



# זכרון ZichronNote

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

Volume XL, Number 1

February 2020

### DNA Sees All, Tells All

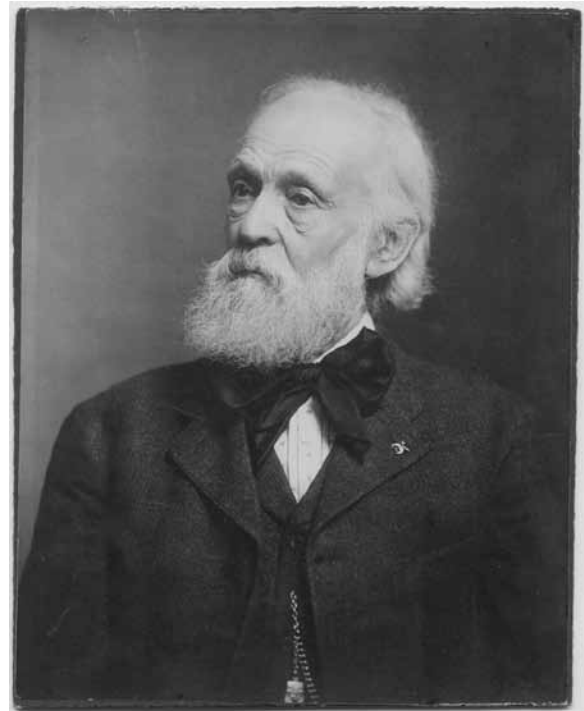
**Sharing a relative with the same name with someone doesn't automatically mean you're related. DNA can tell if you are or not. See page 5.**

### Also in This Issue

Jewish Conductor on the Underground Railroad Dr. Yvette Alt Miller .....	8
Using the Revised Version of RandyMajors.com for County Lines Ted Bainbridge, Ph.D. ....	10
Data Indexing Event: 19 April 2020 in Oakland Jeff Lewy .....	13

### Departments

President's Message .....	2
Society News .....	3
Genealogy Calendar .....	4
Family Finder Update .....	14
Upcoming SFBAJGS Events .....	back cover



*August Bondi (photograph taken between 1895 and 1907), one of the few Jewish conductors on the Underground Railroad.*

*See page 8.*

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

© 2020 San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

ZichronNote is published four times per year, in February, May, August, and November. The deadline for contributions is the 15th of the month preceding publication. The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions. Submissions may be made by hard copy or electronically. Please send e-mail to [newsletter@sfbajgs.org](mailto:newsletter@sfbajgs.org).

**Reprinting** of material in ZichronNote is hereby granted for nonprofit use when there is no explicit limitation and credit is given to SFBAJGS and to the author(s). All other reproduction, including electronic publication, without prior permission of the editor is prohibited.

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

**Back Issues** are available for \$10 per issue. Requests should be sent to SFBAJGS at the address below.

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

**Membership** 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:** Preeva Tramiel, [vicepresident@sfbajgs.org](mailto:vicepresident@sfbajgs.org)

**Secretary:** Shellie Wiener, [secretary@sfbajgs.org](mailto:secretary@sfbajgs.org)

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

**Membership:** Jeff Lewy, [membership@sfbajgs.org](mailto:membership@sfbajgs.org)

**Programs:** Janice M. Sellers, [programs@sfbajgs.org](mailto:programs@sfbajgs.org)

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

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

**Transcription Project Coordinator:** Jeff Lewy,  
[transcriptions@sfbajgs.org](mailto:transcriptions@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)

Note: All URL's are valid as of the time of publication.

**President's Message**  
**Paying It Forward,**  
**72 Years from Now**

Jeremy Frankel, SFBAJGS President

We often hear the expression "paying it forward." This usually means that you have been the lucky recipient of someone's largesse or good fortune, and it's now up to you to pay it forward to the next generation.

I'm not thinking about the next generation, but the one after that. Yes, two generations from now. What I'm talking about is the upcoming 2020 U.S. census.

Since 2000 I have on occasion stood up in front of a class of genealogists and asked them how many participated and filled out the last census. Of course, every hand shot up. People smiled and proffered knowing looks.

