

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST



JGSCV

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

August 2014

Volume 9 Issue 11

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Welcome back from our July hiatus! I hope many of you are ready to get back to attending our meetings and that you continued your genealogy adventures during the month with family reunions, reaching out to previously unknown cousins and just enjoying yourselves.

Tom and I returned from 18 days in Europe in June. The impetus of the trip was my invitation to present about holocaust records access to a private meeting of archivists and historians in Berlin. I was the only genealogist invited! It was a great honor to be recognized and invited due to my work on behalf of the IAJGS on records access. I met fascinating people from around the globe.

As I write this I am getting ready to attend my 16th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. A number of JGSCV members are attending as well as presenting! Dalya, Debra, Hal, Helene, Issie, Jan, Marian, Steve, Warren (and I hope more) will be there! Our own Hal Bookbinder is the lead co-chair and the conference has a very rich program. **Please see page 11 for important information on the future of IAJGS and why the Nominations Committee slate should be adopted.**

If you are unable to personally attend the conference, consider purchasing a LIVE! subscription for 60 live-streamed sessions. Click on this link for more information about



NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY, August 10th 1:30-3:30 PM

Genealogy in the Round

JGSCV members and friends share their successes, brickwalls and artifacts. Hear how others uncovered family history insights and maybe offer help to breakthrough someone's brickwall.

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LIVE!: <http://conference.iajgs.org/2014/Live.cfm>. Access to the sessions are good for three months following the conference so there are no more excuses about having to decide which session to attend. See more on the conference on page 11. JGSCV members received notification from me about a 10% discount for LIVE! I encourage you to use the JGSCV-members only discount. If you no longer have the email with the special code, contact me. The discount is only available to current JGSCV members and is not sharable!

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, JGSCV has been able to set-up a new computer class for *JGSCV members-only*! Crista Cowan, the Barefoot Genealogist[®] of Ancestry.com will facilitate the computer class: "Getting The Most Out of the Ancestry.Com" to be held on Sunday September 14 at the Conejo Valley Adult Education School. This is a JGSCV-member benefit only and while JGSCV defrays most of the costs, **there will be a pre-paid, non-refundable \$10 charge for those who register.** I am certain that the class will fill quickly as there are only 29 computers available for use and Crista is a favorite of JGSCV. Please see page 9 for more information on the class and how to register and prepay.

If you would like to get more active in JGSCV, our Nominations Committee will be selected at the August board meeting. Please let me know if you would like to be considered to serve on the board. We usually meet immediately following the program for about an hour—and we don't meet every month. There will be two vacant seats on the board that we know of for 2015 and getting new board members usually bring new ideas and are great for our growth and enhancing the society. If you will have been a member for at least one year as of next January you are eligible to be considered.

The board is actively working on making arrangements with speakers for our future meetings. We have the dates confirmed and several programs as listed on page 13. As more programs are confirmed they will be posted on the JGSCV website (www.jgscv.org), in this newsletter and on the future meeting handout at the meetings.

The annual Ventura County Fair will be held on July 30- August 10. As in year's past we have had JGSCV members volunteer at the genealogy both and are hoping some of the members will volunteer to work the booths along with representatives of the Ventura County Genealogical Society and the Ventura Family History Library. For more information on the Fair and how to volunteer see page 10.

Our next meeting is August 10, for our annual Genealogy in the Round program. As of writing this email we have 5 presenters and we would like 7-10. This is your program—please contact me at president@jgscv.org to let me know that you are going to share a genealogical success, brickwall or artifact. We always have a great time at this meeting. Depending on the number of participants each person may take 7-10 minutes to share. Whether you are a JGSCV member or friend we'd love to hear your genealogical story!

Looking forward to seeing you on August 10th.

Jan Meisels Allen

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST



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.

