



# זכרונות ZichronNote

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

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February 2013

### The Mystery of Auntie Rosenbaum

Unraveling the clues in a photograph of two young boys and an envelope addressed to a woman in San Francisco. See page 5.

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The envelope addressed to Auntie Rosenbaum

**ZichronNote**  
**Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area**  
**Jewish Genealogical Society**

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**President's Message**  
**Skeletons, DNA, and Genealogy**

Jeremy Frankel, SFBAJGS President

Genealogy got a huge boost recently with two quite diverse news announcements. Both entailed discovering skeletons, genealogy, and DNA! What more could we hope for?

One skeleton was dug up from an old burial ground (now a parking lot) and has been proven to be that of Richard III. He had been buried for more than five hundred years. His body was located and exhumed last summer, but it was only through genealogical research, whereby two living descendants of Richard's sister, Anne of York—some seventeen generations away—were located and their mitochondrial DNA matched pretty much conclusively, that his identity was confirmed.

Just as we genealogists toil for years, so it was that Phillipa Langley, a British screenwriter, spent several years trying to convince authorities that there was a good possibility Richard III's last resting place lay under a parking lot; the land was once a friary. Experts at the University of Leicester carried out the work by going through ancient documents. The team concluded that the king was buried at Greyfriars Monastery in Leicester. Three trenches were dug and in one of them the bones were uncovered.

First, traditional genealogical research methods showed that a cabinetmaker living in Canada was a descendant of Richard's sister. Then his mitochondrial DNA was a sufficiently good match for the researchers to announce to the world that the bones were indeed those of Richard III.

As if all this were not enough, a team from the University of Leicester is now going to investigate the Y-DNA of the remains. Kevin Schürer, a historian at the university, has already found four living straight-male-line descendants of John of Gaunt, the son of Edward III, who was Richard III's great-great-grandfather.

Dr. Turi King found that the four men's Y chromosomes, carried only by men, match, establishing that they are all true descendants of John of Gaunt. The Y chromosome DNA from the skeleton is very degraded, but Dr. King said she could amplify it and hopes to have enough to make a match with samples from the living descendants.

The second skeleton goes back even further in time! A shrewlike mammal, no more than a half-pound in weight with a vegetarian appetite, evolved some 200,000 years ago. This mammal couldn't play its part until the dinosaurs were all wiped out, however.

*Continued on page 10*

## SOCIETY NEWS

### New Members

Julia Guggenheim..... [learning2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:learning2@sbcglobal.net)  
Lynne & Stephen Kinsey [kinsey.stephen@gmail.com](mailto:kinsey.stephen@gmail.com)  
Carol Olmert ..... [colmert2@yahoo.com](mailto:colmert2@yahoo.com)  
Paul Ransohoff ..... [paul.ransohoff@gte.net](mailto:paul.ransohoff@gte.net)  
Lavinia Schwarz ..... [lavinia@grace@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lavinia@grace@sbcglobal.net)  
Joy Silver ..... [joyzeppi@yahoo.com](mailto:joyzeppi@yahoo.com)

### Updated Member E-mails

Brian Kaye ..... [brkaye@gmail.com](mailto:brkaye@gmail.com)  
Judy Kelly ..... [19jkelly16@gmail.com](mailto:19jkelly16@gmail.com)  
Frank Snitz ..... [fsnitz@gmail.com](mailto:fsnitz@gmail.com)

In order to continue to receive the SFBAJGS e-zine and *ZichronNote*, please send e-mail updates to [newsletter@sfbajgs.org](mailto:newsletter@sfbajgs.org).

### Member News

**Jeff Lewy's** article "The Search for Lady Rose", published in 2011 in *Shemot*, the journal of the JGS of Great Britain, tied for the 2011 Brickman Award, awarded for the most interesting article of the year.

**Steve Morse's** One-Step Website was ranked #54 on *Genealogy in Time* magazine's Top 100 Genealogy Websites for 2013: <http://www.genealogyintime.com/articles/top%20100%20genealogy%20websites%202013%20page2.html>.

**Janice Sellers** was elected as a board member at large to the California State Genealogical Alliance.

### SFBAJGS on Facebook

SFBAJGS has a Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/San-Francisco-Bay-Area-Jewish-Genealogical-Society/54214774804?ref=ts>. Friend us and visit often for updates between meetings.

### Seeking Stories for *ZichronNote*

Have you had a breakthrough in your family research, solved a family mystery through painstaking research, discovered a better way to use resource materials, or walked where your ancestors walked as part of an interesting family history trip? Have you had success or made progress at the Genealogy Clinic with the Mavens?

We want to read about it in *ZichronNote*. Please submit materials to [newsletter@sfbajgs.org](mailto:newsletter@sfbajgs.org).

### Member Discount on Fold3.com

We have arranged a discount for society members on Fold3.com subscriptions. Fold3 has a significant online collection of original military and historical records, which can help with your research. For a limited time, you can receive a discount on an Annual All-Access Fold3 membership. If you already have a subscription, you can extend it for an additional year. Take advantage of this offer while it lasts! Go to [http://go.fold3.com/San%20Francisco%20Bay%20Area%20Jewish%20Genealogical%20Society\\_society/?xid=791](http://go.fold3.com/San%20Francisco%20Bay%20Area%20Jewish%20Genealogical%20Society_society/?xid=791).

### Brainstorming with the Mavens

The San Francisco Jewish Community Library hosts a free genealogy clinic every month (except July and August) from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m., usually on the first Sunday of the month. Bring copies of family charts, documents, and other information and let experienced SFBAJGS Jewish genealogists help point you in the right direction in your research. 1835 Ellis Street, San Francisco. There is free, secure parking in the building. Call (415) 567-3327 x704 or write [library@jewishlearningworks.org](mailto:library@jewishlearningworks.org) for dates and more information.

### Meeting Times and Locations

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

**San Francisco: Sunday. Doors open 1:00 p.m. Program begins at 1:30 p.m.**

Rhoda Goldman Plaza, 2180 Post Street.

Parking available in Rhoda Goldman Plaza garage with entrance on Sutter Street.

**Oakland: Sunday. Doors open 12:30 p.m. Program begins at 1:00 p.m.**

Oakland FamilySearch Center, 4766 Lincoln Avenue.

