



זכרון ZichronNote

The Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

Volume XXII, Number 1

February 2002

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
- Los Altos Hills:** **Monday, 7:30 p.m.** Congregation Beth Am, 26790 Arastradero Road

Mon. February 18 Los Altos Hills: *Using Public Libraries to Research Jewish Genealogy.* Rosanne Leeson will outline resources that you may not realize are available in your own city or town. This will be the first meeting at Beth Am. Come at 7 p.m. to get a tour of the extensive Beth Am library. The program starts at 7:30.

**Note date
change.**

Sun. March 17 San Francisco: *Hiring and Using a Professional Genealogist.* Sherrill Laszlo, professional Jewish genealogist and author, will review what is involved in hiring someone, how to find the right person, what you need to provide, and what the researcher might be able to find. Note room change: Building C, Room 235, Fort Mason Center.

Mon. April 15 Los Altos Hills: *Genetics and Genealogy.* Dr. Henry Kaplan will address the question of what we can learn from genetics from a genealogical perspective, and how this can help our research. He will include a discussion of genetic diseases found predominantly among Jews.

Sun. May 19 San Francisco: *Utilizing the Jewish Community Library as a Genealogical Resource.* Judy Baston, former SFBAJGS Librarian and volunteer staff at the Jewish Community Library (JCL) for the last 10 years, will discuss the many ways in which the JCL's 30,000-plus volume collection can aid in Jewish genealogy research. She will discuss the JCL's books on Jewish genealogy methods, name origins, reference works, Jewish community histories, bibliographies and more.

More Genealogy Events of Interest on Page 4

ZichronNote

Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

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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 e-mail 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 at the discretion of the editor. Rates per issue: business card-sized (3-1/2 x 2 inch)-\$10, quarter-page - \$20, half-page - \$35, full-page - \$60. Ads must be camera-ready and relate to Jewish genealogy.

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: SFBAJGS, Membership, P.O. Box 471616, San Francisco, CA 94147.

Society Address:

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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 Beth Am, 26790 Arastradero Road, Los Altos Hills.

SFBAJGS Web Site: www.jewishgen.org/sfbajgs

President's Message

Let's Keep Up the Good Work

by Jeremy Frankel

I would like to thank all those people who encouraged me to take on this position. These words were said by Rodger Rosenberg, the outgoing President, when he first took office in 1998. I echo those sentiments, as well as congratulating the other new Board members. My goal is primarily to continue the excellent work of the Board. I may be at the helm, but I rely upon their experience. Having been on the Board for several years, I know what a wealth of knowledge it represents.

That said, there is one goal I personally would like to see established; the creation of meetings in the East Bay. While San Francisco and the South Bay have for many years held meetings for members living in those communities, East Bay members have, unfortunately, been poorly served.

As Roger has also stated, this is YOUR organization and the Board and I are always open to suggestions, improvements as well as criticism about how SFBAJGS is run. Our names, phone numbers and email addresses are here on page 2. DO call or email us with your concerns.

One project I have always been keen to see started (and now it has) is the Cemetery Project. The Board feels that this is our way of helping the Jewish genealogy movement at large. The civil death records for San Francisco were mostly lost in the 1906 earthquake and fire. In December, Ron Arons and Jerry Jacobson spent several long days testing equipment, then taking more than 600 digital images of the records that remain from before 1906. By the time you read this, we hope that the indexing part of the project will be under way. If you are interested in volunteering to help with this project, please contact me.

In closing, I look forward to seeing the organization go from strength to strength, with an increasing membership and more projects undertaken. I look forward to forging closer ties to other Jewish organizations as we pursue our genealogical research.

*Shalom,
Jeremy*

SOCIETY NEWS

E-mail Address Updates

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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 galleto@pacbell.net so we can keep you up to date.

Passing the Gavel

by Rodger Rosenberg

In composing this, my final message as president for the Society, I find myself reflecting over the last four years and all the changes in the Society and in my own life. In taking on this role I have had the unique opportunity to meet so many of you and try to assist you in your search. In doing so I learned so much more about genealogy and how important it is to you. I want to thank everyone for allowing me this chance and for all the efforts of the past, present, and future Board.

Many of you may not realize how much effort goes into the Society every year, and there are many unsung heroes whom I could embarrass by mentioning their names, but I will not. All I can say is that the more opportunities become available to become involved in this Society; the more chances there are to learn and grow. I speak from personal experience that simply offering to do a small project can blossom into a fantastic opportunity to learn much more than you originally intended.

I would like to offer my congratulations to our new Board. I know that they will do a great job. There are many new projects on the horizon, which will offer everyone a chance to become more involved.

As for myself I will continue my own involvement

in the Society as the new Program Coordinator. I look forward to hearing from everyone with ideas for speakers and new things you would like to learn. Again my thanks to everyone in the Society for all their support over these last four years!

Rodger

Congratulations to New SFBAJGS Officers

The results of the recent election of officers is as follows:

- ♦ President: Jeremy Frankel
- ♦ Vice President: Rosanne Leeson
- ♦ Recording Secretary: Jim Koenig
- ♦ Corresponding Secretary: Michael Steinore
- ♦ Treasurer: Marc Seidenfeld

Congratulations to all. We look forward to a productive year with these leaders at the helm of the society.

To Rodger Rosenberg, former president, and Carol Feiner, former corresponding secretary, thank you for a job well done.

CALENDAR, cont.

More Genealogy Events

Local

Sundays, February 3-March 17, 7-8:30 p.m. **Lehrhaus Judaica. Jewish Genealogy** in the United States with Ron Arons. This course provides a comprehensive introduction to genealogical research in the United States. Students will learn about resources that are available at various facilities across the United States and via the Internet, as well as numerous research archives right here in the Bay Area. The course will include a field trip to one of the Bay Area's leading genealogical libraries. (No class February 17.) 2736 Bancroft Way, Berkeley. www.lehrhaus.org.

