



# זכרונות ZichronNote

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

Volume XXXVII, Number 1/2

February/May 2017

### Special Double Issue!

#### Reconnecting with Lost Branches of Your Family Tree

Contacting and meeting cousins whose ancestors took other paths out of Mother Russia leads to introspection and philosophical comparisons. See page 5.

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Certificate for the Podivín Torah,  
held at Makom Shalom in Chicago  
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**ZichronNote**  
**Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area**  
**Jewish Genealogical Society**

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**Membership** in SFBAJGS is open to anyone interested in Jewish genealogy. Dues are \$23 per calendar year. The Society is tax-exempt pursuant to section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code. Make your check payable to "SFBAJGS" and send to SFBAJGS, Membership, P.O. Box 318214, San Francisco, CA 94131-8214.

**Society Addresses**

SFBAJGS, P.O. Box 318214, San Francisco, CA 94131-8214

Web site: <http://www.sfbajgs.org/>

**Society Contacts**

**President:** Jeremy Frankel, [president@sfbajgs.org](mailto:president@sfbajgs.org)

**Vice President:** Janice M. Sellers,

[vicepresident@sfbajgs.org](mailto:vicepresident@sfbajgs.org)

**Secretary:** Preeva Tramiel, [secretary@sfbajgs.org](mailto:secretary@sfbajgs.org)

**Treasurer:** Jeff Lewy, [treasurer@sfbajgs.org](mailto:treasurer@sfbajgs.org)

**Membership:** Avner Yonai, [membership@sfbajgs.org](mailto:membership@sfbajgs.org)

**Publicity:** Janice M. Sellers, [publicity@sfbajgs.org](mailto:publicity@sfbajgs.org)

**Webmaster:** Barbara Stack, [webmaster@sfbajgs.org](mailto:webmaster@sfbajgs.org)

**Cemetery Project Coordinator:** Pierre Hahn,

[cemetery@sfbajgs.org](mailto:cemetery@sfbajgs.org)

**Electronic Newsletter Coordinator:** Dana Kurtz,

[newsletterexchange@sfbajgs.org](mailto:newsletterexchange@sfbajgs.org)

**Founder:** Martha Wise

**ZichronNote**

**Editor:** Janice M. Sellers, [newsletter@sfbajgs.org](mailto:newsletter@sfbajgs.org)

**Proofreader:** Heidi Lyss, [heidi@sfbajgs.org](mailto:heidi@sfbajgs.org)

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**President's Message**

**Get Out and Volunteer!**

Jeremy Frankel, SFBAJGS President

It's a new year, and with that we have some exciting news to report. One is that the IAJGS wishes to recognize SFBAJGS for its annual gift donations to other nonprofit groups. Our esteemed treasurer has added up the numbers, and it appears we have given away some \$26,000 over the last few years.

The other good news is that the Cemetery Committee has received a spreadsheet with some 5,000 names of people buried in the Home of Eternity Cemetery, which has its own section contained within Mountain View Cemetery in Oakland.

But wait, it gets better still. I've recently been in touch with an Oaklander by the name of Stephen Miller, who has taken the bull by the horns, or rather, his digital camera into his hands, and has photographed all the headstones in the Home of Eternity Cemetery. If you search Find A Grave for this cemetery, you will see these amazing statistics: 5,128 interments, percent photographed: 100%.

When writing this I was going to say "next up is the Home of Peace Cemetery, also in Oakland." But then I thought I better check Find A Grave, and what did I see? Number of interments: 2,620. Percent photographed: 99%!

The word that best describes what is happening here is "volunteerism." Whether it's your time or your generous donation, it's all going to a good cause. (See also our Treasurer's report in this issue on page 27.)

By the time you read this, the society will have already held its first volunteer indexing party, where I'm hoping a large number of members will have assisted in transcribing burial records of Sherith Israel's first cemetery in San Francisco.

As you can appreciate, we thrive on volunteerism; it's our lifeblood and it's what drives this organization forward.

Yes, money always helps and can make life a lot easier, but in the end it's people like you and me who make it happen. We don't run a "Help Wanted" ad in ZichronNote, but we do have a couple of open board positions. If any of you feel up to it please email me ([jfrankel@lmi.net](mailto:jfrankel@lmi.net)) so we can have a chat about it.

In this year of tumultuous change, let us all step up to the plate and continue the momentum through 2017.



## SOCIETY NEWS

### New Members

Stan Greenberg ..... [haskalah@comcast.net](mailto:haskalah@comcast.net)  
Harvey Helfand ..... [helfandphotography@att.net](mailto:helfandphotography@att.net)  
Charles Rath ..... [charles.rath@yahoo.com](mailto:charles.rath@yahoo.com)  
David Silverberg ..... [silverdave1@gmail.com](mailto:silverdave1@gmail.com)  
Lindsay Sweetnam ..... [lindsaysweetnam@gmail.com](mailto:lindsaysweetnam@gmail.com)

In order to continue to receive *ZichronNote* and the SFBAJGS e-blast, please send changes in your e-mail address to [newsletter@sfbajgs.org](mailto:newsletter@sfbajgs.org).

### Member News

Veteran SFBAJGS Board member and indefatigable researcher, transcriber, project leader, and data aggregator **Pierre Hahn** recently saw JewishGen publish his collection of 22,000 Jewish marriages in Alsace, from between 1792 and 1899.

Though unrelated to genealogy, member **Brian Kaye** was named a 2016 Bay Area Top Doctor in rheumatology: <https://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/bay-area-top-doctors-2016>.

### **ZichronNote Helps Reunite Documents with Family Member**

Recently someone contacted me about a short note she found in a 1998 issue of *ZichronNote* that is posted online. The note was an alert from a local genealogy society that had come into possession of some family documents. The society was trying to find a family member to give the documents. More than eight years later, a relative found the note while Googling a family name, and the good news is that the documents were still there! They have now been returned to the family.

### Have You Renewed Yet?

If you who have not yet renewed your membership in SFBAJGS for 2017, now is the time. You must be a member to continue to receive *ZichronNote*. If you can't remember whether you have renewed, e-mail Membership Chair Avner Yonai at [membership@sfbajgs.org](mailto:membership@sfbajgs.org) and ask him to check your status.

### Research Scope of SFBAJGS

The San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society does not limit its scope to the San Francisco Bay area. While our meetings take place in various locations in the Bay Area, our research and pursuits include the entire world, as that's where our ancestors came from. Our members have extensive experience with genealogical research in every corner of the globe and with all types of historical records.

### Your Story Belongs in *ZichronNote*

Have you had a breakthrough in your family history, solved a family mystery through painstaking research, discovered a better way to use resource materials, or walked where your ancestors walked? Have you had success or made progress at the Genealogy Clinic with the Mavens? Do you have a brick wall you want to discuss? Did you meet a cousin at the annual conference, or make contact with a "tenuously, absurdly distant" cousin or a "relative of the heel?"

Tell us your story, share your discovery! We want to read about it in *ZichronNote*. Please submit materials to [newsletter@sfbajgs.org](mailto:newsletter@sfbajgs.org).

### Meeting Times and Locations

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

<b>San Francisco:</b>	<b>Sunday. Doors open 1:00 p.m. Program begins at 1:30 p.m.</b> Rhoda Goldman Plaza, 2180 Post Street Parking available in Rhoda Goldman Plaza garage with entrance on Sutter Street.
<b>Oakland:</b>	<b>Sunday. Doors open 12:30 p.m. Program begins at 1:00 p.m.</b> Oakland FamilySearch Library, 4766 Lincoln Avenue
<b>Palo Alto:</b>	<b>Monday. Doors open 7 p.m. Program begins at 7:30 p.m.</b>
<b>NEW LOCATION</b>	Congregation Etz Chayim, 4161 Alma Street

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

## Genealogy Calendar of Events

### Local and Regional

Thursday, 1 June 2017. Dayna Jacobs, "FamilySearch Power Tools." Monterey County Genealogical Society. Family History Center, 1024 Noche Buena, Seaside. <https://mocogenso.org/>

Thursday, 1 June 2017. Rosemarie Capodocci, "Finding Your Immigrant in Modern Day Records." Genealogical Society of Santa Cruz County. Santa Cruz Public Library, Downtown Branch, 224 Church Street, Santa Cruz. <http://scgensoc.org/>

Saturday, 3 June 2017. Janice M. Sellers, "Ashes to Ashes, Dust to Dust: What's Buried in Cemetery Records." Solano County Genealogical Society. Moose Lodge, 623 Taylor Street, Fairfield. <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~cascgsi/>

Thursday, 8 June 2017. Kim Miller, "Write Your History in Stories." Oakland FamilySearch Library, 4766 Lincoln Avenue, Oakland. <http://www.oaklandfhc.org/>

Saturday, 10 June 2017. Janet Brigham and Richard Rands, "Managing Photos on Mobile Devices." Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group. LDS Church, 875 Quince Avenue, Santa Clara. <http://www.svcgg.org/>

Sunday, 11 June 2017. Maryellen Burns, "Gathering Family Narratives." Jewish Genealogical Society of Sacramento. Einstein Residence Center, 1935 Wright Street, Sacramento. <http://www.jewishgen.org/jgs-sacramento/>

Monday, 12 June 2017. Cat Nielsen, "Preparing for a Research Trip." Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society. Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court, Pleasanton. <http://www.l-ags.org/>

Tuesday, 13 June 2017. "Field Trip to the State Archives in Sacramento." California Genealogical Society and Library, 2201 Broadway Suite LL2, Oakland. <http://californiaancestors.org/>

Wednesday, 14 June 2017. Ralph Severson, "What's New at FamilySearch.org." East Bay Genealogical Society. Oakland FamilySearch Library, 4766 Lincoln Avenue, Oakland. <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~caebaygs/>

Friday, 16 June 2017. Jeff Vaillant, "Lies, Lies and Damn Lies. Can DNA Solve My Paternal Linage?" Mt. Diablo Genealogical Society. 1010 Stanley Dollar Drive, Walnut Creek. <http://mdgs.webs.com/>

Saturday, 17 June 2017. "Planning a Research Trip." African American Genealogical Society of Northern

California. Oakland FamilySearch Library, 4766 Lincoln Boulevard, Oakland. <http://www.aagsnc.org/>

Tuesday, 20 June 2017. Malinda Kashuba, Ph.D., "When to Hire a Professional Genealogist to Boost You over That Brick Wall." Davis Genealogy Club. Davis Senior Center, 646 A Street, Davis. <http://www.scchgs.org/>

Tuesday, 20 June 2017. Brooke Schreier Ganz, "Reclaim the Records." Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society. Santa Clara City Library, Redwood Room, 2635 Homestead Road, Santa Clara. <http://www.scchgs.org/>

Saturday, 24 June 2017. Anthony Ray, "The Berryessa Family: A California Legacy." San Mateo County Genealogical Society. Grace Lutheran Church, 2825 Alameda de las Pulgas, San Mateo. <http://www.smcgs.org/>

Monday, 26 June 2017. "Adoption Research." Oakmont Genealogy Club. Oakmont West Recreation Center, Santa Rosa. <https://sites.google.com/site/oakmontgenealogyclub/>

Tuesday, 27 June 2017. Michael Mayer-Kielmann, "Defiled Tradesmen, Troopers, Quacks & Executioners: Dishonorable Occupations at the Edge of Society." Sacramento German Genealogy Society. St. Mark's United Methodist Church, McMurdo Hall, 2391 St. Marks Way, Sacramento. <http://sggs.us/>

Sunday, 23 July 2017. Gena Philibert-Ortega, "Schools, Jails and Asylums: Your Ancestor's Institutional Life." Sacramento Central Library, Galleria West Meeting Room, 828 I Street, Sacramento. <http://www.saclibrary.org/>

Thursday, 27 July 2017. Erin Lacey, "Blogging Your Genealogy." Marin County Genealogical Society. Marin Family History Center, 220 North San Pedro Road, San Rafael. <http://www.maringensoc.org/>

*Continued on page 26*

### **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. 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 more information.

Upcoming date:

4 June 2017

And then returning in the fall!

## A Torn Family Reunited — After 130 Years

Frederick Hertz

Frederick Hertz grew up in St. Paul, Minnesota and is a fifth-generation Minnesota Jew (with all eight great-grandparents living there by 1884). He has lived in the Oakland area since 1978 and is a lawyer, mediator, and author working on legal issues faced by unmarried couples, both gay and straight.