**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.

**See Back Cover for Calendar of Upcoming SFBAJGS Meetings**

## CALENDAR

### Genealogy Events

#### Local and Regional

Saturday, 16 March 2013. Root Cellar Sacramento Genealogical Society. Spring Seminar: Thomas Macentee, "Building a Research Toolbox", "Internet Archive: A Gold Mine for Genealogists", "Social Networking: New Horizons for Genealogists", and "You Use WHAT for Genealogy? Wonderful Uses for Unusual Tools." Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church, 11427 Fair Oaks Boulevard, Fair Oaks. <http://www.rootcellar.org/>, <http://rootcellarramblings.blogspot.com/2012/10/society-saturday-topics-announced-for.html>

Saturday, 16 March 2013. Merced County Genealogical Society. Steve Morse, "One-Step Website: A Hodgepodge of Lesser-Known Gems." Merced County Library, Gracie Room, 2100 O Street, Merced. <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~camcgs/>

Sunday, 17 March 2013. Jewish Genealogical Society of Sacramento. Shlomo Rosenfeld, "Family Roots Digging and Discovering a Branch That Survived the Holocaust." Albert Einstein Residence Center, 1935 Wright Street, Sacramento. <http://www.jewishgen.org/jgs-sacramento/>

Tuesday, 19 March 2013. San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society. Susan Goss Johnston, "Writing Your Family History One Byte at a Time." Danville Family History Center, 2949 Stone Valley Road, Alamo. <http://srvgensoc.org/>

Friday, 29 March 2013. Oakland FamilySearch Center. Janice M. Sellers, "Using the Subscription Newspaper Web Sites at the Oakland FamilySearch Library." Oakland FamilySearch Center, 4766 Lincoln Avenue, Oakland. <http://www.oaklandfhc.org/>

Thursday, 4 April 2013. Genealogical Society of Santa Cruz County. Christine Rose, "Leaping to Erroneous Conclusions: What do the Records REALLY Say?" Santa Cruz Public Library, 224 Church Street, Santa Cruz. <http://scgensoc.org/>

Saturday, 20 April 2013. Sonoma County Genealogical Society. Spring Seminar: Barbara Renick, "Overcoming Idiosyncrasies of Genealogy Database Sites", "Online: How to Get There Does Make a Difference", "Online Tools for Genealogists", "Cloning Your Family Tree on the Internet." Harry A. Merlo Theater at Wells Fargo Center for the Arts, Highway 101 at River Road, Santa Rosa. <http://www.scgsonline.org/>

Saturday, 20 October 2013. Digging for Your Roots. 20th annual Family History Seminar. LDS Church, 3700 Concord Boulevard, Concord. Jackie Hein, [lejaki1957@aol.com](mailto:lejaki1957@aol.com).

#### State and National

Friday–Sunday, 21–23 March 2013. RootsTech 2013. Salt Palace Convention Center, 100 S. West Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah. Technologies and applications that could have an impact on the many emerging facets of family-history-related consumer markets worldwide. <http://www.rootstech.org/>

Friday–Monday, 26–29 April 2013. A Feast of Yiddish Language and Culture. DoubleTree Hotel, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. SFBAJGS board member Avner Yonai will speak about the recreation of the Ger Mandolin Orchestra. <http://www.derbay.org/pittsburgh/>

Wednesday–Saturday, 8–11 May 2013. National Genealogical Society 2013 Family History Conference. Las Vegas Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada. [http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/cs/conference\\_info](http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/cs/conference_info)

Sunday–Friday, 4–9 August 2013. 33rd IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. Boston, Massachusetts. <http://www.iajgs2013.org/>.

Wednesday–Saturday, 21–24 August 2013. Federation of Genealogical Societies 2013 Conference, "Journey through Generations." Fort Wayne, Indiana. [http://www.fgs.org/upload/files/FGS2013\\_Conference\\_Flyer.pdf](http://www.fgs.org/upload/files/FGS2013_Conference_Flyer.pdf)

Saturday, 12 October 2013. 15th Annual Family History Day at the California State Archives. California State Archives, Sacramento. Free. <http://fhdnewsline.blogspot.com/>

Sunday–Friday, 27 July–1 August 2014. 34th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. Salt Lake City, Utah. <http://www.iajgs.org/future-seminars.html>

#### International

Tuesday, 21 May 2013. New Trends in the Historiography of Jewish Immigration. Western Galilee College invites scholars to a conference and research workshop on new developments in the historiography of immigration. The workshop will be divided into sessions, with each session dedicated to a specific topic. Dr. Haim Sperber, [haims@wgail.ac.il](mailto:haims@wgail.ac.il).

Saturday, 1 June 2013. East European Genealogical Society Seminar. Kahlile Mehr, speaker. LDS Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. <http://eegsociety.org/Seminar2013.aspx>

Friday–Sunday, 6–8 September 2013. Exodus: Movement of the People. Hinckley Island Hotel, Watling Street, Hinckley, Leicestershire, UK. <http://www.exodus2013.co.uk/>

5 October–4 November 2013. International Jewish Genealogy Month. <http://www.iajgs.org/jgmonth.html>



## The Auntie Rosenbaum Mystery

François Delage

François Delage is a midnight genealogist. This article was first published in *Avotaynu*, Spring 2012, pages 39–40.

Hanging on the wall in our living room is a little wooden frame composed of an old photograph and an envelope. The photograph features my wife Stephanie's grandfather Jerome Schiller at the age of 12 and his younger brother Arnold at the age of 9. It was taken during the World Panama Pacific Exposition, which was held in San Francisco's marina district from February to December 1915. According to Stephanie's father, Barry, Jerome and Arnold sold newspapers to the visitors there. Her dad always liked to remind her of that story when they were walking along the Palace of Fine Arts, the only building surviving today from the Exposition. Below the photograph is an old yellowed paper envelope. On the top of the envelope is a green stamp and the seal of the Exposition. On the left side, written in a child's handwriting, is the message, "Dear Auntie, Look on the other side. With love, Jerome and Arnold." and on the right side an address, "Mrs Rosenbaum, Larretta Apt. Ellis St Bet. Pierce & Scott. City." For years we had wondered about the identity of Auntie Rosenbaum, and nothing in our ensuing genealogical research had provided us with answers about her identity. A few months ago we contacted a distant cousin, Sandy Ayeroff, and discovered with surprise that Sandy owned the same picture. It had been sent to Julia Fisher Attell, Sandy's grandmother and Jerome and Arnold's aunt. This exciting discovery reawakened our interest.