I then ask how many of them made a copy before mailing it in to the Census Bureau? Not one hand goes up. The slow realization dawns on those same faces. It's a real "OMG" moment.

We must make sure it doesn't happen again with the 2020 census. We must make a concerted effort to photocopy or scan it. We must also reach out to family members and ask them to make a copy for you and for safekeeping.

You may not know who the next family member will be to take your reins as the family genealogist, but that person will be very grateful that you saved a copy of the 2020 census and there will be no need to wait another twenty-five years to see what it contains.

In the past I've also commented that we are living in the "golden age" of genealogical research. Why? Because there are so many records from the past that we have access to in order to research our family history. We have birth, marriage, and death certificates. We have census returns, ship passenger lists, city directories, and phone books. We have military records and newspapers, to name but a few.

But what about the poor family genealogist, fifty years from now, trying to do what we accomplish with so much ease and the click of a few buttons on our keyboard?

Given the rush toward "privacy", how easy will it be to obtain vital records? What about passenger lists? Ha! I'm sure airlines dump their records, say six months after the flight, but the U.S. security agencies probably have them and are not going to make them available any time soon. In any case, there probably won't be much of genealogical value in those records. (Is there anyone in the airline business who would like to correct me?)

*Continued on page 7*

## Society News

### 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).

### New Members

Judith Bloom ..... [jgoldbl@yahoo.com](mailto:jgoldbl@yahoo.com)  
Shelley Hébert ..... [shelley.s.hebert@gmail.com](mailto:shelley.s.hebert@gmail.com)  
Tova Levi ..... [vota86@aol.com](mailto:vota86@aol.com)  
Sarah Liron ..... [sarahliron@comcast.net](mailto:sarahliron@comcast.net)  
Georgia Lupinsky ..... [glupin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:glupin@sbcglobal.net)  
Misti Reif ..... [misti@mistilayne.com](mailto:misti@mistilayne.com)  
Dan Williams ..... [dawilliams929@gmail.com](mailto:dawilliams929@gmail.com)

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

### 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.

### SFBAJGS 2020 Election Results

The voting for our four elective offices concluded on 15 January 2020. Ninety-seven (97) votes were cast. Ninety-five (95) members voted for the full slate of President Jeremy Frankel, Vice President Preeva Tramel, Secretary Shellie Wiener, and Treasurer Jeff Lewy. Two (2) members voted for only the President. Fifty-seven (57) paper ballots and forty (40) electronic ballots were received. No invalid ballots were cast.

### Members in the News

The monthly Mavens meetings at the Jewish Community Library, where SFBAJGS members assist others with their Jewish research, were featured in an article in *The Jewish News of Northern California*: <https://www.jweekly.com/2019/12/03/genealogy-mavens-go-old-school-to-uncover-jewish-past/>.

Steve Morse’s One-Step Website was ranked 45th in global online traffic by Alexa.com in a listing of worldwide genealogy sites: <https://www.geneamusings.com/2020/01/selected-genealogy-website-alexa.html>.

### Meeting Times and Locations

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

- San Francisco:** Sunday. Doors open 12:30 p.m. Program begins at 1:00 p.m.  
**NEW LOCATION:** San Francisco Public Library, 100 Larkin Street, Latino / Hispanic Room  
Easily reachable by BART: across the street from Civic Center BART station.
- Oakland:** Sunday. Doors open 1:00 p.m. Program begins at 1:30 p.m.  
Oakland FamilySearch Library, 4766 Lincoln Avenue
- Palo Alto:** Monday. Doors open 7:00 p.m. Program begins at 7:30 p.m.  
Congregation Etz Chayim, 4161 Alma Street

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

## Genealogy Calendar of Events

### Local and Regional

Tuesday, 3 March 2020. Bill Hannah, "Finding and Using Historical Maps with Google Earth." Genealogical Society of Santa Cruz County. Santa Cruz Public Library, Downtown Branch, 224 Church Street, Santa Cruz. <http://scgensoc.org/>