UPDATED DEATH RECORDS

The Online Death Records and Indexes Website has updated links to records in 26 states including California, Colorado, New York and Oregon. Start searching at this site: <http://www.deathindexes.com/>

RECORDS OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The California State Genealogical Alliance has posted links to the WPA land use survey maps for the city of Los Angeles for 1933-1939 including still pictures and a Survey of Federal Archives: <http://tinyurl.com/m5hwxo6>

NEW AT ANCESTRY.COM

- U.S. WW I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-18
- California Prison and Correctional Records, 1851-1950
- New York, Tax Assessment Rolls of Real and Personal Estates
- U.S. Register of Civil, Military and Naval Service, 1863-1959
- Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906-1944, *Updated*
- Moldova, Church Books, 1811-1936 (in Romanian) Start your search at www.ancestry.com

UCIS WEBINARS

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is offering a series of webinars this summer that will familiarize you with their services and help with research. The webinars cover 'History Library Catalog Services', 'Genealogy Program Introduction', 'Guide to I&N History Research' and "Records Found" Case Studies. <http://www.uscis.gov/HGWebinars>

MOBILE APPS FOR FAMILYSEARCH

FamilySearch has released 2 new mobile apps. 'Tree' is a mobile tree viewer and can be used with both iPhones (iOS operating systems) and Androids (all other operating systems). 'Memories' is only available for iOS systems and allows for adding pictures and recordings. Read more: <http://tinyurl.com/ow7yz6z>

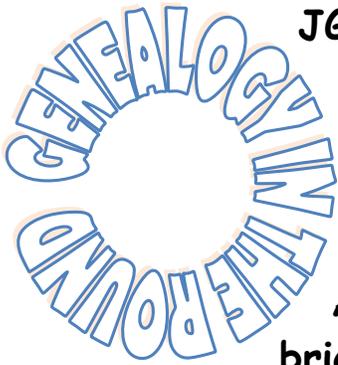
NEW DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE AT USHMM

According to *Nu? What's New?* Previously unavailable World War II records from the U.N. War Crimes Commission are now accessible. Comprising 370,000 pages and covering the period 1943-49, documents include the charges filed against the Nazi war criminals as well as follow up papers. For more information: <http://tinyurl.com/gza3med>



The JGSCV will hold a general meeting, co-sponsored with Temple Adat Elohim, on Sunday, August 10, 2014 at Temple Adat Elohim 2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

The Topic: 'Genealogy in the Round'



JGSCV members and friends are welcome and *encouraged* to share their genealogical experiences.

Everyone would like to hear how your diligence (or just plain luck) allowed you to discover a relative or a place or some other piece of your family history.

And, feel free to show how you got to your current brickwall. Maybe someone has been in that same place already and can offer some help.

This is also a great time to show off family treasures discovered when you finally opened grandma's trunk.

"Genealogy in the Round" is the one meeting each year that belongs to members and friends. The length of each presentation will be based upon the number of presenters. But each presenter will have at least 5 minutes. Please contact Jan Meisels Allen if you would like to participate as a presenter: president@jgscv.org.

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.



JGSCV UPDATES . . .



JGSCV really, really needs an assistant editor for our newsletter, “Venturing Into Our Past”. The assistant editor will need to devote only about of 2 hours (at your own pace) throughout each month researching and accumulating the records updates and insights that appear on page 3 of this publication. Help in writing will be provided if necessary. Please contact Allan Linderman if interested: newslettereditor@jgscv.org

THE SCHMOOZING CORNER is available if you would like individual insights for your genealogical pursuits from an experienced JGSCV member. JGSCV founding member Werner Frank will lead the Schmoozing Corner before the August 10th meeting. Come to the front right corner of the meeting room and look for the SCHMOOZING CORNER sign 20 minutes before the meeting is scheduled to begin.



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.

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 the website www.jgscv.org

JGSCV Computer Workshops are one of the many benefits of membership. To help plan future Workshops, please fill out the form on page 12 and tell the board what interests you most. You may hand it in at the sign-in desk at the next meeting. If you prefer, just ask for the form at the desk at the next meeting and fill it out there.

