Guenzburger*

1 David Guenzburger	1628 - 1681
.... 2 Lehmann ( <b>YEHUDAH</b> ) Guenzburger	d bef 1755
..... 3 David Lehmann Guenzburger	1700 - 1765
.....4 Gitel Guenzburger	1728 - 1810
..... +Rabbi Joseph Hirsch Blum	1735 - 1805
..... 5 Lehman ( <b>YEHUDAH</b> ) Blum	1755 - 1804
.....+Babette ( <b>BEILE</b> ) Geismar	1759 - 1830
.....6 Hirsch Lukas (Naftali) Blum	1795 - 1875
.....+Zipporah Uffenheimer	1810 - 1888
.....7 Gideon (Getlin, Eliakan) Blum	1843 - 1921
.....+Mathilde Grumbach	1850 - 1920
.....8 Ludwig Lehmann (Louis, <b>YEHUDAH</b> ) Blum	1871 - 1951
.....+Mathilde Weil	1877 - 1960
.....9 David Hans Blum	
.....7 Babette ( <b>BEILE</b> ) Blum	1835 - 1894
.....+Joseph Weingartner	1826 - 1899
.....8 Lehmann (Louis, <b>YEHUDAH</b> ) Weingartner	1868 - 1928
.....+Hedwig Gutmann	1876 - 1923
.....9 Bertha ( <b>BEILE</b> ) Weingartner	1903 - 2006
.....+Arthur Frank	1895 - 1981
.....10 Werner (Louis, <b>YEHUDAH</b> ) Frank	

Sure enough, Yehudah, the Shem HaKodesh, as well as the secular given names of Lehmann and Louis percolate throughout this 10 generation chart spanning almost four hundred years of the families FRANK, WEINGARTNER, BLUM, and GUENZBURGER. The Yehudah naming pattern fulfills the tradition of naming a male after the deceased paternal or maternal grandfather and is a useful measure to validate belonging to a particular family. Note also the repetitive occurrence of the name Beile in the female line of descend.

In a sense, this phenomena can be compared to the more scientific use of Y-DNA which, of course, is limited to tracing of one’s direct paternal line. On the other hand, the Shem HaKodesh can handle both the direct and indirect male or female line as the case may be.

The traditional Jewish naming pattern is an unheralded “genetic code” useful in genealogical research.

Interested in furthering your understanding of the relevance to genealogy of DNA testing for either paternal Y-DNA or maternal mtDNA ? Check out the JewishGen tutorial at [www.jewishgen.org:80/DNA/genbygen.html](http://www.jewishgen.org:80/DNA/genbygen.html)

## SPECIALIZED GENEALOGY SEARCH ENGINES

Two general search engines facilitating genealogical research are available on a free basis:

### MyHeritage Research, operated by an Israeli organization located in Bnei Atarot

MyHeritage Research offers a genealogy search engine on [www.myheritage.com/research](http://www.myheritage.com/research). This genealogy tool is useful for finding ancestors and advancing your family research through searches across more than 12 billion records, providing the most extensive genealogy searches available anywhere on the Internet. Additional resources are added continuously so that it is worthwhile to visit this site often. To use MyHeritage Research, enter the last name you are researching, or a combination of a first name and last name. MyHeritage Research will then search its nearly 1,500 genealogy databases and Websites on the Internet that cannot be searched by regular search engines like Google. Searches can look for an exact spelling, or multiple spelling variations (called Megadex). Because of the sheer extent of this search engine, some searches may take several minutes to complete. This search engine is particularly useful if you are researching a rare last name, or an uncommon combination of a first name and last name. Upon entering the search parameters, the system shows the progress of the search through a unique set of meters as well as the hits found in specified databases that were searched. Access to the data is then controlled by the owners of the respective databases. This site also offers are benefits including for download a free family tree application package.

### FamilySearch Labs, operated by the Genealogical Society of Utah, an affiliate of the LDS Church

Record Search is a quick way to search millions of historical records for clues about your ancestors. Enter what you know about an ancestor, then click and see matching records — all online. The query capability is flexible, allowing for entry of name and associated event of birth, marriage or death with an associated range in date, as well as specifying locations of the world. The available resource databases are limited at this point since the site is new and in a beta test mode. However, new sources are added continuously. (requires [Adobe Flash Player](#)) see <http://familysearchlabs.org/> Additional tools and features helpful to the genealogists are also offered.

### ONLINE HISTORY OF SOUTHERN JEWISH LIFE

The Institute for Southern Jewish Life (ISJL) has undertaken a project to compile an online history of every congregation and significant Jewish community in the South. This "digital archive project" is accessible at [www.isjl.org](http://www.isjl.org) by clicking on the "ISJL Digital Archive." Currently they have completed 83 communities in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and parts of Tennessee. There is a wealth of detail and names.

(Due to Marion H. Bernstein, San Antonio TX)

### SOURCE FOR WARSAW GHETTO INFORMATION

The Warsaw Ghetto site is a collection of facts from the history of the ghetto accessible through a search mechanism of the Internet database. It was designed so that users can easily find related information on specific subjects: people, events and places from the Warsaw ghetto. Moreover an interactive plan of the ghetto enables users to view the places. Depending on stored information on addresses, individual buildings may be displayed on the plan. In addition, users of the site have access to source materials. See <http://warszawa.getto.pl/>

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