



SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Martha L. Wise 1990 20th Ave. San Francisco, Calif. 94116

Feb. 1985

BUSY SUMMER

So much is planned for this summer that it seems doubtful anyone could even consider attending everything.

You already know about the 5th National Seminar on Jewish Genealogy to be held in New York in July and about the Research Seminar and Expedition to Poland that is to follow for those who wish to make the trip. You also know about the National Genealogical Society's annual conference which is to be in Salt Lake City this year. Now we hear that the American Jewish Historical Society is to hold a national conference in Baltimore this June. This apparently is by no means the first such conference although they do not say which number this is and we have not previously been aware of them.

This is not a genealogical society although apparently they have been drawing some genealogists among others. Since their program is not yet at hand it is not possible to judge how much there will be of interest to genealogists but since it is a Jewish society the historical focus is sure to be on Jewish history.

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

There will be a second international seminar but not before 1986 or 87. It will be in London. It was thought that too many international seminars would reduce attendance since very few people can handle a seminar overseas on an annual basis. They will probably be on a five year basis from what we hear so that people can attend the national seminars annually and still attend the international seminars when they are held. Of course some of us will not get beyond the wishing stage but the lucky ones will go and we will get reports and perhaps tapes.

SEMINAR TAPES

The Jewish Genealogical Society in New York is offering to lend cassette tapes for the cost of two way postage. They will send only a single tape at a time although you can order as many as you would care to at one time.

They also can sell tapes to those desiring to own them. If you wish to purchase a tape write to Raymond Goldberg, 509 Cathedral Parkway, Apt 4D, New York, N.Y. 10025. To borrow one it would be wise to write first to be sure this offer is general and not simply for members. That is not made clear by what we have at hand. Also you might want a list of the available tapes. The list is too long to print here.

They are able to provide tapes for the Los Angeles seminar of 1983 but our members have no need to borrow tapes from New York if they are interested in Los Angeles tapes. We own all of the Los Angeles tapes and we lend them for \$1.00 per month plus a refundable deposit in the amount of the replacement cost of the tape.

New York also has seminar tapes from the Israeli seminar of last spring. They must have all the tapes for this seminar since they list almost forty tapes.

There is, of course, no substitute for attendance at a seminar but if that is not possible or if you did attend but could not hear every talk of interest or would simply like to be

able to recheck some particular item, tapes can be a very good idea.

BOOKS

We have added to our library two small paperback volumes that should be helpful additions. Guide to Research seems to be a well put together little volume. It is not oriented toward Jewish genealogy but is a good basic book with much useful information. Computer Genealogy is beyond your editor's comprehension but we do have a number of members who understand computers and to whom it will probably be helpful.

We have also received not one but two family histories within the space of a month. Both are on quality paper, include photographs, a name index by page, an index by locality and a great deal of information that should be of considerable interest to those belonging to these families. Both include charts, one a great many small charts with references back to other charts to show a full relationship with a minimum of effort on the part of the user. One book was compiled by Anna Oshwanger of Memphis, Tenn. and concerns the Oshwanger family and related families. The other represents the efforts of Maynard Abrams with the assistance of his wife, Gertrude to provide a family record for their children and relatives. The Abrams live in Hollywood, Florida.

We had planned to include the names other than those on the cover but between the two there are far too many for the newsletter. One contains over two dozen different surnames, the other has that many without getting past the beginning of the Bs. Someone may ask us, or their own society, to allow them to study one book or the other but it would seem that if there are to be any more such family histories in future, either in as ambitious a form as these two or simply in typed manuscript form that there should be some central record of all the information so that anyone asking for a certain name and giving a time period and location could receive whatever information might be in this central card file or computer record, perhaps for a fee, plus the name of the book or manuscript and that of the person to contact if they would like a copy or have something to share with the person who wrote the history to begin with.

The problem is who would be willing to undertake such a project? It would be rewarding, making matchups is fun, but it would also be a formidable amount of work and a neverending job.

There are computerized files but they contain the names of people being sought and the names of the seekers. Aside from location no specific information such as known children, siblings, parents or the like is given. Often not much is known by the seekers.

These files are of course useful since we can use them to ask for information on a given name.

On the otherhand the family histories contain not only already researched direct lines but many collateral lines as well. Only one who is lucky enough to be included in a family genealogy knows what a joy it is to have so much already done and available.

We do also have at least two Jewish history centers in California that keep family histories and will make information available but that does not cover other parts of the country not to mention other countries.

There are stirrings in this direction, some root cellars already exist, although so far we are not aware of a Jewish one, but there is no central place to which to turn and it is often a matter of luck if one discovers that one exists.

DANISH CARD FILE

Your editor does maintain an as yet quite incomplete card file containing the names of thousands of Danish Jews and a sprinkling of German families whose families included a Danish branch or German ancestry that was included in one of the genealogies used in compiling these cards. Jewish settlement in Denmark only began in the later part of the 17th century and most of the early Jews in Denmark came from Hamburg or Altona although often the genealogy does not go back any further than those first settled in Denmark.