Sun., February 10, 1:15-5:15 p.m. **Lehrhaus Judaica. Russian Jewish Genealogy** with Michael Steinore. The course will emphasize those sources of information more easily accessible in the U.S., including census documents and passports; state Duma voter lists; city directories, calendar books, and Yizkor books. Congregation Beth Am, Los Altos Hills. www.lehrhaus.org.

Wed., February 27, 7:30 p.m. **Marin County Genealogical Society, Issues of Security, Privacy, Storage, and/or Access to Genealogical Family Records and Artifacts.** Open forum discussion. Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, 1100 Los Gallinas Avenue, San Rafael. www.maringensoc.org.

Sat., March 23, All day. **Sonoma County Genealogical Society, Spring Seminar** with James L. Hansen, FASG, nationally known genealogical lecturer and writer. Luther Burbank Center for the Arts, Santa Rosa. www.scgs.org.

Sun., April 14, 1 p.m. **Congregation B'nai Emunah. Introduction to Jewish Genealogical Research** with Ron Arons. Using examples from his own research, Ron Arons will explain the various types of records used to start and expand your family tree. A heavy emphasis will be placed on how the Internet is making family research easier and more efficient. 3595 Taraval Street, San Francisco. (415)664-7373.

Save the date:
Toronto 2002: A Meeting Place
22nd International Conference
on Jewish Genealogy
August 4-9, 2002

South Bay Meetings at Beth Am

By Rosanne Leeson, SFBAJGS vice president

As previously announced, the meetings of the SFBAJGS in the South Bay will be moved to Congregation Beth Am, in Los Altos Hills, beginning with the first meeting in 2002, on February 18. (Please note that this is the correct date. The date listed on the cover of the previous issue of ZichronNote is incorrect.)

Out meetings will be held in Room 16 at Beth Am, which is just across from their library, to which we will have access during our meetings. For this reason the library will be open to our members beginning at 7 p.m. on the night of our meeting, which will provide an extra half-hour for research before the meeting itself begins, and will remain open until 9:30 p.m. Beth Am is just down Arastradero Road from Kol Emeth, closer to Highway 280, at 26790 Arastradero Road. The telephone number is (650)493-4661.

Beth Am has one of the finest synagogue libraries in Northern California. The library, which has over 6,800 books, serves the religious school, adult education and outreach programs, as well as the entire congregation and the community at large. It may be used during the week during regular temple office hours. If it is locked you may request a secretary to open it. There is a sizeable circulating collection, and books may be checked out on a self-service basis for three weeks. Instructions are posted inside the library. Books and materials may be returned at any time. Book returns are located outside next to the patio door, and also inside the library at the workroom counter. If you need the services of the library staff you may visit the library on Sundays, during religious school hours, from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.

An introduction to the library has been scheduled for us before the February 18 meeting. It will be conducted by our member, Richard Hoffman, who is a founder of the library, together with his wife, Caroline. The introduction will take place at 7 p.m. on Monday, February 18, before the regular meeting time of 7:30. Please do arrange to come early to this important event.

**Jewish/Eastern European SIG
is part of Sonoma County Society**

The Sonoma County Genealogical Society has a Jewish and Eastern European Special Interest Group that meets monthly. For more information contact Suzanne Waxman at (707) 538-4378 or sswnola@earthlink.net.

Chasing Windmills in Poland

by Jerry Jacobson

Jerry Jacobson, a retired radiologist, is now a student taking liberal arts classes. In 2001 he and his wife traveled to Poland to visit his mother's birthplace. He is researching **JANOVSKY**, **ROSENZWEIG**, **PLOTNICK** and **MILLER** in Janow Sokolski and Bialystok, Poland, and **JACOBSON** and **SUSSMAN** in Tukums, Latvia.

My mother and her family emigrated from Yanova in 1912. The town is about 50 kilometers north of Bialystok. At age 14 she measured the distance as an over-night ride in a cart. When she was 90 years old she still reminisced about her life in this shtetl, populated by Jews and surrounded by gentile farmers.

Her father was the youngest of 12 children and some of her aunts and uncles had already died or moved away by the time she was born. She sometimes told of two adult cousins, Shepsle and Feivle, brothers who owned windmills at opposite sides of town and who had children with whom she played. Stories like that are the stuff of dreams and from the time I first heard them I could imagine these people with strange names in a land that had to be a lot like Holland.

A few years ago I met the husband of a distant relative who had heard that I had an interest in genealogy. He had been going through some of his mother-in-law's family albums and was intrigued to find a photo of a windmill. The people posed in front were somehow related but no one was certain who they were. I told him my mother's stories and he sent me a copy of the picture, but the trail seemed to end there.

I had long before heard of a possible relative living in Jerusalem. I wasn't certain how we might be related, and he had never responded to an earlier letter. Eventually I mailed him a copy of my family tree, mentioned some family legends including Shepsle and Feivle and their mills, and was delighted to get a reply. He had no knowledge of my branch of

the family but said that he was named after his grandfather, Shabtai Janovsky, better known as Shepsle. This relative had grown up in Bialystok, and he fondly remembered visiting his grandmother

at the family windmill in Yanova. When I mailed him a copy of the photograph he immediately responded. Not only did he remember this picture, but he was one of the children in it! And he could identify six of the other nine people, including his grandmother, mother, and brother. He later described arriving by cart with his mother one day in 1933 or '34 and discovering that the mill had burned down. Only one mill remained on the skyline. They both had cried. Everyone seemed certain that it was arson but the crime was never solved.