Sunday, 8 March 2020. Glenda Lloyd, "Courthouse Research." Sacramento Public Library. Central Library, 828 I Street, Sacramento. <https://www.saclibrary.org/>

Thursday, 12 March 2020. Rabbi Tarlan Rabizadeh and Ron Lezell, "Glimpses of Persian Jewish Life." Jewish Community Library, 1835 Ellis Street, San Francisco. <http://www.jewishlearningworks.org/library-events>

Sunday, 15 March 2020. Kathy Glatter, "Jewish Hungary: A Personal and Genealogical Journey." Jewish Genealogical Society of Sacramento. Albert Einstein Residence Center, 1935 Wright Street, Sacramento. <https://www.jewishgen.org/jgs-sacramento/>

Monday, 16 March 2020. Linda Harms Okazaki, "West Coast Immigration in the 20th Century." Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society. Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court, Pleasanton. <http://www.l-ags.org/>

Tuesday, 17 March 2020. Sharon Hoyt, CG, "Brick Wall Busters." San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society. 2949 Stone Valley Rd., Alamo. <https://www.srvgensoc.org/>

Saturday, 21 March 2020. Linda Harms Okazaki, "West Coast Immigration to the United States in the 20th Century." California Genealogical Society. Oakland FamilySearch Library, 4766 Lincoln Avenue, Oakland. <https://www.californiaancestors.org/>

Monday, 23 March 2020. "Lives of Famous Women in America before Suffrage." Oakmont Genealogy Club. Oakmont West Recreation Center, Santa Rosa. <https://sites.google.com/site/oakmontgenealogyclub/>

Monday, 23 March 2020. Patricia Burrow and Pam Fujii, "DNA Basics for Genealogists: How Four Testing Companies Can Change Your Family Tree." Free but you must register. Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society. Santa Clara City Library, Redwood Room, 2635 Homestead Road, Santa Clara. <http://www.schgs.org/>

Thursday, 26 March 2020. Brooke Schreier Ganz, "Reclaim the Records: Using Freedom of Information Laws for Genealogy." Marin Genealogical Society. Marin Family History Center, 220 North San Pedro Road, San Rafael. <https://www.maringensoc.org/>

Saturday, 28 March 2020. Carolyn Williams, "Preserving Family Photos, Photo Stories, Documents." San Mateo County Genealogical Society. Grace Lutheran Church, 2825 Alameda de las Pulgas, San Mateo. <http://www.smcgs.org/>

Tuesday, 21 April 2020. Janice M. Sellers, "Researching Historic LGBT Relatives." Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society. Santa Clara City Library, Redwood Room, 2635 Homestead Road, Santa Clara. <http://www.schgs.org/>

### State and National

Wednesday–Saturday, 20–23 May 2020. NGS Family History Conference, "Echoes of Our Ancestors." Salt Lake City, Utah. <https://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/>

Sunday–Friday, 9–14 August 2020. IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. San Diego, California. <http://www.iajgs2020.org/>

Wednesday–Saturday, 2–5 September 2020. FGS Annual Conference. Kansas City, Missouri. <https://fgs.org/conferences/>

### International

Sunday–Saturday, 30 October–28 November 2019 (Cheshvan 5780). International Jewish Genealogy Month. <http://www.iajgs.org/blog/ijgm/>

For more events, visit <http://www.library.ca.gov/sutro/genealogy/calendar/> and <http://www.conferencekeeper.com/>.

### Free Webinars

FamilySearch. <https://sites.lib.byu.edu/familyhistory/classes-and-webinars/online-webinars/>

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

Georgia Genealogical Society. <http://gagensociety.org/events/webinars>

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

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

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

Ontario Genealogical Society. <https://ogs.on.ca/webinars-2020>

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

Utah Genealogical Association. <https://ugagenealogy.org/cpage.php?pt=11>

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



## Doppelgangers, DNA, and Doubts

Jeremy Frankel, SFBAJGS President

At the beginning of 2019 I was contacted by someone in Perth, Australia. I will call him "Mitchell." He claimed he was my cousin. He had taken a DNA test which proved he was 25% Jewish, though it only confirmed what he already knew. As this is a story that's still unfolding, and because of what was uncovered, I'm not using any real names here. You will appreciate why as you read the story.