Even with only about half a dozen genealogies carded up so far matchups can be easily made and gladly will be if anyone has Danish ancestry. Information does not usually extend much beyond the birth of those born prior to WWI, WWII at most, but more often not.

OFFICE ENVELOPES

All too often a business envelope arrives addressed to an individual with nothing to indicate that it is not simply some sort of promotion. The result can be that it will be tossed away as

unopened junk mail or perhaps marked "refused" and put back in the mail to be returned at the expense of the original sender and discourage further such mailings, again because it has been mistaken for junk mail.

If you use your company's envelope either use the name of the society as well as the name of the individual or add your own name to the return address or both. Take just a moment to insure your letter the reception you would wish for it. You don't want it to be lost because the glut of business envelopes with unfamiliar firm names has caused so many people to feel any such envelope contains junk mail.

GRAFFITI

The University of Heidelberg is old and prestigious dating from the 14th century, but its students, like students everywhere, deliberately misbehaved in order to win the approval of their peers. It was considered very macho to engage in duelling long after duelling was forbidden. Scars were a source of pride. Drinking and rowdy roistering were also popular with the students although frowned upon by the university and the town police as well. As a result the young men often found themselves incarcerated in the "kerker" or jail used for students. While there they would proudly leave their names and at times small verses and the like.

Although it has not been used in a long time it has been preserved and apparently one can tour through it just as I remember doing in 1929.

Clarise Iles of Laguna Hills and her husband visited there last year and found the following on a wall: 24/3/89 Max Salomon, San Francisco, Calif. USA.

Mrs. Iles was kind enough to share this with us in case one of our members descends from Max Salomon, not only that, but she has offered to send a picture of this wall to anyone who might like to have it. Any relatives of Max Salomon out there?

NATIONAL ARCHIVES IS FIFTY

According to something Joan Simms has sent us the National Archives turns fifty this year. It is suggested that since this is a birthday a gift might be in order. Do you need to be told what sort of gift is wanted? That's right, money.

You may send a check to your own society which is to keep it until sufficient funds have been accumulated at which time the money will be forwarded to the Federation of Genealogical Societies marked for the archives gift fund. Of course should you care to make a gift of \$100.00 or more you may send it directly to the Federation. All checks will be photocopied and eventually filed as a record of donors at the archives.

The Federation is the organization to which we all contribute \$1.00 a year when we pay our dues. As mentioned previously, the dues themselves are \$15.00. The extra dollar goes to the Federation for its work in producing finding aids.

Future finding aids under consideration are complete pension files for the revolution and the war of 1812, Navy mothers pension files. Completing the index to passport applications and microfilming civil war records (service records, volunteer records, etc.)

Happy birthday to the archives. We all appreciate the archives but we wish the Federation luck in finding those with \$100.00 or more to donate to their project. They should not be too surprised if most people settle for their \$1.00 per year.

NEW GENEALOGICAL SOCIETIES

There is now a new society in Toronto, the Toronto Jewish Genealogical Society. Ohio now has four societies, one in Cleveland, one in Cincinnati, one in Columbus and one in Dayton. All called the Jewish Genealogical Society of their respective city.

We have come a long way in only a short time. The first Jewish genealogical society, the Jewish Genealogical Society in New York was founded only seven years ago this spring. Soon there will be no state without a society and Canada will certainly increase its societies as people become aware of genealogical societies.

SEPHARDIC TOUR

The New York society's newsletter tells us that a tour to Turkey and Greece is to take place in March and will focus on the Jewish experience in these countries. It is apparently not to be a genealogical tour but more a touching base for Sephardim with Turkish or Greek

heritage. The information came too late for Californians but no doubt if it is a success it will be repeated. Perhaps the next time it will include some opportunities for genealogical research as well.

GRAVEN IMAGES

We tend to feel that pictures prior to the advent of photography scarcely exist for Jewish people. There were those, we know, who resisted photography in its early days as contrary to the ten commandments. Photographs were seen as graven images and thus forbidden. If photographs were so viewed then one is apt to think paintings and drawings must have been regarded in the same fashion.

In due course even the most orthodox accepted photography in the same light as a reflection in a mirror and recognized that they were a record of what was and not an image that might be worshipped. As such photographs obviously broke no commandment.

Actually though some Jews did have their portraits painted as early as the 17th century. The earliest this writer has seen (not in the original, of course) are of court Jews in Germany and Austria and while these people were undoubtedly rather orthodox by today's standards they were probably not regarded as ultra orthodox in their own day. They dressed in the fashion of the upper class of their day, although in their day many Jews still did not dress in the latest fashion, a hangover from the day much earlier when Jews were forced to dress in such fashion that gentiles could recognize them and not mistake them for Christians. Later the Jews continued to set themselves apart by their own wish just as the Chinese in time came to regard the pigtail, originally forced upon them, as a mark of their Chinese heritage and objected to doing away with it. Obviously these were people of wealth and the average person did not sit for a portrait in oils. There are later pictures of less wealthy citizens, some oils, some done in pastels or charcoal and some silhouettes but of course they are more the exception than the rule.

