



זכרונות *ZichronNote*

The Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area
Jewish Genealogical Society

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Members Report on Impressions of the IAJGS Conference in LA

By Lynn Rhodes, Janice Sellers, Marcia Orol Kaplan, Diane Leeds,
Henry Kaplan, Jim Van Buskirk, and Amelia Lemmon

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ZichronNote
Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area
Jewish Genealogical Society

President's Message

Back from the LA Conference

By Jeremy Frankel, SFBAJGS President

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Ahh yes, the Conference. It was quite a whirlwind affair, as we all lost weight traipsing from one end of the hallway where the Conference meeting rooms were to the other; and then we put it on again as we grabbed wraps and drinks during the short breaks between lectures. It didn't help that you would start off on Level Three, but somehow be on Level Two when arriving at the far end!

One could experience the "regulars" who have spoken at past conferences — including diamond gems who happen also to be SFBAJGS members such as Judy Baston, Vivian Kahn, Robinn Magid, Roy Ogus, Ron Arons and of course Steve Morse (who may hold the record, having given eight presentations at the conference). New this year was Karen Roekard and her talk on geospatial mapping, through which one can "marry" cadastral (land record) maps with modern geographic information systems to create a new look at our family's past.

Other Bay Area locals included Lara Michels of the Judah L. Magnes Collection (now a part of UC Berkeley's Bancroft Library) and Henry Hollander of San Francisco, a book-dealer who specializes in Hebrew and Yiddish publications as well as a wide range of English-language books (I was especially pleased to discover a book that detailed the first 100 years of the [London] *Jewish Chronicle* newspaper), Frances Dinkelspiel (reprising her Isaias Hellman and Wells Fargo Bank history) and Jim Van Buskirk with his *Grandmother's Suitcase* story. My sincere apologies if I have left anyone out.

Society members could barely walk five paces before being greeted by any one of the other 60 or so members! Yes, we probably and not unsurprisingly had the largest contingent of any JGS and comprised some 10 percent of all California attendees. We further delighted in having another half dozen attendees join the SFBAJGS while at the conference! Great work by all those who made that happen.

Which reminds me: I kept advising the first time attendees and new society members to "take it easy." There were so many presentations on offer. As an indication of our abundant choices, the half-letter size Program Guide ran to some 270 pages and was almost three-quarters of an inch thick!

Through the week we continued to be astonished and overwhelmed by the breadth and depth of topics on offer. However, the underlying theme that quietly

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SOCIETY NEWS

New Members

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In order to continue to receive the SFBAJGS e-zine and *ZichronNote*, please send e-mail updates to **newsletter@sfbajgs.org**

Annual Awards Presented at IAJGS Conference

Congratualtions to the winners of the various annual awards presented at the banquet during the IAJGS Conference in Los Angeles.

Hal Bookbinder received the Lifetime Achievement Award for his many contributions to the world of Jewish genealogy.

Judith Frazin was presented an award for Outstanding Contribution to Jewish Genealogy via the Internet, Print or Electronic Product for her book *A Translation Guide to 19th Century Polish-Language Civil Registration Documents, 3rd Edition*.

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Philadelphia received the award for Outstanding Program or Project for its Philadelphia Area Jewish Genealogy Resource Guide.

Roots-Key, the Journal of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Los Angeles, received the award for Outstanding Publication by a Member Organization.

The Israel Genealogical Society (IGS) was awarded the Rabbi Malcolm Stern Grant for its project to make as much family information as possible available for genealogy researchers by the opening of the IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in Jerusalem in 2014.

The complete text of the awards is published on the IAJGS website at **www.iajgs.org**.

Meeting Times and Locations

Unless otherwise indicated, the SFBAJGS meeting schedule is as follows:

- San Francisco: Sunday, Doors open 12:30 p.m. Program begins at 1:00 p.m.**
Congregation Beth Israel - Judea , 625 Brotherhood Way.
- Los Altos Hills: Monday, Doors open at 7 p.m. Program begins at 7:30 p.m.**
Congregation Beth Am, 26790 Arastradero Road, Room 5/6.
- Oakland: Sunday, Doors open 12:30 p.m. Program begins at 1:00 p.m.**
Oakland Family History Center, 4766 Lincoln Avenue.

**Please Note: New Meeting Sites for San Francisco and East Bay
See Back Cover for Calendar of Upcoming Meetings of SFBAJGS**

CALENDAR

Genealogy Events

Local and Regional

Wed., Aug. 25, 7:30 p.m. **Marin County Genealogical Society.** “**Evaluate Handwriting for Characteristics.**” Professional graphoanalyst Leslie Nye will present an overview of Graphoanalysis and how it can be used to discover the personality and character of an ancestor based on his/her writing. Marin Family History Center, 220 North San Pedro Rd., San Rafael. More information at www.maringensoc.org/.

Wed., Sept. 8, 10 a.m. **East Bay Genealogical Society.** “**The Truth in Family Myths and Legends.**” There is a shred of truth in most family lore. Chris Green will explore her experiences in separating truth from myth in several stories, from the ordinary to the improbable. Family History Center, 4766 Lincoln Ave., Oakland. More information at <http://caebaygs.blogspot.com/>.

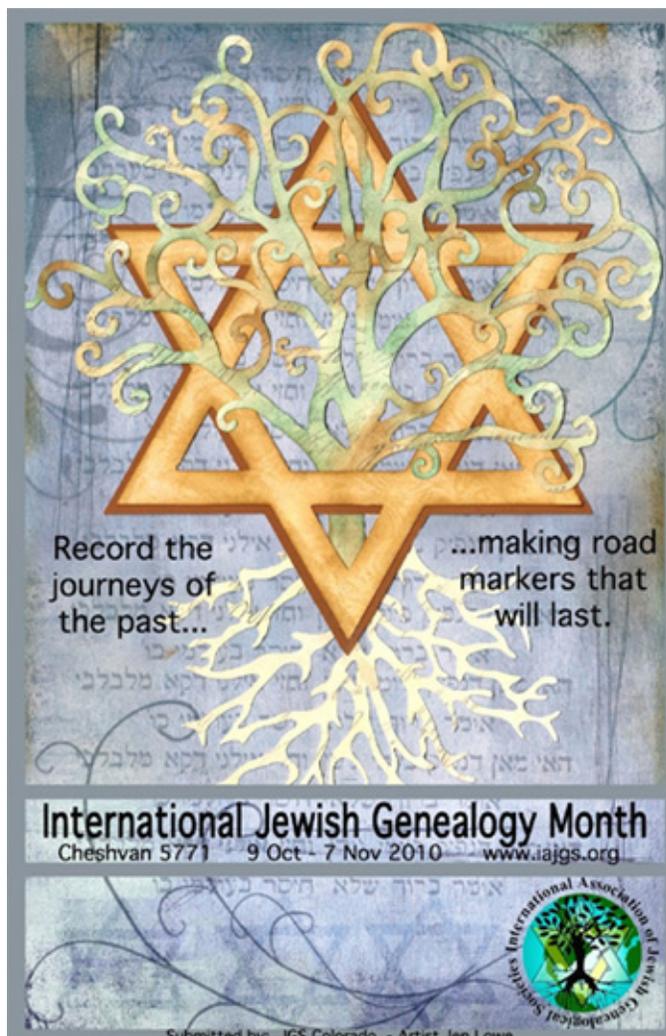
Sat., Sept. 11, 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. **Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group.** “**POW! Publishing Our Work, Sharing Family History.**” Fall workshop includes creative writing workshop, publishing in hardcopy and online, writing books for your grandchildren, and creating photobooks and slideshows. LDS church, 875 Quince Ave., Santa Clara. More information at <http://svcgg.org/>.

