

# זכרון ZichronNote

## The Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

Volume XIX, Number 4

November 1999

### CALENDAR OF GENEALOGICAL EVENTS

#### Meetings of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

**Please note:** Unless otherwise indicated, the meeting schedule is as follows:

**San Francisco:** **Sunday, Doors open 12:30 p.m. Program begins at 1 p.m.**

Fort Mason Center, Marina Boulevard at Buchanan Street, Building C, Room 205

**Palo Alto:** **Monday, 7:30 p.m.**

Congregation Kol Emeth, 4175 Manuela (near Foothill Blvd. and Arastradero Road)

- Sun. Nov. 21** **San Francisco:** *14<sup>th</sup> Annual Jewish Genealogy Workshop*, 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. As in previous years, our annual workshop will feature classes, one-on-one assistance, translators, and extensive library resources. Mark your calendar to make sure you don't miss this exciting day of research, resources, and sharing expertise! (*See page 4*)
- Mon. Dec. 20** **Palo Alto:** *Annual Special Interest Group Meeting*. Building on last year's successful December meeting, we will identify common research interests among our members and facilitate sharing of information.
- Sun. Jan. 23** **San Francisco:** *Resources at University of California, Berkeley*. Jeremy Frankel will discuss U.C. Berkeley collections and the resources for genealogy. [**Note date change**]
- Mon. Feb. 21** **Palo Alto:** Welcome speaker Zachary Baker, former Senior Librarian at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York, now the Reinhard Family Curator of Judaica and Hebraica Collections at Stanford University Libraries.
- Sun. Apr. 16** **Palo Alto:** *The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Jewish Genealogy Workshop in Palo Alto*. To be held at Congregation Beth Am. Doors open at 12:30 p.m., programs being at 1p.m.

#### Tentative Dates for the Remainder of 2000

##### San Francisco

Sun. Mar. 19  
Sun. May 21  
Sun. Jul. 23  
Sun. Sep. 17  
Sun. Nov. 19

##### Palo Alto

Sun. Apr. 16 [**Note day and date change**]  
Mon. Jun. 19  
Mon. Aug. 21  
Mon. Oct. 23  
Mon. Dec. 18

**More Genealogy Events of Interest on Page 4**

## ZichronNote

### Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

ZichronNote is published four times per year, in February, May, August and November. The deadline for contributions is the 1st of the month preceding publication. The editor reserves the right to edit all submittals. Submissions may be made by hard copy, 3-1/2" floppy disks or email to dLkurtz@ix.netcom.com.

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**People Finder** queries are free to Society members. Non-members may place queries for \$5 each, limited to 25 words not including searcher's name, address, telephone number, and email address.

**Back Issues** are available for \$5 per issue. Requests should be addressed to the SFBAJGS at the Society address below.

**Display Advertising** is accepted. The rate for a business card-sized (3-1/2 x 2 inch) insertion is \$10 per issue, quarter-page ad \$20, half-page ad \$35, and a full-page ad, \$60. Ads must be camera-ready, relate to Jewish genealogy and be in good taste.

**Membership** is open to anyone interested in Jewish genealogy. Dues are \$20 per calendar year. The Society is tax-exempt pursuant to section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code. Make your check payable to "SFBAJGS" and send to: Sita Likuski, Membership, 4430 School Way, Castro Valley, CA 94546.

**Society Address:**

SFBA JGS, P.O. Box 471616, San Francisco, CA 94147

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**Founder:** Martha Wise

**ZichronNote Editor:** Dana L. Kurtz

**Copy Editor:** Gordon Fine

**Meetings:** **Odd-numbered months**-3rd Sunday of each month, 1 p.m. at Fort Mason Center (Marina at Buchanan), San Francisco. **Even-numbered months**-3rd Monday of each month, 7:30 p.m. at Congregation Kol Emeth, 4175 Manuela Avenue (near Arastradero and Foothill), Palo Alto.

**SFBAJGS Web Site:** [www.jewishgen.org/sfbajgs](http://www.jewishgen.org/sfbajgs)

## President's Message

by Rodger Rosenberg

With summer concluded, I hope that everyone had an opportunity to engage in the "three Rs": rest, relaxation, and research. This summer saw record numbers of participants at the annual Jewish genealogical summer seminar where more than 1,300 attendees swarmed to New York City for a huge variety of workshops and lectures. I know some of our members were lucky enough to attend. For those of you, like myself, who were not present, our society purchased audio-cassette tapes of some of the excellent presentations given. Information about these tapes can be found in this issue, and members may borrow the tapes.

Our annual workshop is quickly approaching with new and exciting opportunities for researchers of all experience levels. We'll offer a workshop for beginners, a wide range of materials in the resource room, birds-of-a-feather sessions, one-on-one assistance, and a panel discussion on obtaining records from foreign sources. For those of you who have "hit a wall" in your research, this promises to be invaluable. Any members who would like to help out at the workshop should contact Jerry Jacobson. (See page 4 for more details.)

The Family Tree of the Jewish People database has finally become a reality. This project seeks to centralize the collection of family trees for Jewish people in order to provide as powerful a resource as possible to connect individuals researching the same family branches. Our Society owns a copy of this CD-ROM, which will be available for review at the November workshop.

We have received notice that the Israel Genealogical Society is desperately trying to replace the more than 102 yizkor books which are missing from Yad Vashem and the Tel Aviv municipal library. These books were removed without permission and leave a gaping hole in collections that were meant to be shared. New strict rules have been set up to protect these valuable resources. A list of these missing volumes can be found at [www.yad-vashem.org.il](http://www.yad-vashem.org.il). If you can replace any of the missing volumes, your contribution will be appreciated worldwide.

Finally, I would like to offer a personal invitation to our members to become more involved with the JGS. Opportunities abound for anyone who would like to participate in the business of the Society, or work on a special project. Expertise in genealogy is not necessary for volunteering. Only your desire and enthusiasm to participate are required. Take it from experience, participation is a great way to enhance your genealogical knowledge!

*Rodger*

<b>SOCIETY NEWS</b>
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**Email Address Updates**

Please note the following updates to e-mail addresses listed in the SFBAJGS Membership Roster.

Jeremy Frankel	jfrankel@pop.lmi.net
Betty Goren	deebeeg@juno.com
Thea Hodge	tdhodge@pacbell.net
Marcia Kaplan	marcia@kaplanandkaplan.com
Debra Katz	dkbk@psinet.com
Sybel Klein	sklein@ccsf.org
Rae Sal Schalit	rschalit@ccsf.org

Messages to the following people have bounced. Please advise us of your correct e-mail address:

Arleen and Leon Chassman  
Suzanne Waxman

If you have an e-mail address but have not been receiving occasional SFBAJGS messages, or your e-mail address has changed, send a message to [dLkurtz@ix.netcom.com](mailto:dLkurtz@ix.netcom.com) so we can keep you up to date.

**Welcome New Members**

Marcia DeVries	Clayton
marciadv@msn.com	
Jane Weidringer Jolly	El Cerrito
wLjolly@socrates.berkeley.edu	
Judy A. Kelly	Piedmont
wwtrkelly@ail.com	
Jonathon Khuner	Oakland
jkhuner@flash.net	
Sheila Radman	San Francisco
sheilarad@aol.com	
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ssunola@earthlink.net	
Phil Weintraub	Oakland
kamtraub@aol.com	
R. Naidia Woolf	San Francisco
rnwoolf@cs.com	

**SFBAJGS Family Finder Update**

The surnames and towns being researched by our newest members are listed below. We hope to maintain this database for our membership. If you have a correction, update or new information you would like us to know about, contact: SFBAJGS, P.O. Box 471616, San Francisco, CA 94147, or send email to: [dLkurtz@ix.netcom.com](mailto:dLkurtz@ix.netcom.com).

<u>Surname</u>	<u>Town, Country</u>	<u>Member</u>
Barg	Miedzyrzec, Poland	Radman, Sheila
Buchbinder	Ostrava, Moravia, Czech Republic	Khuner, Jonathon
Falk	Altenmuhr, Egenhausen, Bavaria, Germany; Portland, Harrisburg, OR; Boise, ID	Veloz, Elaine
Fogel	Gomel, Belarus	Khuner, Jonathon
Frankl	Bzenec, Moravia, Czech Republic	Khuner, Jonathon
Gliboff	Gomel, Belarus	Khuner, Jonathon
Hoodoff	Gomel, Belarus	Khuner, Jonathon
Khuner	Wien, Austria; Bzenec, Moravia, Czech Republic	Khuner, Jonathon
Kossoff	Gomel, Belarus; New York City, NY	Khuner, Jonathon
Krasny	Wien, Austria; Ostrava, Moravia, Czech Republic	Khuner, Jonathon
Kuhner	Bzenec, Moravia, Czech Republic	Khuner, Jonathon
Lowenstein	New York	Veloz, Elaine
Radman/Rajdman	Miedzyrzec, Poland	Radman, Sheila
Rejdman	Miedzyrzec, Poland	Radman, Sheila
Seller	Altenmuhr, Egenhausen, Bavaria, Germany; Portland, Harrisburg, OR; Boise, ID	Veloz, Elaine
Skorohodov	Gomel, Belarus	Khuner, Jonathon

## CALENDAR, cont'd.

### More Genealogy Events

#### Local

Thu. November 18, **Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society, Scandals and Scallywags: What to Do with the Skeletons in the Closet.** 7 p.m. Community Room, Santa Clara City Center Library, 2635 Homestead Rd., Santa Clara. [www.katpher.com/scchgs](http://www.katpher.com/scchgs).