Just a few hours after landing in Tel Aviv for a two-week visit in 2011, I set out for a walk along the stunning waterfront path overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. It was my first visit to Israel in more than a decade, and just a few years after I'd embarked on an exploration into my family's 19th-century immigration history and genealogy stories. As I stared out into the distant blue sea, enjoying the well maintained park and impressed by the high-rise hotels to my side, I kept asking myself: What if my great-great-grandparents had sailed to Palestine in 1884 from their home town in Latvia, rather than coming to that other promised land, the United States? Where would I be living now, and what would my life be like as an Israeli? It's an absurdly counterfactual inquiry, for sure, but the question lingered with me throughout my time in Israel.

A year later, I visited the home towns of most of my 19th-century ancestors in rural Latvia, and as I wandered through these picturesque villages and later prayed in the stunningly restored synagogue in central Riga, I obsessed on another version of this compelling hypothetical situation: But for the anti-Semitism of Eastern Europe and the devastation of the Holocaust, what would my life be like if my family had stayed in Latvia? Where would I be living, and who would I have become?

I descend primarily from Baltic Jews (with one set of great-grandparents from Kovno in Lithuania). They left their comfortable homes and rather secure small-town merchant lives in western Latvia (known then as Courland) for the unknown lands of America in the 1870's and 1880's, ending up in the rather drab but safe city of St. Paul, Minnesota in the early 1880's. I'm a fifth-generation Minnesota Jew, and as far as I knew when I was growing up—and certainly when I asked myself these questions several years ago—I had no relatives living in Israel, and I definitely had no family in Latvia. To my knowledge no one I could meet and no one alive today could tell me how their lives had unfolded in our family's country of origin, or in that other Jewish pilgrimage destination, the land of Israel. This was truly a hypothetical question, with no available source of answers.

But to my amazement (and that of my cousins), five years later I find myself regularly socializing with a wonderful assortment of newly found fourth and fifth cousins, some

of whom live in Israel and others who grew up in Latvia and now reside in the San Francisco Bay Area, after arriving here in the 1970's as Soviet Jewish refugees.

The story of how we came to reunite our long-separated families is a magical journey of coincidence, diligence, and lucky Internet research.

It all began in 2008, when my Episcopalian second cousin in Seattle found a box of unpublished manuscripts authored in the 1920's by David Blumenfeld, one of my great-grandfathers who came from Courland. Apparently the box had been given to my cousin's mother when our great-grandfather died in the 1950's, in the misguided belief that since she was herself a writer she would appreciate reading them. She didn't, and so they languished in her house for decades, passed to her son, who ignored them but, thankfully, stashed them in his basement—only to rediscover them when he organized his move into a new residence. Most of the preserved volumes were mediocre novellas, one of which was titled "A Torn Family Reunited", providing the most appropriate title for this essay. But there was one true gem: a novelized family history titled "Diary", telling the story of the family's life in Courland starting in the 1860's, documenting the details of their journey to America in the 1880's, and describing the highs and lows of David's struggle for success in his first forty years in the land praised by him as "The Continent of Glory."

Over the next five years we have been pursuing the details of this story, including the 2012 visit to the home towns of most of my great-great-grandparents. One evening during our stay in Riga, after having finally ascertained the proper spelling of my great-great-grandmother's name, I began to wonder whatever happened to the brother she had said goodbye to in 1884, as described in the novelized diary written by her son David. Inspired by this curiosity I returned to my hotel room, entered his name into the Yad Vashem database, and was immediately confronted by a stunning result. A Page of Testimony explained that he had been murdered 57 years after that farewell in 1884, in the first week of the Nazi occupation of Latvia. At that time he was a widower in his 80's, residing in the same town where he had been born and perhaps still living in the same home he had occupied in 1884. What was equally jarring was that the testimony was written by his daughter,



5.4.5 **Mere Leah** married David Hirsh Klazov of Tukom, Latvia and had one son and six daughters,

6.4.5.1 **Dvore** (married Zvi Traub of Kadan, Latvia in 1892, moved to Tel Aviv in 1925. Two sons and two daughters, Israel Traub, Zalmen Traub, Chana Yaver, Hinde Motelev);

6.4.5.2 **Frieda** (married her cousin Leib Samunov);

6.4.5.3 **Chava** (married Mr Jacobson and resides in Riga, Latvia with two sons);

6.4.5.4 **Minnie** (married Mr Rashall and died in Riga childless);

6.4.5.5 **Sarah** (married Mr Drubkin and lived in Letland, where together with her father, one daughter and grand-daughter, she was killed by the Nazis. Another daughter married Dr Shenkman and have two children in the USA. Sarah's son Yoel resides in Riga, Latvia);

6.4.5.6 **Channe** (married Mr Courting and has a son and daughter in San Francisco, USA);

6.4.5.7 **Mordecai Klazov** (married Emmy Hurshman of Libau, Latvia).

*The Klazov family tree information found online*

out that several had travelled to the United States as Soviet Jewish émigrés in the 1970's and 1980's and were living in the San Francisco Bay area, within an hour's drive of my own home. It was easy to track them down and tell them the story of our family connection. One hundred thirty years later, our "torn" family was reunited.

Several years have passed and we remain in close touch with each other. I see my Latvian cousins a few times each year, and we share stories about their journey here, their Jewish lives in Soviet-era Latvia, their anguished decision about whether to migrate to Israel or the United States, and how the decisions of their parents have shaped their lives and those of their children. I've been back to Israel

several times, and every time I'm there I get together with Ada and Tami, and often with their extended families as well. Last year several of us got together with some of the descendants of the 1930's California arrivals. Along the way we've discovered that the family connections had been maintained in the early decades of this century, with occasional meetings of the Minnesota and California cousins and even a return visit to Latvia by one of the California cousins in the late 1930's.

Most of our time together focuses on our shared family stories and our quite distinct personal journeys. My rather remote and sentimental connection to Latvia stands in sharp contrast to that of my Latvian cousins, who still mourn the loss of most of their family in the Holocaust. Not surprisingly, my internal debates about the current political situation in Israel often differ from those of my cousins who are now third-generation Israelis. And our individual sense of what it is to be Jewish and the heritage we received from our American, Israeli, and Latvian parents is unique for each of us. But there are striking overlaps and a resonance that—at least it seems to me—stems from our shared roots. Perhaps it's because of a thin genetic connection, or, of equal significance, because we are all secular educated Jews of a similar ethnic cultural background, but in so many ways our life paths seem to display a remarkable similarity. And so, in a deeply meaningful way, I've received some form of an answer to my questions about the paths not taken in my own ancestors' lives.



*Drabkin cousins with Fred*

## My Visit to See the Podivín Torah

Martin Gewing

Martin started looking into his family history in the early 1990's at the urging of his older brother. He has had a lot of success with his father's ancestry, going back to the 1750–1770 period for the lines of three of his four great-grandparents. In addition to his obsession with tracing his family tree, he is married and has a 19-year-old son in junior college.

On 29 February 1872, my great-grandmother Mathilde Eisinger (married name Tannenblatt) was born in Kostel in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, now Podivín in the southern part of the Czech Republic, about ninety minutes north of Vienna, Austria. Seventy years later, she was deported from Vienna, on 21 September 1942.

The Eisingers were a prominent family that had resided in Kostel for several hundred years. The town typically had two mayors, one of whom was for the Jewish population. Many times, throughout the years, an Eisinger served as the Jewish mayor.

I have visited Podivín and saw the old Jewish cemetery, overgrown with weeds. The caretaker started cutting them down while my dad and I wandered around. We saw the building where bodies had been prepared for burial. The building had been restored with a beautiful Star of David; sadly, a Nazi swastika had been painted on the front.

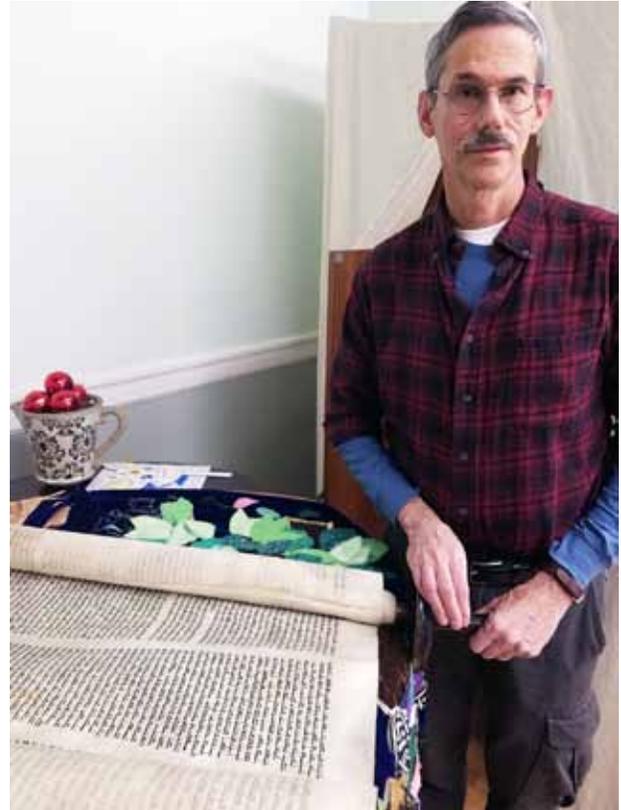
Mathilde's nephew, Josef (Terry) Eisinger, recorded the memoir of his father, Rudolf (Rudolf, Matilde's brother, was also born in Kostel). Terry has researched our family history and published his own memoir during the summer of 2016.

My father purchased a copy of Terry's memoir, titled *Flight and Refuge: Reminiscences of a Motley Youth*, and eventually lent it to me, the family member obsessed with our family tree and fascinated by our family's exodus from Europe to sites all over the world. Terry included his father's memoir as an appendix to his own.

In 2016, my wife and I had planned to visit her mother in her retirement community in rural Tennessee at the end of the year over the New Year's holiday. Sadly, she passed away in October, so my wife and I decided to visit her family in Chicago and drive down with everyone for my mother-in-law's memorial in Tennessee.

Before the trip I finished reading Terry's memoir and discovered that a Torah from the Podivín synagogue was now located at Makom Shalom in Chicago. When the Torah was rededicated, Terry had been invited to attend as a representative of Kostel's Jews.

Once I learned the Torah from Podivín was in Chicago and that I would, for the first time in my life, be going to Chicago, I resolved to try and see the Torah. My family



Martin with the Podivín Torah

has a few photos of pre-1938 family life in Austria, but nothing physical, so learning about something from the ancestral homeland of the Eisingers (my father's maternal grandmother) rang a chord in my being. It was something I could see and hold, something tangible from the town my great-grandmother Mathilde Eisinger was from.

A quick Internet search told me about the Makom Shalom congregation and its warm, welcoming community. I also found its schedule, which included a Friday evening Chanukah/Shabbat celebration, held on the only Friday I was planning on being in Chicago!

Life contains opportunities to make moments *kadosh* (sacred), something my wife and I experienced when Makom Shalom welcomed us. The administrator, Jaqi, showed us the Torah. The rabbi explained several things about the Podivín Torah and was kind enough to ask me to share my story during the service.



## Unclaimed

Judy Vasos

Judy Vasos lives in Oakland, California with her husband, Tony Baczewski. She has been researching her family history since 1990. Her Web site is <http://www.judyvasos.com/>.



*Philip de Paauw and Ruth Knoller on their wedding day in Nazi-occupied Amsterdam, 16 June 1942. Photo taken by Foto-Bureau in Amsterdam, which no longer exists. The surviving photo has some damage.*

This photo from the wedding of Philip and Ruth de Paauw appears in two books published in the 1990's. The photo was sent to Ruth's aunt, Lea Nathansen, in Leipzig and hidden in a sealed box during the war by a non-Jewish neighbor in that city.

My husband and I received a photo (see page 10) of the wedding from Rosi—Ruth's cousin and my mother-in-law—in early 1990 with a note saying she'd held onto it

for long enough and it was time to pass it on. She had the photo for more than 40 years, and although she'd shared many photos and documents about the Holocaust with us, she'd chosen to hold this photo back. We also held it back and shared it only with close family members who wanted their descendants to see it and know about what the photo represented.

We were shocked to see Ruth in her bridal gown with the Star of David on her wedding dress. We were aware of the Nazi decree issued in May 1942 which forced all Jews in Amsterdam over the age of 6 to wear the Jewish star sewn on their clothing to clearly mark and identify them as Jews, but we'd never seen a wedding photo taken after the decree was issued.