In September 2001 my wife and I visited Yanova, now known as Janów Sokolski. It is a modest village in a farming region, dominated by the twin spires of the Catholic church. The small post office sells toothbrushes in addition to stamps. Some farm equipment is parked off the road. There are no

remaining windmills. The only evidence of a Jewish past is the neglected cemetery just to the north of town. Our guide, Chris Malchiewski, located an elderly Pole who had grown up in the Jewish section of town. Now 75 years old, Daniel Polanik said he had learned to speak Yiddish from his childhood playmates and was disappointed to find that I spoke none. With Chris translating for us, Daniel spoke in Polish and told of the plight of the Jews of Janow during World War II, ending on November 1, 1942, when they were loaded onto 100 horse carts and



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LOCAL RESOURCES

Get an Early Start on the 1930 U.S. Federal Census (Part II)

by Michael Steinore, Corresponding Secretary, SFBAJGS

In the last edition of *ZichronNote*, I discussed the arrival of microfilm series T1224 at the National Archives (NARA) facility in San Bruno. T1224, which contains textual descriptions of Enumeration Districts (EDs), determines the ED in which to find your family in the 1930 U.S. Federal Census. NARA San Bruno has now received microfilm series M1930, 36 rolls of microfilm, which contains over 8,000 ED maps, with ED boundaries marked on the maps.

After reviewing the ED maps on M1930 microfilm, I think its usefulness is hit-or-miss. Here's why: The maps come in a variety of scales, from a variety of origins, and with a variety of ED marking styles. Urban areas, such as major cities, tend to have large scale maps, so the ED boundaries are visually quite small, and therefore hard to determine.

This was a problem with 1910 ED maps too, but the increase in population density since then means that ED boundaries in major cities can be even smaller. The maps were microfilmed in color to retain their original appearance, but that turns out to be a mixed blessing. Many of the ones I saw were blueprint-style, with a largely blue background, making

determination of EDs difficult. Sometimes the background was clear, but the ED boundaries were drawn with faded red markers, again making them hard to use. The source of the maps varies from engineering maps, sewer maps, and water district maps, to insurance maps, and those found in city directories. Therefore, street names are not always fully noted.

Because of the variety of maps, it is hard to generalize on their usefulness. They are probably more helpful for rural areas, where the ED boundaries are larger, than for urban areas, where they can be quite small. Based on my experience determining EDs for Milwaukee and New York City, M1930 by itself was not sufficient, but it did help confirm the EDs I had determined using the textual descriptions in T1224. The NARA staff at San Bruno says that they may acquire a hard copy version of M1930, which might eliminate the problem of hard to see, colored ED boundary markings. They also expect "lines out the door" when the 1930 census is released in April, so determine your EDs early.

1890 Census is Gone, But a Substitute is Available Locally

by Jeremy Frankel, President, SFBAJGS

It is well-documented and there is much regret in genealogical circles that the 1890 U.S. Federal Census does not survive today. In brief, a fire at the Commerce Building in Washington, D.C., in January 1921, led to much of this census being destroyed and disposed of. The only states for which the census survives include parts of Alabama, D.C., Georgia, Illinois, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York (not NYC), North Carolina, Ohio, South Dakota and Texas. A name index was created by the National Archives and consists of two microfilms, having the NA code number M496. Anyone interested in these states should check such sources as "The Source" by Eakle and Cerny for the counties covered in each state.

As a fall-back, while city directories for that year offer a snapshot view, they unfortunately don't include the whole family. However, for those of us researching New York City, all is not lost. There is the unusually-named 1890 "Police Census." It consists of 59 rolls of 35 mm film (the "wide" films in LDS parlance). Whilst not having the breadth of

information one normally associates with censuses, it does however give the street address, the name, sex, age, the patrol officer, enumerator and police precinct.

The LDS instructions state that to locate a street address one should use the Wilson Street Directory to find the blocks, then use the AD (Assembly District) map to find the street and block number. Using the latter, one can then locate the ED (Enumeration District) number to find the book number. Yes, it does sound rather laborious and there are one thousand books! Fortunately the Wilson Directory was also filmed and forms the first two films in the series.

But the best news of all is that all 59 rolls are at the San Francisco Mormon Library. The library is located at 1900 Pacific Avenue, San Francisco. The phone number is (415) 771-3655. Naturally, as all Mormon libraries are staffed by volunteers, anyone intending to visit should call ahead to check for opening hours.

Expansion Under Way at Oakland LDS Library

by Jeremy Frankel, President, SFBAJGS

The San Francisco Bay Area is home to over 20 libraries run by the LDS (Mormons). They come in all shapes and sizes and vary enormously in their library holdings and facilities. The Mormon Temple one can see in the Oakland Hills also has a library. Not only is it the largest in the Bay Area but it is one of the three largest in the United States. The library takes up half the basement of the Visitor's Center, which is located to the right of the parking lot.

It is a tenet of their religion for Mormons to pursue their genealogy, and since the end of World War Two, they have been microfilming local, state and federal records all over the world. The whole collection, held at the main library at Salt Lake City, comprises over 2.6 million microfilms and 2 million microfiche as well as many books and maps.

As the Oakland library is now being expanded from 5,000 to 10,000 square feet, it is timely to remind those new to genealogy as well as seasoned genealogists of its existence and the advantages of using it.

By the time you read this, the Oakland Library will be halfway through its planned expansion program. This project has been "in the works" for over two years now, and it is sorely needed by all those who are regular users. And I use the word "sorely" quite literally. As one attempts to get to a microfilm reader, negotiating the space between other people using the microfilm readers sometimes means one's tush is accidentally brushing against a reader's chair!

The expansion program will provide much more traffic space as the whole library is quite crowded. Although no money has been budgeted for new equipment, one new computer will be available for general Internet use, so one can access the on-line LDS catalog, Ellis Island, Ancestry.com, etc. Apparently software will be installed that will prohibit accessing sites not in keeping with the mission of the Church. Recently new, improved Minolta microfilm/fiche reader/printers have been bought. These are now self-service machines. The single classroom will have one wall replaced by a removable divider, so that there can be either two classrooms or one large room.