Sat. November 27, **Sonoma County Genealogical Society, Are Your Ancestors Buried in the National Archives? speaker Claire Miller.** 1 p.m. Lark Hall, Santa Rosa Junior College, Room 2009, Sonoma. [www.scgs.org/](http://www.scgs.org/).

#### Regional

Sun. November 21, **Jewish Genealogical Society of Sacramento, Researching U.S. Census Records, speaker Glenda Lloyd.** 10 a.m. Albert Einstein Center, 1935 Wright St., Sacramento. Tel: (916) 486-0906, ext. 361. [www.jewishgen.org/ajgs/jgs-sacramento/](http://www.jewishgen.org/ajgs/jgs-sacramento/).

Sun. December 19, **Organizing and Keeping Track of Your Research, speaker Pam Dallas.** 10 a.m. Albert Einstein Center, 1935 Wright St., Sacramento. Tel: (916) 486-0906, ext. 361. [www.jewishgen.org/ajgs/jgs-sacramento/](http://www.jewishgen.org/ajgs/jgs-sacramento/).

#### National/International

Fri. - Sat. January 28-29, **GENTECH 2000, Genealogy and Technology Conference.** San Diego Concourse Convention Center. Gentech 2000, P.O. Box 140277, Irving, TX 75014-0277; Fax (888) 522-7313; e-mail [sdgs@genealogy.org](mailto:sdgs@genealogy.org). [www.gentech.org/2000home.htm](http://www.gentech.org/2000home.htm).

### Second Annual Peninsula Workshop

On Sunday, April 16, the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society, and Congregation Beth Am in Los Altos Hills will sponsor the Second Annual Peninsula Workshop at 26790 Arastradero Rd., Los Altos Hills. More information to come.

Tentative schedule:

- 12:30 Registration, Facilities available.
- 1:00 Resources in the Bay Area — a review of the new SFBAJGS publication.
- 2:00 Internet Genealogy: Separate sessions for those who are connected to the Internet and for those who are not.
- 3:00 Parallel sessions for Special Interest Groups. One of these sessions will be tailored to new immigrants from the former Soviet Union and will be given in Russian.
- 4:00 Workshop ends. Those interested are invited to stay for a concert sponsored by the Beth Am Emigre Department.

### Don't Miss the SFBAJGS Annual Workshop!

On Sunday, November 21, the SFBAJGS will present our **14<sup>th</sup> Annual Jewish Genealogy Workshop**, from 12 to 4 p.m. at Fort Mason Center, Building C, Room 205, in San Francisco.

Expanded library resources will include books, gazetteers, microfiche readers and our complete fiche collection, computers and genealogy CD-ROMs. Maps will help you locate your ancestral towns. The SFBAJGS librarian and many other volunteers will be present to help you get the most out of the materials.

We'll also have translators available through the day, to help reveal the secrets of documents and photographic inscriptions. Languages tentatively scheduled are Polish, Yiddish, Russian, Hebrew, German, French, and Macedonian! (Sign-up sheets will be posted at the Workshop.) JGS experts will lead classes and "Birds-of-a-Feather" sessions, and experienced genealogists will be available throughout the day to assist researchers of all levels.

Don't miss this great opportunity to schmooze with fellow genealogists. Door prizes will be given away, too!

#### Tentative Schedule

##### CLASSES

**12-1:30 p.m.** – Jewish Genealogy: The Basics

**2-3:30 p.m.** – Obtaining Records from Foreign Sources

##### BIRDS-OF-A-FEATHER SESSIONS

###### 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

- |                       |             |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| ✓ Research in England | ✓ Lithuania |
| ✓ Hungary/Romania     | ✓ Poland    |

###### 3 p.m. – 4 p.m.

- |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| ✓ Latvia  | ✓ Germany |
| ✓ Galicia | ✓ Ukraine |

##### RESOURCES

###### All Day 12 p.m. – 4 p.m.

- Resource Room – Books, Maps, CD-ROMs, more
- Translators: (Schedule to be determined)
- One-on-One Assistance
- Refreshments

You are encouraged to review your research needs prior to the Workshop, to be ready to take advantage of the array of resources available. Check our web site for the latest information.

The Workshop is free to members, guests – \$5, applicable towards membership. Don't miss this exciting day of research, resources, and sharing expertise. Bring your questions, papers, and curiosity!

## Success Story: A London Beshert Story

by Jeremy Frankel

Jeremy has been researching his family genealogy for thirteen years. His maternal grandmother was a **GOLD(RATH)** from Praszka, Poland and his grandfather was a **LEVY** from Kalisz, Poland. His paternal grandmother was a **KOENIGSBERG** from Vilkaviskis, Lithuania. After all this time he still does not know where the **FRANKELS** are from. British records state only Russian Poland. His recent introduction to the wonders of e-mail has recently yielded such delights as a photo of his mother as a 14 year-old bridesmaid.

After reading the four "beshert" stories by Lillian Wurzel in the August 1998 issue of *ZichronNote*, I was, to be honest, even more envious at not having such a story I could tell about my own family – even after thirteen years of research. Well it finally happened albeit several thousand miles away in London, England.

About a year ago I received a Family Finder booklet from the JGS of Great Britain. Naturally I turned to see if anyone was researching the same family names as mine. I was very surprised to see another JGSGB member researching the **KOENIGSBERG** name. My interest in Koenigsberg stems from the fact that my father's mother's family are Koenigsbergs. The researcher was Doreen Berger, the organization's Press Officer as well as one of its founding members. Doreen has been researching Jewish newspapers and contributes a column on items of historical interest culled from the *Jewish Chronicle* in *Shemot*, the magazine of the JGSGB. She recently published a book, "The Jewish Victorian," which details all vital record announcements in Jewish newspapers published in London between 1771-1780. (See the JewishGen web site for additional details.)

I sent a brief letter of introduction enclosing some family trees and awaited her response. I was not, to be honest, expecting much as there had already been people on both coasts of the United States who had contacted me, writing that they might be related. But as usual, I was never able to make the connection. I was, however, more than a little bit interested in Doreen's Family Finder entry, as I actually did have the Berger name appearing in my Koenigsberg family. From a *Jewish Chronicle* marriage announcement of 26 November 1920, I knew that Harriet Koenigsberg had married a Solomon **BERGER**. I looked up Doreen's address in a London street atlas and was surprised to see that she lived close to my uncle, Aubrey **SELBY**. Aubrey's mother, as it so happens, was Esther Koenigsberg, a first cousin to the bride Harriet.

I wrote to Aubrey on the off chance that he might know the Bergers and it turned out that although not close friends, he did indeed know them. In fact Aubrey and David Berger belong to the same synagogue and often walk home together after the services.

Finally I received a letter from Doreen herself. She explained that she is married to David Berger and it was through researching his family that she came across the Koenigsberg name. David's paternal grandfather was Samuel Berger (originally Barro) who had married Fanny Koenigsberg in London in 1888. (At present, we don't know when or why he changed his name.)

Fanny was one of five sisters of Morris David Koenigsberg, my great-grandfather. One of Morris' four daughters was Esther, who married Woolf **SCHWALBE** in 1918. Esther, as you will recall, was Aubrey's mother. So it turns out that these two now former acquaintances, who walk home together nearly every weekend from shul, were to discover that they are in fact second cousins. As my father (also David) is a first cousin to Aubrey, he is also a second cousin to David Berger. My father has known Aubrey since childhood. They were both evacuated together during the war to the countryside far away from the bombing of London. They get together every few weeks, where, as my father puts it "they spend much of the evening swapping bits of family history."