When I recently learned that a different photo of Ruth's wedding had appeared in two books I had to know how a photo had gone public after we'd held onto our photo and treated it with something close to reverence for so many years.

I'd corresponded with Ruth for many years. She lived in Bat Yam, Israel and was as kind, openhearted, and down to earth as Rosi had described her. She identified everyone in the group wedding photo for me and shared stories of the family's time in Amsterdam, including their arrest and deportation first to Westerbork Transit Camp and from there to Bergen Belsen concentration camp in 1944. They were fortunately not sent to Auschwitz, the usual destination from Westerbork and where her 17-year-old younger sister, Karla, and Rosi's parents and other family members had been sent and murdered. Ruth and her family had obtained passports for Ecuador, which made them eligible for a possible prisoner exchange at Bergen Belsen.

By the time of their arrest, Ruth had given birth to her first son, Ronny (Aron). He was six weeks old when she placed him with a non-Jewish unmarried woman who lived a short distance from Amsterdam. Ruth wrote in a letter that "she saved his life while we were gone."

Not all Jewish families who placed their children in hiding were able to reclaim them after the war. Ruth was fortunate to retrieve her son, and she remained in contact for many years with the woman who had cared for him.

Ruth had endured a great deal, but her spirit stayed strong and at least in our letters she expressed no bitterness



*Philip de Paauw and Ruth Knoller wedding party, 16 June 1942. Photo taken by Foto-Bureau in Amsterdam. Photo is in possession of Baczewski family.*

over the circumstances of her life. The gentle smile evident in her wedding photos seemed to stay with her throughout her life. We both hoped we would meet someday. She had never mentioned the Nathansens in her letters, but they turned out to be pivotal in the discovery of the photos of Ruth's wedding in two books.

Ruth died in Israel on 18 December 2014 at the age of 93. When I learned of her death and contacted the family to offer condolences, I thought of the wedding photo Rosi had sent us and asked if they would like a copy. After they saw it they told me that another photo of Ruth's wedding had appeared in the book *Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany* by Marion Kaplan.

I immediately made contact with Marion, who graciously explained how she had found the photo of Ruth in yet another book, *Davidstern und Weihnachtsbaum: Erinnerungen von Überlebenden* ("Star of David and Christmas Tree: Memories of Survivors"), compiled by Bernd-Lutz Lange and published in 1992. Marion received permission from the publishers of Lange's book to use Ruth's wedding photo in her book published in 1998. By complete chance Ruth saw Marion's book in a bookstore in Israel; she told a professor who was studying in Israel and knew Marion

that she was the bride in the photo. The professor told Marion the identity of the bride and the story of how Ruth had sent the photo to her aunt Lea Nathansen in Leipzig, Germany. The Nathansens had in turn taken the photo and other items they wanted saved during the war to their non-Jewish neighbor, plumber Heinz Zaspel. They delivered these items in a candy box, and Mr. Zaspel put the box in a zinc container and welded it shut for safekeeping.

The photo remained hidden in the sealed box for almost 50 years, until Bernd-Lutz Lange came to Leipzig. He contacted the Jewish Religious Community of Leipzig to help him research survivors of the Holocaust in Leipzig, including the Nathansens. He met Heinz Zaspel's son, who had almost forgotten about the box his father had hidden for the Nathansens. He retrieved it from its hiding place and showed Mr. Lange the contents, including photographs of Ruth's wedding, two *mezuzot*, and private documents of the Nathansens. He said the Nathansens had expressed their intention to reclaim their possessions after the war. It seems unlikely, but the Nathansens may have held out some hope at the time. They had signed a contract known as a *Heimeinkaufsvertrag* ("Home Purchase Agreement") disguised as a contract for lifelong

The first page of the Heimeinkaufsvertrag ("Home Purchase Agreement") the Nathansens signed. The complete document is ten pages long.

Datum: 10.3.42 Bs.

**Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland** **Fragebogen.**  
 Abt. Wanderung

---

Name Nathansen Vorname Gabriel Markus Familienstand verheiratet  
 Geburtstag 0.3.79 Geburtsort Halberstadt Staatsangehörigkeit deutsch  
 Beruf Grundstücks- und Hypothekemakler Kennkarte Leipzig A 00201  
 jetzige Tätigkeit keine Mitglied der Jüd. Gemeinde ja  
 Genaue Postanschrift Leipzig O.L., König Joha nstr. 31 II Fernruf ---  
 Sprachkenntnisse französisch und englisch

**Familienangehörige**  
 (Für Angehörige, welche ein gesondertes Auswanderungsvorhaben bearbeiten, ist ein besonderer Fragebogen auszufüllen).

Name	Vorname	Verwandschaftsgrad	Geburtsort und -ort	Beruf	Anschrift, falls nicht wie oben
Nathansen geb. Knoller	Lea Sara	Ehefrau	Krefeld 19.3.89	ohne	wie oben
			Leipzig A 00202		

**Beziehungen im Auslande** (Adressen genau angeben)

I. Verwandte:

Name	Vorname	genauer Verwandtschaftsgrad	Anschrift	seit wann ansässig
Nathansen	Mosee	Bruder	Tel Awiv Reehow Frischmann	1933
Nathansen	Jakob	"	Tel Awiv ,16 Berns ein Kohn Street	1933
Eschwege Emanuel	Ida Fanny	Schwester	Tel Awiv, Pinksenstr. 60 New York Avenue 417-89th. Street	1938
Knoller Dr.	Gabriel	Schwager	Rebatajim bei Tel Awiv	1939

II. Sonstige Beziehungen:

Name	Vorname	Anschrift	seit wann ansässig
Rechmilewitz	Dr. N.	Tel Awiv rue Hagilboa 3 Generalkonsul von Littauen	1933
Kestenbaum Bros. Kellmann	Max	New York. 243 West 30th Street NewYork. 825 W 180 th Street	Amerikaner 1939

community accommodation in a retirement settlement for Jews where housing, medical care, food, and washing were to be provided in exchange for signing over all their assets and possessions to the Nazis. The true destination—Theriesenstadt Ghetto—is never mentioned in the document.

The Nathansens never returned to claim the box of possessions from Mr. Zaspel.

The Nathansens were sent to Theriesenstadt Ghetto on 20 September 1942. Gabriel became ill in the overcrowded, unsanitary conditions in the ghetto and died there on 3 May 1944. Lea was sent to Auschwitz on 9 October 1944 and was murdered upon arrival.

For a time all that remained of the Nathansens was held in the box Mr. Zaspel had hidden. Despite the fact they were never able to reclaim what they left behind, there are many ways they are now known and remembered.

The contents of the box were sent to Gabriel's relatives in Israel, and the *mezuzot* are being used by family. In 1999 Ruth submitted a Page of Testimony to Yad Vashem for her Aunt Lea. Family in Israel submitted testimony for Gabriel.

Marion Kaplan's book with the photo of Ruth's wedding day and her encouragement to pursue the mystery of how the photo was found inspired the historical detective in me to follow all the clues and bring the Nathansen story and their connection to Ruth into the light.



## Casa Mendoza

Alan Silverman

Alan Silverman was born in England. He is a member of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society.

This is the story of my Sephardic family and its journey from Spain to Holland to England, and finally to San Francisco. Along the way I hope to introduce you to some interesting characters, all relatives of my maternal grandmother, Rachel Mendoza. Among the people you will meet are London's first kosher butcher, the boxing champion of England, a Viceroy of India, and a famous movie star.

You will learn of two relatives who had minor misunderstandings with the law, endangering the good name of the Mendoza family. And you will learn of three subsequent relatives whose efforts on the correct side of law have vindicated the good name of the Mendozas. I will also tell you of two genealogy coincidences that happened to me. But first we need to discuss a little Jewish history.

Following the destruction of the second temple in Jerusalem in AD 70 Jews started to migrate to a variety of countries around the Mediterranean in southern Europe and North Africa. By AD 600 significant Jewish populations were in Greece, Italy, and Spain. The accepted Hebrew word for Spain is *Sefarad*, and thus Jews of Spanish origin became known as Sephardim. Spain was conquered by the Visigoths in the 7th century and life became harder for the Jews. In the 8th century an Arab-Berber army crossed the straits of Gibraltar and drove out the Visigoths. By AD 750 almost all of Spain was under Islamic rule, and Jews lived in relative freedom and prosperity, particularly in southern Spain. Cordoba, Sevilla, Granada, and Toledo became important centers of Jewish learning.

Zealous Islamic sects from North Africa began to exert a stronger influence in Spain, however, and things started to turn worse for Spanish Jews. There was a pogrom in Granada in 1066 with 4,000 Jews killed. In 1085 Toledo was captured by the Christians, and the moderate Islamists sought military help from their more extreme Moslem allies from North Africa. By 1172 Jews and Christians were expelled from Islamic-controlled southern Spain. Some, including Maimonides, left for more tolerant Muslim lands. Others moved north into Christian Spain.

About 100,000 Jews lived in comparative freedom in Castile and Aragon in the 13th century and most of the 14th century. This changed in 1390 and 1391 with the deaths of the tolerant king of Castile and the moderate archbishop

of Sevilla. On 6 June 1391 a mob invaded the Jewish quarter of Sevilla and killed 4,000 Jews. On 9 July 1391 in Valencia 200 Jews were killed and the remainder converted to Christianity. By 1410 about two thirds of Spanish Jews had converted. In 1478 the Spanish Inquisition was enacted, giving Jews three options: leave Spain, convert to Catholicism, or be burnt at the stake.

Being more pragmatic than brave my Mendoza ancestors chose the second option. They elected to convert—or at least to pretend to convert. Jews who took this route were known as “Conversos” or “Marranos”, because they were made to eat pork as a sign that they had abandoned Judaism. In fact, the Mendozas continued to practice Judaism secretly. The Inquisition was primarily aimed at rooting out insincere converts, rather than finding the remaining Jews. Conversos had to be very careful in their behavior. For example, nosy neighbors might report you for such obviously Jewish behavior as taking your weekly bath on Friday afternoon, instead of Sunday.

Mendoza is not a Jewish name, and it is possible that the family took that name because they had Christian friends named Mendoza and the friends agreed to be godparents at the baptism which marked their conversion. The intensity of the Inquisition varied from place to place and from time to time. Consequently we believe the family moved back and forth between Spain and Portugal quite often in the 16th and 17th centuries. When I was young my mother's family often referred to themselves as Portuguese.

The earliest genealogical record my family has is of David Mendoza being born in 1655 in Jaen, Spain. That record came not from Spain, but from the Municipal Archives in Amsterdam, for a reason that will be explained soon.

Having survived for almost two centuries as secret Jews, the Mendozas decided it was time to look for a more secure future, away from the influence of the Inquisition. For much of the 16th century the Netherlands was part of the Spanish empire, and during that time Converso merchants had a strong trading presence there. When the Dutch gained independence from Spain in 1581 they continued to trade with Portugal. Spanish and Portuguese Converso merchants were common in Amsterdam, and the strongly Protestant Dutch encouraged them to “come out” openly as Jews. The Spanish and Portuguese Jewish Synagogue

was founded in Amsterdam around 1610 and became a magnet for Converso refugees from Portugal and Spain.

David Mendoza married Abigail, who was born in Spain in 1653. We know of Abigail's birth date not from Spanish records but from London. Abigail died in London in 1751 at age 98, thereby starting a family genetic tradition that I hope to continue. One of my mother's sisters—a true Mendoza—was born in 1899 and died in 2002, thus having lived in three different centuries.

David and Abigail had four children: Daniel, born 1685; Moses, born 1688; Jacob, born 1690; and Rachel, born 1698. They were all born in Spain or Portugal, but we know their birth dates from records of the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish community in Amsterdam.

Sometime in the late 17th century, David and Abigail found a way to take their entire family to Amsterdam and thus return to their Jewish roots. The Spanish and Portuguese Jewish community in Amsterdam was overwhelmed by the number of Conversos seeking refuge, many of them relying on charity. The community looked for ways to help these fellow Jews find safe homes in other Protestant countries and relieve the burden in Amsterdam. The two most common Protestant destinations for Conversos from Amsterdam were London and Germany. Fortunately, David Mendoza's oldest son Daniel chose London, otherwise I may not have been here to write this story. Below is an extract from the book of accounts of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue in Amsterdam, dated 3 Tishrei 5475, corresponding to 12 September 1714. It shows that the synagogue paid 53 florins to Daniel Mendoza to go to *Londres con sua familia* ("London with his family"). In other words, they paid my ancestors to get out of town (a fact my wife sometimes reminds me of).