Photography brought preserving an image much closer to the average person. It does seem to have taken much longer to catch on in some places than in others but most of us do have photographs of ancestors who lived to see photography become commonplace.

Thank goodness for photographs, they mean so much to us and will mean even more to succeeding generations. It is a way to at least know what our ancestors looked like. It is frustrating however to find you have inherited an album full of unidentified people.

Do remember to identify your pictures for the future.

AVOTAYNU

The first issue of Avotaynu is out. It includes a history of the Jews of Australia by Rabbi Porush, chief rabbi of Australia, a suggested variation on the soundex code to adapt it to Jewish names that under the system in use may wind up widely separated but under this system would come close together since they derive from a common source, a book review, reports on archival library sources and publications which may include material of value for genealogy, a list of Jewish genealogical societies, and more. This is the first edition. We wish it much success.

WASHINGTON RESEARCH FIRM

Roots-Key reports that Du Pont & Associates, a Washington D.C. area research firm with access to an extensive number of genealogical records and collections will research any request at no charge unless a proper answer can be found. In that case you pay \$35.00 per answered request. You will receive a fully documented report.

For request forms and details write to Du Pont & Assoc. P.O. Box 10931. Arlington, Va. 22210

PRIVATE RESEARCHER

Richard Zneimer, 2408 Aspen St. Philadelphia, Pa. 19130 (215) 235-1318 formerly a genealogy division specialist with the N.Y. Public Library will do research in New York and Washington and of course, Philadelphia for \$15.00 per hour.

There are times when, if you cannot get to the proper place yourself, knowing where to find someone who can do a decent job for you may be the answer for you.

MEMBERS FORUM

Nothing was received for this column this issue.

FAMILY FINDER

Queries for the Family Finder should be sent to Mrs. Warren R. Wise, 1990 20th Ave. San Francisco, Calif. 94116.

This column is free to members. It is \$2.50 to non-members per query.

K-3 Dorothy Kohanski, 2370 1-D Via Mariposa W., Laguna Hills, Calif. 92635 (714) 855-4692
Seeking descendants of Moritz GREENWALD (1813)(son of Judah GREENWALD & Rachel KOHUT) and Maria STERN, daughter of Leopold GREENWALD and Barbella DRUCKER. Sons, Ludwig (1860), wife, Paulina BRUCHSTEINER & Heinrich (1862), wife Regina Weisz. Daughters, Cecile (1864), Rosa (1866), Gizella (1868) and Borbella (1876) all born in Budapest, Hungary.

Also seeking descendants of Mor STERNBERG (1821) and Rozalia KOHN. Children: Maria (1853) wife of Julius GREENWALD; Maria's twin, Clara wife of Moritz POMERANZ; Rosa wife of Samuel I. BLUM died NYC 1929: Johanna wife of Lipot Mark KAUFMANN; Zilla and Helene. O'Budai/Altoffen section of Budapest. Can share data on other KOHUT, DRUCKER, GREENWALD and STERNBERG family members from Budapest.

K-3 Dorothy Kohanski, see above.

Seeking "Coby" STERNBERG, violinist, lived in Cincinnati beginning 1900s, said to have married a relative of Harriet Beecher Stowe. Also searching for children and grandchildren of Frederick GREENWALD (concert pianist) 1888 in Hungary/Austria. Married Sophie KANTERWICH in New York 1915. Daughters musical. Also LEVINSKI from Lazdijai, Lithuania. Also seeking any DELLAR/DILLER/DELER from Odessa. Solomon DILLAR (c 1830) arrived 1882 aboard SS Ohio in Philadelphia, Pa. Died as DELLAR in Portland, Or. 1918. Need siblings, others.

L-1 Arthur Liss, 1960 Donohue Ct. San Jose, Calif. 95131 (408) 272-7367

Looking for relatives with the family name of WITASKIS (WISTASCKES) originally from Zhitomer, Ukraine. Also need information on anyone with the name LEVOW(SKY) from Zhitomer. Last residence Elizavetgrad (now Kirovograd). Also looking for relatives named LISHENSKY/LASANSKY Pritzker from Boguslav (near Kiev) name commonly changed to Liss. Also FREISTADT from Boguslav.

S-5 Joan Morganstern Simms, 1424 Harker Ave. Palo Alto, Calif. 94301 (415) 326-0600

Seeking all descendants of Boruch (Bernard) SHATZKIN whose children were Joseph, Molly, Ida, Reva Leah, Saidie and Michael and Hattie (twins). Also any information on A.M., Samuel, Nathan, Moses and Sol Lesser. All born in Kopyl (Kopolia) Lithuania. Some of the above lived in the Bay Area during the first half of this century.

W-2 Martha L. Wise, 1990 20th Ave. San Francisco, Calif. 94116 (415) 564-9927

Seeking descendant of Carl and Arthur von Weinberg, brothers born 1860 and 1861 in Frankfurt a/Main, Germany. Died the same year 1943. They were sons of Bernard Otto Weinberg and Pauline Gans, daughter of Ludwig Aron Gans and Rosette Goldschmidt. The von Weinbergs were manufacturers of aniline dyes. Wives names not known.