I am still working on this story, waiting to hear how long Aubrey and David Berger have known each other. My parents hosted a get-to-know-each-other evening not too long after I had made the connection. By all accounts it was a successful meeting, with my parents, (David and Helena), and Aubrey and his wife Sheila, catching up on the long family history gap between them and David and Doreen. As Doreen describes it, they had a "fascinating evening..." I just wish I could have been the proverbial fly on the wall! All three couples are now re-acquainted and meet on an occasional basis.

While this solved one mystery, I still had another, also involving a Berger. A Solomon Berger had married Harriet Koenigsberg in November 1920. Harriet was the daughter of Myer Koenigsberg, brother of my great-grandfather Morris. So it was natural for me to wonder if there was any relationship between Samuel Berger and Solomon Berger. Once again it was Doreen who was able to supply the information. It turned out that Solomon was one of

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## SFBAJGS Elections

*In accordance with the bylaws of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society, a call for nominations for elected officers was made at the September meeting in San Francisco and the October meeting in Palo Alto. Elections will be held at the end of this year to select officers to serve the 2000-2002 term. Please watch for your election ballot in December. The following slate of candidates will be presented for your approval:*

### **President – Rodger Rosenberg**

I have been proud to serve as the Society's President for the last two years, and am seeking your support for another two-year term. Prior to holding this position I served as publicity officer for several years. My goal, as it always has been, is to make this Society as inclusive as possible. With this aim, I have always sought out and encouraged members to become more involved so that this is truly YOUR Society. I have been involved in my own genealogical research for the last seven years, focusing on the East Coast, Poland, and Japan.

### **Vice President – Rosanne Leeson**

A native New Yorker, and fourth-generation Manhattanite, I obtained an MS in library science from Columbia University. I spent several years working for the New York Public Library, before retirement #1, for marriage and motherhood. A California transplant (of 23 years), I returned to my career as a reference librarian at the Los Altos Public Library in 1981. I retired again a couple of years ago, though am still an active substitute librarian.

My interest in genealogy was aroused by the questions of my son, when he was little. The virus immediately took over my life! I am a member of the SFBAJGS, JGSNY, Texas Jewish Historical Society, the Cercle de Généalogie Juive, and GenAmi in France, and was the first Jewish member of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas!

I have written book reviews for *ZichronNote* and spoken to the SFBAJGS on the use of public library resources. I have been a Mentor in the online JewishGen College, and lectured at the 1997 and 1998 Summer Seminars in Jewish Genealogy. Together with my husband, Dan, we have created a searchable database which has resulted in the recently-published two-volume index to the long-awaited volume of more than 5,000 Jewish marriage contracts from 18<sup>th</sup> century Alsace.

### **Treasurer – Marc Seidenfeld**

I have served as the treasurer of your Society for three years and look forward to continuing in this position. I enjoy working with the other members of the Board and other members of the Society on our meeting programs. I have learned a lot about genealogy by becoming active in the Society and I recommend this to everyone – it is enjoyable as well as educational.

Although I am a native New Yorker I have lived in the Bay Area since 1975. Professionally, I am an attorney in private practice in San Francisco.

My genealogical interests center on Galicia, a province of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. My Hand and Gortner ancestors came from Dembitz, and my Seidenfeld, Schleider and Scher ancestors came from Kolomya and Stanislav.

### **Corresponding Secretary – Carol Feiner**

I have been a member of the SFBAJGS for three years, and I am primarily researching Hungary and the Ukraine. I wish I had more time to devote to research, as it has been the most fascinating hobby I have undertaken. I encourage everyone to take advantage of the Society's annual workshops in San Francisco and Palo Alto. These workshops are an immensely valuable tool for researchers of Jewish genealogy in the Bay Area.

In my "regular" life I manage Airport Travel Agency at the San Francisco Airport, and I hope to one day plan a trip that will take me to all of my ancestral sites in Eastern Europe.

I have been the Corresponding Secretary of the SFBAJGS for the last two years, and have enjoyed being on the Board and getting to know the members of the Society. I look forward to serving in the same capacity for the next term.

### **Recording Secretary – Open Position**

*The responsibilities of this position include taking minutes at Board meetings (approximately every-other month), and contributing your thoughts during Board discussions. We encourage all members to get involved in the operations of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society. Please contact Dana Kurtz (415-921-6761 or dLkurtz@ix.netcom.com) if you are interested in this position.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Dana Kurtz  
Nominations

## Reflections on the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Jewish Genealogy

The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Jewish Genealogy was held at the Marriot Marquis Hotel in New York City, August 8-13. Hosted by the Jewish Genealogical Society, Inc. (JGSNY), the conference drew more than 1,200 researchers. While host cities are selected by the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS), these annual seminars are run by the local Jewish genealogical society. The 2000 conference will be held in Salt Lake City, July 9-13. As there is no local society, the seminar will be hosted by the IAJGS.

### My First Summer Seminar

by Dana H. Shultz

I'm a pretty recent convert to Jewish genealogy. The bug bit me in February 1998. But even though I became very involved very quickly, I skipped the 1998 Summer Seminar in Los Angeles. I just couldn't see investing the time and money that would be required.

However, this year was different. New York beckoned. My wife, Peg, is convinced that she lived on the Lower East Side in a former life. Our daughters would be away at choir camp. And, conference week would include both Peg's birthday and our 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary! It is impossible to resist this sort of planetary alignment. I signed up right away. From the attendee list, it appears I was the eleventh person (out of approximately 1,000) to register.

For me, the most surprising aspect of the Conference was the large percentage of attendees who appeared to be of retirement age. When you communicate via e-mail, you normally don't have many clues about your correspondent's age. I guess it's sort of like stamp collecting; retirees have the time to really get into it.

With the celebrations we had planned, relatives to visit, (many newly-identified through JewishGen), and the varied attractions of New York, I knew I could attend only a few sessions. I decided the Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings would be most important because of the potential for directly advancing my research. The syllabus would give me the gist of the sessions I missed.

Three of my grandparents came from Volhynia Guberniya in Ukraine. Iris Folkson chaired the Volhynia SIG meeting. The several dozen members in attendance introduced themselves and the names and towns they were researching. Iris facilitated a discussion of ideas for research projects that the SIG should undertake.

Robyn Perlin, an energetic new member of the SIG, agreed to document which towns were in which districts so the SIG could organize by district to acquire source materials. Robyn also gave me some helpful advice. I had been frustrated because a professional researcher (Efim Melamed) reported that there were no primary materials available for my grandparents' hometowns of Kiselin and Lokachi. Robyn suggested that I broaden my research to

include larger nearby towns. Looking at my database, I found references to Lutsk and Rovno, so I will continue my research there.

My fourth grandparent was from Belarus. David Fox led the meeting of the Belarus SIG, which has been very active under David's able leadership. To my surprise, I did not take any notes at the meeting. As I recall, not much new was discussed. However, right after the Seminar, David led a "Shtetl Schleppers" group to Belarus, and his reports to the online Belarus Discussion Group have been marvelous.

Peg's parents were from Kielce Guberniya in Poland, so Peg attended the Kielce-Radom SIG meeting while I was cavorting with my fellow Volhynians. Several members agreed to help the small number of volunteers who have been running the SIG and publishing the outstanding *K-R SIG Journal* for almost three years.

Later that afternoon, Jeff Cymbler led a birds-of-a-feather meeting for researchers interested in the Katowice-Sonsowiec region of Poland. Jeff has an extensive bibliography of materials for this region that he is eager to share. (You can request a copy from him at [jcymbler@aol.com](mailto:jcymbler@aol.com).)

I am delighted that I attended the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Jewish Genealogy. The wealth of information, high energy level, and eagerness to share combined to make the seminar a unique experience.

### Personal Impressions of a Lecture at the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Jewish Genealogy Conference

by Michael Witkin

More than one-hundred lectures and presentations are delivered over the six days of an annual Jewish genealogy conference. The subjects range from the hard-core, pragmatically oriented panels about current travel in our Eastern European homelands, doing research at YIVO, and basic web page design, to highly specialized lectures on rabbinical dynastic genealogy, and "Jews in the Austro-Hungarian Armed Forces 1788-1918." There are also the academic presentations of scholars presenting unique perspectives on the Jewish experience in the Eastern European Diaspora. Occasionally, scholarly perspective lectures can set one's mind to spinning and add a whole new approach to one's endeavors in and commitment to Jewish genealogy. These special

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**Genealogy Conference, cont'd. from page 7**

talks are the frosting on the rather staid and arduous cake, the researching of names, dates, and places, and document acquisition. This "frosting" enhances the experience of the Conference making it revelatory as well as pragmatic. Michael Steinlauf's lecture "Uncovering a Lost World: The Civilization of Eastern Ashkenaz," was one of those revelatory, mystical experiences. This lecture helped me understand the context and meaning of my own research and questions in a larger perspective, and my relationship to the Holocaust as a secular Jew in the post-Holocaust Diaspora.