During late nights spent doing genealogical research I had quite often thought of resolving "the Auntie Rosenbaum mystery", and after several unsuccessful attempts, I decided to give it another try. My first thought was to look at the 1915 San Francisco directories. I scrolled through the different names in alphabetical order: Roseman, Rosen, Rosenback, and finally Rosenbaum. It turned out that there was a Bertha Rosenbaum at 1861A Ellis Street, located between Scott Street and Pierce Street. For the first time I felt that I had a serious lead; this person could really be the one who received Jerome and Arnold's letter. I persevered and looking in the U.S. federal census of 1900 found that Henry and Bertha Rosenbaum lived on Ellis Street between Scott and Pierce. The census also indicated that Bertha was born in Germany in 1852 and emigrated to the United States at the age of 10.

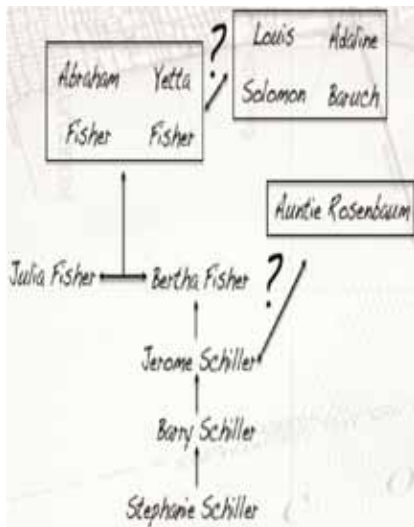
This suggested that Bertha was from an older generation. She would have been too old to have been Jerome and Arnold's real aunt, since in 1915



she was 63 years old and 25 years older than their mother, Bertha Fisher. The census also indicated that Henry and Bertha had no children, however, leaving the mystery unresolved. At that stage, I gave up and went to bed.

The following day, I realized that I had forgotten to check one source that had been quite helpful to me in the past. FindAGrave.com is a resource for finding the final resting places of deceased relatives. Its volunteers visit cemeteries across the country and do a remarkable job of taking photos of headstones in order to make them available to anyone on the Web. I entered "Bertha Rosenbaum" in the search engine and to my surprise found a Bertha Rosenbaum buried in Salem Cemetery in Colma, California, where almost all of Stephanie's family is buried. Diane Reich, the volunteer who had taken the picture, had put a

comment on Bertha's profile: "Buried along sister Hannah Baruch and mother Pauline Baruch." With increased interest, I suddenly remembered that some of Stephanie's ancestors had the surname Baruch.



Jerome and Arnold's grandparents on their mother's side were Abraham and Yetta Fisher (see tree on the left). They emigrated to the United States in the early 1850's from Poland, first to New York and then eventually to San Francisco. Around 1855, during the most perilous time of

the Indian Wars, they made the trip to Oregon and finally set up in Jacksonville, where a gold strike had occurred a few years before. Abraham started a general retail store with his brother and his sister's husband. The Fishers were well integrated in the Jacksonville Jewish community and were apparently close to several families, in particular Louis and Adaline Solomon. In the early 1880's, due to diminishing returns in the local goldfields and to the decision of the Oregon and California Railroad to bypass Jacksonville, the town's prosperity declined. Like many Jews, the Fishers and Solomons resettled in San Francisco. In San Francisco Abraham started a new business. In 1894 Yetta passed away and Louis Solomon, who was also widowed by then, moved in with Abraham.

I had long wondered about the nature of the relationship between the Fishers and the Solomons and when I discovered that Yetta's maiden name was Solomon by consulting her daughter Julia's death certificate, I naturally assumed that Louis and Yetta were brother and sister. This is where the two stories coincided: Louis Solomon's wife's maiden name was Baruch.

In my research for "Auntie Rosenbaum", I had found a Bertha Rosenbaum née Baruch and also an Adaline Baruch who married Louis Solomon, Yetta Fisher's brother. Therefore, Jerome and Arnold were probably sending their letter to their great-aunt's sister. It seemed plausible, but it required more research for confirmation.

I then took a look out of curiosity at Bertha Rosenbaum's mother's profile on FindAGrave, as Diane had mentioned that they were buried next to

each other. Bertha's mother's name was Pauline Baruch, and Diane had taken a photo of her tombstone. I looked at the tombstone photo and read, "Pauline Baruch, beloved mother of Yetta Fisher, Bertha Rosenbaum. Native of Kolmar, Prussia." For a moment I was confused and could not make sense of what I had just read, but suddenly all the strings linking the members of the family seemed to materialize.



You frequently have to question your sources when you are conducting genealogical research. I had previously thought that Yetta's maiden name was Solomon, thanks to Julia Fisher's death certificate. Julia's children probably made this assumption because their mother's uncle and cousins were both named Solomon. In fact, Julia's children were mistaken; their grandmother's maiden name was Baruch. What tied the Fishers and Solomons together became clear: Yetta's sister Adaline Baruch was married to Louis Solomon.

This final discovery resolved the "Auntie Rosenbaum mystery", and thanks to a little message written to a mysterious aunt by two little boys, we know now about Stephanie's third-great-grandmother, Pauline Baruch, a midwife who was born in Kolmar in the province of Posen in 1817 and died in San Francisco in 1894. I also finally discovered what linked the Fishers and the Solomons: two sisters. Interestingly, Yetta bestowed her maiden name on her son Baruch and she named her daughters after her sisters, Adaline and Bertha. This indicates that Yetta had a strong affection for her siblings and her premarriage family.

I imagine that Jerome must have inherited the frame containing the envelope when his great-aunt Bertha Rosenbaum died in 1920. The frame was passed through to my wife's dad and then to her. Now, 92 years after Bertha's death, we are happy that she is not forgotten anymore.



## In Andalusia, on the Trail of Inherited Memories

Doreen Carvajal

Doreen Carvajal, a reporter for the *International Herald Tribune* and *New York Times*, is the author of *The Forgetting River: A Modern Tale of Survival, Identity and the Inquisition*. She will speak to the SFBAJGS on 21 April at the Oakland FamilySearch Center and on 22 April at Congregation Beth Am. See the online calendar at <http://www.jewishgen.org/sfbajgs/calendar.html> for more information.