Sat., Sept. 18, 10:30 a.m. **San Mateo County Genealogical Society.** “**But It’s My Family — Copyright Issues for the Twenty-first Century Genealogist**” by Cath Madden Trindle, CG. Transfiguration Episcopal Church, 3900 Alameda de las Pulgas, San Mateo. More information at www.smcgs.org.

Tues., Oct. 19, 6:30 p.m. **Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society.** “**Cemeteries of Santa Clara.**” Larry DeJanvier, Cemetery Operations Superintendent for the City of Santa Clara, will talk about the types of information that can be found in cemetery records and will discuss Santa Clara’s two city-run cemeteries. Santa Clara Public Library, 2635 Homestead Road, Santa Clara. More information at www.scchgs.org/main/meeting.html.

State and National

Mon., Sept. 20, 7 p.m. **Sacramento Jewish Genealogical Society.** Sandra Harris presents “**When Was That Picture Taken?**” Albert Einstein Residence Center, 1935 Wright St, Sacramento. For more information visit www.jewishgen.org/jgs-sacramento/html/meetings_2010.html.



October 9 through November 7 (the month of Cheshvan in the Jewish Calendar) will be International Jewish Genealogy Month. What will you do to celebrate? This year’s poster was submitted by the JGS of Colorado and designed by Jen Lowe, whose projects have been published in books and magazines around the world. Read more at www.iajgs.org/jgmonth.html.

Sat., Oct. 9, 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. **California State Archives.** “**Family History Day.**” Includes classes from beginning genealogy to Internet resources and specialized research topics; how to preserve family papers; research in the Root Cellar Library; and tours of the Archives to learn about the historical documents held there. 1020 “O” Street, Sacramento. More information at <http://fhd2010.blogspot.com>.

Sat., Oct. 16, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. **California State Genealogical Alliance.** “**CSGA - FCGS Annual Seminar.**” Includes presentations on spreadsheets, digital photography, and much more. Woodward Park Regional Library, Fresno. More information at www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~cafcdgs/annual.htm.

Members Report on Impressions of the IAJGS Conference in LA

By Lynn Rhodes, Janice Sellers, Marcia Orol Kaplan, Diane Leeds,
Henry Kaplan, Jim Van Buskirk, and Amelia Lemmon

Lynn Rhodes

The 30th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in Los Angeles was my fifth conference. My purpose in attending each one has been to achieve two principal goals — to get information and to find inspiration. The five-and-a-half days of each conference have never failed to satisfy these goals, but the LA conference seemed to have an abundance of riches in these two areas and so much more.

I started the week early this time because I was intrigued by the two opportunities on Saturday to hear the “genealogist-in-residence,” Arthur Kurzweil. One of the first (of many) genealogy books I purchased so many years ago, as I started my own genealogical quest, was his book, *From Generation to Generation, How to Trace your Jewish Genealogy and Family History*. I had no idea what to expect, but I was completely charmed by his engaging presentations. By the end of his Saturday afternoon presentation, “**Kabbalah for Dummies**,” I was certain that I could now think about Kabbalah without Madonna and red bracelets ever entering my mind again. He also provided me a number of insights into the theology of Judaism and my own relationship to it.

At the welcome dinner on Saturday evening, as my tablemates and I introduced ourselves and talked about our genealogy and prior conference experience, I also shared that I was, at that very moment, missing a Paul McCartney concert at AT&T Park with my family back home.

Following the meal, Arthur Kurzweil spoke about his own transformation from a librarian to a genealogist as he talked about genealogy as a spiritual pilgrimage. He wove stories that were interesting and humorous. Throughout his talk he invoked great Talmudic scholars, and on several occasions threw in relevant quotes from the “great Rabbi Harrison of Liverpool” or from those other two scholars, Lennon and McCartney. So, although I did indeed miss the awesome pyrotechnics, as described by my daughter, that accompanied “Live and Let Die” at the concert, I still managed to get a dose of the Beatles along with some inspirational messages about our shared passion for genealogy.

The week continued to supply some amazing moments of inspiration, the keynote speech on

Sunday evening by Daniel Mendelsohn, the author of *The Lost: A Search for Six of Six Million*, chief among them. I came to the conference having just begun the process of writing the story of my grandmother’s solo journey to America at the age of 14 from her home in Nesvizh, in the Minsk Gubernia, to St. Paul, Minnesota in 1906. Following his speech, I went back to my room Sunday night bursting with excitement, new ideas, and a commitment to do my best not just to tell a story, but to illuminate her experience for our family with whom she had rarely shared “that terrible story.”

With workshops and learning opportunities starting at 7 a.m. with “Breakfast with the Experts” and ending with “Midnight with the Mavens” there was no dearth of information. I filled my brain with a steady diet of history, geography, technology, methodology, and genetic genealogy, barely stopping for a meal, except, of course, for the Belarus SIG lunch. I scraped my cheeks twice during the week, once for the autosomal DNA test, Family Finder — (well, who knows what I might find?), and once to join the registry as a possible bone marrow donor — (who knows whom I might be able to help?).