Dr. Steinlauf is a physically imposing man, well over six feet tall, sturdily built, with finely chiseled features, a strong nose, with a kepot covering the top of his just slightly graying black hair. As he took the platform at one end of the long narrow ballroom on the ninth floor of the Marquis Marriott, his kepot seemed to touch the low ceiling. His speech is clear, melodic, unhesitating, and carries well in this room whose acoustics are designed for this type of gathering. The Marquis Ballroom can accommodate a group of 400. Today there is an audience of about 200, crowded into the front rows. The attendees were hushed as Dr. Steinlauf spoke of a new narrative for understanding Jewish history: "Israel redeems the Holocaust." According to Dr. Steinlauf, many of us suffered historical amnesia in the first 20 years following the Holocaust, and that this historical amnesia was part of the healing process resulting from our collective trauma. Amnesia is not, after all, an unexpected symptom of great trauma. It is a natural phenomenon, and consistent with our biology. This historical amnesia began healing in the 1970s, with the revival of Yiddish, Klezmer music, Jewish studies programs and the proliferation of Holocaust studies.

Israel redeems the Holocaust. Even before the inter-war period, the Jewish world was declining and moribund. Its root causes were the splintering factors of Zionism, socialism and Americanization along with the breakdown in shtetl life. (Between 1900 and 1940, half of all Eastern European Jews moved from shtetl to city.) In the cities of Eastern Europe, we frequently assimilated, just as we have done in the American Diaspora. This decline was followed by our death in the Holocaust and rebirth, as symbolized by Israel.

Dr Steinlauf then introduced the idea of our 1,000-year sojourn in the Eastern European Diaspora as a "civilization," one with a birth, a golden age, a decline, death, and a rebirth. The rebirth is personified by the emergence of the State of Israel, the renewed interest in Yiddish literature and music, and the work that many of us are attending to with our personal searches to reconstruct the history of our families.

Why does one consider this group of Jews in the Diaspora a civilization as opposed to merely a minority group living in a foreign land? We had a religion, united for a millennium, a vast geography (the Pale of Settlement) stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, our own languages, commerce, and artisan traditions. The four pillars of this civilization were the characteristic pattern of Jewish life, the shtetl, which, at the turn of the last century, was 33% to 90% Jewish. We had our own laws, halaka, as interpreted by the rabbinate. The kehila, our Jewish councils, operated community services such as education and care of poor, and others, through taxation and khevras. We had an internal bilingualism which intersected in the schools and study houses, Yiddish, the spoken language for home and marketplace, and Hebrew, the written language, for synagogue and documentation.

Dr. Steinlauf concluded his talk with a discussion of the Jews of the Soviet Union and Poland at the end of the inter-war period. I took notes, but I was really mentally absent by then, into the new world where I now understood how and why I had been driven to doing this family research and how it fit into being a Jew in the post-Holocaust Diaspora, and that I must continue working to help in recreating our lost civilization for posterity.

Prof. Michael Steinlauf teaches Jewish history and culture in Eastern Europe and Polish-Jewish relations at Gratz College. He holds a Ph.D. in Judaic Studies from Brandeis University, has been a Fulbright Fellow in Poland, and senior research fellow at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. His book, "Bondage to the Dead: Poland and the Memory of the Holocaust," was published by Syracuse University Press in 1997.

### **New York City Resources – County Clerk's Office, Division of Old Records**

by Roy Ogus

#### **Interesting Holdings at the facility**

At the Annual Conference on Jewish Genealogy, held in New York during August 1999, there were, as expected, a number of sessions describing the wealth of resources for genealogical research that exist in New York City. (An article summarizing some of these facilities was included in the May/August 1999 issue of *ZichronNote*.) However, one of the sessions at the Conference covered a division of the County Clerk's Office that is often not mentioned or emphasized in many of the compilations of N.Y. resources. In particular, I'm referring to the Division of Old Records, which is housed in Room 703 of the N.Y. County

*Continued on page 9*

**Genealogy Conference, cont'd. from page 8**

Clerk's Office at 31 Chambers Street, New York, telephone: (212) 374-4376.

While limited in scope, this repository only houses materials for New York County (Manhattan), the resources there contain a wealth of very valuable genealogical materials if one is researching in this particular county. This session at the Conference, presented by Leslie Corn, was not only an entertaining talk, but it also pointed out a number of particularly valuable holdings which can be found in this repository, and which one can access easily and quickly. Right after the session, I jumped on the subway to the downtown facility, and in just a short period of time found several interesting references and documents which were most useful to my research.

This discussion describes some of the unusual holding of this Archives, as well as some impressions from my visit to the facility. For details on the Division of Old Records, consult the syllabus prepared for the New York conference, or contact the repository directly.

**Some key holdings at the facility**

This repository, formerly known as the "Hall of Records," holds the older records of the State Supreme Court in New York County and other courts, which preceded it historically, as well as certain other materials. More recent records are located in other repositories. Not all of the documents held by the repository are housed in the Chambers Street facility; some need to be ordered from an offsite location. The materials can be easily ordered, (but not viewed), during one day's visit. When you have identified the document reference information, complete an order form, and the repository will notify you by mail when it has been retrieved. All the materials that I consulted were indexed and easily found.

Some of the key 20<sup>th</sup> Century resources housed in the Division are as follows:

Naturalization Records:

The New York County Supreme Court Naturalization documents for the period 1907–1924 are housed in this facility. Furthermore, these naturalization records can *only* be found in this repository; they cannot be found in the National Archives. Not only are these the only source for these records, but the original, large bound books of the documents can be consulted. I found these not only more convenient to peruse than microfilm, but they also gave me the excitement of being able to see and handle very old original documents!

An index to these documents is provided in an old-fashioned alphabetic card-index file cabinet, which conveniently points one to the exact location of the bound volume on the shelves. Copying of the naturalization

documents, however, is not permitted from these old original copies, and must be carried out using the microfilm copies, also housed in the facility.

Business Records:

The repository contains a number of most interesting business records, including:

- Certificates of Incorporation for New York County businesses, 1804–1946 (records for 1921–1946 are housed offsite). These records contain much information of genealogical value, including the corporation officers' names and addresses, the purpose and description of the organization, as well as other pertinent data of interest. Also included in this collection are the Certificates of Incorporation for some landsmanshaften and synagogues in Manhattan. An alphabetical index of the business names is available in card and book form;
- Limited Partnerships (1822–1923). Information in these records includes the business' location, purpose, and names and addresses of the partners;
- Trade Names (1900–1924, housed offsite). These records document the establishment of single-owner proprietorships, and include the name and address of the business.

Change of Name Petitions (1848–1936):

The documentation for these petitions often includes comprehensive material, containing a wealth of genealogically-rich information. Background information is frequently provided as to why the individual was changing his name, which may yield interesting information about the family. The petitions are indexed in a card-index file, by both the old and new surnames.

Case Files, N.Y. Supreme Court Civil Actions (1799–1940, 1978–1990):

These case files are indexed by name of plaintiff. The documents may enable one to find a significant amount of information about a family member, such as address, occupation, family relationships, and financial and property ownership details.

Other holdings:

Numerous other holdings can be found in this repository, such as Manhattan City Directories (1850–1933, the original bound books!), census records (N.Y. State and Federal), old maps of Manhattan, marriage records, and military records.

**Description of facility**

The repository is housed in the same building as a number of the other New York City facilities, such as

*Continued on page 10*

*Genealogy Conference, cont'd. from page 9*

the Municipal Archives, and thus can be visited in the same trip. Since the facility is not that well-known (at least not before the New York Conference!), it is generally not too busy or crowded. It is open Tuesdays and Thursdays, and on other days by appointment. During my visit, the staff was most helpful and responsive.

Although microfilm readers and copying facilities for both hardcopy documents and microfilm are provided, the room appeared to me as would the quintessential old archives: huge shelves on all the walls reaching up to the very high ceilings, packed full of dusty old books and volumes; ancient file cabinets and card index cabinets containing old yellowed cards and other finding aids; large stacks of binders, documents, and other materials which probably hadn't moved for many years. Documents on the highest shelves required the use of a stepladder to access them; the staff was more than willing to lend a helping hand to those daunted by the thought of climbing that high to lift heavy books off the shelves.

All in all, my visit to the Division of Old Records was most rewarding, both because of the experience of being able to carry out research in such an interesting facility, as well as the specific documents that I found, which have been most useful to my own research.

### **The Best of the Conference and Beyond**

by David Abrahams

I had the pleasure of attending the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Jewish Genealogy in New York in August. Jolene and I arrived on the Monday night and were immediately overwhelmed by the size of the hotel, and the number of participants we saw.