To begin at the beginning, Mitchell's father, "Douglas", was born from a relationship between two people in London, England. The biological father was Jewish, the birth mother was not. The young woman was sent away to Brighton, on England's south coast, where the child was born. After the young woman had given birth, her father paid to have the child kept in a "private creche" (daycare center) for three to four years. Her father then died, and the woman's mother put Douglas up for adoption. He was adopted by a couple in Manchester, Lancashire.

When World War II began, Douglas, aged 13–14, was sent to Australia. (The adoptive parents planned to follow, but both died of natural causes in the UK.) Hence Douglas grew up alone in Australia. He eventually married and had children of his own.

Douglas' son Mitchell grew up knowing his father was half-Jewish. Naturally he knew all about his mother's family, but his father's family stopped right there with Douglas.

About twenty years ago Mitchell found Douglas' birth mother ago (she lived to be 102!) and was able to fill in the story about how Douglas came into the world.

Douglas' birth mother had recalled, even after all those years, the full name of the biological father and the kind of business that the father's family was engaged in. She said that his name was Harris Koenigsberg (Mitchell's spelling) and that Harris was in the "fur business."

Now, to be honest, on the one hand with 8,000+ relatives gleaned from 35+ years of research, I'm not in that great of a hurry to add many more. Because of this I've not really paid much attention to reviewing DNA results and seeing who might be a close relative—except that "close" is a relative term. (No pun intended!)

My two brothers and I have a slightly unusual situation. My father was an only child, and my mother's brother never married. Hence we have one uncle, no aunts, and no first cousins.

That said (deep breath), my father's mother was one of seven children, all born in England. My father's father was one of ten children, all born in England. My mother's mother was the youngest of nine, all born in Poland, but apart from the oldest who married in Poland, the other eight all married in England and all nine had children in England. Finally, although my mother's father had but one brother, the two of them had twenty-three first cousins—yup, all born in England.

On the one hand I've had a relatively easy time researching all my English cousins. I have a very, very large, extended family, and much of my research has been focused in England.

On the other hand I know very little about much older branches that were in Poland and Lithuania, because the members of my family who left did so between the 1840's and 1880's.

Because of this luxury of having spent a lot of time researching my family in England (plus the odd branch in the United States) I've not really given much thought to possible cousins who could be discovered from DNA testing.

It was quite a surprise when Mitchell contacted me to say, "Hi, I'm your long-lost cousin."

Knowing the biological father's full name allowed Mitchell to engage in some creative sleuthing. This led him to e-mail me in January 2018:

Hello Jeremy,

My name is Mitchell and I live in Perth, Western Australia.

To be brief, my father was born out of wedlock in 1929 and was adopted by the XXXXX family. I found his birth mother in 1990 and she told me that my dad's father was Harris Koenigsberg, whose family were furriers in London. Harris (or Harry as he was known to my grandmother) may be the youngest brother of Jane Koenigsberg . . . your father's mother . . . being your maternal grandmother. I am just guessing at the moment that I have the right Harry Koenigsberg.

I then carried out a search in FreeBMD for anyone whose first name was "har\*" (the asterisk is a wild card that permits any ending after "har") and whose last name was "ko\*igsber\*" (which allows for any last name that begins

with “ko”, including “kon” and “koen”, and which could end in “berg” or “berger”) for the period 1909 to 1940. it brought up only four results.

One was a woman, Harriet Koenigsberg. Two were for Harris Koenigsberg (a death in 1921 and a marriage in 1934), and one was for Harris H. Koenigsberger, who married in 1936.

The first three are members of my family. Harriet was my grandfather’s niece. The Harris Koenigsberg who died in 1921 was my great-grandfather’s brother, and the Harris Koenigsberg who married in 1934 was my grandfather’s brother and the supposed birth father of Douglas, born five years earlier.

Harris H. Koenigsberger was born in 1871, which means if he had fathered Douglas he would have been 58 years old. Not impossible, but unlikely. Harris Koenigsberg, on the other hand, was born in 1906, meaning he would have been 23 years old, making him a much more likely candidate as the biological father.