The library houses 26 microfilm readers, 10 microfiche readers and six computers for accessing several Mormon databases as well as the Social

Security Death Index. The library houses over 28,000 microfilms and 6,000 sets of microfiche, 7,000 books and various census indexes, maps and gazetteers. Four other computers house specialized catalogs or are for CD use only. Nearly all the shelves are chock-full and so purchasing new films for the permanent collection has not been possible. Once the expanded library is up and running, it is hoped that recommendations may be made to the Director as to what records ought to be acquired for the permanent collection.

Many of the libraries have "niche holdings" and I hope to write about this in later articles. The niche collection at Oakland is the U.S. Census microfilms and printed or filmed indexes. Oakland has the census returns from 1790 to 1900 with portions of 1910 and many for 1920.

As mentioned above, the main library in Salt Lake City (SLC) houses the complete collection. One can use the computer catalogs to find what records exist and if they are held locally or at another Bay Area location. Otherwise they can be ordered from SLC. Films cost about \$4.59 per monthly rental and fiche cost \$1.00 per order and 25 cents per fiche. The fact that this facility is one of the larger ones may be why turn-around time for ordering film or fiche from Salt Lake City usually takes only two to three weeks.

As an indication of the LDS collection's usefulness, I have often bumped into Robinn Magid, a long-time Society member, head down in one of the microfilm cubicles. Robinn was one of the coordinators for the Jewish Records Indexing-Poland project (go to www.Jewishgen.org/JRI-PL/ for more information). She has been diligently reading, translating and indexing hundreds of names from the microfilms the LDS filmed in various Polish State Archives. Many of these records go back to the early 1800s. Now she is the Lublin Archives Project Coordinator for the Jewish Records Indexing - Poland.

During construction, the opening hours have naturally had to be curtailed from the 49 hours per week that the library is usually open. Right now it is open during the evening from Tuesday through Thursday (5 - 9 p.m.) and Saturdays (9 a.m. - 5 p.m.). But all this is dependent upon the contractors. So phone ahead before setting out. The front desk number is (510) 531-3905.

BOOKSHELF

News of the SFBAJGS Library

by Rosanne Leeson, Vice President, SFBAJGS

As many of you may remember, the SFBAJGS was forced to give up the space in which our library collection had been housed when the Masonic Library required the space which it had lent to us. We applied to a number of other facilities in the Bay Area, without any success. The Library Committee of the SFBAJGS met over a period of months to decide the best way to make our materials available to our membership, which is spread over a wide area.

After much deliberation it was decided to keep certain unique and basic core items, as well as audiovisual materials, books in foreign languages, and our periodical collection. These will probably be housed by the president of the Society, as before, and brought to meetings for general usage. A small number of items which were deemed too out-of-date will be removed from our collection altogether. They will be brought to meetings so that anyone who has an interest in any of them can take that item or items.

The rest of the collection will be split among four different locations in the Bay area: Congregation Beth Am in Los Altos Hills, a few to the Jewish Community Library in San Francisco, some to the Sutro Library in San Francisco, and some to a new East Bay site, the JCC of Berkeley-Richmond. Here is the current list of items that are being dispersed to other locations:

To Beth Am:

- American Jew as Patriot, Soldier and Citizen
- Autobiography of a 17th-century Rabbi
- Bialystoker Memorial Book
- Conversation with My Father
- Diary of Joshua Gielczynsky
- Graven Images
- Hoffman Happenings
- Jewish Family Names and their Origins

To Berkeley-Richmond JCC:

- Alameda County Genealogical Research Guide
- Archival & Oral history Collections - Western Jewish History Center
- Atlas of the Holocaust 1982 ed.
- California Family Newmark

- Finding our Fathers 1977 ed.
- Free to Choose
- From Generation to Generation 1980 ed.
- History of Sinai Memorial Chapel
- In Memory's Kitchen
- Josel of Rosheim
- Jews and Judaism in a Midwestern Town (Columbus, OH)
- Temple Sinai, Oakland 1875-1975
- Uprising in the Warsaw ghetto

To Jewish Community Library, SF

- Merchants & Jews...
- Russia's Western Borderlands

To Sutro Library:

- Auerbach Family
- Descendants of Herz Anshell of Bonn
- Gamsu Family History
- In Search of Anixters
- Koenigswarter Family...
- Olschwanger Journals
- Oral History of an Immigrant Family
- Reinharts of Nevada
- Rothschild of Nordstetten
- Schwebel Family Saga (3 vols)

A number of items currently owned by the SFBAJGS are also available at Beth Am, and therefore will not be carried to the Palo Alto meetings:

Items Owned by Both Beth Am and SFBAJGS:

- Biographical Dictionary of Canadian Jewry, 1909-1914
- California Family Newmark
- Dictionary of Jewish surnames from the Russian Empire
- Dictionary of Jewish surnames from the Kingdom of Poland
- Finding our Fathers

Continued on page 9

Library, cont. from page 8

- Finding your Jewish Roots in Galicia
- Following the Paper Trail
- From Generation to Generation
- Getting started in Jewish Genealogy
- Guide to Jewish Genealogical Research in Israel
- Guide to Naturalization Records of the U.S.
- How to Document Victims and Locate Survivors of the Holocaust
- Jewish Personal Names
- Jewish Roots in Poland
- Jewish Roots in Ukraine & Moldova
- Latter Day Leaders, Sages & Scholars
- Library Resources for German-Jewish Genealogy
- Lithuanian Jewish Communities
- Russian Jewish Given Names
- Shtetl Finder Gazetteer
- Sourcebook for Jewish Genealogies
- They Came in Ships
- The Source
- Where Once We Walked
- WOWW Companion

We remind you to also check the catalogs of your local public libraries, which may well have copies of many of these books available for borrowing. If there is anything in our core collection that you wish to use it is requested that you notify the president at least two weeks prior to the next JGS meeting, to ask that the item be brought to the meeting.