I absorbed as much as my brain could handle during the day, and was entertained on Monday and Tuesday evening by the theatrical presentations *Looking for Louie* and *The Bialy Eaters* with Tovah Feldshuh and Lawrence Pressman. I got my updates on JewishGen, JRI-Poland, and the One-Step Webpages, and spent an hour and a half in the resource room copying out information on my family surnames from the Alexander Beider books, *Dictionary of Jewish Surnames of the Russian Empire and the Kingdom of Poland*. I spent another entertaining hour with Arthur Kurzweil on Thursday evening as he performed card tricks, demonstrated his powers of ESP and told many more stories as we all were “**Searching for God in the Magic Shop**.” I squeezed in two more sessions Friday morning before hopping on the shuttle back to LAX and my flight home with several new books, my DVD of Daniel Mendelsohn’s keynote address in my backpack, and pages of notes and ideas from the many sessions I attended. The week had also been filled with conversations with friends, both old and new. I had a great week in Los Angeles.

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Janice Sellers

My favorite presentation at the recent IAJGS Annual Conference was “**Genealogy from the Inside Out: Pursuing the Elusive & Unknown**” by Steve Luxenberg. I had already heard of Mr. Luxenberg and his book, *Annie’s Ghosts: A Journey into a Family Secret*, because he had given a talk in 2009 that the SFBAJGS had cosponsored, but I had been unable to attend the talk at that time.

While the story of how he discovered his family secret — that his mother had had a sister he and his brother had never heard of — was very interesting, what I really enjoyed was his discussion of alternative ways to find information in two areas where researchers routinely run into dead ends: U.S. Army service and mental illness.

As many family history researchers know, most U.S. Army records prior to 1957 were destroyed in a fire (and it really was a fire, unlike the 1890 census, where most of the damage and loss were due to the water used to put out the fire). Luxenberg talked about his use of “morning reports,” which are essentially the 20th-century equivalent of 19th-century muster rolls, to trace where his father had been located near the end of his service and before his return to his family. Though not a true substitute for a complete service file, just as city directories from 1889-1891 are not really a substitute for the lost 1890 census, morning reports at least can help you piece together some information about your relative who served in the Army. The one big negative about these reports is that they are not microfilmed; they can be viewed in person only, in Kansas City, Missouri.

The other wonderful resource Luxenberg discussed was his use of court records to find significant amounts of information about why his previously unknown aunt had been committed to institutions and when. Health records in general in this country, and mental health records in particular, are almost totally untouchable by the average researcher, assuming they even still exist; I have read that hospitals routinely destroy records older than 20 years. Court records, however, stick around for a long time. Many people who were institutionalized probably left some trail in the court system, because few people commit themselves voluntarily. I have three relatives in my family tree who are said to have been institutionalized at different times, and I have not been able to gain access to extant records. I am looking forward to seeing what information I can find about them in court records.

Marcia Orol Kaplan

“**Social Networking - New Horizons for Genealogists**,” presented by Thomas MacEntee of High Definition Genealogy (<http://hidefgen.com>)

For a long time, I have resisted my children’s suggestion that I open a Facebook account so that I can keep up with their lives and my grandchildren’s. Not to mention all the new friends I would make. Well, I have more friends than I can keep up with as it is; but when Jan Tuerk regaled me with reports about all the cousins she has found on Facebook, I decided to listen to this presentation. I am now convinced that I need to do this in a way which will throw out a net to capture cousins without revealing my personal life to the world. (I am not convinced that I will be able to do that.)

As MacEntee says “Used wisely, social networking does have great value for the genealogy community.” (I guess I’ll just have to see about THAT.)

“What Is Social Networking?”

At its roots, social networking is information published in a variety of methods that encourages its readers/users to interact socially with other readers/users. The methods used to publish and disseminate this information utilize Internet-based technologies such as websites and blogs, online communities and more. Even computer-based applications, such as Family Tree Maker, contain ways to interact with others through Internet connectivity and sharing of family trees.”

Among the various terms employed is “publishing” or making content available or “collaborating” by “allowing more than one author to publish original content at a site” Discussion and sharing are other examples.

Even now, my confusion concerns how to find the place on the Internet where all this new material will be revealed and retained. MacEntee describes these as “Genealogy Social Networking Sites: sites with a focus on genealogy. Examples: Ancestry, dynastree, GenealogyWise, Geni, MyHeritage, WeRelate.”

“Benefits of Social Networking for Genealogists:

- Find other researchers working on the same surname or ancestral lines: Many genealogists have stories to tell of how they’ve met long-forgotten or even unknown family members on sites like Facebook. Currently researchers are using Twitter to see who else might be researching specific surnames, family lines or even subject matters such as African-American genealogy.
- Locate new resources for research. Let’s face it, there is no way any of us can track every

new genealogy database, website or blog. By following genealogy-focused people in social networking you'll get the latest news and resources.

- Get opinions and recommendations from other genealogists. Once you build a community online it is easier to get recommendations on genealogy database software or on how to write a difficult source citation.
- Publicize events and conferences for your genealogical society. Groups are realizing how easy it is to connect with other genealogists and 'get the word out' on upcoming happenings but also to drive traffic to their sites."

Finally, there are "dos and don'ts" which follow the same basic cautions as with any other use of the Internet. As MacEntee says, "Don't follow everyone that follows you — check out someone before following and make sure they are a "good fit."

"The Jews of the Texas Frontier: Assimilation, Accommodation and Adaption" by Kay Goldman, PhD.

The talk is based on Dr. Goldman's dissertation and is quite extensive.

As the title states, Goldman stresses the free and open nature of Texas society in the 1850s and on. Around then, groups of Europeans were brought to Texas to populate the state; although there was no attempt to segregate these immigrants. Since most were men, some returned to Europe or the east coast of the U.S.A. to find brides.

At first, the new arrivals congregated in the port cities, which were situated along the Texas coast, because inland travel was nearly impossible. Eventually the interior opened and Jews moved in with the rest of the population.

Goldman devotes her attention to the fraternal and social organizations that became a regular part of city life. Jews, she reports, were welcomed and they embraced the culture of the state. In particular, there were many Jews in leadership positions of the Masons and Odd Fellows. This in spite of the fact that these were not "Jewish" lodges. Records show that the Gentile members of these organizations provided the Jews with a support system during difficult times, including financial help to support heirs of the less well off members. She also extensively details the participation of Jews in politics.

Focusing on genealogy, Goldman traces the growth of the families and even the burial locations of the prominent Jews of the frontier. Goldman informed us that she initiated a project to locate and record the information on Jewish graves.

The process has begun; but not to the extent that Goldman had wanted.