The syllabus that was given to us is something worth keeping. The outlines of the presentations, for the most part, were excellent. I was able to use most of them as notes, and only added a few comments here and there.

There were more lectures than I could attend, with plenty to interest attendees at all levels of genealogy. I attended those that I thought would be beneficial to me in my research. I began with a lecture by Marian L. Smith, Historian, U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. I wanted to find out if there will be any improvements in the way requests for naturalization papers are handled, and if there is any relevant material available that will help me in reconstructing my families' relocation from Europe to the States (answers pending).

From there, I tried to attend as many lectures as I could regarding research in Germany. There were too many to highlight here, but the bottom line is that I met several people with whom I have subsequently

been in touch via e-mail, and even met one couple researching one of the surnames that is collateral to my major line!

The ability to meet and interact with so many researchers from around the world is one of the best things that happens at these seminars. I think we can learn just as much from these "friends" as we can from attending the lectures.

Of course, I also made time to visit several of the research facilities in New York, including the branch of the National Archives where I found four sets of naturalization papers – one of which I hadn't known existed! And, Jolene and I found time for some sightseeing as well. Altogether, we had a worthwhile week in New York.

Just as an aside, from New York, we took the train to Philadelphia and spent a couple of days seeing the historical sights. Then we rented a car and headed for Gettysburg, Washington, DC, and a week in Delaware doing research for Jolene. (Next year is the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her progenitor's arrival in the Maryland/Delaware area and we're having a reunion in Dover in June or July 2000!)

### **Researching at the Leo Baeck Institute**

by Mary/Miriam Russell

Among the highlights of my week at the New York conference was the morning I spent at the Leo Baeck Institute. I had made an appointment in advance, as directed by the instructions sent to conference attendees, and was greeted at the door by a friendly staff person. The institute, containing the largest collection of German-Jewish material in the world, was located on a quaint street of brick buildings on East 73<sup>rd</sup> Street. After signing in, the research assistant took me up the spiral staircase to the second floor reading room. There she presented me with several large folders of material she had researched and assembled for me, including a summary of all the documents. Many of the documents were original letters and documents from my ancestors' hometown in Prussia. Correspondence from famous persons from the town – although not directly related to my relatives – gave me a picture of the town in which my ancestors lived during that era.

Before leaving, the research assistant gave me a "request form" to complete for copies of any documents I wished to be sent to my home. Although I did not locate any direct information about my relatives, I learned about their hometown, Schneidemuehl, Germany, which had the largest population of Jews in the Poznan province. It was one of the most enjoyable research experiences I have ever had.

*Continued on page 11*

*Genealogy Conference, cont'd. from page 10*

## **The City of the Free, the Home of the Brave**

by Lois Silverstein

What captured me most about this summer's genealogy conference was its geography. First, because going to New York was going home, and second, because after 30 years in California plus several years in outposts in various other American cities, I returned as if from exile. Like my ancestors before me, I stepped on New York sidewalks with excitement and apprehension. What would I find? Who would greet me? How would I fit in? That the meetings themselves took place in the heart of Manhattan, further accented this, for everywhere I walked linked me to the same sidewalks I knew as child and young girl, and to those my great-grandparents, grandparents, parents, and their families, walked. The same angles of sunrise and sunset, the same degrees of August heat and humidity, the same urgency, energy, and gusto I experienced, they had too, give or take 125 years. What better hands-on experience in genealogical exposure could I have?

Then, I had access to almost all the records I needed, if the call of excellent workshops and talks, allowed time to study them. While our local Family History Centers, Sutro Library and the San Bruno branch of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) offer excellent sources, turning over the oversized volumes of yellow naturalization certificates at the Division of Old Records, gave me "direct" contact with my Great-Uncle Abraham from Podolsk – without a six-to-twelve-week delay, a SASE (self-addressed, stamped envelope), and a \$15 check. So too, unreeling more death, birth, and marriage records for relatives I couldn't have managed to find in such a short time, down in the Municipal Archives' well-used Room 13. "Instant" information it seemed, was also to be found at the New York Public Library on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and NARA down on Varick Street. YIVO too, offered immediate help in uncovering landsmanschaften materials.

Not the least of these gratifications was going to 97 Orchard Street, four doors from where my great-grandparents set up housekeeping, and where my great-aunts and great-uncles lived. The Tenement Museum seemed hardly a collector's piece, in that regard, nor did sitting in the Eldridge Street Synagogue and other local Lower East Side haunts. I bussed through Hasidic Brooklyn, only blocks from where my grandmother lived and died, and then ferried to Ellis Island, where she and my grandfather, and their born-on-board baby Dora, had to walk up the stairway and be scrutinized by officials on the

balcony to determine if they were fit to enter the land of the free. In fact, I was met there by four cousins I had "discovered" a month before I arrived, and together we sorted through bundles of feelings, memories, and ideas pertaining to our collateral histories. Waltzing up and down New York's 1999 life, and meeting another range of first, second, and third cousins, and "interviewing" them, allowed me, in seconds, to be back in a version of the world about which I was researching and learning. What better learning experience could I have? Education experts have spent more than 75 years advocating experiential learning, along with traditional kinds. They have unanimously claimed that there is no substitute for direct experience for enhancing knowledge acquisition and understanding. I was, on this score, a high achiever.

Last, but hardly least, were the high-powered, quality lectures, workshops, and talks of the Conference itself. Henry Stanislawski eloquently disputing the standard view of Jews exclusively being chased from the Pale; Marsha Saron Dennis, making census records lively as well as informative; Estelle Guzik pointing out the intricacies of naturalization records; and Eileen Polakoff, restoring my confidence in scaling brick walls to solve genealogical puzzles. Then, there was the fine miniaturist portrait of Jewish emigration by Ruth Gay, and Helen Epstein's restoration of Jewish women as detailed by her study of her own family of origin. Without Jeffery Gurock's excellent work on immigration and adaptation of East European Jews, I would not have felt so linked to the spiritual and economic issues, with which I struggle today as Jew. What was then was, in many ways, also now. This balancing was indeed a specialty of the conference — hard fact and interpretation, sociology and culture, laws and trends, records and memorabilia transforming personal information into public knowledge. Here was genealogy at its finest.

For what else are we engaged as we pursue our histories, if not broadening and deepening our connections among past, present, and future? L'dor va dor, from generation to generation, our liturgy tells us, is our task and our commitment. The conference in New York highlighted this for me. It prepared and reminded me to be satisfied with what I could uncover and to keep working, assuring myself that I could bequeath my efforts as a legacy to those who come after me. When I boarded Amtrak to continue my explorations, interviewing "new" relatives in Silver Spring, Maryland, and Miami, Florida, and exploring passenger lists at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., I felt like Chaucer's high-spirited Wife of Bath, who gaily pursues her pilgrimage, confident she has had the world in her time.

## San Francisco Exhibit to Feature Your Family Photos

by Judy Baston

If you think that some of your family photographs speak volumes about Jewish family history, now's the chance to submit them for other people to view in a photo exhibit.

"Long Exposure: Family Snapshots of San Francisco Bay Area Jews," an exhibit sponsored by the Bureau of Jewish Education, will open April 2, 2000 and run through June. The deadline for submitting photographs is December 15.

You may submit no more than three of your best photos by that date, along with a copy of the official submission form with each photograph. You may obtain copies of the submission form by calling the Jewish Community Library at (415) 751-6983, ext. 106; stopping by the Library at 601-14<sup>th</sup> Avenue (at Balboa) in San Francisco; or going to the Jewish Family Education Project web page at [www.bjesf.org](http://www.bjesf.org).

The Bureau does not guarantee that every photo submitted will be used in the show. Those images most likely to be selected, they note, are amateur photos that show Jewish family life or history without need for captions, or those that represent a significant historical moment, even if a caption is necessary to identify it.

For this show, the submission form states, "we're interested in any part of your family history, not just that which takes place in San Francisco."

Photographs not used in the show will be returned to submitters or available for pickup in February.

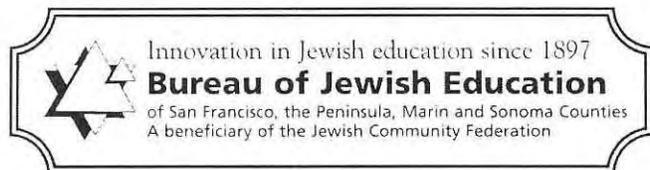
# WANTED



## Your Best Family Snapshots Illustrating Jewish Life or History

For an exhibition to be held at the Jewish Community Library.

To receive a submission form, call (415) 751-6983, ext. 106, stop by the Library at 601 14th Avenue (at Balboa) in San Francisco, or go to [www.bjesf.org](http://www.bjesf.org), Jewish Family Education Project page.