Furthermore, Harris Koenigsberg was a furrier, whereas Harris Henry Koenigsberger was, according to the 1939 Register, a commission agent and importer.

Now, I concede that using FreeBMD is not conclusive, and it’s possible there might have been another “Harry Koenigsberg” living in London around 1929. Yes, I did check other databases such as the 1939 Register, which itself is also not conclusive, as the name might have been redacted.

Having gotten this far, I was almost on the verge of getting very excited (was it my Harry?). There was, however, just one little fly in the ointment: Mitchell doesn’t show up as a DNA match to me. You would think at 25% he would—could he not? On the other hand (sadly), maybe the birth mother was mixed up as to who the father was. Wouldn’t it be unusual, though, for a gentile woman to be in some sort of relationship with not one, but two Jewish men at the same time?

With a deep sigh and the realization that I had to clear my family name, I embarked on a sleuthing expedition of my own. There was little to go on other than the birth mother recalling that the biological father had the name Harris Koenigsberg. I pulled up my Harris Koenigsberg and looked over all the information there was on him in my Ancestry tree.

Working through his life and various documents I got to the 1930 London telephone book. He was the only H. Koenigsberg. It was a double-column page, however, and as my eyes skimmed over the page I noticed in the next

column an entry that read “J. Konigsberg and Sons, fur brokers.” Hmmm?

I began constructing a tree for this Konigsberg family. The Konigsbergs had seven children, the oldest being Harry Konigsberg, born in 1895. The family was in the fur business but in a different way from my family. My Koenigsbergs were manufacturers of fur clothing, whereas the Konigsberg family were fur brokers. The family all lived and worked in London except Harry, who lived in New York, but, as immigration records showed, he often traveled between the two countries.

Harry married Celia Gold in 1924 (age 29) in New York. Sadly, their first child, a son, born in 1926, lived but five days and was buried in a Jewish cemetery in Queens, New York. The couple then had Naomi in London, born six months before Douglas.

Several interesting things came to light. Harry and Celia never traveled together when Harry went to England. In October 1927 Harry traveled to London. Celia followed, arriving on 5 June 1928.

I used an online conception calendar, where one simply plugs in the date of birth and it will show the most likely date for conception, and, if you wish to be that specific, the most likely date when intercourse would have taken place. (I have found it to be very useful—the program that is!) It’s part of a suite of programs put out by <https://www.calculator.net/>.

Hence we see that Naomi’s likely conception was 5 July 1928 (ten days after Celia arrived in London) and she was born 5 April 1929. Douglas was born 21 October 1929, meaning his conception date was around 5 February 1929.

Putting it bluntly, Harry was not only married, but his wife was pregnant and about to give birth in two months time when he was also involved with another woman.

I then continued researching the Konigsberg family to recent times.

Naomi married in New York in 1951 and had three sons. In mid-September I reached out to the oldest one, Geoffrey, a retired certified public accountant in New Jersey. I explained who I was and why I was writing to him.

His first response:

I may be the Geoffrey Selby you are looking for. My mother’s name was Naomi Konigsberg. My maternal grandfather was named Harry and he was in the fur business in London and New York City. My mother was born in London in 1929.

I wrote back explaining the whole *megillah*. His terse response:

It is hard for me to believe that my grandfather had a son out of wedlock. He was ultra orthodox. If I was to agree to the DNA test, would you share the results with me?

I told him of course I would. He never got back to me. A few days later I tried one more time:

Have you had a chance to review and think about what I had sent you regarding Mitchell's research? Also, I was wondering if you are in touch with any of your English Konigsberg cousins?

A month later I got this from Debby, Geoffrey's cousin, who lives in England. Her email was very interesting.

I'm replying to this on behalf of a family member who's forwarded your email to me. I've spoken to some of our family, and it's unlikely we'd do a DNA test to see if we're a match for the man you're talking about.