It is our intention to continue to purchase new and important items, both for our core collection and for the JCC Berkeley-Richmond Library.

A New SFBAJGS East Bay Library Facility

It has long been a concern of the Board of the SFBAJGS that our many members in the East Bay had no ready access to materials in our library, other than at the JGS meetings. We have now arranged for a collection to be maintained at the Berkeley Richmond Jewish Community Center, 1414 Walnut Street, Berkeley. The phone number is (510)848-0237.

We have agreed to provide them with a genealogical collection that we would supplement

from time to time with items that we no longer need in our core collection, as well as with new books to which we felt our East Bay members should have access. The books that we have donated are kept in a locked bookcase in their library and are for reference use only. Most of the rest of the books in the library may be borrowed. They have a decent-sized library of general Jewish interest, including a large and very nice children's collection. There is a librarian available to assist during the hours that they are open: Monday through Thursday, from 11 a.m. till 3 p.m., and on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 till 8:30 p.m.

We hope that our members will find this collection useful, and will take advantage of it. If any of you have any suggestions for further items to be added please let us know. Donations of funds to assist in the collection building at the Berkeley Richmond JCC will also be greatly appreciated! You can contact Marc Seidenfeld, our treasurer, at seidenfeld@bigfoot.com.

In addition, the Library Committee is seeking someone from the East Bay who might be interested in joining the committee, to be our liaison person. If you are already a member of the JCC it would be helpful, but it is not necessary. Contact Rosanne Leeson at Leeson1@attglobal.net to volunteer.

Books Purchased for SFBAJGS Collections

The Library Committee has purchased two new items which are to be added to our Core Collection:

The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy, Revised Ed., Szucs, Loretto Dennis & Sandra Hargreaves Luebking, eds., 1997. (To replace older edition).

The Census Book: A Genealogist's Guide to Federal Census Facts, Schedules & Indexes, Dollarhide, William, 2000.

We have also purchased for the new Berkeley-Richmond JCC collection:

Jewish Personal Names, S. Gorr, 1992.

Dictionary of Ashkenazic Given Names, A. Beider, 2001.

Paintings by Holocaust Survivor on Display in Marin

Paintings by Israeli artist, animator, poet and author Joseph Bau will be on exhibit at the Osher Marin Jewish Community Center in San Rafael through May 1. Bau, who was born in Krakow, Poland in 1920, is a Holocaust survivor whose wedding is shown in the film "Schindler's List." He survived as an artist and draftsman in the camps. Forty-eight of his paintings will be on display at the JCC, located at 200 North San Pedro Road, San Rafael. For information call (415) 444-8061.

Book Reviews: Tangled Truths and Family Secrets

by Judy Baston

Reprinted with permission from "What We're Reading," a publication of the Jewish Community Library of San Francisco. The library is located at 601 14th Avenue at Balboa. For information phone (415) 751-6983 or visit www.bjesf.org.

As a genealogist I've covered a number of books, largely memoirs, in which people look at their own family histories and often touch on the larger social and political circumstances that led to life decisions. I'm especially interested in books that deal with people who discover in adulthood that they had Jewish ancestry — then confront this fact and their own families as well — and learn about why their families had chosen not to live as Jews.

Turbulent Souls, Stephen Dubner
After Long Silence, Helen Fremont
Half-Jew, Susan Jacoby
In This Dark House, Louise Kehoe

These family secrets touch us all. Writers Fremont, Jacoby, and Kehoe grew up sensing there was something they weren't being told about their families' pasts, and each in her own way discovers that the secret is Jewish ancestry. They — and Dubner, who knows his Catholic parents had been born Jewish — learn more about their parents' lives and share with us the forces, historical, social, personal, and religious, that led to their parents' decisions.

Bibliography of Jewish Books On Line

by Hal Bookbinder, President, IAJGS

The Bibliography of North American Jewish Community Books is now on line. It was originally included in the syllabus of the 20th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy, Salt Lake City. This bibliography is the most extensive yet produced on the subject, including over 1,000 references across the United States, Canada, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. You can access it at the IAJGS website, www.iajgs.org.

In addition, Jewish Genealogy Yearbook 2001 is now available on line, providing reference information about more than 100 organizations dedicated to Jewish Genealogy, including contacts and activities.

Where She Came From, Helen Epstein

Fine writing makes reading this book an almost magical experience. Years of journalistic training equipped Epstein to search for her mother and grandmother's Czech past by discovering and poring over documents and diaries, as well as speaking with family members. She not only uncovers surprising details of these women's lives but also shares a fascinating social history of Central European Jews.

An Echo in My Blood, Alan Weisman

This family history makes a good mystery. What shapes the various family stories we're told as we grow up? As journalist Alan Weisman tries to penetrate the tangled web of family lore, his journey takes him from the Cold War politics of Minnesota to a little town in the shadow of Chernobyl. He sifts fact from myth and discovers why his family was among the many immigrants who chose to re-invent themselves in their new land.

Proposals Wanted for Presentations to Toronto Conference

Anyone who wants to be a presenter at the 22nd IAJGS International Conference is requested to submit a proposal for a presentation. The deadline for proposals has been set for February 28, 2002. The registration fee to the conference will be waived for all those accepted as speakers. The conference will take place at the Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel, August 4 through 9.

Information on submission procedures is posted at the site of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto) at www.jgstoronto.ca. This website features updates and additional information until an independent conference site is announced. The same information is available at the site of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) at www.iajgs.org. Presentation proposals as well as requests for Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and Birds-of-a-Feather (BOF) meetings, including the number of anticipated participants, should be directed to: 2002program@jgstoronto.ca.

Send all other inquiries to: info@jgstoronto.ca.