JGSCV would like to include your genealogical discoveries in our newsletter. Maybe it is a photo or a document that you have uncovered. Maybe you have connected with a new relative. Or, maybe you've encountered a brick wall that you'd like to share. Please take some time to summarize what you would like to share and we will contact you for more details if necessary. See page 12 for more details.

Jews in the Civil War:

Beth Ahabah Museum and Archives

By Jan Meisels Allen

I attended the recent National Genealogical Society (NGS) conference in Richmond Virginia, and one of the many Virginia repositories they recommended visiting was *Beth Ahabah Museum and Archives*. The Museum was established in 1977 to gather and preserve the existing records and artifacts concerning Kahal Kadosh Beth Shalome and Congregation Beth Ahabah, as well as those documents essential to understanding the Richmond and Southern Jewish experience.



Kahal Kadosh Beth Shalome received its charter to operate three years after the Virginia General Assembly passed the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom in 1786. As noted on the Museum and Archives website: “the core of the collection is the congregational documents of Beth Shalome and Beth Ahabah”. A visitor will also find genealogies, Civil War correspondence, immigration papers, over 1000 photographs from rare ambrotypes to contemporary snapshots, and a wide variety of ritual objects from Kiddush cups to Hannukah menorahs (<http://www.bethahabah.org/bama>).

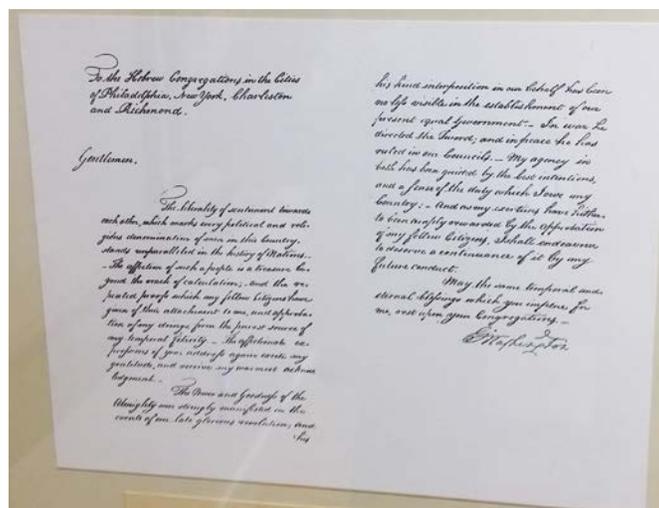
Not having any known Southern roots, what drew me to the Museum is an exhibit on the Jews in the Civil War called “That You’ll Remember Me”. The exhibit commemorating the sesquicentennial of the Civil War, will remain open through April 2015. “That You’ll Remember Me” recounts stories of the Richmond Jewish experience during the Civil War through personal effects, letters, documents, paintings, sculpture, song and audio narratives.

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Richmond was also a market town specializing in flour and slaves. Richmond was the capital of the Confederacy and the heart of the South's industry. Allegiances to North or South unified some families while tearing others apart but their patriotism was unwavering. Jews, through the military, government or civilian assistance, fulfilled many necessary roles and services for the south during the Civil War period. Because it was the Confederate Capital it was the focus of the Union’s attention.

History of Jews in Virginia

In addition to the Civil War exhibit (see below) the Museum has a copy of a letter from George Washington dated 1791 replying to a congratulatory letter by the Hebrew congregations of Philadelphia, New York, Charleston and Richmond. Also, Confederate War Bonds, bearing



the signature of Judah P. Benjamin, Secretary of State (Kadosh Beth Shalome used much of its own Kahal funds to purchase Confederate war bonds,