This article was originally published in the *New York Times* on 17 August 2012 ([http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/21/science/in-andalusia-searching-for-inherited-memories.html?\\_r=2&ref=science](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/21/science/in-andalusia-searching-for-inherited-memories.html?_r=2&ref=science)).

I still wonder how I ended up living in a former medieval bordello on the brink of a sandstone cliff on the southern frontier of Spain.

It was 2008, the start of the Andalusian region's economic meltdown, La Crisis, and anxiety spread like the Black Plague. But from the roof of my apartment in this ancient white pueblo, I plunged back in time.

The other world worried about bills, real estate values, tourism, lost jobs, the immediate future. In contrast, I retreated into my quest, hoping to take new stock of my identity by reclaiming ancestral memories, history, and DNA clues that I believed had been faithfully passed down for generations of my family, the Carvajals.

They had left Spain centuries ago, during the Inquisition. That much I knew. We were raised as Catholics in Costa Rica and California, but late in life I finally started collecting the nagging clues of a very clandestine identity: that we were descendants of secret Sephardic Jews—Christian converts known as *conversos*, Anusim (Hebrew for “the forced ones”), or even Marranos, which in Spanish means swine.

I didn't know if my family had a connection to the white pueblo. But by living in its labyrinth of narrow cobblestone streets, I hoped to understand the fears that had shaped the secret lives of my own family.

History is a part of daily life in the old quarter, where Inquisition trials were staged and neighbors spied on neighbors, dutifully reporting heretics—Christian converts who were secretly practicing Judaism. The former Jewish quarter, where white houses plunge down a steep, silvery lane, is still standing, though unmarked by any sign. I wanted to understand why my family guarded secret identities for generations with such inexplicable fear and caution. When my aunt died a few years ago, she left instructions barring a priest from presiding over her funeral; my grandmother did the same.

Scientific studies are exploring whether the history of our ancestors is somehow a part of us, inherited in unexpected ways through a vast chemical network in our cells that controls genes, switching them on and off. At the heart of the field, known as epigenetics, is the notion that genes have memory and that the lives

of our grandparents—what they breathed, saw, and ate—can directly affect us decades later.

Recent studies in Sweden have explored the effects of famine and abundant harvests on the health of descendants four generations later. That is not exactly what I am looking for: I'm intrigued by the notion that generations pass on particular survival skills and an unconscious sense of identity that stands the test of centuries.

The French psychologist Anne Ancelin Schützenberger, now in her 90's, has spent decades studying what she calls the “ancestor syndrome”—that we are links in a chain of generations, unconsciously affected by their suffering or unfinished business until we acknowledge the past.

In the 1990's Dina Wardi, a psychotherapist in Jerusalem, worked with the children of Holocaust survivors and developed the theory that survivor parents often designated certain children as “memorial candles” who took on the mission of serving as a link to preserve the past and connect the future. The children of survivors who actively struggled against the Nazis, she found, had a compulsive ambition to achieve.

A similar strategy existed among the forced converts, the Anusim: Usually older women were entrusted with passing on information about their secret identity to particular younger family members. In our family, the historian was my great-aunt Luz, whose name means light in Spanish. I lived for a summer in her house in San José, Costa Rica, but she never confided in me, and regrettably I was not curious enough about our past to ask questions.

But recently, my cousin Rosie told me that she had made it her mission to question Aunt Luz at a family gathering. Given our family penchant for secrecy, she taped the conversation with a hidden recorder.

“Luz told me that our family came from Spain,” Rosie said. “She asked me, ‘Has your mother ever told you that we are Sefarditas?’ Of course, when I brought it up with my mother, she refused to talk.”

My fantasy, of course, was that I could somehow tap these ancestral memories. I have recently made the acquaintance of another Carvajal in Spain, an actor who remembers that even though he was raised



*The author's great-aunt Luz, third from the left, top row, was the guardian of the secret Sephardic Jewish identity of the Catholic Carvajals.*

Catholic he always insisted to his mother that he was Jewish. He said he started making the claim when he was about 6 years old.

In the video game *Assassin's Creed*, fiction provides a solution to this kind of riddle: Gamers plunge into the main character's genetic memory archives to share vivid recollections of Jerusalem and Italy during the Renaissance.

Reality is even stranger. Dr. Darold A. Treffert, a psychiatrist in Wisconsin, maintains a registry of about 300 "savants" who through a head injury or dementia acquire skills they have never learned. Conceivably, he says, those skills, such as music, mathematics, art, and calendar calculating, were buried deep in their brains. He calls it genetic memory, or "factory-installed software", a huge reservoir of dormant knowledge that can emerge when a damaged brain rewires itself to recover from injuries.

"How is this possible?" Dr. Treffert asked in an interview. "The only way that knowledge can be there is through genetic transmission.

"In the animal kingdom, we accept without question migration patterns that birds are born with, which they never learned. The monarch butterfly makes a trip from Canada to Mexico to a 23-acre spot, and they take three generations to get there."

I think about the flight of butterflies when I consider what has brought me back to southern Spain, where my own ancestors surely left for Costa Rica on a boat from the Bay of Cádiz, most likely with some of the early Spanish explorers, who carried *converso* Jews fleeing the Inquisition.

In the red leather folder where I keep my reporter's notebook and business cards, I always keep a photograph of the old Inquisition jail in Arcos de la Frontera. It's from that heady time when I first visited the pueblo and felt a powerful urge to stay and explore. The photo shows a splintering wood door, a cobblestone lane, and a whitewashed box of a building with a glowing light and street sign with the word "leal", for loyal. I have marked it with a phrase from T. S. Eliot: "And the end of all our exploring, will be to arrive where we started, and know the place for the first time."

Long after I made my sojourn to Arcos de la Frontera, which is partly bounded by the Guadalete—named for the mythical Greek river of forgetting—I found out that Aunt Luz sometimes dreamed about Andalusia. It is too late to pose the question—she died in 1998—but it haunts me that she told another cousin in Costa Rica that she often dreamed of a river that plunges into the bay where Columbus set sail for the Americas.

It could only be the home of our butterflies: the green river of forgetting, the Guadalete.