### Family Finder

Do you have "OLSCHWANGER" or a variation of the name on your family tree? Anna Olschwanger is starting an online discussion group for members of the Olschwanger families in North America, England, Australia, Israel, Lithuania, and other countries. You can post and request information about your family tree, or just shmooze with other members. To join the online group, send an e-mail to Anna Olschwanger at [olschwanger@mindspring.com](mailto:olschwanger@mindspring.com).

**NATIONAL RESOURCES**

**JGSNY Project to Computerize Brooklyn Naturalization Indexes**

*Extracted by Sita Likuski, from the website of the Jewish Genealogical Society, Inc., www.jgsny.org/.*

Because of the poor condition of the indexes to Naturalization records in the Brooklyn County Clerk's Office, the Jewish Genealogical Society, Inc. (JGSNY), in partnership with the Italian Genealogical Group of New York and the German Genealogy Group, has undertaken a project to computerize these records. The project will include Declarations of Intention and Petitions for Naturalization completed from 1907 to 1924, a period in which a significant number of immigrants were naturalized in Brooklyn. As of September 1, 1999, this new database includes approximately 52,000 entries!

Volunteers are urged to join in this effort. If you can donate a few hours of your time, or commit to typing a few pages covering one letter of the alphabet, contact Estelle Guzik, JGSNY President. The project is starting with the 1923-24 index volumes (Volumes 22A & 22B) and is working back to 1907. At the same time, the book indexes to the Declarations of Intention starting from 1907 to 1915 are being computerized. Some of this work can be done at your home computer. For more information and an assignment of a letter or pages, contact the JGSNY at JGSNY@aol.com or leave a message for Estelle Guzik at (212) 330-8257.

A printed copy of the index (the first 37,500 entries) is available for viewing at the Kings County Clerk's Office, Records Room; the National Archives-Northeast Region; and the Plainview, Long Island Family History Center.

**SFBAJGS Library**

The library of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society is available between meetings at the Institute for Masonic Research, 1111 California Street at Taylor in San Francisco. Parking in the building will be validated upon request for persons using the library. The institute is open Monday - Friday, 3 p.m. - 8 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

For any questions about the SFBAJGS library, contact Society Librarian Judy Baston, (415) 285-4616, or send e-mail to jrbaston@aol.com. If you wish to request that a particular item be brought to a Society meeting, make sure you let Judy know at least one week before the meeting.

Many thanks to the members who have donated to the library.

**New Titles in the Library**

Book of Life, a Directory of Hebrew Names and Dates Martha Marenhof, compiler 1992  
**[Donated by Barbara Corff]**

**Audio Tapes from the 1999 Summer Seminar in Jewish Genealogy**

The Pale of Settlement: The Czars Edicts and Their Impact on Our Ancestors	Michael Stanislawski
Polish Jewish Genealogical Research	Warren Blatt
Lesser Known Immigration & Naturalization Service Records Since 1906	Marian L. Smith
Immigration & Naturalization Service Records for Genealogical Research	Marian L. Smith
What Geneticists Can do for Genealogists & What Genealogists Can Do for Geneticists	Panel
East European Jews in America – Immigration and Adaptation 1880-1920	Jeffrey S. Gurock, Libby M. Klaperman
Update on Holocaust Survivor and Victim Lists	Peter W. Lande
Resources for Sephardic Genealogy	Jeffrey S. Malka
Jews in the Austro-Hungarian Armed Forces 1788-1918	Erwin A. Schmidl
Demographic and Genealogical Problems of 18 <sup>th</sup> Century Polish Jewry	Gershon David Hundert
Hungarian Jewish History and its Application to Genealogy	Louis Schonfeld
Jewish Vienna: History and Genealogy	Henry Wellisch

## INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES

### New JGS in Jamaica, West Indies

by Sita Likuski

After nearly two years of planning, the Jamaica Jewish Genealogical Society held its first meeting in the capital city of Kingston. Many of the 40 founding members live abroad but have ancestral roots in the West Indian island. Jamaica has had a continuous Jewish community since the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The newly elected president is Ainsley Henriques. He can be contacted at: ainsley@cwjamaica.com. A quarterly newsletter is planned for the society.

The Jamaican Jewish website, hosted by sephardim.org and maintained by David Silvera, includes a timeline of Jewish Jamaica, sound files of Spanish and Portuguese liturgical music, and an extensive genealogy for many of the early Sephardic settlers. Names include SILVERA, HENRIQUES, BRANDON, DE LEON, MATALON, DA COSTA, DE SOUZA, PERIERA MENDES, and many more. The address is [www.sephardim.org/jamgen](http://www.sephardim.org/jamgen).

### The Most Frequent Surnames of Ashkenazi Jews in Buenos Aires, Argentina

by Paul Armony, JewishGen

I have finished the first part of a study about 133,189 burials in five Jewish Ashkenazic cemeteries in Buenos Aires, from 1910 to 1998. The first conclusion is that there are only 41,508 different surnames, considering all different last names with at least one different letter (before applying the Daitch-Mokotoff Soundex).

The 20 surnames with the greatest frequency are listed below. They are compiled from 5,821 different burials (4.37% of the total). Another conclusion is that there are 17,295 surnames with two or more entries so the balance of 24,207 surnames had only one entry each. Perhaps they originated with different spellings – a theory I will study in a second step. I am also analyzing the most frequently found Sephardic surnames from 20,000 burials in six Buenos Aires cemeteries.

The database from where this information was taken is not open for public inspection. It will be published in the near future and there will be a fee for consulting the data. The information given here is to show our friends in the world that in Argentina, we are researching and working on the preservation of Argentine Jewish information.

<u>Surname</u>	<u>Total with Same Surname</u>
Feldman	575
Katz	485
Fridman	364
Rabinovich	357
Goldstein	337
Grinberg	332
Kaplan	321
Kohan	307
Goldberg	297
Levin	297
Lerner	288
Rubinstein	239
Waisman	220
Roitman	214
Furman	206
Rosenberg	200
Goldenberg	199
Goldman	199
Gutman	193
Kogan	191

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## Schmieheim, Germany Cemetery Documented

by Rosanne Leeson

*Memor-buch der Jüdische Friedhof in Schmieheim*, Naftali Bar-Giora, Germany, 1999. ISBN 3-924123-40-3

In 1975, I paid my first visit to the old Jewish cemetery in the small town of Schmieheim (Baden), Germany, where my great-grandparents and other family, were buried. It was on a hillside, in the country, on the outskirts of the town, and the only sounds to be heard were the buzzing of insects and a tractor way off in the distance. The sign on the gate announced that the key was in the rathaus (town hall). But when we got there, no one was in who could help us. So, my husband and I climbed over the moss-covered stone wall at its lowest part.

We found a cemetery in very poor condition; weeds shoulder high, broken stones underfoot, and holes in the ground, made our going rather dangerous, to say the least. We were also confronted with stones in disarray, overgrown with moss and lichen, and mostly indecipherable, so we left in despair. A visit a few years later was even worse, since there was then obvious desecration that had occurred. At the time, my husband wrote to every official body that we could think of to report on this scandalous matter, and to try to seek some help. The only answer we received was from the then German Consul in San Francisco, who promised to try to do something.

I am happy to say that, indeed, something has been done! Thanks to the efforts of a number of organizations and several determined individuals over a recent period of years, this cemetery has been cleared, stones righted, cleaned, repaired as possible, and the entire cemetery documented. And now, a remarkable memorbuch has finally been published, a copy of which has been donated to the library of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society.

The earliest documented grave dates from 1701, the last in 1955. This was the principal burial ground for the five surrounding communities of Rust, Altdorf, Nonnenweier, Orschweier, Kippenheim, and, of course, Schmieheim itself. It contains about 2,000 graves.

This memorbuch is in two very large volumes, and is a treasure trove of information. It contains greetings from local officials and the landesrabbiner, and words from the compiler, Naftali Bamberger. Then follows a historical overview of the cemetery, the origins of the first community, and the places that they came from as derived from their names, a discussion of the

inscriptions and how they were translated, and list of sources. Following that is the meat of the book: a row by row, grave by grave, listing of each burial. Each listing gives the row and grave number, names, dates, names of spouses and/or parents, and a picture of the stone itself. Perhaps most valuable of all, are the several indexes that enable one to find the listing of an ancestor. Every burial is cross-listed in each of several indexes: family name, first name, row/grave number, and chronological list. There is also an index by town, which gives the grave/row number for every burial from that community. In other words, one can search by a variety of methods.