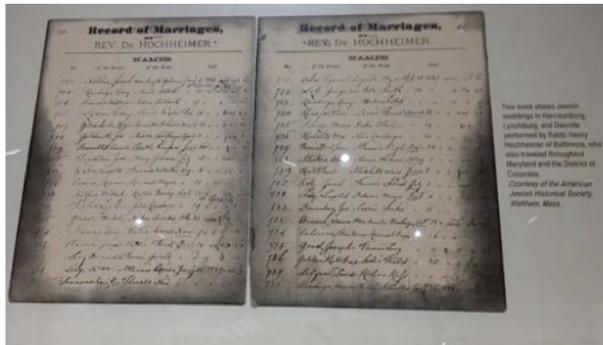
that class of our soldiers. But the necessities of war admit of no relaxation of the efforts requisite for its success, nor can it be known on what day the presence of every man may not be required, I feel assured that neither you or any member of the Jewish Congregation would wish to jeopardize a cause you have so much at heart by the withdrawal even for a season of a portion of its defenders.”

Another interesting display was when the secessionists took down the Union flag on April 17, 1861 and threw it in trash heap, with the intent to burn it later. A 13 year old page at the state capital, grabbed the flag, hid it under his shirt ran home and placed it under his mattress where it stayed for the duration of the Civil War. His name was Richard Gill Forrester. When Richmond fell to the Union troops Forrester took the flag back to

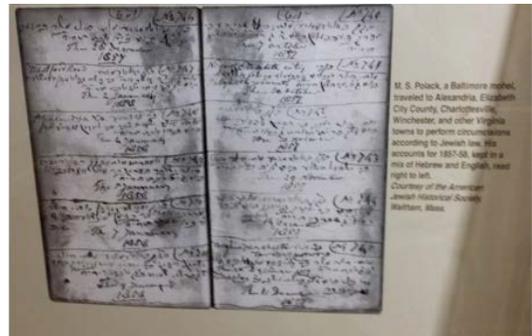
the Capital steps and raised it. Lt. Royal B. Prescott of the 13th regiment of the New Hampshire volunteers asked who had raised the flag. The original flag was given to Lt., Prescott and today is in the Hall of Flags at the New Hampshire State Capital. A facsimile flag is in the exhibit.

But who was Richard Gill Forrester? His grandfather was Gustavus Myers and his mother was a black freewoman Nelly Forrester. They had a son Richard Gustavus Forrester and Richard was brought up in the Jewish religion by Myer’s aunts.

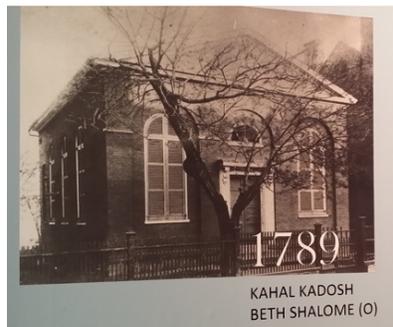
The exhibit had other items of interest: Photographs, documents, and ledgers with genealogical items of interest such as a circumcision log (below) by a traveling mohel from Baltimore and a wedding registry by a traveling rabbi and much more. It also depicted Jewish Richmond from the earliest Jewish inhabitants in 1786 through post World War II. If you have roots in the area the Museum does have archival staff to assist you—for a fee. Go to: www.bethahabah.org and click on museum and archives.



Record of Marriages

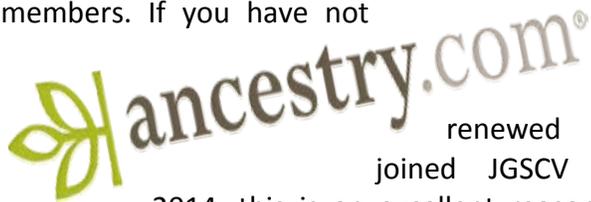


Record of Circumcisions



NEXT MEMBERS-ONLY WORKSHOP: “GETTING THE MOST OUT OF ANCESTRY.COM”

A computer workshop on Ancestry.com will be held at the Conejo Valley Adult Education Center (1025 Old Farm Road) in Thousand Oaks on September 14th from 1:30-4:30 PM. Entitled, “Getting the Most Out of Ancestry.com”, the workshop will be led by Crista Cowan, the “Barefoot Genealogist”[®]. JGSCV has been privileged to have Crista talk to us several times, so we know this will be a fast-sell out. The workshop is limited to the 29 spaces available in the single computer room so if you are interested, it is suggested that you act quickly. This is in addition to our monthly programs and is only offered to 2014 JGSCV dues paid members. If you have not



renewed or
joined JGSCV for
2014, this is an excellent reason to
do so now!