Doreen Carvajal has written additional articles on her search for her Sephardic ancestry and related topics:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/09/sunday-review/a-tepid-welcome-back-for-spanish-jews.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/09/sunday-review/a-tepid-welcome-back-for-spanish-jews.html?_r=0)

<http://deborahkalbbooks.blogspot.fr/2013/01/q-with-author-doreen-carvajal.html?m=1>

<http://rendezvous.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/01/15/and-now-via-google-time-travel-through-the-streets-of-segovia/>

### ***The Galitzianer* Request for Submissions**

*The Galitzianer* is the quarterly journal of Gesher Galicia. Submissions may be articles and/or graphics, both original and previously published, relevant to Jewish genealogical research in Galicia: articles about recent trips to Galicia, reports on your own research, research techniques, historical and recent pictures relevant to these matters, lists, book reviews, etc.

Electronic submissions are preferred, though not required. Submissions are accepted from both members and nonmembers of Gesher Galicia.

Though submissions are accepted year-round, the deadline for the June 2013 issue is **15 April 2013**. To send a submission or if you have any questions, contact Janice Sellers at [janicemsj@gmail.com](mailto:janicemsj@gmail.com). For more information see <http://www.jewishgen.org/galicia/newsletter.html>.



## DNA USA: A Genetic Portrait of America Not What the Title Promises

Book Review by Judy G. Russell, JD, CG<sup>SM</sup>

A Certified Genealogist with a law degree, Judy G. Russell writes and lectures on a variety of genealogical topics ranging from the murky territory where law, history, and genealogy come together to the use of DNA in genealogy. A self-confessed DNA junkie, she's never met a DNA test she wouldn't take. She blogs as The Legal Genealogist (<http://legalgenealogist.com/>), where DNA is always the topics on Sundays.

*DNA USA: A Genetic Portrait of America* by Bryan Sykes. New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2012. ISBN 978-0-87140-412-1.

Bryan Sykes is a thoroughly engaging, entertaining, and educational author on genetics. His previous books, including *The Seven Daughters of Eve* (New York: Bantam Press, 2001) and *Saxons, Vikings, and Celts: The Genetic Roots of Britain and Ireland* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2006), are works I'm delighted to have on my bookshelf.

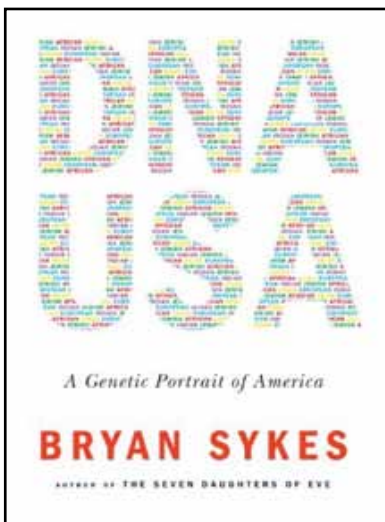
So when I heard that he'd written a book about DNA in the United States—*DNA USA: A Genetic Portrait of America*—I had to have it. I preordered it with Amazon, waited impatiently for it to arrive, and . . . and . . . and . . .

I've labored over it ever since.

Perhaps it's because the genetic portrait of the United States requires a canvas far broader than a single book with fewer than 400 pages of text. Perhaps it's because the stories Sykes tells are largely in the form of a travelogue. Perhaps it's because of the annoying and often infuriating tone of condescension by this British author toward Americans that creeps into the writing. And perhaps it's because I simply can't figure out why Sykes wrote this book at all. But the fact is, it's a disappointment.

Sykes prefaces the book by noting that he "knew that this was a project on an entirely different scale" from anything he'd done before but that, as a geneticist, what he found "most appealing about America was that it is the place where the genes from three great continents converge." Recognizing that he "had to be selective or be overwhelmed", he whittled his sample size down to a total of 25 people and completely ignored huge portions of the diverse American population—there are no Asians included, for example. So the first thing that strikes you as a reader is that this simply isn't "A Genetic Portrait of America", as the subtitle promises. It's a genetic portrait of a few people Sykes found interesting or entertaining or both.

Sykes himself admits as much: "Instead of the comprehensive and detailed planning that had



gone into earlier research projects, I decided this one would be guided by chance events from the start: I would just see where they led."

And it shows. It shows in the selection of persons to test, the stories to tell, the information to be included in the book—and even where in the book information can be found. Although nominally organized in three broad sections called movements, the book often seems to include informational nuggets in almost a random order.

The first movement suffers most from this. It's a hodgepodge of background information ranging

from the significance of the Clovis points archeological finds in New Mexico in the 1920's to how an African-American discovering he has European ancestors is similar to a British man discovering that his ancestry was Viking and not Celtic. There's good basic scientific information about YDNA (the type only men have and pass only to their sons) and mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA, the type women have and pass to all of their children but that only their daughters can pass on). But there's also a superficial and often confusing chapter entitled "All My Ancestors" that seems to be trying to explain autosomal DNA but diverges without transition into chromosome painting. It also contains one entire chapter focusing on the Clan Donald surname project that can't help but make the reader wonder, "Why is this here?"

The second movement contains the stories of those people he had tested. That part would have been the most entertaining, but for the fact that much of it—and indeed much of the book—consists of a travelogue of Sykes' trip across the United States that reads much like a school report entitled "My First Trip to America, and a Train Ride with My Son."

But it's also the most disappointing because of its narrow scope: New Englanders, Black Americans, and American Indians are surely among our most intriguing populations, but by themselves can't paint

“A Genetic Portrait of America.” Moreover, the quality of the chapters here is inconsistent. Some chapters are beautifully written and you want to go back and read them again. Others make you want to bolt for the exits.

The third and final movement has but a single chapter, “The Private View”, and that’s where the real results of Sykes’ research are revealed—and nothing there is any real surprise:

- Almost all descendants of slaves have European ancestors.
- Among white Americans, Southerners are most likely to have detectable African DNA.
- New Englanders tend to be largely European, with very little racial mixing.
- Descendants of early Spanish settlers in the Southwest often show Jewish ancestry.

Don’t get me wrong. There’s still much to be learned from this book, and I’d still want to read it, even knowing what I know now about its contents and its structure. But I can’t help but wish I’d checked it out of my local library instead of forking over \$27.95. And that’s exactly what I’d recommend for anyone interested in genetic genealogy.