Diane Leeds

"Writing Jewish Family Stories and Memoirs, Part 2" by Lil Blume (www.lilblume.ca)

This was the second part of a workshop by Lil Blume. In this session, she discussed how to use defining moments and events and family "one-liners" (Uncle Joe was Al Capone's body guard) as starting points for your stories. She also suggested delving deeper into various family mythologies in order to find the truth in the fiction. This will enable you to flesh out your stories. Imaginatively recreate the person's voice to help you find the energy of the person you're writing about. Visualizing the audience for your story will help you determine how to write the story; whether to write from your perspective or from a third party. Lil was a great and motivating presenter. I only wish that I could have attended Part 1!

"Within and Beyond the Pale: Jews in the Russian Empire" by Benjamin Nathans

Ben is a Professor of History at Penn State University. He presented a comprehensive historical look at Jews who lived in the Kingdom of Poland and the Pale of Settlement during the 19th century. He discussed the idea that picking the point at which you could define Jews as a modern people is challenging since they lacked a centralized religious or geopolitical structure. He went on to discuss various times in Europe and the U.S. that could be proposed as the beginnings of a modern Jewish people. He also discussed how different events imposed restrictions on Jews in the Pale and in Poland, as well as how specific Jewish populations were able to migrate outside of the Pale. A fascinating talk! Ben has written a book on this research which I am certainly going to purchase.

"American Passage: The History of Ellis Island" by Vincent Cannato

This lecture was based on the book of the same name and was presented at last year's IAJGS conference as well. Professor Cannato discussed how Ellis Island served sometimes as a "gate" and other times as a "sieve" (separating the desirable from undesirable) and how this resulted in different regulations and rules being applied to immigrants. He also explained why so few immigrants were returned to their point of departure (98 percent were admitted). Steamship companies conducted their own inspections prior to departure because they were financially responsible for the return passage of any immigrant denied entry. Fascinating and informative!

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Conference, cont. from page 7

“Discovering the Treasures in 19th Century Polish-Language Records” by Judith R. Frazin

I had attended this lecture at the New York IAJGS conference, but this is definitely one session that was well worth a second listen. Judith walked us through how to “translate” Polish-language records without being able to speak Polish. She showed us how to break down civil registration records into component parts to facilitate the translation and then how to recognize one or two characters in a word to help you determine the entire word, and following that, the meaning of the entire record.

Henry Kaplan

“Legacy: A Genetic History of the Jewish People”

Jews in Europe and the Mideast share genes.

Harry Ostrer, M.D., Professor of Pediatrics and Director of the New York University Medical School Human Genetics Program, using genome-wide scanning to compare several Jewish communities throughout the world (Iranian, Iraqi, Yemenite, Georgian, Syrian, Italian, Turkish, Greek, Ashkenazi, Ethiopian, Libyan, Tunisian, Djerban, Algerian and Bene Israel) found that Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews share many chromosomes which harken to the Levant, though they also have acquired genes similar to those found in their families’ host countries. The genetic signature of Sephardim and Ashkenazi Jews is similar to the genetic signature of Italian Jews, suggesting intermarriage among the three communities.

Dr. Ostrer also discussed his ongoing breast-cancer genetic research. He is particularly interested in reaching women who have family origins involving four grandparents who lived within a 100 mile geographic radius, whether there is a family history of breast cancer or not.

“New Resource: Jewish Genealogy from India at Beit Hatfutsot”

Chaim F. Ghiuzeli, Director of the Databases Department at Beit Hatfutsot, The Museum of the Jewish People, described and showed fascinating slides of the recently enriched resources of the museum relating to the genealogy of the Jews of India, particularly those in the Bene Israel community and those from Kerala. Family trees at the museum include genealogical information about many thousands of individuals and include many photographs and biographies. The museum URL is <http://bh.org.il/> and Ghiuzeli can be contacted at bhmarkt@post.tau.ac.il.

Jim Van Buskirk

As a first-time IAJGS attendee I was excited and a bit overwhelmed by the conference. Judy Baston generously went over the program schedule with me beforehand, recommending what might be useful to me. And then I somehow left those notes at home. It was nice to keep running into the familiar faces of Judy, Jeff, Jeremy, Beth and Steve Luxenberg (whom I had met when the JCL invited him to speak about his fascinating book, *Annie’s Ghosts: A Journey into a Family Secret*). I also met several members of JGSLA, who remembered my presentation from 2009, and from JGSNY, who extended an invitation to present “My Grandmother’s Suitcase” the next time I came to New York.

I was happy to be back in Los Angeles, where I was born. My first adventure was the “**Shomer Shabbos Downtown Los Angeles Historical Jewish Walking Tour**” led by Laura Gold. Having enjoyed tours offered by the LA Conservancy, I found it interesting to cover some of the same territory from a Jewish perspective. I had no idea that the development of downtown was so heavily influence by Jewish businessmen. (The “L.A. Live!” complex seemed a rather soulless development, but apparently it has been popular.)

Having long been interested in cemeteries, I was grabbed by the title “**It’s Carved in Stone.**” Madeleine Isenberg and her (Christian) colleague Miki Liptak spoke engagingly about their six-year project documenting information from headstones in the Spis region of Slovakia. I was fascinated by Madeleine’s descriptions the imagery of the engravers and very impressed with these two researchers and their difficulties translating, deciphering and decoding the abbreviations, acrostics and other puzzles of the headstones.

Joan Adler’s presentation “**For the Sake of the Children: A New Book about the Relationship of Otto Frank and Nathan Straus, Jr.**” illuminated newly discovered correspondence between the lifelong friends. Despite Straus’ position as director of the U.S. Housing Administration and a great friend of Eleanor Roosevelt, as well as his financial ability, his efforts to get the Frank family out of Europe were ultimately unsuccessful. The letters, which were heavily redacted before being declassified by YIVO in 2007, chronicle the tightening restrictions of the U.S. State Department and deteriorating conditions in Europe. Joan’s book, intended for young adults, will give greater insight into the tragic era. The letters also make a cameo appearance in *Against the Tide*, the recent documentary from Moriah Films about what the United States did (and more importantly did not do) to save Eastern European Jews during the Holocaust.

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BOOKS

***Annie's Ghosts* by Steve Luxenberg**

Reviewed by Jeremy Frankel

Some of us were privileged to be in the audience at the Jewish Community Library in March, 2010 when Steve Luxenberg stopped in San Francisco as part of his book tour. His was a familiar tale; a mysterious family member and Steve's genealogical efforts to research and bring the story to light.

I can honestly say that this is a book well worth recommending to anyone interested in genealogy as well as anyone interested in mystery stories. There's even more than that, but I will come back to it later.