I wrote back to Debby:

It's a little disheartening to read your response. Mitchell who contacted me is bereft of any family further back than his father because he doesn't know who his father's father was. He knows who the birth mother was because he was in contact with her some twenty years ago. Not knowing his father's lineage is probably hard to live with. I have to impress that what I have surmised is but a conjecture. And yes a DNA test would probably tell us one way or the other.

They never got back to me. I leave it to you to draw your own conclusions as to why.

I carried out the research for Mitchell during the early part of 2019. He had previously taken a DNA test with Ancestry.com (as I had), and because Mitchell was shown as 25% Jewish, if he had been related to me, then a match of some sort really ought to have shown up—but it didn't. I began writing this as a story for possible publication at around the same time.

On 24 January 2020, the final piece of the puzzle slipped into place. I received an e-mail alert from Ancestry.com that "Stuart" had taken a DNA test and was related to Mitchell, in the 3rd-4th cousin range with 157 cm across nine segments. According to the microscopic three-person tree, Stuart was one of Harry's three grandsons, living in America.

In fact, Stuart was Geoffrey's brother, the other grandson I had contacted who couldn't believe his grandfather had fathered Mitchell's father. (Did all that make sense?)

Stuart may have unwittingly taken a DNA test just for fun (who knows), but the results proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that Mitchell was not only related to the Konigsberg family, he was also Harry's grandson.

My hunch and subsequent research had been confirmed by the DNA test results. What Mitchell will do with this, I don't know. He may go on with his life, possibly comforted by the fact that he does now know the full extent of his father's paternal family and who they were and are. He may or may not contact them, but he has the information.

As we have seen and no doubt read, DNA testing has changed everything. What was once thought to be private, and perhaps a secret that could be taken to the grave, can now be turned upside down.



---

*President's Column, continued from page 2*

City directories and phone books, today these are almost a thing of the past. More than half of American households have ditched their landlines. Has anyone seen a phone book for cell phones?

Another "raise your hands" question concerns newspapers. I have personally retrieved several thousand paid notices for events involving my family that were published in the London *Jewish Chronicle*. We avidly scour the newspapers for these notices and obituaries. How many of you are placing notices in the newspaper for family events taking place today? I don't see many raised hands.

In conclusion, I come back to the upcoming census. In the coming weeks, we will be bombarded with public service announcements in all media outlets exhorting us to fill out the census on 1 April. (Some of us will be doing it online.) And just today (15 January) I heard on the radio that California is spending \$190 million to carry out its own census to make sure everyone is counted (<https://tinyurl.com/qlg23uc>). (Otherwise it might lose a seat in the House of Representatives.)

Make sure you fill out the census. And make sure you make a copy for the future genealogist in your family. Pay it forward!



## Jewish Conductor on the Underground Railroad

Dr. Yvette Alt Miller

Yvette Alt Miller earned her B.A. at Harvard University. She completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Jewish Studies at Oxford University and has a Ph.D. in International Relations from the London School of Economics. She lives with her family in Chicago and has lectured internationally on Jewish topics. This article was first published by Aish at <https://www.aish.com/jw/s/Jewish-Conductor-on-the-Underground-Railroad.html> on 5 November 2019 and is reprinted with permission.

The stirring movie *Harriet* brought the incredible bravery and heroism of Harriet Tubman to life. Born a slave in Maryland in the year 1822, she escaped to freedom in 1849, then returned to the South nineteen times to help other slaves escape, ultimately shepherding more than 300 slaves to freedom.

In 1863, while the Civil War raged, Tubman became one of the only women in U.S. history to lead an armed military raid. She guided three boats full of Union soldiers along the Combahee River in South Carolina, attacking Confederate soldiers and freeing 750 slaves who worked in plantations along the river.

One of the most moving scenes in the film is when Harriet is led to a top-secret cellar where she is inducted into the Underground Railroad and named a “conductor”, someone who guided slaves to freedom. It’s unclear whether this moving scene is accurate; historians disagree about just how organized the Underground Railroad was. What we do know is that as far back as the 1700’s, a loose network of individuals—both black and white—worked together to help hide runaway slaves and guide them to safety.