NATIONAL RESOURCES

**National Archives II Can Provide Detailed Information
About Soldiers Killed in Action**

by Barbara Corff

While visiting the National Archives in Washington DC this fall, I also decided to do research at The National Archives II in College Park, Maryland. I was familiar with these archives and knew that they had World War I Army burial files. Most genealogy researchers are familiar with the main archives in Washington DC, but they don't realize what a treasure is housed at Archives II.

A free round trip shuttle to Archives II originates at the National Archives in downtown Washington DC. The Archives at College Park have floors devoted to maps, photographs, and military information.

On this trip I was successful in finding a file about a relative's WWI death because he was buried in France while serving in the U.S. Army. The alphabetical files allowed me to find this relative by his last name, Grossman. The file included his serial number, his company and division, and that he was killed in action at the Madeleine farm in the Meuse. Considering how many men died in France, I was impressed with the detailed care that the Army showed in their documentation. Samuel Grossman's final resting place is the huge Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery. The cemetery has an informative website and will send you a photo of your relative's grave for free.

In Samuel's file, I was pleased to find that his mother Lena was able to visit his gravesite in France. The U.S. government organized and funded this trip in 1930. These women were called "Gold Star Mothers." I viewed a photo of Lena, her handwritten letters and documents arranging her trip, including the full itinerary, and personal information. I was able to find out that Samuel's brother Nathan was also in the service.

Nathan was notified of his brother's death by telegram. Addresses from the 1930's were provided. I was very pleased with the variety of information I gathered from this visit. I was also pleased to recognize and honor the life of this long lost son. I had a little extra time and was able to find hundreds of photos of my father's WWII Marine War Dog platoon, as well as war photos of my father.

In order to find my burial file, I met with a specialist in a separate part of the library. This required separate pass badges and quite a bit of time. The

files are only retrieved or "pulled" each hour. The staff are very strict about only allowing one item at a time to leave the file for viewing on your desk. Items for photocopying must be previewed by the staff, with a five minute limit on the use of copy machines. All aspects of security are taken seriously at these archives, so be prepared to spend some time learning their process in order to have a rewarding search.

On my return to San Francisco, I spent time getting unpacked and recovering from a cold. When I finally sat down at my computer to enter Samuel Grossman's name in my family tree, I made a mistake and entered his burial date as his death date. When I retraced my steps to find the correct date, I realized that I was doing this on the actual anniversary of Samuel's death, October 13, 1918! I had the feeling that somehow he knew I was thinking of him.

Better Late than Never

by Martin Gewing

Sometimes a simple inquiry can have unforeseen results. Hermann Gewing was my grandfather's uncle. Hermann, his wife, Karoline and their two children lived in St. Pölten, Austria for almost 40 years prior to Hitler's invasion in 1938.

My inquiry into his life sparked an investigation into modern Jewish life in St. Pölten. The culmination was an exhibition that was held in St. Pölten in November of 1998. The City invited, and paid for, the former Jewish residents of St. Pölten to join the town at the exhibition. I was able to attend with a grandson of Hermann Gewing, Gerard Gewing (who lives in Paris). The high point of the event was being welcomed by the President of Austria at the royal palace in Vienna. Other high points were meeting former Jewish residents, all of whom knew my family, and being personally recognized at the exhibition.

Two books, one in German, the other in English, were written on the subject.

All of this shows that one person can make a difference. Many times our research just gives us one more date, one more name. Once in awhile we get involved with (or start something, as in my case) that really makes all the drudgery well worth while.

The Names Judah, Benjamin, Issachar, Naphtali and Ephraim: How Biblical Attributes Affect Jewish Genealogical Research

By James Koenig, SFBAJGS Recording Secretary.

Jim has made presentations on Jewish names at SFBAJGS membership meetings and is a member of the American Names Society.

In the Torah, several of the sons of Jacob are given animal attributes: Judah (Yehuda) is described as a lion, Benjamin (Binyamin) as a wolf, Issachar (Yissakhar) as a bear (and elsewhere as a donkey, but that's a different story), and Naphtali (Naftali) as a deer. Ephraim (Efrayim) is associated with fish. The Yiddish word for 'lion' is Leib, 'wolf' is Wulf, 'bear' is Ber, 'deer' is Hirsh, and 'fish' is Fish.

Thus there is the association of the names:

Judah/Leib
Benjamin/Wulf
Issachar/Ber
Naphtali/Hirsh
Ephraim/Fish

There is a further association between several of these names and their modern Hebrew equivalent:

Leib - Aryeh
Wulf - Ze'ev

Ber - Dov (note that this is distinct from David, which has a different meaning)

Hirsh - Tsvi

In Central and Eastern Europe of the 18th to early 20th Centuries it was common for a child to be given a sacred name (Shem haKodesh) soon after birth; and for a secular name (Kinnui, plural Kinnuim) to be registered with the civil authorities. Sometimes the Shem haKodesh and the secular name were the same. Often, however, for persons named Judah, Benjamin, Issachar, Naphtali or Ephraim the attribute name would be used as the Kinnui.

That is, Judah might be registered with civil authorities as Leib, Benjamin as Wulf, Naphtali as Hirsh, etc. As the child grew up, the suite of names might be used either interchangeably (Judah, for example, could also be called Leib or even Aryeh), or as a couplet (Judah Leib, to continue the example), or even as a triplet name (Judah Leib Aryeh). This means that the person referred to in one document as Judah might indeed be the same person mentioned elsewhere as Leib or Judah Leib.

The same relationship is true for the shemot haKodeshim and Kinnuim for Benjamin, Naphtali, Issachar and Ephraim. The person called Ephraim

in one document may be the same person referred to as Fish or Fishl elsewhere; many a Benjamin is recorded as Wulf; and there are numerous examples of persons named Naphtali appearing as Hirsh in other records. The name combinations Dov Ber (really Issachar) and Tsvi Hirsh (Naphtali) are found in many documents.