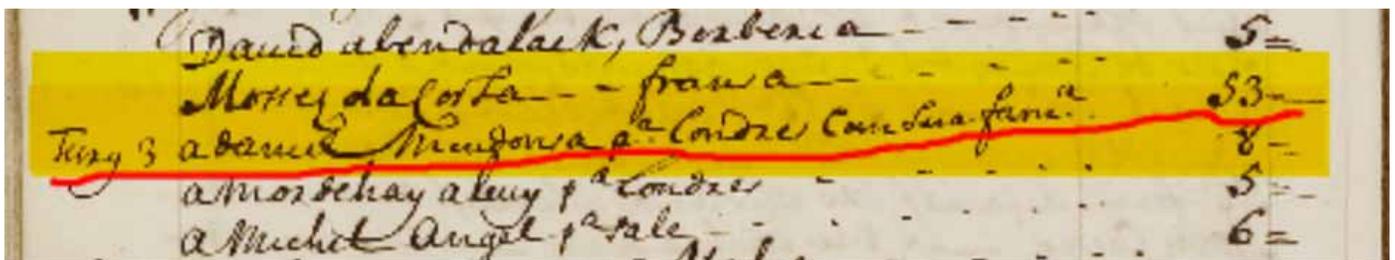
Why would London accept them? To answer that we have to quickly review a little history of Jews in England. There is no record of Jews in England prior to it being conquered by the appropriately named "William the Conqueror" in 1066. William had previously employed Jews in his native Normandy to collect taxes and provide a coin currency.

No such system existed in England, and William decided he would prefer to collect taxes in coin form rather than in cows or sheep (coins do not produce manure). Thus he imported a number of Jews from Rouen to implement this coin taxation system. Needless to say, this did not make Jews very popular with the average English taxpaying peasant.

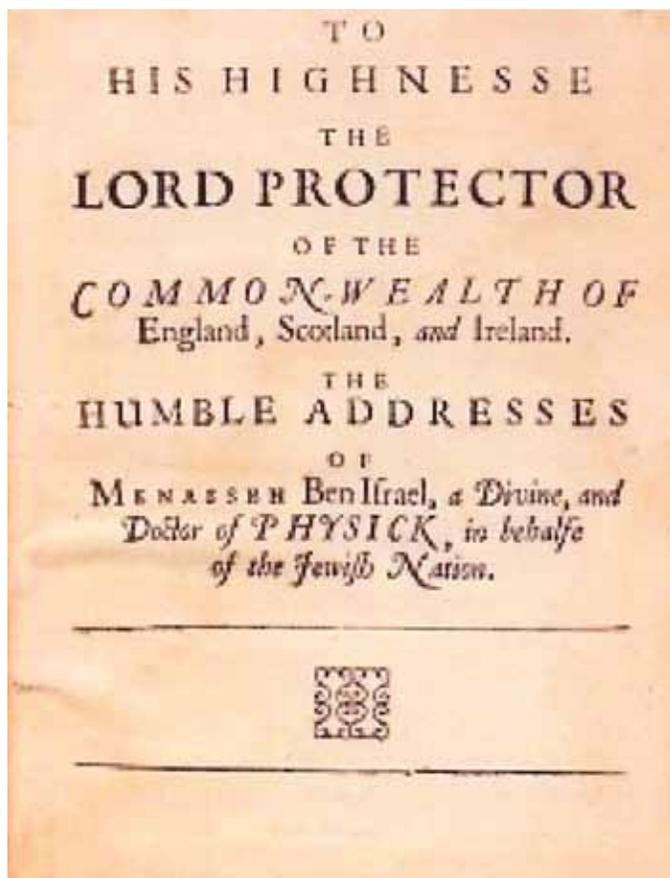
Jews continued to live precariously in England for the next 100 years because their value to a series of kings afforded them some protection. With the rise of the Crusades, however, violence against Jews increased. In 1190 in York 150 were killed. Things became worse during the 13th century, resulting in the arrest of all Jews in 1278, with 300 being executed in 1279, and finally the expulsion of all Jews in 1290.

That hardly sounds like the kind of place Daniel Mendoza would want to take his family in 1714, but there had been a lot of changes in England by then. A civil war started in 1642 between the Parliamentarians and the Royalists over the manner in which the country should be governed. The war resulted in the execution of King Charles I in 1649; the exile of his son, Charles II, in 1651; and the replacement of the English monarchy with a commonwealth in 1649 and a protectorate in 1653 under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell. While all this was going on there was a war between England and the Netherlands which lasted from 1652 to 1654, and war was declared by England against Spain in 1656.

Despite the expulsion of Jews in 1290 a number of Converso merchants were living in London who were engaged in shipping between England, Spain, and the Netherlands. They represented themselves as Spanish citizens, not Jews. This became a problem when England went to war with Spain in 1656. They solved the problem by "coming out" as Jews instead of Spaniards. Oliver Cromwell thought Conversos could help his government increase its international trade. About the same time the Jewish Community in Amsterdam was faced with a flood of Converso refugees from Spain and Portugal.



Tishry 3, p<sup>a</sup> Daniel Mendoza a Londres con sua fam<sup>a</sup>, 53-



To His Highness the Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland, the Humble Addresses of Menasseh Ben Israel (1655)

Menasseh ben Israel was a leader of the Amsterdam Jewish community and saw an opportunity to transfer some of the local Converso problem to England. So he visited Oliver Cromwell and presented a petition on 24 March 1656, asking permission for Jews to be allowed to resettle in England. The image above is reproduced from the records of the Bevis Marks Synagogue in London. On 24 June 1656 Cromwell gave his oral consent, which was never committed to writing.

On 19 December 1656 the newly liberated Jews in London acquired a lease on a house in Creechurch Lane and started converting it to a synagogue. On 13 November 1699 the new congregation signed a lease for land in a street called Bevis Marks. Thus started what became the Bevis Marks Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue in London, which Daniel Mendoza joined in 1714 and which still stands. The Bevis Marks Synagogue has meticulous records in English of circumcisions, marriages, and burials from 1657 through today. Those records have been printed and published in six books, and I have a complete set.

Most early members of the Bevis Marks congregation were newly arrived Conversos from Spain and Portugal.

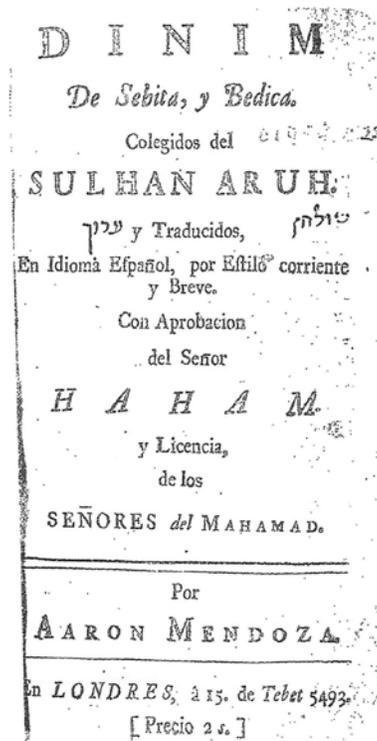
As such they had not enjoyed the luxury of formal Jewish religious services for major family events. They were anxious to correct that when they arrived in London. Some were “remarried” according to Jewish law. Some adult men decided to be circumcised. There are even some records of men doing both on the same day—not a comfortable thought!

When Daniel and Abigail Mendoza left Amsterdam for London in 1714 they had three children with them. The oldest of these was Aaron, who was born in 1710 in Amsterdam, and who would have been 4 years old when arriving in London. We know from the Bevis Marks records that Aaron married Benvenida Tubi in London on 22 March 1730. Aaron and Benvenida were the patriarch and matriarch of my English Mendoza family. My grandmother, Rachel Mendoza, was a great-great-granddaughter of Aaron and Benvenida. As was common in Jewish families, female children were often named after a grandmother, and we will find Benvenida reappearing in this story.

As Aaron was only 4 when he left Amsterdam and was born to Converso parents, we can assume that most of the learning that he had of Judaism was obtained in London after his arrival. He must have been a diligent student, because he became the first official kosher butcher of the London Jewish community at age 23. On 5 March 1733 he published a book on *shechita*. An original copy is in the Jewish Museum in London.

The book contains 34 pages and includes a dedication to the *Haham*, or chief rabbi, and a recognition that the book is licensed by *Los Señores del Mahamad*, or the Board of Directors. It also has an explanation by the *Haham* which states that it was translated into the Spanish language, presumably from Portuguese, the language used by Aaron Mendoza.

The next interesting Mendoza was Aaron and Benvenida’s grandson Daniel, who was born on 5 July 1764. Growing



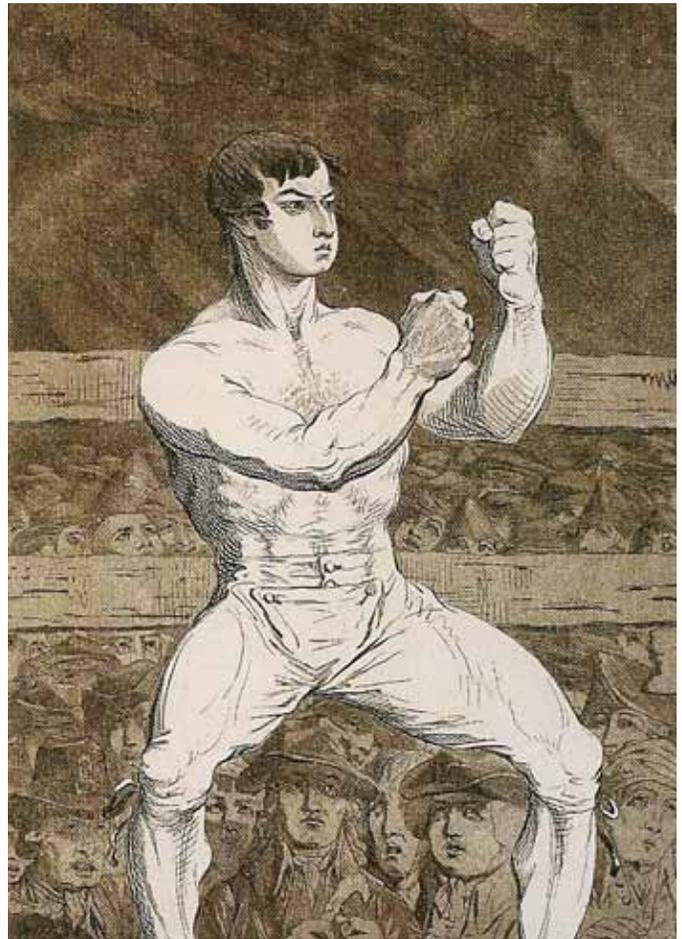
up in a tough part of East London (incidentally close to where I was born), Daniel quickly learned as a child to defend himself in street fights. He became a professional boxer and is credited with introducing the “science” of ducking and weaving into boxing. He soon became the boxing champion of England. The Prince of Wales was one of his fans and took Daniel to Windsor Castle to meet his father, King George III. It was the first time the King had ever met a Jew, let alone a street fighter from the East End of London. Whether the King found the meeting much consolation for the recent loss of his American colonies has not been recorded.

In 1785 Daniel beat “Martin the Butcher” in a record 20 minutes. Thanks to the patronage of the Prince he earned 1,000 pounds from that fight. He continued to earn his living by giving boxing exhibition fights but was often the object of disparaging remarks about his religion. On one such occasion he is said to have thrashed one Squire Fitzgerald within an inch of his life.

Daniel finally lost the title in 1795 but continued exhibition bouts and opened a boxing school to teach poor Jewish kids in East London how to defend themselves in the tough streets. Daniel’s family life was not as glorious as his boxing career, however. He often drank his prize money before he got home, and his wife had continual problems paying the rent. One thing he often did give her when he came home was another child—eleven in all. He died in 1836, leaving his wife destitute.

And here is where the first of the genealogical coincidences occurred. Daniel was buried in the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish cemetery in Mile End Road in London. In the early 1900’s Queen Mary College of the University of London was established on a site in Mile End Road immediately west of the Jewish cemetery. I attended Queen Mary College in the late 1950’s. At that time the college was growing rapidly and looking for adjacent land upon which to build. College representatives approached Bevis Marks Synagogue and offered to buy the land occupied by the cemetery, give the congregation an alternative site on the outskirts of London, and pay for the removal and reburial of all the remains. It was agreed that the congregation would keep a small plot for a few special graves, including that of Daniel Mendoza, and so I witnessed the rededication of his grave, although I did not know of our relationship at the time.