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**President’s Message**, continued from page 2

I can’t do better than quote a short piece from the *New York Times* article which stated:

“Scientists had been searching for just such a common genealogical link and have found it in a lowly occupant of the fossil record, *Protungulatum donnae*, that until now has been so obscure that it lacks a colloquial nickname. But as researchers reported Thursday in the journal *Science*, the animal had several anatomical characteristics for live births that anticipated all placental mammals and led to some 5,400 living species, from shrews to elephants, bats to whales, cats to dogs and, not least, humans. . . . The research team drew on combined fossil evidence and genetic data encoded in DNA in evaluating the ancestor’s standing as an early placental mammal. Among characteristics associated with full-term live births, the *Protungulatum* species was found to have a two-horned uterus and a placenta in which the maternal blood came in close contact with the membranes surrounding the fetus, as in humans.”

While neither of these discoveries will assist in my own genealogical research, I still found them both to be incredibly exhilarating to read and see how genealogy and DNA are really making inroads to many other areas of our lives.



**Jewish Genealogical Society  
Newsletters Available to  
SFBAJGS Members**

Several Jewish genealogical societies share their newsletters with other societies. This is the current list of newsletters we receive (semi)regularly as PDF files. A benefit of membership in SFBAJGS is that you can request to be on the distribution list for any or all of these. Send a message to Dana Kurtz, our Electronic Newsletter Coordinator, at [dana.kurtz@earthlink.net](mailto:dana.kurtz@earthlink.net) and let her know which one(s) you would like to receive. Warning: We do not receive all these newsletters on a consistent basis.

<b>As of 17 November 2012</b>	<b>Issue Last Received</b>
Argentina	2007-04
Australia (New South Wales)	2012-10
Australia (Victoria)	2012-09
Australia (Western Australia)	2012-02
Bergen County, NJ	2004 Fall
British Columbia	2003-05
Broward County	2008-11
Conejo Valley	2012-11
Connecticut	2012-11
Denmark	2006-06
Great Britain	2012-10
Philadelphia	2008-03
Illiana	2012 Fall
Illinois	2012 Summer
JFRA Israel	2011-06
Miami	2012-09
Michigan	2007 Fall
Montreal	2009 Summer
Oregon	2012 Fall
Palm Beach County	2012 Q4
San Diego	2008 Summer/Fall
South Africa	2005-08
South Africa JG SIG	2012-08-09
Southern Nevada	2012 Summer
Southwest Florida	2012 Fall
St. Louis Gen Society	2012-11
Sweden	2012 #3
Switzerland	2012 Q2
Toronto	2008-09
Utah	2010 Winter
Washington, DC	2012 Spring
Washington State	2006-01
Wisconsin	2005-09



## DPs: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945–1951

Book Review by Ed Rozyłowicz

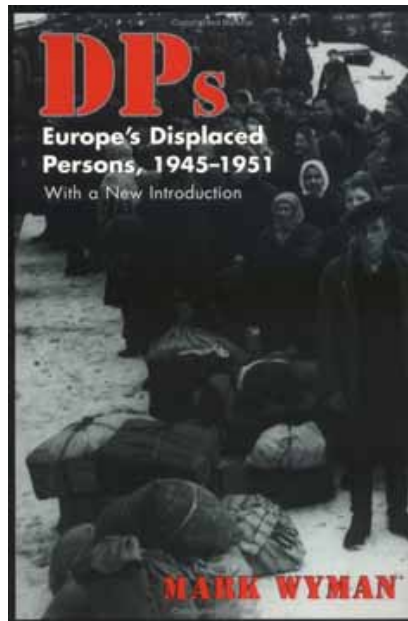
*DPs: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945–1951* by Mark Wyman. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1998. 256 pages. ISBN-10 0801485428; ISBN-13 978-0801485428. This review originally appeared in *Galizien German Descendants* #67, July 2011, pages 19–20.

Today, being politically correct, they are called “refugees”: those people who have been uprooted from their native homes and soil and forced to migrate to places where they are not wanted. In the period after World War II, they were called DP's: displaced persons—a label that carried considerable burdens as to a person's perceived worth and ethnic identity.

I and my family, born in Poland and forcibly removed from the land we called “home”, were DP's after World War II. Although through the intervening 65 years after the war that stigma has all but disappeared, the implications of being associated with that group still linger deep in our souls. Unless one experienced being displaced and underwent the trauma of relocation, resettlement, and potential repatriation, one cannot even begin to comprehend the crises that surrounded the DP's.

Having lived as a DP, while reading *DPs: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945–1951* by Mark Wyman I relived that time again. Although my memories are not that distinct or precise, many aspects of living in a “camp” came back to me. The social, economic, and political circumstances of being an outcast from my homeland and being of a specific ethnic and cultural group often labeled as shiftless, lazy, criminal, or unproductive, I recall our family surrounded by events and circumstances often without compassion. How we and other DP's managed to survive this upheaval and the strategies and means by which we survived (and some who did not) is revealed quite succinctly in this book—to that I and my family can personally attest.

The book details how the major victorious powers, and other nations as well, dealt with this plight of unprecedented human crisis. Considered “undesirable”, DP's were mostly ignored, shuttled about from camp to camp, often denied basic human needs, repatriated against their will, persecuted for the most part upon their return to their native



soil, and made to suffer humiliation beyond reason. Those who were very fortunate (or lucky enough) to receive a compassionate and welcoming entry into another society reflected upon their good fortunes.

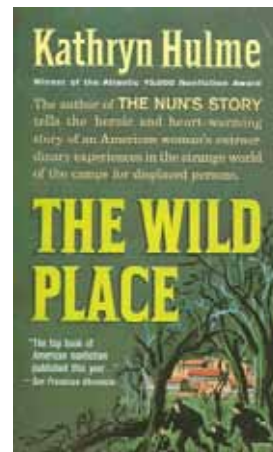
Displaced person camps such as Mauthausen (Austria), Reggio (Italy), Landsberg (Germany), and especially our family's own Polish DP camp of Wildflecken (Germany), were “not friendly places.” Many were deprived; others were full of deprivation, especially for older workers with family responsibilities. We spent nearly four years in our camp, from September 1945 to March 1949. Due to a myriad of controls and regulations everyone was subjected to being “classed, tagged, probed, indexed, etc.” as

demonstrated by the various documents one had to possess.

Meticulously researched, including personal anecdotes of camp life, *DPs: Europe's Displaced Persons* makes compelling reading, for it provides insight into a human tragedy of monumental scope.