Additional wonderful information includes a list of various symbols used on the stones, individuals listed by occupation, both laic and within the religious community, a description of the various Jewish holidays – month-by-month, instructions on reading the symbols on the stones, and a lengthy bibliography.

Then follow two appendices by Gunter Boll. One, a document relating to the history of the Jewish cemetery and synagogue in Schmieheim, the second reproducing the two oldest documents about the history of the Schmieheim cemetery. A last appendix is a marriage contract from 1819 in Kippenheim.

This entire work is printed on paper of the finest quality, and beautifully bound. There are a number of color photographs, and a separate, large plan of the cemetery. This memorbuch is truly a work of devotion produced with infinite care.

As a final note, this summer I again paid a visit to the Schmieheim cemetery, with the plan and photocopies of the tombstones of my great-grandparents in hand. With a brief search, I soon found myself before their graves for the first time. I placed a stone on each, and my husband recited the kaddish. It was a most emotional ending to a long search!

*Editor's Note: Although this tremendous work is entirely in German, researchers interested in names and places from the Schmieheim area should not be dissuaded from using this reference.*

**Beshert**, cont'd. from page 5

Samuel's two sons and he had married his first cousin. The other son was Isidore, David's father!

Although originally "estranged" from his Koenigsberg family, my genealogical research successes are now putting my father in touch with new-found cousins. It now leaves me with a lot more work with several lines of Bergers to research.

The End (oh really!)

**COMPUTER/ONLINE NEWS**

**Jewish Genealogy Databases  
Unite to Create a Family Tree of  
the Jewish People**

*Received from Susan King, President, JewishGen, and Howard Margol, President, International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies.*

People throughout the world who are interested in tracing their Jewish roots and finding relatives will now have a vastly improved and readily accessible database of more than two million names in a family tree format, thanks to a long-awaited agreement signed on October 24. Three major Jewish genealogy organizations – the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS – 75 genealogical societies worldwide), JewishGen (the Internet site for researching Jewish ancestry), and Beth Hatefutsoth (the Diaspora Museum in Tel Aviv) – have agreed to combine their family tree information. The agreement will allow this valuable resource to be available on site at the museum, on the World Wide Web, and on CD-ROM.

Prior to this agreement, anyone searching Jewish family lines had to contribute their family trees to each of the three organizations for their information to be included in the separate databases. Now, an Australian consulting the database on the Web might find a cousin in Chicago who had registered the family tree with JewishGen or IAJGS, and an avid genealogist cousin in Israel who had donated the family tree to Beth Hatefutsoth. Long-lost relatives can reunite and learn more about their shared history.

Harvey Krueger, Vice Chairman of Lehman Brothers, Inc., genealogy enthusiast and philanthropist, envisioned this agreement to help Jewish people graft together branches of their families that were torn apart by the Holocaust and separated by emigration, and was the catalyst for its completion. Combining the three databases will create a two million-name-strong family tree of the Jewish people, a tree that can only grow and flower as it is nurtured by this agreement.

To learn more about searching the database, which should be operational by the end of January 2000, and about submitting trees to the participating not-for-profit organizations, please consult their web sites:

- **JewishGen:** [www.jewishgen.org](http://www.jewishgen.org)
- **IAJGS:** [www.jewishgen.org/ajgs](http://www.jewishgen.org/ajgs)
- **Beth Hatefutsoth:** [www.bh.org.il](http://www.bh.org.il)

**Web Site for Information About  
Ship's Passenger Lists**

The Immigration and Ships Passenger Lists Research Guide at [home.att.net/~arnielang/shipguide.html](http://home.att.net/~arnielang/shipguide.html) is an outstanding source of information about how to find and use passenger manifests for our ancestors. This comprehensive site offers a history of passenger lists – what information was collected, under whose auspices, and how they changed over time as well as a “how-to” for finding the manifest you seek.

The section on getting started suggests what information you should have on hand before you start your search for your ancestor's passenger manifest listing. A guide to sources and how to interpret those sources is provided, as are tutorials and links to relevant web sites. Many of the recommended research techniques for organization and methodology can be applied to your general genealogy research.

The bulk of the web site is broken down by immigration time frame. For example, the section “Research in Years 1820 to Circa 1891” discusses the possible ports of entry for that period, where the records can be found, and what data was collected on the manifests. Many of the topics are illustrated with scanned examples of documents.

Additional subjects include obtaining photographs of ships and discussions of naturalization documents and passports. A fairly extensive bibliography and reference list rounds out the inventory of valuable resources. Read in its entirety, this web site offers an excellent home-study course in passenger manifests.

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**Immigration and Naturalization  
Service Web Site**

*Michael Steinore, JewishGen*

The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has a history and genealogy web site at [www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/aboutins/history/index.htm](http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/aboutins/history/index.htm). According to the home page, “(t)his site contains information about the INS Historical Reference Library collection and services, documents concerning the history of the Service as well as of immigration law, procedure, and immigration stations, and instructions for historical and genealogical research using INS records.”

Reading the FAQs is highly recommended particularly the sections on genealogy and history.

*Continued on page 17*

*INS Web Site, cont'd. from page 16*

Excellent information is provided on immigration and naturalization topics such as name changes by immigrants, numbers written on passenger manifests, alien registration records, visa files, and naturalization documents. Images are used to compliment the written material. For example, a section on passenger list annotations includes an image and explanation of the notations. The seldom seen Alien Registration form (AR-2) is reproduced in full. Often, a listing of the information collected on these forms is included.

A history of the use of many of these forms is also provided, which can be quite valuable in determining if such a form might exist at all, for your ancestor. Knowing when your ancestor immigrated or was naturalized will help you decide what forms to look for. Instructions on how to request a search of the files are also given.

A section on ports of entry discusses both overland and seaport locations by state. A table describes what records exist, for what dates, location of original filing and microfilm record set numbers. The naturalization section discusses women and naturalization, naturalizations during World War I, and the variety of citizenship documents the INS has issued. A link to the National Archives is provided for quick access to information on how to research these and other records.

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## MultiGen: Search Popular Databases from One Site

by Sita Likuski

The MultiGen web site at [ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/CACulman/MultiGen.htm](http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/CACulman/MultiGen.htm), is an efficient way to search for a surname in eight powerful genealogical databases. On the MultiGen page, enter a surname and click the link to any of the following:

- Ancestry.com
- Family Tree Maker
- Gendex
- Genealogy.com
- JewishGen Family Finder
- Kindred Konnections
- LDS Family Search
- Roots Surname List

Your browser then loads the results page of the selected search engine. You may then modify your search of that database, start a new search, or return to MultiGen to choose another database.

## Search for Late Jewish Politicians

by Rodger Rosenberg

For those of us who like to remind everyone we meet about great uncle Jacob who was a Congressman in the 1890s, this is our site. Political Graveyard, at [politicalgraveyard.com/group/jewish/](http://politicalgraveyard.com/group/jewish/) describes itself as "a web site about U.S. political history and cemeteries."

Although incomplete by its own admission, the site details the careers of Jewish politicians, judges, and diplomats. Within specific categories (such as "Jewish,") the database is indexed by decade (1830s-1990s) and by state. Back at the home page, [politicalgraveyard.com](http://politicalgraveyard.com), you can search by surname, by office held or sought, and other criteria. In many cases, links are provided to cemeteries, congressional biographies, and other reference material. For those who have or are searching for family members in the political arena, this is a great resource.

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## Jewish Newspaper List

Lenn Zonder, *JewishGen*

A listing of many Jewish newspapers published around the world can be found at [www.libertynet.org/anderson/jprintnewsmedia.html](http://www.libertynet.org/anderson/jprintnewsmedia.html).

The listing is sorted by country and by state within the U.S. Information provided includes name of publication, address, telephone number, frequency of publication, and in some cases, URL and e-mail address. Although the site has not been updated for two years, many of the links still work and the index itself is an excellent resource.

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## Reunion Planning

Tom Venetianer, *JewishGen*

Have you thought about planning a family reunion? There are a number of web sites that can make this tremendous undertaking a bit easier.

Reunion Research at [www.reuniontips.com/](http://www.reuniontips.com/), is a commercial site for reunion planning publications but offers great suggestions and links to other sites providing tips and insights. From fundraising and logistics to games for the kids, recipes and publicity, there's excellent information to be obtained here.

At [family-reunion.com/](http://family-reunion.com/), the interface is a bit cutesy but you'll quickly get past that to a wealth of planning information. More formal in organization and perhaps providing greater depth than Reunion Research, Family-Reunion.com devotes pages to scheduling, themes, finances, locations, activities, and other topics. Using this site, you can easily find yourself with the beginnings of a start-to-finish outline of what you'll need to address to pull off a successful reunion.