Two of Daniel’s children were the family members whose unfortunate misunderstandings with the law brought the Mendoza name into disrepute. We know about Daniel’s children Sophia and Abraham because their careers are recorded for posterity at the Old Bailey, London’s Central



*Daniel Mendoza, boxer (1764–1836); drawing attributed to 1 January 1836*

Criminal Court (a subject my wife often reminds me of when we have a minor family disagreement). You can read of their deeds at <http://www.oldbailyonline.org/>.

Abraham Mendoza was tried at the Old Bailey on 10 July 1816 and indicted for “feloniously assaulting Joseph Wood in the King’s Highway on April 7th and taking from his person and against his will a watch, value 15 pounds and a chain, value 4 pounds.” Abraham’s defense was that he was late for an appointment, just wanted to borrow the watch to tell the time, and forgot to return it. Unfortunately, the jury did not buy his story, and he was sentenced to death at age 22. His sentence was later commuted to transportation for life to Australia, where he eventually died in a Sydney hospital.

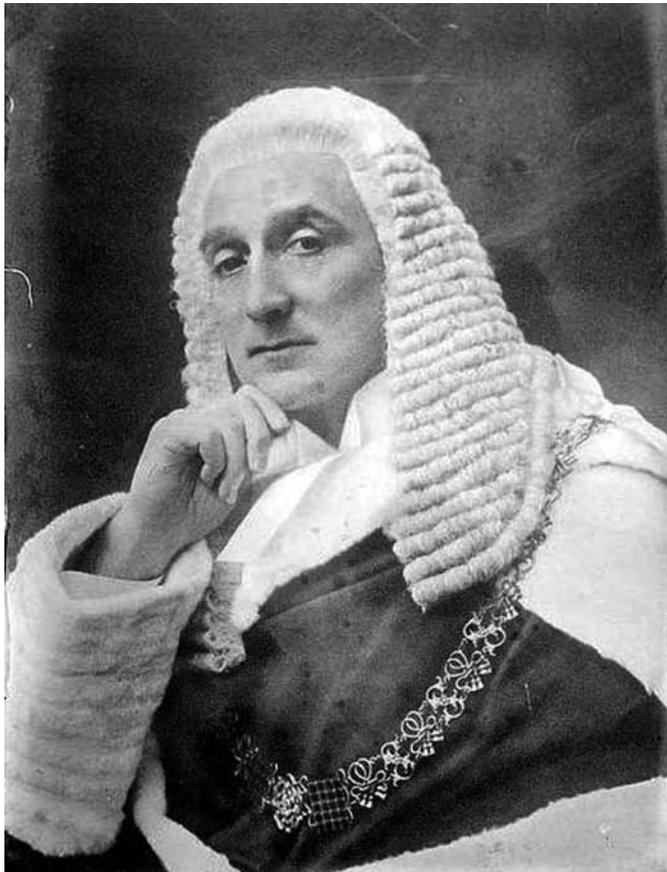
Daniel’s daughter, Sophia, was a lady(?) of some dubious virtue. In April 1828 she was 34 years old and living in what might be euphemistically called a rooming house. One of her neighbors was short of money (business was slow?) and asked Sophia to take some items to the pawnbroker for her. Sadly, the neighbor did not remember asking Sophia to take the items, and so Sophia was tried and convicted

on 29 May 1828 at the Old Bailey of stealing a teapot, a tea caddy, and seven chimney ornaments.

For stealing just over one pound's worth of goods Sophia was sentenced to be transported to Tasmania at His Majesty's expense for seven years. Surprisingly, she was not the only Jewish woman in the Tasmanian jail. Also there was Ann Solomon, wife of the notorious London fence Ikey Solomon. Ikey was the real-life character upon whom Charles Dickens is reputed to have based his character Fagin. Ikey escaped from the police while being transported from prison to the Old Bailey for his trial, so the police decided to arrest his wife on a charge of receiving stolen property, and she ended up in the same prison as Sophia.

By examining records in the police museum in Hobart I have been able to reconstruct some of Sophia's adventures in prison. By a series of episodes of bad conduct Sophia managed to extend her original sentence of seven years to 25 years. One of her more colorful misdeeds was being found drunk and disorderly in a military barracks.

Lest you think all of my ancestors were criminals (an assertion often hinted at by my wife), I will now discuss the efforts of some reputable Mendozas who have fought hard to enforce the law and restore the good name of Mendoza.



Rufus Daniel Isaacs, 1st Marquess of Reading (1860–1935)

Our English patriarch and matriarch, Aaron and Benvenida, had a great-granddaughter, Sarah Mendoza, who was born in London in 1793. She married Michael Isaacs, and their son, Rufus Daniel Isaacs, was born in 1860. Rufus was anxious to restore the good name of his mother's family and so became a lawyer (which may seem counterintuitive to some). He then became a Member of Parliament in 1904. To go even further to correct the image of relatives who were criminals, he was appointed Lord Chief Justice—the chief law enforcement officer in the kingdom—from 1913 to 1921.

Later Rufus was briefly British Ambassador to Washington. Then he became Viceroy of India, ruling "The Jewel in the Crown" on behalf of the King. While ruling India he imprisoned Mahatma Gandhi. For such outstanding service to the Empire he was promoted to Marquess of Reading in 1926, the highest rank in the British peerage ever achieved by a Jew.

I have mentioned that it was a tradition to name the female children in the Mendoza family after our matriarch Benvenida. After about 150 years of being in London it was thought appropriate to Anglicize Benvenida's name. So when Isaac Mendoza, son of Daniel Mendoza the boxer and brother of Abraham and Sophia, had a daughter, born in December 1854, she was named Welcome Mendoza, a literal translation. (My grandmother, Rachel Mendoza, was born in 1864. She and Welcome shared the same great-grandfather, Moses Mendoza, Aaron and Benvenida's son, who was born in 1740.)

Welcome Mendoza married Solomon Marks in June 1877. They had a daughter, Agnes, who was born in 1895. Solomon Marks died quite young, leaving Welcome Mendoza with ten children to support. She tackled this problem in a very entrepreneurial (Mendoza) way. She decided to put her brood on the vaudeville stage and start her own vaudeville management company. She assumed the stage name of Belle Ray. The family performed at a variety of English seaside resorts, never reaching the bright lights of the London stage. Welcome bought a large transparent water tank and had her two daughters appear on stage as scantily clad nymphs. The act was a hit with the men in the audience.

While performing at Portsmouth, Belle Ray and Agnes met an itinerant piano player from Yorkshire named Bill Sellers. Agnes married William Sellers in a civil ceremony in 1923 (he was a Protestant). Are you beginning to guess the ending? That's right—Agnes and William had a son in 1925, Richard Henry, whom they called Peter. Peter went on to be a famous comedian and movie star. Among his



*Peter Sellers as Group Captain Mandrake in Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb (released in 1964)*

most famous films was *Dr. Strangelove*, in which he played three roles: the U.S. President, the crazy ex-Nazi scientist Dr. Strangelove, and Group Captain Mandrake of the Royal Air Force.

My second genealogical coincidence occurred when Peter Sellers and I met during the filming of a scene in the movie in which Group Captain Mandrake is in a computer room. The scene was shot in October 1963 at the IBM London Data Center, where I was a brand-new trainee working as the computer console operator. I was sitting in my chair at the IBM 1410 computer, making all the tape drives twitch, and then Peter replaced me in the chair in order to shoot the scene. Who knows—if we had not exchanged chairs I might have become a famous movie star and he might have been writing papers on genealogy. At the time neither of us knew of our relationship, which is a shame, because I am sure Peter would have liked to tell his famous friends that

he had met the Alan Silverman. [Editor: And in an amusing instance of irony, I was told by my paternal grandfather that I was related to Peter Sellers through him but have since disproved that by learning that my grandfather was not biologically a Sellers.]

Of course, Sellers' other famous role has more to do with efforts to restore the reputation of the Mendoza name. He was famous as the bumbling French detective Inspector Clouseau, in pursuit of truth, justice, and the French way—and always in pursuit of the Pink Panther.

At the start of this story I told you we would end up in San Francisco. That is where my son, in a further effort to put the Mendoza name on the correct side of the law, is a captain in the San Francisco Police Department. He is part of an informal group of law enforcement officers known as the "Jews in Blue" or *Shomrim*, the Hebrew word for "guardians."



## Sephardic Jews in Central and Northern Poland

Kevin Alan Brook

Kevin Alan Brook is a historian in Connecticut, U.S.A., who has written on Eastern European Jewish themes, the Karaites, and the Khazar kingdom in books and journals and on his site Khazaria.com. His previous articles in the Sephardic series appeared in the May 2016 and August 2016 issues of *ZichronNote*.

The historian Bernard Weinryb denied that Sephardic immigrants had a lasting impact on Polish Jewish communities, asserting, "Few of the Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain in 1492 and from Portugal in 1497, and few of the Marranos (crypto-Jews) later, made their way to Poland. Of the ones that did, few remained there. . . . Some individual Sephardim who reached and settled on the Polish lands may later have . . . been assimilated among the Polish Jewish population, but only a very small number of people were involved." In a previous article, I summarized evidence of extensive Sephardic settlement of southeastern Poland, whose descendants are widely dispersed among Ashkenazim today. The present article contains equally decisive evidence for Sephardim in central and northern areas of Poland.

A number of Sephardic businessmen moved from Amsterdam, Netherlands and Hamburg, Germany to Gdańsk, a city along the Baltic coast in northern Poland. Some stayed and raised families there, while others moved back west.

The Portuguese Jewish merchant Paulo de Millao (called Mosche Abensur in the Jewish community), son of the converso Enrique Dias Millao from Lisbon, escaped from Portugal in 1610 and lived in Gdańsk later that decade. According to Susan Sherman, some members of the Dias Millao family, descendants of Paulo's sister Beatriz and her salt-trading husband, Álvaro Diniz, still lived in Poland in the 1700's and 1800's, including in Bakalarzewo, a village in northeastern Poland, where some continued to trade in salt, although doubts have been raised by other expert genealogists about their claim of descendancy.

Several Sephardic merchants were found living in Gdańsk. Francisco Dias Nunes lived in Gdańsk as of 1618–1623, where he dealt with goods such as rye, cinnamon, and fabrics. Gabriel de Valenca also lived for a time in Gdańsk in the early 1600's. Jacob Abensur from Denmark lived part of his life in Gdańsk in the late 1600's. Brothers Joshua and Isaac Palache, members of a Spanish Jewish family, temporarily resided in Gdańsk in 1618–1619 but later left Poland. Sephardic merchants bearing the surnames Abenjacar, Castiel, de Lima, and Dubetent lived and worked in Gdańsk between the 1620's and 1640's.

According to Frank Meisler, the horse-trader Louis Boss (1855–1940) was born in Gdańsk into an exiled Spanish Jewish family originally named Boaz and died there too. His great-grandfather had moved from the Netherlands to Gdańsk.

Moses Zacuto, a Portuguese Jew living in Amsterdam, bought 38 cloths and in 1622 requested they be sent to the city of Poznań, in west-central Poland, where his sons Mordechay Zacuto and Abraham Bensamerro lived and were waiting to trade these goods. I assume that the Polish Jews named Zakuta descend from the Zacuto family. In Szczuczyn, a town in northeastern Poland in Łomża Gubernia, Elia Zakuta was married in 1886 and Israel Zakuta was born in 1900.

The Sephardic physician Isaac de Lima, born in the Portuguese village of Ponte de Lima circa 1479, died in Poznań. Isaac's son Judah ben Isaac de Lima was born in Poznań circa 1512, and Judah's son Samuel ben Judah de Lima was born there around 1545. Samuel's son Judah ben Samuel de Lima was a physician in Poznań like his great-grandfather and died there in 1641. This younger Judah's son Moses ben Judah de Lima (born circa 1611 in Poznań) was likewise a physician there and was the father of Juda de Lima Pozner Norden (born circa 1644 in Poznań), whose son was born in the Netherlands and had descendants there. Judah's daughter married Rabbi Solomon Calahora (1580–1650) from Łeczyca in central Poland, grandson of the Sephardic physician Salomon Calahora from Italy. Rabbi Solomon's son, Rabbi Yosef Calahorra (1600–1696), and Yosef's son, Arye Kalifari, were preachers in Poznań. Some descendants of these people stayed in Poznań, and some live as part of the Ashkenazi population today.