As Jews became increasingly secularized, in the late 19th and 20th Centuries, there was a tendency to further replace the Yiddish Kinnuim with names in the local language. Because the Yiddish words and their German equivalent were fairly similar, there was not much difference to be noted in German-language records: Hirsh, for example, became Hirsch, and Leib was Löwe, whereas Wulf remained the same. Where Russian was the local language of authority, the changes often were more profound. For example, Hirsh became Girsh, Wulf turned into Volk, and Leib became Lev.

In addition, Yiddish has a rich tradition of creating diminutives from given names. Not content with replacing Judah with Leib, diminutives such as Laibl or Leibush were used.

A partial list of these would include:

Laibl and Leibush for Leib (Judah)
Hershel and Girshl for Hirsh (Naphtali)
Velvel for Wulf (Benjamin)
Beril, Berel, Berk and Berko for Ber (Issachar)
Fishl for Fish (Ephraim)

This is especially true for unofficial documents, such as letters, diaries, and the notations on photographs, as well as in oral testimonies. The enormous variation in spelling of these diminutives reflects both the dialect variations in spoken Yiddish, and the difficulties in transliteration from the Hebrew and Cyrillic alphabets into our Latin letters.

With continued assimilation, these Yiddish-derived names often were replaced by names that sounded similar, but might have no meaning in common. Volodia often replaced Volk/Wulf in Russian-speaking regions. Leo and Leon were substituted for Lev/Löwe/Leib; and Bernard became a common replacement for Berk/Ber. As the descendants of these persons migrated to English-speaking

Continued on page 14

COMPUTER/ONLINE NEWS

Given Names Data Bases Accessible On Line

By Professor G. L. Esterson, JewishGen

We are pleased to announce the posting of new on-line searchable Given Names Data Bases for 15 European countries. These Given Names Data Bases (GNDBs) make it possible for you to search for one or more Jewish given names in your European country during 1795-1925 and to retrieve all of the other Jewish and secular names that your ancestor might have used in various forums. The search results also include a listing of the vernacular names your ancestor might have used in his foreign country of immigration, after leaving Europe, based on his European names.

The Countries

The 15 European countries are Belarus, Denmark, France, Galicia, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Prussia, Romania, Russia, Sweden, and Ukraine. Other countries will follow later.

The nine foreign countries are: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, Palestine, South Africa, United Kingdom, and United States.

This is an on-going project so updates to the databases will be made from time to time. The GNDBs for some countries are advanced but still not complete (e.g., Belarus, Lithuania, Poland), for others, moderately advanced (Galicia, France, Germany, Ukraine), while the others have only basic data (Denmark, Russia, Sweden).

The Databases

The databases present the Legal, Yiddish, Local Secular, and European Secular linked names of Jews for each country. Legal names have been extracted from Hilchot Gitin (divorce) books written by rabbis to guide community rabbis in writing the Get (divorce) documents, and are oriented to precise and accurate specification of the names of the parties. Numerous archival data bases from various parts of each country, and other sources, were also used.

Vernacular names adopted when emigrants from Europe entered foreign countries are included. These names have been extracted from databases produced by researchers who recorded the entries on gravestones in foreign countries (for example, Ada Greenblatt for the US), as well as from private databases of Jewish genealogy researchers, and other sources. These vernacular names are

statistically linked to the Jewish and secular names used by emigrating Jews from European countries.

Using the GNDBs

You can search the GNDBs by entering the proper Input Form information: (European country, European search name, search field(s), search type (text, DM Soundex), and foreign country). This will yield both the European and the foreign names possibly used by your ancestor. Or you can enter data to search based on known names in a foreign country, finding all possible names used by him in his foreign country and in a European country. Various options are available for specifying the search name(s), e.g., Moshe, Mos*, Arye OR Leyb, [MO]she (DM Soundex), etc. The page containing the Input Form also contains a concise description of the databases and how you can use them. Read this on your first entry to the Search Page to become oriented and to avoid frustration.

Information About Given Names And Their History

The JewishGen site includes a considerable amount of detailed information about how the GNDBs were developed and what they contain, as well as the history of the development of given names throughout the world and how they were related to Jews, their religion, and the impact of their wanderings around the world. These documents are available from the search page itself. It is strongly suggested that you read at least some segments of this material — this will help you to understand what you see in the search results displays.

Accessing The GNDBs

The GNDBs can be accessed from the main JewishGen site or from the site of one of the Special Interest Groups who are hosting their country's GNDB. The JewishGen site contains access to any one of the 15 GNDBs at www.jewishgen.org/databases/GivenNames/.

The two SIGs which have their GNDBs up are: Belarus SIG, www.jewishgen.org/belarus/srchbela.htm, and LitvakSig, www.jewishgen.org/litvak/srchlith.htm. The Ukraine SIG is now working on its GNDB site and it should be up soon.

Continued on page 14

Given Names Database, cont. from page 13

Other SIGs are invited to contact Prof. G. L. Esterson at Gerald.Esterson@huji.ac.il in order to discuss their hosting of one or more of the GNDBs.

Your Contributions To The Databases

If you have quality information which shows the linkage between the Jewish/secular names of your ancestors in a European country and also the vernacular names they adopted in one of the nine foreign countries, please do contact Prof. Esterson. Obtaining this sort of European/foreign country linked names is quite difficult outside of the US, and also for some European countries whose emigrants entered the US.

Acknowledgement

I wish to express my sincere thanks to Michael Tobias and Warren Blatt, JewishGen volunteers, who prepared the data bases and their associated html files for the JewishGen site. Their wisdom, knowledge, insights, and guidance were a constant source of help to me during the development process.

I wish also to thank the leaders and webmasters of the three SIGs for installing their GNDBs on their sites: David Fox and Edward Rosenbaum (Belarus), Davida Handler and Trevor Tucker (Lithuania), and Florence Elman and Mel Fishman (Ukraine).