If *DPs: Europe's Displaced Persons* is not enough for you, I also highly recommend Kathryn Hulme's *The Wild Place* (1953, Little, Brown & Company; also 1960, Pocket Books; currently out of print), a verbatim record of the most dramatic human debris of the modern era—the homeless hordes left on deposit in Germany.

A source of information and images on Camp Wildflecken, the United Nations Relief Rehabilitation Administration, and the International Refugee Organization is the “Wildflecken DP Camp” Web site at <http://www.dpcamps.org/wildflecken.html>. The official Web site of modern Wildflecken is <http://www.wildflecken.de/> (in German).



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[www.video.iajgs2013.org](http://www.video.iajgs2013.org).

Co-hosted by the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies and the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston



## Now Online

Janice M. Sellers

In this column Marilyn Dornhelm has been sharing information on online indices, digitized archival material, and tools. She has decided to step down and focus on other things. We are grateful for the information she has collected and shared, and will miss her regular contributions. I have put a small number of links together for this issue, but I am eagerly looking for someone to take over the column. If you are interested, contact me at [newsletter@sfbajgs.org](mailto:newsletter@sfbajgs.org).

### GENERAL

*Free Online Genealogy Courses*

<https://familysearch.org/learningcenter/home.html>

More than 300 free online genealogy research courses for beginners, intermediate, and advanced researchers, including courses on reading handwriting in other languages, such as Russian and Polish.

*Free Electronic Genealogy Magazine*

[http://www.theindepthgenealogist.com/?page\\_id=6086](http://www.theindepthgenealogist.com/?page_id=6086)

A new magazine with a variety of articles.

*Preserving Photos*

<http://www.thefamilycurator.com/home/2012/10/30/5-first-aid-tips-for-waterdamaged-family-photos.html>

How to protect photos and care for damaged photos.

### USA

GENERAL

*U.S. Federal Census Guide*

[http://haitfamilyresearch.com/pdf\\_files/Census\\_Pathfinder.pdf](http://haitfamilyresearch.com/pdf_files/Census_Pathfinder.pdf)

Free downloadable PDF guide with directions to online information about the U. S. Federal Census, including links to manuscript and microfilm copies, digital images, authorizing acts of Congress, enumeration instructions, statistical compendia, maps, and more.

ILLINOIS

*Chicago Foreign Language Press Survey Online*

<http://flps.newberry.org/group/jewish/data.html>

The Chicago Foreign Language Press Survey is a collection of approximately 50,000 translated newspaper articles originally published in Chicago's ethnic press between the 1860's and the 1930's. The URL above is to the 7,130 articles from Jewish publications.

NEW YORK

*New York State Death Index 1957-1962*

<https://apps.nyhealth.gov/METRIX/main.action>

About halfway down the page is "Genealogical Research Death Index." Click on the icon to the right and download the .zip file with the death index.

*New York City Jewish Communal Register 1917-1918*

[http://openlibrary.org/books/OL6615024M/The\\_Jewish\\_communal\\_register\\_of\\_New\\_York\\_city\\_1917-1918](http://openlibrary.org/books/OL6615024M/The_Jewish_communal_register_of_New_York_city_1917-1918)

Readable online or downloadable in multiple formats. Has information on congregations, schools, social institutions, etc. and an extensive index. (My great-great-grandfather is listed as the president of a lodge.)

WESTERN STATES

*Jewish Museum of the American West*

<http://www.jmaw.org/>

A virtual museum from the Western States Jewish History Association. The association is open to other groups that wish to have "exhibition halls" and so tell the story of the Jews from their regions.

### EUROPE

GENERAL

*The European Library*

<http://www.theeuropeanlibrary.org/tel4/faq>

The European Library is a portal to the catalogs and collections of more than 48 libraries. It provides the ability to search records, access full-text content and digital images, and more.

GERMANY

*Reconstructed 1850 Hamburg Passenger Lists*

[http://books.google.com/books?id=2XTFWn6o4hgC&printsec=frontcover&dq=%22reconstructed+passenger+lists+for+1850%22&hl=en&sa=X&ei=sNApUb\\_TCqjGiwK7qoCACg&ved=0CDoQ6AEwAA](http://books.google.com/books?id=2XTFWn6o4hgC&printsec=frontcover&dq=%22reconstructed+passenger+lists+for+1850%22&hl=en&sa=X&ei=sNApUb_TCqjGiwK7qoCACg&ved=0CDoQ6AEwAA)

A preview of several pages of this book, with names, is available on Google Books.

NETHERLANDS

*Here Was Bertram*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7nTpuCZJTE>

Documentary on the life and destiny of Bertram Polak (1918-1942).

POLAND

General

*Sephardic Jews in Poland*

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/203015933156718/?ref=ts&fref=ts>

This forum exists to research the origins of Sephardim living in Poland, their lives in Poland, and their paths to arrive so far east.

Shupca

*Shupca Records*

<http://www.slupcagenealogy.com/>

Indexed and searchable civil transcripts and church records for parishes in the Shupca area, plus maps, links to translational aids, etc.

UKRAINE

Czernowitz

*New Facebook Group for Czernowitz*

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/100581650116667/>

Primarily focused on the Jewish cemetery in Czernowitz (now Chernivtsi, Ukraine) but also for networking of volunteers, today's citizens of the city, and former Czernowitzers and their descendants.

## AUSTRALIA

*National Library Podcasts*

<http://www.nla.gov.au/podcasts/>

Some of the podcasts under Exhibitions relate to the "Dunera Boys", Jewish refugees from Europe who were held in internment camps in Australia.

## CANADA

*JewishGen Canada Database*

<http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Canada>

This new database searches all of JewishGen's records for Canada and external databases from the Canadian Jewish Heritage Network.

## HOLOCAUST

*Survivor Testimonies on YouTube*

<http://www.youtube.com/user/YadVashem>

Yad Vashem has posted a large number of survivor testimonies on YouTube.



## Obermayer German Jewish History Awards

### Call for Nominations

The German Jewish Community History Council, GerSIG, and the Berlin Parliament are pleased to announce the call for nominations for the annual Obermayer German Jewish History Awards to be given to non-Jewish Germans who have made extraordinary contributions to preserving vestiges of former Jewish life in their local communities, including historical records, cultural material, cemeteries, and synagogues. The call for nominations can be found at <http://www.obermayer.us/award/nominate.htm>.