Many Jewish individuals with the surname Portugal lived in these regions. For instance, the siblings Berla, Abraham, and Majer Portugal were born between 1832 and 1842 in the city of Sierpc in north-central Poland. Majer was married there in 1860, and his son Rubin Portugal (named after his grandfather) was born there in 1861. Other children with the surname Portugal were born in the central Polish town of Zakroczym in 1880 and 1884 and the north-central Polish town of Mława between 1860 and 1870. In the 19th and 20th centuries, marriages of Jews surnamed

Portugal took place in central Poland, including in the cities of Warsaw and Łódź, the town of Rawa Mazowiecka, and the village of Kuczbork. As of 1907, Zelik Portugal was a registered voter in Sochaczew, a city in Warszawa Gubernia in central Poland.

Aharon Portuges was buried in 1906 in the Jewish cemetery on Okopowa Street in Warsaw. Hersz Szpanier and Ludwig Szpanier were buried in a Jewish cemetery in Łódź in 1935 and 1941, respectively.

Szewach Sford was born in 1867 in Suwałki, a town in northeastern Poland, to Kofeł Sford and his wife, Szejna Blankicka. The Yiddish writer Dovid Sford (1905-1981), originally from western Ukraine, lived in Warsaw during some years in the 1920s and 1930s and returned again to Poland after World War II, where he became involved with the Warsaw-based publisher Yidish-bukh.

Hiszpański means "Spanish" in Polish. Stanisław Hiszpański was a Jewish homeowner in Warsaw in the 1850's–1870's. The Jewish peddler Antoni Hiszpanski was a registered voter in Radomsko in south-central Poland as of 1918. A Jewish Hiszpanski family also lived in the Dobrzyń-Golub area of northern Poland in the 19th century where, for instance, the siblings Ozier and Michla Hiszpanski were born in the 1810's.

Szaja Algoze, a member of the Algazi rabbinical family that originated in the Sephardic Mediterranean, was born in 1887 in the town of Andrzejewo in Łomża Gubernia. A son of Maryjem Algaze, Fiszel Rozenberg, died in 1909 in Warsaw.

Five children with the Sephardic surname Dylion were born in Łódź between 1888 and 1902: Dwejra, Fiszel Dawid, Adam, Cywiia, and Zbignew. In the nearby town of Zgierz, immediately north of Łódź, Berta and Hinda Dylion were born in 1861 and 1864, respectively. Chana Dylion was born in 1857 in the village of Wizna in Łomża Gubernia in northeastern Poland. Multiple marriages and deaths of Jews from Dylion families took place in Warsaw.

Some members of the Sephardic Bondy family that also inhabited southern Poland lived in Warsaw.

Alfus is a variant spelling of the Sephardic surname Alfasi. Many Jews with the surname Alfus were born in Warsaw between 1908–1913, in Tomaszów Mazowiecki in central Poland between 1891–1904, in Rawa Mazowiecka in central Poland between 1847–1890, in Opoczno in south-central Poland between 1829–1862, and in Radom in east-central Poland in 1885. Marriages involving Alfus family members took place in Łódź in 1890 and 1902. Some Jews with the original form of the name, Alfasi, also lived in

Poland in the 19th and 20th centuries. Moshe Simcha Alfus, a 19th-century religious judge and rabbi in Opoczno who also resided for years in Rawa Mazowiecka and Ujazd, was alternatively known as Moses Alfasi. Moshe's son Abraham Alfus alias Alfasi served as a rabbi in Drzewica, a town in Opoczno County. Moshe Yitzhak Alfasi from Drzewica died in Otwock in 1922 and was buried in its cemetery.

The Spanish surname Alba was also held by Jews in Poland. Some of them lived in Raciąż, a town within Płock Gubernia in central Poland. For instance, Josek Alba's daughter Basja Alba, born there in 1833, was still living in Raciąż, under the married name Pestka, near the end of the 19th century, as were her sons Josek and Jakow Pestka, who were born there in 1858 and 1872, respectively. Basja's sister Zlata Alba, born in town in 1837, was still a resident under the married name Rubin as the end of the century approached, and Zlata's children Sura and Ginan Rubin, born in Raciąż in 1866 and 1868 respectively, remained late in the century. Albas also had a presence in Płock, a city on the Vistula River in central Poland, where Lejb Alba was married in 1897 and Ryfka Laia Alba was born in 1902. Zanwel Alba, born in 1902 in Warsaw, moved to Lublin and survived the Holocaust.

Abugow is the Polish spelling of a surname of Sephardic origin that was spelled Abugov further east. Five Jewish children surnamed Abugow (Sasza, Zalmen, Wolf, Hersz, and Mejer) were born in Łódź between 1897 and 1903. Mejer was registered as a student there nearly two decades later. Zelik Abugow and Mendel Abugow were buried in Łódź's Jewish cemetery in 1931 and 1940, respectively.

Alexander Beider believes that the surname Rynaldo is probably of Sephardic origin. Some Jews with this surname lived in Płock and Łódź. Beider thinks Domingo is also probably Sephardic. The Jew Khemiya Domingo married Laya Monka in 1897 in Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki in Warszawa Gubernia. Saul Domingo was buried in the Jewish cemetery on Okopowa Street in Warsaw in 1933.

Beider speculated that Eastern European Jews with the surname Abarbanel didn't inherit it from the Spanish Jewish family of that name: "It is possible, for example, that at the beginning of the 19th century, its progenitor adopted artificially this Sephardic name, due to the fame attributed in Jewish history to Don Isaac Abarbanel (1437–1508)." Cecil Roth asserted that those carrying the name in Poland and the southern Russian Empire were authentic members of the Abarbanel family. Majer Abarbanel was born in 1849 in Wołyń, a village in Siedlce Gubernia in eastern Poland, and Chana Leia Abarbanel's son Srul Ofenhejm was born in 1870 in Biała Podlaska, a city in the same gubernia.

Avraham Abarbanel was buried in the Jewish cemetery on Okopowa Street in Warsaw in 1937.

Jews were born with the surname Majman (often representing descent from the Sephardic Maimon family) in such central Polish locales as Warsaw, Żyrardów, and Piotrków Trybunalski.

Paula Firestone Spiro's recent ancestors were Jews who lived in Warsaw and Łódź and had typical Ashkenazi surnames. Her paternal uncle had informed her that it was believed that her Feuerstein family from Łódź, owners of a prosperous import/export business, had originated in Spain before moving temporarily to Germany. Paula shares a triangulating identical-by-descent autosomal DNA segment with not only me, my mother, and other Eastern European Jews but also with multiple non-Ashkenazi Latin Americans including a New Mexican Hispano, a Cuban, and a Dominican, and with one Moroccan Jew, two Syrian Jews (at least one of whose ancestors recently lived in Aleppo, where some Spanish Jews had settled), and a half-Ashkenazi person whose other parent came from a Ladino-speaking Sephardic family from Thessaloniki, Greece. The common ancestor for this cluster of DNA matches must have been Sephardic.

Matches between North African Jews and Mexican Catholics are routine. I made a similar discovery recently on Joshua Weinstein's segment that he and my mother share with some Mexicans and a Costa Rican that I discussed in my article about Lithuanian Sephardim. After its publication, I found a new Algerian bearer of that segment who is the grandchild of an Algerian Jew with a Spanish surname and a known Sephardic family history.

I have obtained the consent of all the named DNA testers for whom I made discoveries using GEDMatch to have their results discussed, and they have seen and approved the paragraphs I wrote about them.

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## David Nathan Walter: A San Francisco Jewish Pioneer and His Descendants

Sheri L. Fenley

Sheri is a professional genealogist and historical researcher located in Stockton, California. She is the author of the blog "The Educated Genealogist", which was voted as one of *Family Tree Magazine's* Top 40 Blogs in 2010. This is a revised version of an article that first appeared in the Fall 2011 issue of *The California Nugget*, published by the California Genealogical Society.

Within the large gilded circle of the Jewish elite in San Francisco in the later 1800's was a smaller, even more exclusive circle whose members referred to themselves as "Reckendorf aristocracy."<sup>1</sup> David and Isaac Walter, Isaias Hellman, and Jacob and Abraham Haas were boyhood friends in the small Bavarian village of Reckendorf. As adults living in San Francisco, they maintained a close-knit community of prosperous and extremely wealthy businessmen.

In 1848, at the age of ten, David Walter left Reckendorf with an aunt to live in Albany, New York to attend school.<sup>2</sup> Ten years later he made his way to San Francisco to meet up with five younger brothers—Emanuel, Isador, Moritz, Isaac, and Herman—to establish D. N. & E. Walter & Company, a wholesale carpet business first located at 82 Sacramento Street.<sup>3</sup> (The company's name came from the names of two of the brothers, David Nathan and Emanuel.) The very next year, in 1859, silver was discovered at the Comstock Lode, and people with newfound fortunes began pouring into San Francisco. Lavish homes went up quickly, and the demand for home furnishings grew. D. N. & E. Walter & Company expanded its inventory to meet those demands, and brother Herman was sent to open a store in Portland, Oregon. In 1878, the company opened a branch office in New York City, and by 1900, with additional stores in Los Angeles and Seattle, D. N. & E. Walter & Company was the largest home furnishings company in the west.<sup>4</sup>

In 1862 David Walter went back to Albany, New York to find a wife. He chose Hannah Smith, a childhood friend, daughter of Jacob and Gertrude Smith.<sup>5</sup> On their way back to San Francisco, they stopped in Chicago, Illinois, where they married on 20 November.<sup>6</sup>

Marriages among the families within the gilded circle produced a staggering network of influence. David's brother Moritz married Sophie Seligman, and his aunt Addie Walter married Henry Seligman, of the prominent banking family in New York. Later, other successful local Jewish immigrant families, such as the Haas, Hellman, Koshland, Fleishhacker, Heller, Gerstle, Lilienthal, and Brandenstein families, were connected to the Walter family through numerous ties of marriage.

When David Walter applied for a passport on 11 March 1867 in New York, to make the first of many trips back to Bavaria, he stated that he had become a naturalized citizen in the U.S. District Court of the Northern District of California on 1 November 1860. His physical features were described on the document: He was 5 feet, 6 inches tall with a prominent nose, large mouth, round chin, sallow complexion, long oval face, medium forehead, black eyes, and black hair.<sup>7</sup>

In the 1870 census D. N. Walter was recorded as having real estate valued at \$15,000 and a personal estate valued at \$100,000, substantial sums for the time.<sup>8</sup> With D. N. & E. Walter & Company doing so well, he was able to engage in a number of other interests. He was a director of both the Nevada Bank and the German Savings and Loan Society, both in San Francisco.<sup>9</sup> He belonged to the Concordia and Verein (now Argonaut) social clubs. The Concordia club, located on Van Ness Avenue between Post and Geary streets, is one of the oldest and most important social organizations in the west. Organized in 1864, it was described in 1899 as "the principal Jewish society in the city", whose membership was primarily composed of wholesale merchants.<sup>10</sup> David Walter owned several thousand dollars' worth of shares of the San Francisco and San Joaquin Valley Railroad Company<sup>11</sup> and was a director of the San Francisco Board of Trade. The \$150 Walter Cup, the winning prize of the California Yacht Club, was sponsored by D. N. & E. Walter & Company.<sup>12</sup>

The Walter home, located on the northeast corner of Van Ness Avenue and Sacramento Street in San Francisco, was built by the architectural firm Schmidt and Shea, which also designed the Haas-Lilienthal mansion, still standing today at 2007 Franklin Street. Hosting lavish parties was par for the course, and no expense was spared, as seen in this 1897 article from the Jewish newspaper Emanu-El:<sup>13</sup>

"One of the pleasantest entertainments ever given in San Francisco was that given one evening last week by Mr. and Mrs. D. N. Walter at their home, 1700 Van Ness Avenue. It was complimentary to Miss Clara Hellman, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. I. W. Hellman, and the invitations asked a hundred and more friends to meet the young guest of honor



*The Walter home at Van Ness and Sacramento*

'at a gathering of the gypsies.' Following the plan of the hostess, Miss Mary Bates carried it out in most picturesque detail. The handsome dining-room of the Walter mansion was converted into a gypsy camp. There were tents of skins and canvas, the tripod with the kettle and all sorts of things that go to make up the typical settlement of the Romanies. The other rooms were canvased for dancing and appropriately decorated. Miss Hellman was not with Mrs. Walter to greet the guests, but made her appearance in a beautiful tableau surrounded by a dozen young ladies like herself in gorgeous gypsy garb, she being the queen. After this pretty general introduction she received 'in camp,' graciously dispensing its hospitality. Interest was added to this scene by the presence of 'real' gypsies from a camp on the outskirts. They told past, present and future to the great amusement of the young people. Dice were shaken for prizes. An Italian supper prepared by a chef of that nationality was served before midnight, after which dancing was resumed."