Looking for Names? Try Surname Navigator

By Rob Kuijsten, *JewishGen*

Surname Navigator www.kuijsten.net/navigator/ provides surname searches from multiple other web-based sources, based on preset and customized input-forms, specially focused on important free searchable online databases.

Have a look at the MEGASEARCH links at the top of the page. Now it is possible to search in up to 15 databases, with only one input window.

There is a Surname Navigator for the following countries: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, New Zealand, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, UK and USA. Including CGI (LDS), Ancestral File (LDS), Geneanet, Google genealogy, Google News Genealogy, Rootsweb Surnamelist, Ellis Island Registers, California Death Index, SSDI, censuses and many others.

Biblical Names, cont. from page 12

countries, the names evolved even further. Henry and Harry were substituted for Hirsh (itself a substitute for Naphtali); and William often replaced Wulf (Benjamin). In the United Kingdom, Lionel became the name of popular choice for Leib, thereby maintaining the approximate meaning ('little lion'). Thus, the child today named Lee might (wittingly or otherwise) honor an ancestor named Judah.

The impact on surnames is equally great. Jews of Eastern and Central Europe were required to adopt hereditary family names in a series of edicts issued in Austria, Russia and Prussia in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries. Individuals wishing to honor a father or grandfather named Judah might thus adopt Lewenstein or Leventhal as a suitably German-sounding name (from Löwe, German for 'lion'). In a Russian-speaking region, the surname might be Levkowitz or Leibovsky.

Examples for the other attribute names include:

Fishman, Fischer for Ephraim (this is not an occupational surname in most cases: great-grandfather wasn't a fish peddler)

Berman, Berkowitz for Issachar

Hirschberg, Hirschenson, Hershfeld,

Girshman for Naphtali

Wolfson, Wolfberg for Benjamin

(This list is by no means complete.)

Endings such as -berg, -feld, -stein and -thal were added in order to make the names appear 'more German'. Despite their appearance as place names (Hirschberg = 'deer mountain'), their purpose is to disguise the original Yiddish given name embedded within the surname. This class of surname is often referred to as 'ornamental'.

The endings -man, -son, -sohn, and -witz, -wicz and -vich (all meaning 'son of') more openly acknowledge descent from some individual. However, even here the original Biblical Hebrew name is concealed, except to the initiated, such as the readers of this brief report.

Editor's Note: This is one of a series of articles on Jewish names that will appear from time to time in ZichronNote. If you have questions for the author, contact him at: jbkoenig6332@msn.com, or contact ZichronNote.

Using the Internet to Better Understand the Lives of Our Ancestors (Part II)

by Ron Arons

When not researching his family, Ron Arons works on high tech marketing. Ron talked about using the Internet to get a better understanding of our ancestors at the October meeting of the SFBAJGS in Palo Alto. Ron is researching **SPIER, ARONS/ARONOWITZ, GILLMAN, TARSHIS, STERNBERG, HYMAN, GORDON, LONDON, LEBENSOHN, and GREJS.**

Newspapers & Magazines

www.jewishsf.com Jewish Bulletin (Bay Area)
www.newyorktimes.com
www.wsj.com
www.newsweek.com
www.jchron.co.uk Jewish Chronicle (London)
www.jewishtelegraph.com Jewish Telegraph
(Manchester)
www.the-times.co.uk/ The London Times

Online Bookstores

www.amazon.com
www.bn.com Barnes & Noble
www.bookfinder.com aggregation site for online
used booksellers

Libraries & Archives

www.familysearch.org LDS Library (SLC)
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www.nysl.nysed.gov/ New York State Library and
Archives, Albany
www.sfpl.lib.ca.us/ San Francisco Public Library

www.oaklandlibrary.org Oakland Public Library
www.lib.state.ca.us/ Holdings for CA libraries
including Sutro Library
www.lib.berkeley.edu UC Berkeley Library
www.huc.edu/libraries Hebrew Union College
www.genuki.org.uk List of local studies libraries
in U.K.

Free Lookup Services, Local FHSs, Professionals

www.iajgs.org List of other Jewish genealogy
societies
[www.geocities.com/heartland/plains/8555/
england.html](http://www.geocities.com/heartland/plains/8555/england.html) Free U.K. lookup services
www.sog.org.uk Society of Genealogists - England

Free Online Language Translators

babelfish.altavista.com/ English - Fr, Sp, Port, Ital,
German
www.ectaco.com/online/diction.php3?lang=7
English - Polish (limited)
www.translate.ru/eng/text.asp English - Russian

Chasing Windmills, cont. from page 5

taken away for extermination. When asked if he remembered any windmills owned by Jews, he recalled one but said it had burned down long before the war. He was fairly certain it had been arson. When asked the name of the owner he said he was called Shepsle.

Daniel led us to the empty field where Shepsle's windmill once stood. He said that the small cottage next to it had once belonged to the mill owner. Its yellow vinyl siding was added recently. This area is higher than the town and the wind may have been stronger here. The Jewish cemetery, now unmarked and overgrown with weeds, is a little farther down this road.

Daniel didn't remember Feivle's mill, though the father of the town librarian later confirmed that there had been two windmills, both owned by Jews. Andrej

Koslowski, the editor of the town newsletter, was born after the war but has a strong interest in local history. He was able to lead us to two other windmills that still exist only a few kilometers from Janow. One stands unused with just remnants of its wind vanes; the other has no vanes at all but is still used occasionally, now powered by electricity. Electricity came to this area in 1949 and, in an area with few tourists, probably sealed the fate of windmills. Andrej also pointed out a pile of charred rubble at one crossroad. He said that it had also been a mill until it burned a few years ago.

So the loop of family stories and an old photo was finally closed for me. It may not have been a great leap back in time, but in a shtetl with almost no surviving records this passes for a breakthrough.

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