Crista will show you how to get the most out of your Ancestry.com searches. This is a step-by-step workshop with demonstrations of tips and tricks to maximize your searches and find even more treasures on Ancestry.com. Registration for “Getting the Most Out of Ancestry.com” will be available on a **first-come first-serve basis for those who register through JGSCV**. You will only be able to register through JGSCV. The Conejo Valley Adult Education Center will *not* accept direct registrations. If you are interested, contact Jan Meisels Allen at president@jgscv.org. (Note, only Conejo Valley Adult Education Center computers will be used for this workshop. Please do **not** bring your own laptop.) While JGSCV will absorb most of the costs, **the participant fee is August, 2014**

\$10. *The \$10 fee is per person even if you have a family membership to JGSCV.* Once you let Jan know by email and she confirms the reservation, the \$10 fee must be paid in advance by check payable to JGSCV and mailed to our treasurer: Karen Lewy, 4500 Henley Court Westlake Village, CA 91361. **Deadline for receiving the check is September 1** so that those on the waiting list may be contacted. **Payment will only be refunded if someone on the waiting list can fill the previously reserved space.** This new provision has been put in place since five pre-registrants did not attend the last workshop leaving some disappointed members who remained on the waiting list while 5 seats were vacant.

The date is **Sunday, September 14 from 1:30-4:30 p.m.** The workshop will start **promptly at 1:30 p.m.** Late arrivals will have to catch up on their own so please plan accordingly. **The Conejo Valley Adult Education Center is located at 1025 Old Farm Road in Thousand Oaks.**

Eligibility Requirements

1. Be a JGSCV 2014 dues paid member—neither spouses nor friends that are not current JGSCV members may attend and those who are current members need to be individually registered.
2. **You must be proficient in basic computer skills:** how to work a mouse—including the difference between right and left clicking, opening and closing a window, getting on the internet, migrating through webpages and **following directions**. The computers

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use Windows 7 operating system. **This is not a class on how to learn how to use a computer.** The only assistance given will be how to use the Ancestry.com website.

Registration

The Adult Education Center requires JGSCV to provide information for each person using the facility. If you have a family membership and both members in the membership want to participate, that is considered two (2) registrations - and two \$10 fees. Therefore, in your email to Jan, please include the following information for each individual registering:

1. Name
2. Address
3. Phone number (cell or landline)
4. Birth date including birth year (this is the unique identifier used by the school)

REMINDER: If you have a family membership to JGSCV and both members wish to attend, you **MUST** provide the above information separately for each family member.

The school assures us that this information will not be used for solicitation or other purposes unless you give them permission to contact you following the class.

For those who register, you may find it helpful to bring a USB (flash) drive in order to copy and bring home any documents you may create or want to download.

The limited number of spaces will go quickly so please sign-up now! *Additional information will be provided to registered participants.* If you have any questions contact Jan at president@jgscv.org

VENTURA COUNTY FAIR



Once again the Ventura County Fair (July 30-August 10) will take place at the Ventura County Fairgrounds located at 10 W. Harbor Blvd. in Ventura. This year's theme is: "A Country Fair With Ocean Air".

JGSCV members have volunteered in past years in the genealogy booth and enjoyed it! The IAJGS conference ends on August 1 so there are still many days you can volunteer at the Fair! Genealogy volunteers are needed for each day. Volunteers participate in 4 hour shifts 10:30 a.m to 2:30 p.m.; 2:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. It is best if volunteers are familiar with Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org as well as other popular programs to show the fair attendees how genealogy is researched. Training sessions will be held for those needing an update on the latest programs. Volunteers are admitted to the Fair free but there are no parking privileges. For more information, go to: <http://www.venturacountyfair.org/>

If you are interested in volunteering please email Kristin Stiles at kstiles222@yahoo.com.