As the summer months in San Francisco were foggy and chilly, the Walter family usually closed up the house in San Francisco to move to their summer home in San Rafael, or their home in the Sierras located two miles from Tahoe Tavern. The trip to Tahoe Tavern was an all-day excursion. The family would pack three or four cars and drive to the ferry, which would take them across the bay and into the delta to disembark in Sacramento, where they would have lunch before driving the eight to ten hours it took to get up to Tahoe Tavern.<sup>14</sup>

## **Children of David Nathan Walter and Hannah Smith**

In 1863 David and Hannah's first child, Jacob Smith Walter, was born. He contracted diphtheria and died in October 1865.<sup>15</sup>

Adele, the oldest daughter of David and Hannah, was born in 1867 in Bavaria, Germany and married Moses Heller 25 years later, in October 1891.<sup>16</sup> A newspaper account of the wedding noted that they were married beneath "a Sabbath Lamp that had been in the Walter family for over 200 years." Moses was the son of Martin Heller, another San Francisco Jewish merchant, who had amassed a huge fortune with the Heller Brothers dry goods business.<sup>17</sup> Adele and Moses had two children, Walter<sup>18</sup> and Ruth.<sup>19</sup> Walter married Jeanette Augusta Meier, from Portland, Oregon, the granddaughter of Aaron Meier, founder of the Meier and Frank Department Stores.<sup>20</sup> Ruth married Richard Herman Shainwald, a director of Wells Fargo Bank.<sup>21</sup> Richard and Ruth's daughter Dickie graduated from Stanford University with a B.A. in education in 1947 and a Master's in Physical Education in 1949, and became the president of the Women's Golf Association of Northern California in 1972<sup>22</sup>; daughter Barbara was the subject of a series of photos by famed photographer Dorothea Lange currently housed at the Oakland Museum of California.<sup>23</sup> After Moses Heller died at the family's vacation cabin in Yosemite National Park in 1931<sup>24</sup>, Adele lived as a permanent guest of the Mark Hopkins Hotel. She died in December 1936.<sup>25</sup>

Clarence Walter, the oldest surviving son, was born in 1871 in San Francisco; he went east to attend school, graduating from Harvard University in 1890.<sup>26</sup> He returned to California and in October 1898 married Rosalie Neustadter, the daughter of Jacob H. and Dora Neustadter.<sup>27</sup> Jacob Neustadter was part of Neustadter Brothers Clothing Manufacturers. After the birth of Clarence and Rosalie's three daughters, Dorothy, Mildred, and Rosalie, the family moved south of San Francisco to Atherton in San Mateo County. Clarence was a founding member of the Menlo Circus Club and a founder of the Menlo Park Fire District. He became vice president of D. N. & E. Walter & Company and held that position until his death in San Francisco in May 1940.<sup>28</sup> Daughter Dorothy was elected a Fellow of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, specializing in early childhood education.<sup>29</sup>

Rosie Walter, the second daughter, was born in 1873 in San Francisco; she married Abe Meertief, an executive with Levi Strauss Company, in January 1896.<sup>30</sup> Abe was the son of Solomon Meertief.<sup>31</sup> Rosie and Abe had one child,

Hannah, who in married 1915 Franklin Schwabacher, son of Sigmund and Rosa Schwabacher.<sup>32</sup> Sigmund Schwabacher began the Crown Willamette Corporation, the forerunner of Crown Zellerbach Corporation; Franklin became the vice president of Crown Zellerbach, a position he held until his death.<sup>33</sup> Rosie died in San Francisco in March 1924.<sup>34</sup>

Herbert David Walter, the youngest child, was born in 1878 in San Francisco. He married Ethel Bernard Gans in New York City in December 1912.<sup>35</sup> Ethel was the daughter of Levi Liberman Gans, a well known New York City merchant, and Jennie Bernard.<sup>36</sup> Ethel's brother, Howard S. Gans, was Assistant District Attorney in New York City from 1902 to 1909. He later formed the law firm of Gans & Iselin, where his clientele included Mortimer Schiff, a notable investment banker and early leader of the Boy Scouts of America.<sup>37</sup>

Herbert and Ethel moved back to San Francisco after the births of their daughters, Ethel and Margaret. Ethel married Alfred Magnell<sup>38</sup>, and Margaret married Ensign (later Lt. Commander) Bernhard H. Bieri, the son of Vice Admiral of the U.S. Navy Bernhard Henry Bieri.<sup>39</sup> Herbert Walter became a playwright of some note. He wrote *Code Book*, about Japanese espionage, and *Dress Parade*, a book about cadets at West Point Academy, which was made into a movie.<sup>40</sup> He died in San Francisco in 1956.<sup>41</sup>

David Nathan Walter died on 3 March 1900 at the age of 62, surrounded by his family at his home on Van Ness Avenue.<sup>42</sup> After David's death, Hannah Smith Walter went to live at the Mark Hopkins Hotel, where she died at age 85 in 1928.<sup>43</sup> Both David and Hannah are buried in the Walter family vault at Home of Peace Cemetery in Colma, California.<sup>44</sup>

One hundred fifty years later, D. N. & E. Walter & Company is still operational, although not in the home furnishings business. Today it is a privately held investment management company, and the descendants of David Walter and his brothers sit on the executive board.

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## What a Revelation!

Diane J. Levinson

Diane Levinson was both a teacher and social worker. Genealogy has become her addictive hobby for the last 30 years. She has seven grandchildren to pass the past on to.

I recently spent another day with my ten-and-a-half-year-old grandniece, Skyla, sharing my family history with her. I am astounded that a child this age is so passionate about finding out who her ancestors were and learning as much about them as possible. About a year ago, Skyla discovered Ancestry.com and has been a devotee ever since. She's computer literate and open to hearing stories of those who came before her.

My brother—her grandfather—passed away when she was five months old and left his autobiography, dedicated to her, which includes pictures from throughout his life. My goal on this particular day together was to go over those photos and tell her little stories so that she might “know” him better. I think about my own great-grandparents and the fact that I know so little about them as real persons, beyond names and dates. I want her to think of my parents as fully rounded personalities.

My own grandchildren have heard stories from time to time because we live in close proximity. But they aren't willing to sit with me for a day and have a real discussion regarding genealogy. I keep wondering why this delightful child has such an interest. Part of it is because she has an intense interest in all history and soaks it up in school. Skyla is an only child and relates well to adults. Her enthusiasm is expressed in her big brown eyes trimmed with long dark lashes. Her wonderment lights up her face.

Skyla is a mixture of cultures and religions. Her household is one of interfaith and multiculturalism. My own family takes on the role of sharing Judaism

with her. She loves to celebrate Passover and Hanukkah with us, and thinks that matzo balls and latkes are fabulous. Since she is the only one of my younger relatives carrying on my Jewish maiden name, I so much want her to feel at least half Jewish. Our mutual interest in genealogy has given me the route to helping that happen.

Today she learned that two of her Jewish ancestors were rather famous. That tickled her, and she loved being able to tell her father about the French captain Alfred Dreyfus and the violin-playing conductor Arnold Volpe, former conductor of the Miami Symphony. Those two men, of course, are her father's ancestors as well.

It's a revelation to me that such a young child could share a deep interest in genealogy because, in the past, I've always said that a person's children needed to be around age 50 before they care to know about who lived before them. Skyla has certainly changed my mind about that.



## Sale of the Arthur Szyk Collection and Archives

Genealogy Events, continued from page 4

The Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life at the University of California at Berkeley made a public announcement on 3 April 2017 that the largest single monetary gift to acquire art in the history of the university was used to purchase the Arthur Szyk Collection and Archives. The collection—the world's largest and most important collection of Szyk art—which was assembled by Irvin Ungar over more than 25 years, will be formally known as the Taube Family Arthur Szyk Collection. With the acquisition of this collection, made possible through Tad Taube, chairman of Taube Philanthropies, the Magnes will become the institutional custodian of the legacy of Arthur Szyk. In support of this endeavor, the Board of Directors of the Arthur Szyk Society, for which Ungar has served as in-kind curator for almost twenty years, has passed the mantle of institutional leadership to Dr. Francesco Spagnolo and his staff at the Magnes, a museum and research center cofounded more than 50 years ago by the late Seymour Fromer, former Vice President of the Arthur Szyk Society. The Magnes is the third largest Jewish museum in the United States.

The Magnes plans to welcome future Szyk researchers, students, and scholars into its doors on the UC Berkeley campus and in cooperation with UC Berkeley extend Szyk's art globally for generations to come. Licensing requests for use of Arthur Szyk art should be directed to [magnesrights@berkeley.edu](mailto:magnesrights@berkeley.edu). Questions regarding information about the collection should be directed to [magnesresearch@berkeley.edu](mailto:magnesresearch@berkeley.edu).

The Magnes Collection for Jewish Art and Life is located at 2121 Allston Way, Berkeley, CA 94720.



Szyk's *The Scribe* (1927)

of Arthur Szyk. He is looking forward to this coming September, when a major Szyk exhibition will open at the New York Historical Society, for which he is serving as guest curator. The exhibition will include a significant loan from the Taube Family Arthur Szyk Collection.

Tuesday, 15 August 2017. "Field Trip to Statewide Museum Collection." California Genealogical Society and Library, 2201 Broadway Suite LL2, Oakland. <http://californiaancestors.org/>

For more local events, visit <http://sfbagenealogy.blogspot.com> and <http://www.conferencekeeper.com/>.

### State and National

Sunday–Friday, 23–28 July 2017. 37th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. Orlando, Florida. <http://www.iajgs2017.org/>

Friday–Saturday, 28–29 July 2017. 2017 International Germanic Genealogy Conference. Minneapolis, Minnesota. <http://www.ggsnm.org/>

Wednesday–Saturday, 30 August–2 September 2017. FGS Annual Conference. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. <http://www.fgsconference.org/>

Tuesday–Thursday, 5–7 November 2017. Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies Annual Conference. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. <http://cryptojews.com/events.php>

Wednesday–Saturday, 22–25 August 2018. FGS Annual Conference. Fort Wayne, Indiana. <http://www.fgsconference.org/>

Wednesday–Saturday, 21–24 August 2019. FGS Annual Conference. Washington, D.C. <http://www.fgsconference.org/>

### International

Sunday–Saturday, 22 October–18 November 2017 (Cheshvan 5778). International Jewish Genealogy Month. <http://www.iajgs.org/jgmonth.html>

### Free Webinars

Florida State Genealogical Society. <http://www.flsgs.org/cpage.php?pt=253>

Illinois State Genealogical Society. <http://ilgensoc.org/cpage.php?pt=234>

Legacy Family Tree. <http://familytreewebinars.com/upcoming-webinars.php>

Southern California Genealogical Society. <http://www.scsgsgenealogy.com/>

Minnesota Genealogical Society. <http://mngs.org/eventListings.php?nm=38>

Wisconsin State Genealogical Society. <http://wsgs.org/cpage.php?pt=127>



## SFBAJGS Financial Report for 2016

Jeff Lewy, SFBAJGS Treasurer

2016 was another successful year for SFBAJGS. We held 16 meetings, with interesting and informative presentations on research sources, techniques, and personal family histories. We also cosponsored five additional presentations. We had a substantial turnout of 45 members at the annual IAJGS conference in Seattle in August, and 12 Society members made presentations at the conference. We are not the largest society in IAJGS, but we are one of the most active in supporting its goals of educating members and others on techniques and sources for their genealogical research.

On a more local note, we hosted a visit to the Colma Jewish cemeteries with a guide from the Colma Historical Society, and about 23 members and guests heard and saw an example of the value and interest of personal visits to a cemetery for their research.