## Coping With the Y2K Bug

*Content taken from an article by Gene Schneider, Generations July/August 1999, JGS of St. Louis. Some editing has been done by Dana L. Kurtz.*

By now you have probably heard of the "Y2K" or "Millennium Bug." But just what is it, and more importantly, how will it affect your computer and what can you do about it?

The problem arises from the practice of storing only the last two digits of a date under the assumption that all dates were in the 1900s. Its origins lie with the early days of computer systems and programs, when disk space was very limited and thus the cost of data storage was very high. The possibility of creating a problem when the new century arrived was in fact recognized but little attention was given to the problem in the 1970s and 1980s because computer programs seldom had a useful life of more than a couple of years. Unfortunately, the practice continued well into the 1990s and the possibility that some of the programs you use may suffer from this problem is all too real.

How can I tell if my computer will suffer from the Millennium Bug? There are two areas that must be checked: the hardware and the application software. There is an internal clock in your computer whose operation is controlled by the Basic Input Output System or BIOS. The instructions encoded in the BIOS hardware chip may cause the clock to fail to roll over to the year 2000 at one second after midnight on December 31, 1999. Any program that reads the date from the BIOS that fails to recognize 2000 may produce erroneous data.

A more thorough check for BIOS compliance can be performed by downloading a program from the Internet that checks the operation of the internal clock. A program such as "Y2K Advisor" from [www.ontrack.com](http://www.ontrack.com) can be obtained by selecting their Download Free Trial Version option.

Should your BIOS not be compliant and your computer is relatively new, you may be able to upgrade the BIOS to a compliant version. Contact the manufacturer or vendor from whom you purchased your computer for information.

Even when the BIOS maintains the correct date problems can arise if your application software is not compliant. Any software that is 'date dependent' can exhibit problems. Programs that calculate interest on CDs, home loans as well as due dates for such things as utility bills and credit cards are good examples of programs that might have problems. Fortunately, most companies have been working diligently on correcting these problems but if you use older versions of Microsoft Money, Quicken by Intuit,

spreadsheets or similar programs, you may encounter problems with your data.

Checking your application programs for compliance begins with making a list of ALL programs and their version numbers on your computer including the Operating System (Windows 95, Window 98, etc.) Version numbers can be determined by invoking the program and clicking on the Help menu and then About. You can check the compliance status of many programs at [www.vendor2000.com](http://www.vendor2000.com). This site lists the current status of most of the programs in use today and includes data on older versions as well. Should your version of a program NOT be compliant you have three choices: upgrade to a newer, compliant version (if available), continue using the program but be watchful for problems, or abandon using the program.

The Y2K Bug has the potential to create problems for the unsuspecting user, ranging from annoying to disastrous. Checking for Y2K compliance is not difficult and can warn of potential problems in time to correct them.

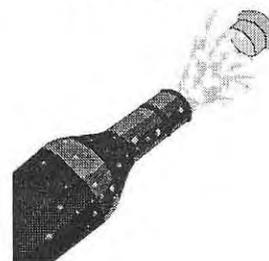
*Comments from the Editor: Genealogy software, by its very nature of recording dates of events, cares about 4-digit years and is therefore not expected to pose any Y2K problems. Most hardware and software manufacturers' Web sites (such as Microsoft) provide Y2K information specific to their products, including patches and other solutions.*

*Another quick test of your BIOS is to set your computer calendar and clock to December 31, 1999, 11:59:50 p.m. When the clock passes 12:00:00 check the date; it should read January 1, 2000. Next, turn your computer off and wait five minutes. When you turn it back on, does the calendar still read January 1, 2000?*

*Are you ready for the leap year? Set your computer to February 28, 2000, 11:59:50 p.m. Follow the same procedure as you did for 2000 - does the date show February 29 after the time rolls over, and after you've turned the computer off and then on again? Don't forget to reset your computer to the current date and time when you're done!*

*Apple's Macintosh computers have always used a 4-digit year BIOS. Mac hardware and software are not expected to experience Y2K problems.*

*Additional resources for BIOS and software checking as well as information on Y2K are **Check 2000 PC Lite** at [www.gmt-2000.com/products/pc/Default.htm](http://www.gmt-2000.com/products/pc/Default.htm) by Greenwich Mean Time and Accute-Date Ver 1.0 from Microsoft at [computingcentral.msn.com/guide/year2000/](http://computingcentral.msn.com/guide/year2000/).*



## E-Mail Virus Hoaxes and Urban Legends

by Dana L. Kurtz

The proliferation of e-mail has provided a new opportunity for pranksters, who take great satisfaction in getting us to spread their message far and wide – particularly when that message is untrue but still causes panic.

### Viruses

Surely you have received an e-mail from a friend warning you not to open any e-mail you receive with a specific subject line (such as “Join the Crew”) lest you risk having your hard drive erased and your computer immobilized by a nefarious computer virus. Wishing to protect your friends and family from such a fate, have you passed that message along? Be an informed computer user: an e-mail message by itself, cannot put a virus on your computer. However, if the e-mail message has a file attached, *and* you load that file, you are putting your computer at risk.

The first line of defense is anti-virus software such as McAfee VirusScan or Norton Anti-Virus. This relatively inexpensive software loads when you start up your computer, and stays resident (“is always on”) until you shut down. How does it work? When you open a file, the anti-virus software scans the computer code and compares it to a database of virus patterns. If a match is found, the software will prompt you for action: clean the virus, don’t load the file, etc.

Since new viruses are generated all the time, it is crucial to keep your database of virus patterns up-to-date. Often, these updates can be downloaded from the manufacturer’s Web site. Note that being able to recognize a virus is not the same as cleaning the virus from your system. Therefore you also need to update the cleaning tool regularly. There may be a small fee for this update, but it is well worth it. Both McAfee ([www.mcafee.com](http://www.mcafee.com)) and Norton ([www.symantec.com](http://www.symantec.com)) offer a subscription, which allows you to update your software regularly.

Another essential in staying virus-free is to examine critically the source of the attachments you receive. As a rule of thumb, never open an attachment from an unfamiliar source. What about the attachment your brother sent? Do you know his source of the file? Your diligence will surely pay off by saving you hours, if not days, of headaches, restoring your computer to good health.

Finally, there are no guarantees. Virtually everyone will get a computer virus at some point. Remember to back up your data files to floppy or zip disk regularly – that means every time you make a change to a file

that you’d rather not have to repeat! Keep that anti-virus software up-to-date!

### Urban Legends

Urban legends are another e-mail annoyance. In these e-mails you may be told a frightening story and are encouraged to “beware;” or the content may be an anecdote, which is amusing but untrue. Examples include last year’s “Kurt Vonnegut commencement address,” the Neiman-Marcus cookie recipe, and an appeal to write to your representative about a plan to impose a five-cent tax on each e-mail message delivered. According to one Internet source, the “cookie recipe” story dates to the 1940s!

More often than not, these stories have no basis in fact. They are distributed by the instigator to see how quickly, and how widely, the rumor can spread. In truth, these legends are generally innocuous, except for the chill or chuckle they inspire.

### Resources

How can you tell if the e-mail story sent to you by your best friend is for real? Check it out for yourself! There are dozens of Web sites devoted to debunking the legends and allaying your virus fears. A few reliable resources are listed below. These sites are the best way to separate fact from fiction.

#### Virus Hoaxes

- [www.icsa.net/services/consortia/anti-virus/alerthoax.shtml](http://www.icsa.net/services/consortia/anti-virus/alerthoax.shtml)
- [vil.nai.com/villib/alpha.asp](http://vil.nai.com/villib/alpha.asp)
- [www.symantec.com/avcenter/hoax.html](http://www.symantec.com/avcenter/hoax.html)

#### Urban Legends

- [www.nonprofit.net/hoax/hoax.html](http://www.nonprofit.net/hoax/hoax.html)
- [www.delta-9.com/net47/myth/](http://www.delta-9.com/net47/myth/)
- [www.kumite.com/myths/](http://www.kumite.com/myths/)
- [ciac.llnl.gov/ciac/CIACHoaxes.html#internetcharge](http://ciac.llnl.gov/ciac/CIACHoaxes.html#internetcharge)

Be kind to your e-mail correspondents! Take the few moments to determine the truth behind the message, and don’t the spread an unfounded rumor.

### Third Cousin Twice Removed?

Did you ever have difficulty keeping track of exactly what is a second cousin twice removed, or a third-great-grandniece? An easy-to-use quick reference chart is available from the State Library of North Carolina at [statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/iss/gr/chart.htm](http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/iss/gr/chart.htm). You may find it comes in handy when talking with less genealogy-inclined relatives. As the JewishGen moderator recommends, “download it, print it and hang it on the wall!”

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