Steve Luxenberg has been an associate editor at the *Washington Post* and has worked in the newspaper industry for over 30 years. It's therefore obvious when reading *Annie's Ghosts* that here is someone who knows how to write. We are blessed by the fact that the author is a writer first and a genealogical sleuth second. The difference really shows.

Steve constantly switches hat from investigative journalist to the concerned son, occasionally torn between wanting to find out and not knowing what his mother's wishes might be (to leave well enough alone?). Like me, you will sit there nodding with recognition as Steve goes through all the machinations and frustrations of trying to work out this particular Rubic's cube. The questions come thick and fast, but where do the answers lie?

There have been comments that the author might have used his journalistic skills and business

contacts to which we genealogists don't have access, but there is no denying that if we were in his shoes, we'd do exactly the same.

I mentioned previously that there is another strand to the story and I won't be giving much away by saying that along the way, Steve forms some strong opinions about the mental health system in this country; from the way it was practiced in the past to the way it was dismantled with the advent of new diagnoses and improved medication.

The hardback edition came out in 2009 and this was followed just a year later by the paperback version, which runs to some 411 pages and includes a five-page interview with Steve at the end.

A few months later I was able to renew my contact with Steve at the IAJGS International Conference of Jewish Genealogy in Los Angeles, at which he gave several presentations. Steve is extremely approachable, very friendly and helpful with the kind of advice genealogists need when they find themselves following in his footsteps.

The book was my conference bedtime reading and I didn't actually finish it until the plane almost touched down back at Oakland Airport.

You won't want to put this book down until you have finished it — and that is high praise indeed

Annie's Ghosts, A Journey into a Family Secret, by Steve Luxenberg. Published by Hyperion Books. ISBN 978-1-4013-1019-0 (paperback) \$15.99

***President's Message*, cont. from page 2**

penetrated the conference was the importance not just of the ubiquitous "names, dates and places," but the even more important "back-stories" — not the facts, but the rich tapestry of those now-gone lives that embellishes and gives substance to the family trees we are so gung-ho on nurturing.

This was nowhere more evident than in the very moving, wonderfully eloquent and sometimes humorous keynote speech given by Daniel Mendelsohn on Sunday evening. He had confessed to not knowing what to write exactly, what to "hang his presentation on" but it all came together with a snafu when he attempted to register for the conference!

Having mentioned Daniel, who also made himself very accessible during the conference, I must also mention the new luminary of the Jewish genealogical world, Steve Luxenberg, the author of *Annie's Ghosts*. (It was my nighttime reading during the conference

and I finished it just before the plane touched down back at Oakland Airport.) Steve was also wonderful, making himself very available. He went more than the extra mile to personally assist anyone with a similar problem of a family member who might have been (literally) incarcerated in one of the many U.S. mental institutions, helping them learn how to obtain the records.

I was probably one of the last to leave the Los Angeles Conference, along with Janice Sellers, whom I saw departing with at least one of the banquet floral arrangements in hand. Janice was off to do some personal research before heading back to the Bay Area.

In short, it was a wonderful time in Los Angeles. Though I'm sooo glad not to have that air-conditioning hum still buzzing in my hearing aid!

Jeremy

PAST MEETINGS

What's Black and White and Accessible Online?

By Beth Galletto

Janice Sellers' presentation of "Newspapers Online" at the Oakland Regional Family History Center (ORFHC) on August 15 was a helpful overview of the ever-changing world of digitally accessible newspapers.

An editor and professional genealogist, Janice has been on the staff of the ORFHC for more than nine years. She illustrated her talk with examples of difficult-to-find information she has located by using newspaper archives while researching clients' families and her own relatives, demonstrating the search methods she used in the process.

She provided a handout with links to various online newspaper archives, both free and subscription, along with information about local libraries at which they may be found.

According to Janice, one of the most useful portals to online newspaper databases is Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newspaper_archives_online. She herself adds any links she finds out about to this

site, making it the one best place to find new links as they become available.

Since online archives are changing rapidly, Janice emphasized some important facts to remember when searching for online newspapers. Some databases add and remove various archives without warning — so if you find a link to something you need, copy and/or save it, because it might not be there tomorrow. On the other hand, many databases and archives are adding newspapers — so if you can't find what you are looking for now, try again. It may be available in the future.

If you missed her talk, Janice will present "Newspapers Online" again on Saturday, October 16, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the annual seminar of the Concord Family History Center, 1590 Denkinger Road, Concord. Contact Jackie Hein at lejaki1957@aol.com for more information. As a bonus, SFBAJGS member Jeff Lewy will present "Book 'Em Dano! Publishing Your Family's Story" at the same seminar.

Conference, cont. from page 8

Other conference highlights included Tovah Feldshuh's performance as Mimi Sheraton in the theatrical adaptation of *The Bialy Eaters*, Daniel Mendelsohn's keynote address (and the dessert reception!), Arthur Kurzweil's spirited presentation on Jewish genealogy, Paul Mazursky's appearance at the screening of his documentary, *Yippee! A Journey to Jewish Joy!* and of course the requisite pastrami sandwich at Langer's deli (where my grandmother used to take me). I came away full of renewed appreciation for genealogists' dedication to preserving Jewish history and culture.

Amelia Lemmon

As this was the first conference I attended, my impressions covered many aspects of this conference. I was particularly impressed at the sheer number of people who attended — over 1000 people from literally around the world. From another point of view, it was interesting to see that genealogists will not let anything keep them from attending the conference. I saw wheelchairs and attendees who carried breathing machines, as well as walkers and many canes. I had not seen this at other types of conferences I had attended.

The lectures, classes, and workshops were so numerous that I had difficulty in deciding what to choose. I decided to take a taste of some of the programs.

The lectures — Arthur Kurzweil was fantastic. I heard all four of his talks. Daniel Mendelsohn's keynote address was inspirational. I enjoyed Ruth Behar's two lectures on her own family in Cuba. I had been on a humanitarian mission recently to Cuba. On a different note, I had never been a fan of klezmer music but was totally captivated by Yale Strom and his band Hot Pstromi in his concerts and documentary.

I found Nancy Adelson's presentation "**Jewish Genealogical Research : Beginner's Strategies Part I and II**" very useful. She was generous in urging us to e-mail her so she could e-mail the lectures to us. I was very glad to have access to her presentation at home. Warren Blatt and Michael Tobias' presentation "**An introduction to JewishGen's Databases: A Beginner's Guide**" gave me more confidence in using that program. "**Putting the Flesh on the Bones**" presented by Ron Arons gave me another insight to my research.

The movies and documentaries were excellent as they offered a chance to relax and focus on something different — a welcome change.