Our members are generous donors to the Society, giving us the opportunity to support our mission:

- support and improve online sharing of data useful to researchers doing Jewish genealogy
- make new records available that support Jewish genealogical research
- support efforts to research and remember existing and vanished Jewish communities

We support activities in the local area that are consistent with this mission. Much of this work takes place where the communities and records are located, however, so it would be difficult for us to do the work ourselves. Therefore, we continued our practice of making donations to other organizations that are working in those communities and archives. We select projects to support based on their value to the broadest possible audience of researchers, the need to preserve and protect fragile sites, and the need to record data where the repositories and archives are newly open or at risk of restricting access.

This year, we donated \$7,400 to ten organizations for their activities. We include their URL's so that you can learn more about their activities if you wish.

### Local

- Jewish Community Library: to maintain and expand the very strong collection of materials related to Jewish genealogy and history in the San Francisco Bay Area  
<http://www.jewishlearningworks.org/jewish-community-library/>

- Commission for the Preservation of Pioneer Jewish Cemeteries and Landmarks in the West: to protect and maintain the seven Gold Rush-era Jewish cemeteries in the gold country of the Sierra foothills

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

- Oakland FamilySearch Library: to expand its collection of materials for Jewish research and support our Oakland meeting location

[https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Oakland\\_California\\_FamilySearch\\_Library/Contact\\_Information](https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Oakland_California_FamilySearch_Library/Contact_Information)

- Oakland Public Library Oakland History Room: to digitize photographs and other materials relating to the history of the Jewish communities of the East Bay

<http://oaklandlibrary.org/locations/oakland-history-room>

These materials are uploaded to the Online Archive of California and the Digital Public Library of America. We suggest you look at these two online portals, which are joint efforts of numerous libraries and archives in California and the U.S.

### National and International

- International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) Stern Fund: to increase the availability of resources for Jewish genealogical research

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

- Italian Genealogical Group: to support its ongoing online indexing of New York vital records

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

- Jewish Records Indexing-Poland: to support ongoing digitization and indexing of Jewish records, primarily from Polish archives

<http://jri-poland.org/>

- JewishGen: to the General Fund supporting the primary online site of Jewish genealogical records and instruction for researchers

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

We also made specific gifts to support JewishGen projects for (1) ROM-SIG indexing of records from Romanian archives, (2) Yizkor Book Translation Project, and (3) indexing of records from the former Hungarian county of Maramaros, now in Romania and Ukraine.

- Kirkuty: to support photography of Jewish cemeteries in Poland, both extant and desecrated, drawing attention to the remaining signs of the prewar presence of the Polish Jewish community

<http://kirkuty.xip.pl/indexang.htm>

- Nowy Dwor Jewish Memorial: to support recovery of gravestones of the desecrated cemetery of Nowy Dwor, Poland and construction of a memorial wall

<http://www.nowydworjewishmemorial.org/Mission.html>

### SFBAJGS Receives IAJGS Salute

The San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society was recognized by IAJGS for our contributions to other worthy genealogical organizations. This honor was only possible due to the generosity of our members, who have donated money in addition to their dues. So we salute you, our members, and thank you for allowing us to help make more records available to researchers. If you wish to read the salute, it can be found at <http://www.iajgs.org/blog/awards/iajgs-salutes/salute-to-sfbajgs/>.

### Financial Results for 2016

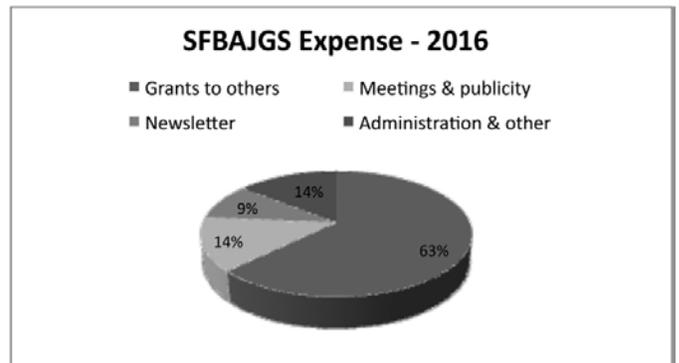
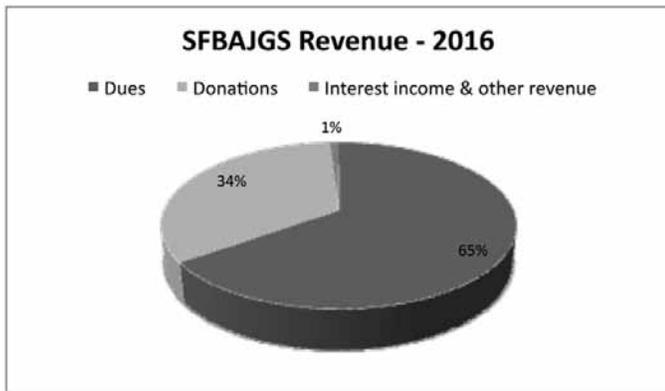
Revenues for 2016 were just over \$8,000, consistent with performance in past years, with more than \$5,000 in dues from 225 members, more than \$2,500 in donations, and a small amount of interest and other income. Thank

you for these donations, which support our activities and those of other groups doing work of great value to you, our members, and to the worldwide Jewish genealogical community.

Expenses totaled almost \$12,000, generating a loss of about \$3,900. This loss was incurred on purpose and was primarily a result of the \$7,400 in contributions. We did not make any contributions in 2015 and consequently decided to make about double our historic level of contributions (generally about \$3,500) in 2016. Details of those contributions are described above. Other major categories of expenses were meetings and publicity (\$1,600) and publication of the *ZichronNote* journal (\$1,100). All other expenses, including insurance, Web site maintenance, and other administrative expenses, totaled about \$1,900.

Below are simple pie charts showing the primary categories of revenue and expenses.

Thank you for your membership, your donations, and your interest in Jewish genealogy and family history. Please let us know if you have any questions on our performance and activities, and how we can most effectively help you with your research. Also let us know if there are any projects or activities you would like to see us undertake or support. We look forward to an informative and productive year in 2017.



**Invite a Friend to Join SFBAJGS**

<http://www.jewishgen.org/sfbajgs/about.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 familyfinder@sfbajgs.org or at P.O. Box 318214, San Francisco, CA 94131-8214.

<u>Surname</u>	<u>Town, Country</u>	<u>Member</u>
Babics	Yonkers, New York	Charles Rath
Elephant	Mosty-Wielkie, Poland	Harvey Helfand
Finkelstein	Duluth, Minnesota	Lindsay Sweetnam
Finkelstein	Pilviskiai, Lithuania	Lindsay Sweetnam
Greenberg	San Francisco	Stan Greenberg
Grunberg	Moinesti, Bacau, Romania	Stan Greenberg
Laszlo	Manhattan, New York	Charles Rath
Muller	Golub Dobrazyn, Poland	David Silverberg
Oreckovsky	Ukraine	Lindsay Sweetnam
Plotzker	Golub Dobrazyn, Poland	David Silverberg
Rath	Manhattan, New York	Charles Rath
Shulman	Wieruszow, Poland	David Silverberg
Silverberg	Wieruszow, Poland	David Silverberg
Spector	Russia	Harvey Helfand
Taylor	Eastport, Maine	Charles Rath
Unikovsky	Wieruszow, Poland	David Silverberg
Young	Grand Manon, New Brunswick	Charles Rath

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37<sup>TH</sup> IAJGS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
**JEWISH GENEALOGY**  
23-28 JULY 2017 • WALT DISNEY WORLD SWAN RESORT ORLANDO, FL

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETIES • JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER ORLANDO

The IAJGS 37<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Jewish Genealogy is fast approaching: July 23-28, 2017 at the Walt Disney World Swan Resort in Orlando Florida. The preliminary Conference schedule is available and up to date. As always, you can expect some changes as presentations are added and some maybe deleted. It will continue to be updated. In addition, prior to and during the Conference, an App will be freely updated with any program changes. To review the Program Calendar with more than 310 Lectures, Panels, Films by over 150 Lecturers, start here: <http://tinyurl.com/m9clw5q> Remember, there will be hands-on workshops with leading experts, a film festival, luncheons with distinguished speakers and a banquet. The Resource Room will offer *free access* to dozens of databases – many of which typically require a fee.

To begin the Conference registration process: <http://tinyurl.com/n8prpmt>

The Conference will be held on the grounds of Walt Disney World at The Disney World Swan Resort where many restaurants, shopping and entertainment venues are readily available. If you have already registered at the Swan Resort and know you will not attend the Conference in its entirety or wish to cancel certain nights, it is requested that you NOT cancel via the hotel but rather contact [adam@iajgs.org](mailto:adam@iajgs.org) so IAJGS can re-assign that reservation to another Conference attendee. Not following that process will result in the hotel offering that room to a non-IAJGS guest. If you are not registered at the hotel, you can begin that process here: <http://tinyurl.com/k7xxtsb>

Special Conference room rates are available from Thursday, July 20 – Friday, July 28. Based on space availability these rates will be extended for three days prior (July 17) and three days following (August 2). The daily Conference rates (for up to 2 adults per room) are listed below. Additional guests are charged at \$25 per night. Children under 18 are free using existing bedding. Note, a daily Disney Resort Fee of \$20 applies to all rooms.

- Standard Room: \$189
- Alcove Suites: \$279
- One Bedroom Executive Suites: \$389
- One Bedroom Grand Suites: \$429

Room Tax of 12.5% will be added to the total rooms charge. If you plan to use either a company credit card which is not in your name, or you will not have the credit card present at check in for the duration of your stay, please ask for a credit card authorization form prior to arrival.



**SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**

Please make checks payable to SFBAJGS and return to:  
Membership, P.O. Box 318214, San Francisco, CA 94131  
Thanks for your support!

**2017 Membership.** Check one:  New member  Renewing member  
Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_  
New Members: How did you find out about SFBAJGS? \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues for 2017:**

\$ 23.00 Regular Membership  
\_\_\_\_\_ Contribution. (Dues and contribution are tax-deductible)  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total enclosed

**Make checks payable to SFBAJGS or use these payment options:**

**Credit Card or PayPal** – Use either a credit card or your PayPal account. Go to [www.jewishgen.org/sfbajgs/about.html](http://www.jewishgen.org/sfbajgs/about.html) and look under “Membership” for further directions.

**Matching Gift** – Does your employer offer a Matching Gift program for charitable contributions? The SFBAJGS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit and may be eligible!

**Newsletter options.** Normally we will send you the SFBAJGS newsletter, *ZichronNote*, as a PDF file. If we do not have your email, you do not have a computer, or you cannot down-load materials, check the blank below and we will send your newsletter by regular mail.

I am unable to download the newsletter. Please send a printed version by regular mail.

**Want to be more involved with SFBAJGS activities? Please check your areas of interest.**

Membership  Newsletter  Publicity  Program Development  
 Website Maintenance  Congregational Liaison  Meeting Coordination

**Family Finder information.** This will be maintained on file with the SFBAJGS and periodically shared with the membership.

Check here if you do NOT want your information to be shared.

**Please print clearly.** New members: Please fill in as completely as you can.

Renewing members: No need to repeat, just update with new information and changes.

**Surname**

**Location**

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Continue on reverse side if necessary.

## Upcoming SFBAJGS Events

**Sunday, 18 June, San Francisco:** *Ketubah: The Jewish Marriage Contract and What It Really Says*. Steve Morse will explain which languages appear on a *ketubah* and what the instructions are for the couple.

**Monday, 19 June, Palo Alto:** *The Power of Digital Photography for Family History*. Ron Madson will talk about the process of using a digital camera for your genealogy, from taking the photographs to naming and filing them.

**Sunday, 16 July, Oakland:** *Bring Your Own Brick Wall: One on One Help with Your Family Tree*. While the Mavens are on hiatus for the summer, we will try to fill in. Bring us your tough problems and we'll brainstorm some research possibilities.

**Sunday, 20 August, San Francisco:** *Nontraditional Resources for Genealogical Research*. Visiting speaker Janette Silverman will talk about less commonly used resources at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York.

**Monday, 21 August, Palo Alto:** *Travel and Research in Ukraine*. Janette Silverman will cover resources that are and are not available in Ukraine, and resources and current projects for JewishGen's Ukraine SIG.

**Sunday, 17 September, Oakland:** *Leaving Something of Who You Are*. Kim Miller will explain why it is important to record your own stories while you are researching those of your ancestors.

See page 3 for meeting locations and times and page 4 for other events of interest.  
For more program information visit <http://www.sfbajgs.org/>.

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