The deadline for submission is Monday, **23 September 2013**.

Thousands of Germans have carried out such activities as volunteers because they feel it is the right thing to do. The preservation of Jewish material is one of the few ways in which they can respond constructively to their country's past.

This award provides Jews throughout the world with the opportunity to recognize and honor German individuals who, in many cases, have devoted their lifetimes to such important endeavors. As Jewish genealogists, we have been the recipients of their good work.

Many of you have previously submitted worthy nominations. Those nominees who have already received Certificates of Commendation are prime candidates for this year's awards. They will only require updating of prior submissions.

This will be the fourteenth year for the awards, which will be presented in January 2014 in Berlin. Each awardee and his/her spouse will be invited on an all-expenses paid trip to Berlin to receive the award at the Plenary Chamber of the Abgeordnetenhaus, the home of the Berlin Parliament. Successful nominators are also invited to attend all of the award ceremony events in Berlin, where they will meet with the award recipients they have chosen to honor.

The honorees will each receive a framed certificate and an honorarium to be used for the furtherance of their work. Awardees' contributions will be described to attendees and to local, national, and international news media. These awards have in the past received extensive worldwide media coverage (see <http://www.obermayer.us/award/news.htm>.)

If you know someone who may be appropriate for nomination, further information, including the call for nominations and profiles of previous award winners and the jury, can be found at <http://www.obermayer.us/award>.

You may obtain a hard copy of the call for nominations by sending an e-mail to

[germanaward@hotmail.com](mailto:germanaward@hotmail.com)

or a letter to:

German Jewish Community History Council  
239 Chestnut Street  
West Newton, MA 02465 USA



## 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>
ALEXANDER	Schneidermuhl, Prussia (now Pila, Poland); San Francisco	Carol Olmert
BODKER	New York City	Lynne and Stephen Kinsey
BOGASH	Berdichev and Smiferopol, Ukraine	Joy Silver
BUCCHOLZ	Austria	Lavinia Schwarz
COHEN	Oldenzaal, Overijssel, Netherlands	Julia Guggenheim
CORENZWIT	Berdichev and Smiferopol, Ukraine	Joy Silver
EINSTEIN	Buchau, Germany	Julia Guggenheim
FEDER	Germany (Prussia)	Julia Guggenheim
FROHMAN	Germany	Paul Ransohoff
GENSLER	Germany (Prussia)	Julia Guggenheim
GUGGENHEIM	Tiengen, Germany	Julia Guggenheim
HAUER	Gehaus, Germany	Paul Ransohoff
HESS	Hesse-Darmstadt, Germany	Julia Guggenheim
HIRSCHFELD	Schneidermuhl, Prussia (now Pila, Poland); San Francisco	Carol Olmert
ISAACS	Schneidermuhl, Prussia (now Pila, Poland); San Francisco	Carol Olmert
JAFFE	Borzna, Ukraine	Joy Silver
KINSBRUNNER	Vienna, Austria	Lynne and Stephen Kinsey
KRATZOK	Borzna, Ukraine	Joy Silver
LARNER	Kamenets, Ukraine	Joy Silver
LIBERMAN	Beltz/Yassi	Joy Silver
LIPMAN	Schneidermuhl, Prussia (now Pila, Poland); San Francisco	Carol Olmert
LISSAUER	Hungary; San Francisco	Carol Olmert
MECHANIC	Ariogala, Lithuania; Elmira NY; Bronx; New Jersey; Chicago	Lavinia Schwarz
MEYER	Cologne; New York City	Lavinia Schwarz
NEW	Bayern Main Stockhein (Germany); New York City	Lavinia Schwarz
OLMERT	Samara, Russia; Harbin, China; San Francisco	Carol Olmert
PHILLIPS	Germany (Prussia)	Julia Guggenheim
RANSOHOFF	Germany; San Francisco	Paul Ransohoff
REGENSBURGER	Bavaria' New York; San Francisco	Lavinia Schwarz
SCHMAL	Buchau, Germany	Julia Guggenheim
SCHWARZ	Mittan Hurland (Germany? Russia?)	Lavinia Schwarz
SILBER	Odessa, Ukraine	Joy Silver
STADTHAGEN	Germany/Poland	Paul Ransohoff
WEITZEL	Poland	Paul Ransohoff
WEXLER	Beltz/Yassi	Joy Silver
WILNER	Vinnytsia	Joy Silver

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

Volume XXXIII, Number 1

February 2013

### Calendar of Events

**Sunday, 17 March, San Francisco:** *StoryCorps: Every Voice Matters.* StoryCorps encourages all Americans to record, share, and preserve the stories of their lives. StoryCorps has a booth at the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco where stories can be recorded. Everyone who records a story gets a complimentary copy of the recording on a CD.

**Sunday, 21 April, Oakland:** *The Forgetting River: A Modern Tale of Survival, Identity, and the Inquisition.* Doreen Carvajal will talk about her discovery of her family's hidden Sephardic Jewish roots.

**Monday, 22 April, Los Altos Hills:** *The Forgetting River: A Modern Tale of Survival, Identity, and the Inquisition.* See 21 April for description.

**Sunday, 5 May, San Francisco:** *Field Trip to the JFCS Holocaust Center.* The May meeting is a tour of Holocaust Center at Jewish Family and Children's Services of San Francisco and the opportunity to learn about the valuable materials it offers for genealogy research.

**Monday, 6 May, Oakland:** Special meeting: *Obscure Records of U.S. Citizenship and Nationality.* Marian Smith, the senior historian of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, will focus on lesser-known federal records of derived citizenship, repatriation, and correspondence covering a variety of citizenship-related problems and topics..

**Sunday, 9 June, Oakland:** *A Torn Family Reunited through Discovery of an Ancestor's Diary.* A Jewish man who immigrated to the United States in 1884 wrote a semifictional diary about his family's life in Latvia and their first 30 years here. One of his descendants will talk about the diary, his trip to Latvia and the better understanding he gained there of the opportunities and limits on genealogical research, and how the diary suggests many ideas for why Jews left Latvia/Russia.

**Monday, 17 June, Los Altos Hills:** *A Torn Family Reunited through Discovery of an Ancestor's Diary.* See 9 June for description.

Also see pages 3 and 4. For more program information visit <http://www.sfbajgs.org/>.

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