Historians estimate that 100,000 slaves escaped this way between 1800 and 1850, primarily from border states such as Maryland, as Harriet Tubman did. In the 1830’s, as railroads crossed America, people began using the language of trains to describe this network, calling it the Underground Railroad, labeling hiding spots “depots” or “stops”, and dubbing people who risked their lives and freedom to help runaway slaves “conductors.”

One important stop on the Underground Railroad was the home of a Jewish couple, August and Henrietta Bondi, in Greeley, Kansas. Their home became a refuge for an unknown number of slaves, and the Bondis worked tirelessly, as Jews, to oppose the horror of slavery.

August Bondi was born Anshl Mendel Bondi in Vienna in 1833 into a Yiddish-speaking family which was involved in radical politics. The family moved to St. Louis in 1848, and Bondi worked various jobs throughout the Midwest, where the treatment of slaves shocked him. Working on a riverboat, Bondi traveled through Texas and later recorded his horror at the cruel outrages of American

slavery: “During my stay in Texas I gathered a great deal of information on Southern life,” he wrote. “When in Galveston the howlings of the slaves receiving their morning ration of cowhiding waked me at 4 o’clock . . . .”

Bondi went duck hunting with a group of white ship captains and their children. When one enslaved oarsman accidentally dropped his oar and scared the ducks away, the teenage son of a ship captain shot the slave in the shoulder. August yelled at the teenager and was shocked when all the white captains turned on him, chiding him and calling him an abolitionist for protesting this appalling cruelty. Bondi later recalled that whereas he’d once felt indifferent to the plight of America’s slaves, he began to appreciate just how evil the institution of slavery was. He began to understand that his only option as a moral human being was to oppose it.

When Congress passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, allowing the residents of Kansas to decide whether they would be a slave state or a free state once they were admitted to the Union, Bondi moved to the Kansas Territory to work for the Free State Movement. It seemed that antislavery activists would win the election, but on election day thousands of heavily armed pro-slavery “Border Ruffians” poured into the territory from Missouri, seized control of polling places and ballot boxes, and declared that the Kansas territory had elected a pro-slavery legislature.

As pro-slavery zealots attacked antislavery activists, Bondi joined with other antislavery supporters in the Battle of Black Jack, on 2 June 1856. Antislavery forces captured 48 Border Ruffians who’d been menacing and attacking antislavery Kansans. (Bondi fought alongside the notorious antislavery figure John Brown, though he later declined to participate in Brown’s most infamous adventure, the 1859 raid on an arsenal in Harper’s Ferry, West Virginia, in order to obtain arms for antislavery fighters. Brown was captured and executed for treason.)

At the Battle of Black Jack, Bondi also fought alongside at least two other Jews: Theodore Wiener, an immigrant from Poland, and Jacob Benjamin, from Bohemia. Bondi later described the battle: “We walked with bent backs, nearly



crawled, that the tall dead grass of the year before might somewhat hide us from the Border Ruffian marksmen, yet the bullets kept whistling." Wiener was right behind him, and Bondi asked him in Yiddish, "Nu, was meinen Sie jetzt?" ("Now, what do you think of this?") In the thick of battle, Wiener responded in Yiddish-accented Hebrew: "Sof adom mavis." ("The end of the man is death.")

All three Jewish fighters survived the battle, and Bondi went on to work tirelessly against slavery. He married Henrietta Einstein in 1860, and the couple moved to Greeley, Kansas. Their home became a stop on the Underground Railroad. Runaway slaves knew that they could find a place to shelter there, receive food, and rest for a time.

Harriet can help give us a clue what their home might have been like. In the movie, Harriet Tubman walks for days, following the directions that a member of the Underground Railroad gave her, until she arrives at the home of a sympathetic Quaker who lets her stay in his home, gives her food and a change of clothes, and treats her with the dignity that every human being deserves.