34th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy

By Jan Meisels Allen



The 2014 IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy will be held in Salt Lake City July 27-August 1. If you haven't yet registered you may still attend. The full program is available on the website <http://iajgs2014.org>.

This year's IAJGS Annual Meeting—where the members vote for the directors and a new vice president—will be a seminal point for IAJGS. Under the leadership of its president Marlis Humphrey, IAJGS is transforming into a 21st century organization. This is a much needed change. The IAJGS Nominations Committee has selected excellent people to serve on the board including two new nominees from genealogical organizations: Ancestry.com and FamilySearch. A candidate from MyHeritage is up for reelection, as well. I have known the person from

Ancestry for about 10 years having worked with him on records access and interacting with him at IAJGS Annual conferences over the years. The Nominations Committee selected the slate of candidates by matching individual skill sets with the results of the Strategic Planning and Membership questionnaires completed by IAJGS members. It was clear IAJGS needed to augment its marketing and membership enhancement capabilities. The JGSCV board reviewed the Nominations Committee report, candidates' bios and correspondence including strong opposition to the candidates from the genealogical organizations. The JGSCV board agreed with my recommendation to vote for the slate as presented. We appreciate and understand the vision of having outside people serve who can bring to IAJGS and its members—like JGSCV—new techniques for marketing, programming and membership development to keep the societies vibrant and relevant. Change is always an “unsettling” feeling and the comfort factor of doing what “we always did” is understandable. However, time for going forth and doing new things with new expertise is here! In the next newsletter I will provide updates from the Annual Meeting.

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.
- Members-Only Workshops on valuable genealogy tools.

Will You Share Your Genealogical Stories?

To all JGSCV members: We would like to include your genealogical discoveries in our newsletter. Maybe it is a photo or a document that you have uncovered. Maybe you have connected with a new relative. Or, maybe you've encountered a brick wall that you'd like to share. Please take some time to summarize what you would like to share and we will contact you for more details.

Name _____
Email Address _____
Contact Number _____

Future JGSCV Computer Classes Survey

To all JGSCV members: Thank you for taking the time and effort to respond to this survey. We want to know what interests you. We have listed some topics, but please add anything else you want to learn.

_____ Jewish Gen – Data Base Searches

_____ JGSCV.org Website Resource Links

_____ How to use Google for Genealogy searches

Genealogy software programs (write on the line below)

Other

Name (optional) _____

JGSCV Meeting Dates Through June, 2015*

At Temple Adat Elohim

Sunday, August 10th 1:30-3:30 PM Program "Genealogy in the Round" JGSCV members and friends share their successes, brickwalls and artifacts

<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
Sunday Sept. 7, 1:30-3:30 PM – Warren Blatt, JewishGen managing director and JGSCV founding board member, "Step-By-Step for Getting the Most From JewishGen"	Sunday January 4 1:30-3:30 PM TBA
MONDAY October 6, 7-9 PM – David Laskin, author of <i>The Family</i> , follow his fascinating ancestors AND celebrate JGSCV's 9 th Anniversary!	Sunday February 8 1-5PM , "Assisted Research Afternoon" at LAFHL 2015 JGSCV Members-Only May join/renew at the door
MONDAY November 3, 7-9 PM TBA	Sunday March 1, 1:30-3:30 PM TBA
Sunday Dec. 21, 1:30-3:30 PM Annual Membership Renewal and Chanukah Party TBA	Sunday April 12, 1:30-3:30 PM TBA
	Sunday May 3, 1:30-3:30 PM TBA
	Sunday June 7, 1:30-3:30 PM TBA

- All programs to be announced. Check website www.jgscv.org

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