I had been warned to pace myself and not try to attend the maximum workshops, lectures and other presentations — that would be too overwhelming and exhausting. I am able to say that I enjoyed the conference tremendously and felt that I learned a lot, and had a good time.

Now Online

By Marilyn Dornhelm

Juicy Bits of Jewish Genealogy

In this column I will share what's new in online indexes, digitized archival material and tools. The main source for these will be JewishGen and many SIG digests. Comments are welcome. Send them to mdornhelm@yahoo.com.

(Editor's Note: In ZichronNote, URL notations are in boldface and the "http://" notation is omitted to save space, unless needed to make a link in the PDF version of ZichronNote.)

Special Note: Thank you to Barbara Speck of Berkeley for emailing her tip on the Maine Jewry website. See USA, Maine below.

Review for April 29 to July 31, 2010

In the USA

GENERAL

Another List of Directories

<http://sites.google.com/site/onlinedirectorsite>. Includes directories from the United States, Canada, Ireland, and the United Kingdom. From *Avotaynu, Nu? What's Nu?* May 16.

Immigrant Databases

<http://stevemorse.org>. Look under "Other Ports of Immigration" for the search page link.

Germans to America, 1850 through 1897. For some, their country of origin or nationality was France, Luxemburg, Switzerland, United States et al.

Russians to America, 1834 through 1897, who identified their country of origin or nationality as Armenia, Finland, Galicia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Russian Poland or Ukraine.

Italians to America, 1855 through 1900. Country of origin or nationality for most was Italy or Lombardy, Piedmont, Sardinia, Sicily, or Tuscany. For some their country of origin was England, France, Germany, Spain, or United States.

Records are of passengers arriving at the Port of New York, as well as some arrivals at Baltimore, Boston, New Orleans, New York, and Philadelphia ports. From *Avotaynu, Nu? What's Nu?* May 2.

The Only Jewish Military Cemetery Outside of Israel

www.fau.edu/library/confederate_cemetery.htm
A complete list of Jewish soldiers who are buried in the cemetery. From Marlene Kempner Dobrin, *JewishGen Digest*, May 28.

Ancestry.com Wiki.

www.ancestry.com/wiki. To seed this online encyclopedia, the company has included its two largest reference books: *The Source: A Guidebook to American Genealogy* and *Red Book: American State, County and Town Sources*. From *Avotaynu, Nu? What's Nu?* May 2.

MAINE

Documenting Maine Jewry

<http://davidkrut.com/pj/index.php>

It's quite active and useful. Emailed by Barbara Stack to mdornhelm@yahoo.com, May 2010.

MICHIGAN

Jewish Cemeteries Index of Deaths from the mid-1800s-1999.

www.thisisfederation.org/cemetery/default.asp.

From *Avotaynu*, June 27.

Ferndale, Michigan: Burial Listings for Machpelah Cemetery, Ferndale

www.machpelahcemetery.org/index.htm.

Ferndale is part of the Detroit metropolitan area. Just click on the link for the "Burial List" located within the left-hand column. Then choose the page that includes the first letter of the last name you're looking for. From Steven Lasky, *JewishGen*, April 29.

MISSOURI

Missouri Death Certificates 1910-1959 (free)

www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/deathcertificates/#search. Images of the original records complete with cemetery/informant name/addresses, etc. From Renee Stern Steinig, *JewishGen*, July 20.

NEW YORK

New York City Buildings

<http://gis.nyc.gov/doitt/nycitymap>. Key in a specific address. An area map will show an outline of every building. Click "Show Additional Information" and data will be provided such as lot frontage, depth and area; year built; gross floor area; number of residential units; and whether it has been designated as a Landmark. From *Avotaynu, Nu? What's Nu?* May 16.

New Capabilities of NYC One Step Census Finders

www.stevemorse.org/nyc/viewer.html

1. The New York City "Police Census" of 1890. Search on a Manhattan or West Bronx address and identify the desired Family History Library microfilm number.

2. The 1905 New York State Census. Images of

Continued on next page

Now Online, cont. from page 11

Manhattan and the Bronx are now included. Do a search-by-address and then see the first image of the resultant AD/ED district. You can then step through the images of that district looking for your target. From Joel Weintraub, *JewishGen*, July 7.

Rochester, New York: A collection of Rochester genealogy related links

www.csh.rit.edu/~adam/bookmarks/Reference/Genealogy/Rochester__Monroe_County/ or <http://tinyurl.com/244h34w>. From *JewishGen*, July 19.

OHIO

Ohio Obituary Index, 1810 to the present.

www.rbhayes.org/hayes/index/.

EUROPE

GENERAL

Eastern Europe For-Fee Researchers

www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/researchers.htm.

This list represents responses from individual Genners who have had favorable experiences dealing with these eastern Europe researchers. Caveats and cautions about hiring genealogists can be found on www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/profgen.html. From Peter Haas, *Austria Czech SIG*, May 28.

Museum of Family History Adds Photos of Synagogues

www.museumoffamilyhistory.com/s/mfh-syn-europe.htm. From *Avotaynu, Nu? What's Nu?* June 13.

AUSTRIA

Satzburg, Jewish cemetery photos

www.flickr.com/photos/cam37/sets/72157605240340950/. View the pictures in the "detail" mode rather than thumbnail. Each picture enlarges greatly for you to see the detail. From Celia Male, *Austria-Czech SIG*, June 30.

Vienna

Map for Vienna Zentralfriedhof Cemetery

www.friedhoefewien.at/fhw/ep/programView.do/channelId/-26733/programId/18701/pageTypeId/13576. Click the Friedhofsplane on the left hand side. From Racheli Kreisberg, *Austria-Czech SIG*, July, 30.

Three New Search Options for Neue Freie Presse Death Notices

www.hugogold.com/peter/Obituaries. Peter Rohel's listing of 10,000 pages of death notices from

the *Neue Freie Presse* in Vienna is ordered by year and surname. The list includes the surnames and most of the given names listed in the death notice. Click on the listing to see the NFP page. From Randy Schoenberg, *Austria-Czech SIG*, July 30.

<http://genealogyindexer.org/>. Logan Kleinwaks has now created a search function for Peter Rohel's listing of NFP obituaries (above). Narrow the search by choosing the "History" Collection in the drop down box. It is possible to limit results to just the NFP database by appending {h21} to your search. Thus, even a search for a common name like "David Kohn" is now possible by searching David Kohn {h21} or more restrictive "David Kohn" {h21}. From Randy Schoenberg, *Austria-Czech SIG*, July 30.

www.GenTeam.at. (site also available in English language!) Obituaries in the *Neue Freie Presse*, Vienna, 1864-1900. Search by surnames, given names, maiden names and year. A link directs you to the obituary in the newspaper, (site by ONB Oesterreichische National Bibliothek/Austrian National Library). No fee, only a simple registration is required. From Felix Gundacker and Traude Triebel, *JewishGen*, May 17.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Recent photos from cemetery in Beroun, 35km west of Prague

http://picasaweb.google.cz/aldurttoch/ZidHrbitov?authkey=Gv1sRgCKT8_L6Xi7zhDA# From Julius Muller, *Austria-Czech Digest*, July 28.

Moravia and Jews, in Czech language

www.muzeum-km.cz/. The Museum of Kromeriz has digitized the last 10 years of annual papers from conferences on Jews and Moravia. These papers are a rich source of valuable information both directly genealogic and on general historic background. From Jan O. Hellmann, *Austria-Czech SIG*, July 26.

HUNGARY

General

Hungarian Surname Changes database, 1800-1893

A book, roughly translated as "Surname changes of our century," published in 1895 in Budapest, has been digitized by Pecs University and can be browsed at their marvelous KlimoTheca website. For a more detailed description and a link to the KlimoTheca digital library, go to the RadixIndex at

www.radixindex.com/databases/pv003001.shtml. Click on Tartalomjegyzek and the starting letter of the surname. From Vivian Kahn, *H-SIG*, July 25.

Finding small Hungarian towns

This lists all the names of the small towns in the various megyes in the 1828 Census. www.iabsi.com/gen/public/Documents/1828_Census.pdf. From Judi Gyori Missel, *H-SIG*, June 21.

Presov, Kosice, Uzhorod

The Presov Holocaust survivors manuscript

<http://bit.ly/SWC-Presov>. It records 700 survivors who returned to that town after being liberated. Data includes dates of birth, concentration camp internments and liberation, addresses, names of dead and surviving relatives, and much more — 50 columns in all. Note: For an English translation of each of the 50 columns, search the H-SIG newsletter archive, <http://data.jewishgen.org/wconnect/wc.dll?jg~jgsys~sigspop>. From Tom Venetianer, *H-SIG*, June 6.

Pest and Veszprem Megye (County)

Genealogical Records

www.zengen.hu/menu2.html. The information is in Hungarian, but the list of names can be easily downloaded as Excel files by clicking on *Pest megye zsidó nevmutato* and *Veszprem megye zsidó nevmutato*. For those who don't speak Hungarian the column heading in these files are: Head of household (Surname); Given name (first); Given name (second); Spouse (Surname); Spouse's given name; Town; Record number. From Stephen Schmideg, *H-SIG*, May 4.

Bodrogkeresztur

Bodrogkeresztur Shtetlink Site Updated

All the cemetery stones and their translations have been posted (finally)! www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Bodrogkeresztur/Welcome.html. From Stuart Ungar, *H-SIG*, May 17.

IRELAND

1901 Ireland Census On-line, no fee

www.census.nationalarchives.ie/. All 32 counties of the 1901 Irish Census are now available on the National Archives of Ireland site. They are arranged by townland and include name, age, sex, religion, occupation, country of birth, and much more. From Jan Meisels Allen, *JewishGen*, June 4.

ITALY

See Holocaust - ITALY

Latvia

Digitized old documents from Latvia and Courland

www.lvva-raduraksti.lv/de.html, then select "EN" for English. The Latvian State Archives (Latvijas Valsts Vestur Arhiv) Riga has digitized old documents

(tax lists, census lists). All are handwritten and somewhat difficult to read. From Robert Dupuis, *JewishGen*, July 21.

POLAND

Okopy Swietej Trojcy

www.okopy-sw-trojcy.org. From Rivka Schirman, *Gesher Galicia*, July 25.

Radom

Radom Shtetlink Additions

www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/radom/. Check the home page for what is new. From Susan Weinberg, *JRI-Poland*, July 5.

Rzeszow

Rzeszow Archive

www.rzeszow.ap.gov.pl/index1.php. No English version, but click on "kontakt." This provides a fax number as well as a list of email addresses for "Dyrekcja," "Sekretariat," and "Osrodek Badania Historii Zydow." The latter is the Jewish History Research Center, a resource unique to this Archive. From Mark Halpern, *JRI-Poland digest*, July 30.

Warsaw

New Warsaw directories 1908, 1909, 1913/1914

<http://genealogyindexer.org>. The search engine now includes Warsaw-specific directories from 1784, 1807/1808, 1821, 1826, 1852, 1863, 1869, 1870, 1908, 1909, 1913/1914, and 1938/1939, plus directories covering all of Poland, including Warsaw, from many other years. From Logan Kleinwaks, *Warsawa Research Group SIG*, May 18.

ROMANIA

Bessarabia, Romania

Vital Records Updated and the first installment of the Bessarabia Revision Lists project

www.jewishgen.org/databases/Romania/BessarabiaRevisionLists.htm

Access the database at www.jewishgen.org/databases/Romania/ or www.jewishgen.org/databases/Ukraine/. This update has some lists from Akkerman, Alexandreny colony, Bendery, and Kishinev. From Bob Wascou, *ROM-SIG*, May 3.

UK

Fully indexed birth records from 1837-2006

www.findmypast.co.uk/birth-indexes-search-start.action. A completely new version of the England and Wales birth, marriage and death records. FindMyPast is a fee-based site but provides the option of paying a small amount of money on a

Continued on next page

Now Online, cont. from page 13

per-transaction basis. From *Avotaynu, Nu? What's Nu?* July 24.

UKRAINE

Jewish Agricultural Colonies in Ukraine

www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Colonies_of_Ukraine/. New books, articles, lists and censuses. Check out all the new documents. Note: Most of these are in Russian. Use on-line translating tools for help. From Chaim Freedman, *JewishGen*, July 5.

THE WORLD

GENERAL

A Comprehensive List of Directories. See USA GENERAL.

AUSTRALIA

Australian Vital Records

Ancestry.com has added indexes to the vital records of Australia to its collection. There are nearly 15 million entries. Some of these indexes are available at no charge at various Australian government sites. For a complete listing of what is available at these free sites see **www.coraweb.com.au/bdmindex.htm#online**. From *Avotaynu, Nu? What's Nu?* July 24.

CANADA

Library and Archives Canada, Digitized Microform Holdings

www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/microform-digitization/006003-110.01-e.php. If you click the Help link next to each of the collections, an index is provided. From *Avotaynu*, June 27.

Canadian City and Area Directories.

Ancestry.com has completed its collection of Canadian City and Area Directories, 1819-1906. The largest collection of historic Canadian directories available online. From *Avotaynu, Nu? What's Nu?* July 25.

Canadian Jewish Casualties in the Canadian Armed Forces

www.cjccc.ca/archives/casualties.php. Servicemen who died in World War I, World War II, and the Korean War. From Saul Issroff, *JewishGen*, June 4.

ISRAEL

Yizkor Soldiers site updated

www.izkor.gov.il/. Now includes soldiers from Eretz Israel back to 1870. From Rose Feldman, *JewishGen*, June 2.

Early Hebrew Newspapers Digitized

www.jpress.org.il/cross-section/allpub-en.asp. This project, being done by Tel Aviv University and the National Library, has an English search engine for Jewish newspapers written in Hebrew, English and French. From Rose Feldman, *JRI-Poland digest*, June 8.

Montefiore Censuses of the Jewish Population

www.montefioreendowment.org.uk/census/. Details include personal and family particulars. In all, there are 5 censuses of Eretz Israel (including Beirut and Sidon), and one of Alexandria. At present, the census of 1839, 1840 (Alexandria) and 1855 are on line. From Mathilde Tagger, *French SIG*, July 30.

HOLOCAUST/WWII

ITALY

Foreign Jews Interned in Wartime Italy, Searchable Database in Italian

www.annapizzuti.it/. Use Google Translate to read page in English. From Howard Orenstein, *JewishGen*, April 29.

MISCELLANEOUS

Virtual Hebrew keyboard available on Google Israel website

www.google.co.il/. A click on the keyboard icon on the upper left will bring up a virtual keyboard. One can then cut-and-paste the inputted characters for a Google search plus other uses (e.g. lookups in Bezeq's online phonebook, lookups in the Tel-Aviv cemetery databases, etc.). From Ittai Hershman, *JewishGen digest*, May 31.

Be sure to check these other websites for IMPORTANT ADDITIONS/UPDATES:

JOWBR Records and Photos of Tombstones

www.jewishgen.org/databases/Cemetery

Shtetl websites

www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/

Yizkor Book Translations

www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/translations.html

SFBAJGS Family Finder Update

The surnames and towns being researched by our newest members are listed below. This database is maintained for the benefit of our membership. If you have a correction or update, please write to SFBAJGS at P.O. Box 318214, San Francisco, CA 94131-8214.

<u>Surname</u>	<u>Town, Country</u>	<u>Member</u>
AFFNER/AVNER BLAUSTEIN BIENENFELD BLUSHINSKY/BUSH	Stuchin, Poland Zloczow (Zolochiv) Ukraine Krakow, Poland Moletai, Nemenune, Lithuania; Postavy, Belarus; New York; Chicago	Avner, Robert Blaustein, Linda Appleby Avner, Robert Bush, Elaine
COTTON COSMANDEL DAVIS FRUMHOFF	Anywhere Anywhere Wreschen, Prussia (Wrzesnia, Poland) Lugansk, Ukraine; Minsk, Shklov, Belarus; St. Joseph, Missouri; Texas; Oklahoma	Levinson, Ilene Pearl, Jolie Avner, Robert Bush, Elaine
GOLDSTEIN HABERMAN HALLER HERZWEIG	Romania; Egypt Kalnik, Ukraine Krakow, Poland Zloczow (Zolochiv) Ukraine	Blaustein, Linda Appleby Laska, Miriam Avner, Robert Blaustein, Linda Appleby
LASKA LEVINSON MAHLER MALACH	Pultusk, Rozan, Poland Anywhere Krakow, Poland Pultusk, Rozan, Poland	Laska, Miriam Levinson, Ilene Avner, Robert Laska, Miriam
MEDVINSKI MILLER MOSCOVITZ PEARL	Anywhere Romania Kalnik, Ukraine Anywhere	Pearl, Jolie Blaustein, Linda Appleby Laska, Miriam Pearl, Jolie
PEARL POLINSKY PRUVER REST	Kovno, Lithuania; Luoke, Lithuania; Slutzk, Belarus Nikolayev, Ukraine; St. Louis, Missouri Krakow, Poland; Trezebinia, Poland Plunge, Lithuania; Libau, Riga, Latvia; Ukraine; U.S.; South Africa; South America	Avner, Robert Pearl, Jolie Avner, Robert Bush, Elaine
RUSHA/RUZHA/ROZA SAMUELS SHANIN SOLOMON	Pultusk, Rozan, Poland Rachas, Poland Monastirschina, Dudino, Belarus Kalnik, Ukraine	Laska, Miriam Avner, Robert Bush, Elaine Laska, Miriam
SUNDELL WEINBERGER WOLFF	Anywhere Kalnik, Ukraine Wieruszow, Poland	Levinson, Ilene Laska, Miriam Avner, Robert

Jewish Community Library Sets Fall Program Schedule

The Bureau of Jewish Education Jewish Community Library plans to host the exhibition "Jews of the Fillmore" during the fall season. Lectures related to the exhibition include: Thursday, October 7, "Jews of the Pacific Coast," by Ava Kahn; Tuesday, October 12, "Jewish History and Identity in California and

the West," by Marc Dollinger; Thursday, October 28, "Pioneer Jews in the Gold Rush," by Felix and Sue Warburg; and Thursday, November 18, "The Fabulous Fillmore," by Fred Rosenbaum. For details see www.bjesf.org/adults_events.htm.

Calendar of Events

Sun. Sept. 26, San Francisco: *Jewish Genealogical Research in South Africa.* Roy Ogus, Vice President of the JewishGen Southern African SIG, will summarize the key sources of documentation and information of genealogical value that can be found in South Africa, and how these materials can be accessed and researched.

Sun. Oct. 17, Oakland: *Data Safari in Poland: Discovering the More Elusive Tracks of Our Ancestors.* Robinn Magid will summarize her recent trip to Poland to discover whether the envelope of available genealogical data can be pushed into the 18th century at one end, and through the Shoah period at the other.

Mon. Oct. 18, Los Altos Hills: *Mapping Madness.* Ron Arons will discuss websites where one can find historical maps, and he will review the online mapping facilities provided by Microsoft and Google as well as lesser known ones.

Sun. Nov. 21, San Francisco: *Introduction to Jewish Genealogy.* Experienced researcher Dale Friedman will explore the meaning of "Jewish" genealogy, with discussion and examples of research methods and resources.

Also see pages 3 and 4. For detailed program information visit sfbajgs.org

ZichronNote

Change Service Requested

SFBAJGS

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