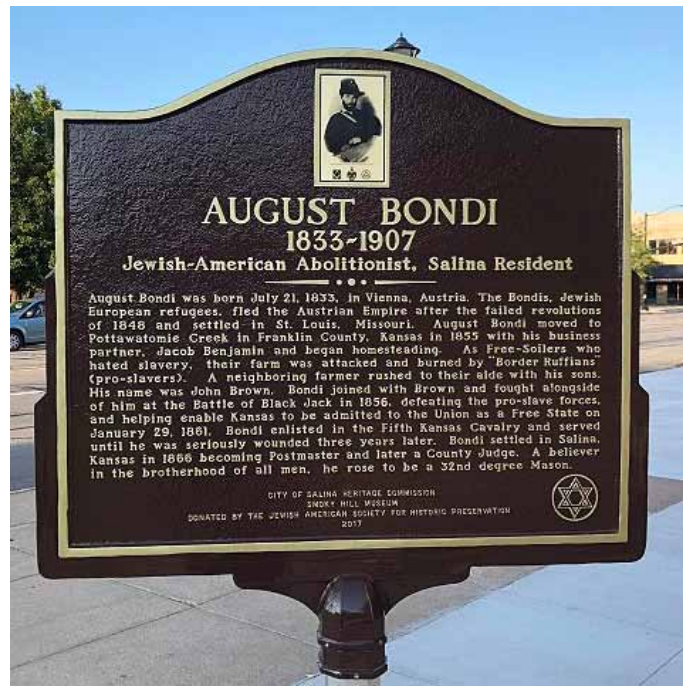


August Bondi, Fifth Kansas Cavalry, Union Army

When the American Civil War broke out in 1861, August Bondi volunteered for the Union Army. He was still fighting on 1 January 1863, when President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, abolishing slavery in areas controlled by Union forces. A joyous Bondi recorded in his diary, "No more Pharaohs and no more slaves."

Bondi continued to fight and was lightly wounded several times. In 1864, he was seriously wounded and left for dead by Confederate soldiers. He survived and after the war attended law school, eventually working as a lawyer, farmer, and judge in the small town of Salina, Kansas.

Though he lived far from established Jewish communities, he always lived his life as a proud Jew. When his daughter married, Bondi insisted that her wedding be held in Leavenworth, Kansas, where there was a Jewish community and a rabbi could officiate. Bondi died in 1907; a rabbi traveled from Kansas City to officiate at his funeral.



August Bondi  
1833–1907

*Jewish-American Abolitionist, Salina Resident*

August Bondi was born July 21, 1833, in Vienna, Austria. The Bondis, Jewish European refugees, fled the Austrian Empire after the failed revolutions of 1848 and settled in St. Louis, Missouri. August Bondi moved to Pottawatomie Creek in Franklin County, Kansas in 1855 with his business partner, Jacob Benjamin and began homesteading. As Free-Soilers who hated slavery, their farm was attacked and burned by "Border Ruffians" (pro-slavers). A neighboring farmer rushed to their aide with his sons. His name was John Brown. Bondi joined with Brown and fought alongside of him at the Battle of Black Jack in 1856, defeating the pro-slave forces, and helping enable Kansas to be admitted to the Union as a Free State on January 29, 1861. Bondi enlisted in the Fifth Kansas Cavalry and served until he was seriously wounded three years later. Bondi settled in Salina, Kansas in 1866 becoming Postmaster and later a County Judge. A believer in the brotherhood of all men, he rose to be a 32nd degree Mason.

City of Salina Heritage Commission  
Smoky Hill Museum

Donated by the Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation

2011

Photograph taken by Jrryjude on 30 August 2018 ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bondi\\_Marker\\_Salina\\_-\\_Smoky\\_Hill\\_Museum.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bondi_Marker_Salina_-_Smoky_Hill_Museum.jpg)). Used under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en>). The only change made was to crop the photo closer to the image of the sign.

## Using the Revised Version of RandyMajors.com for County Lines

Ted Bainbridge, Ph.D.

Dr. Ted Bainbridge has been a genealogical researcher, teacher, speaker, and writer since 1969. His genealogical and historical articles are published frequently throughout the United States and in several foreign countries. He is a member of the Colorado Council of Genealogical Societies Speakers Bureau and has served as president of his local genealogical society.

To search for government records about people in the United States, one must know which state and county had jurisdiction over the place where an event occurred *on the date of that event*. U.S. county boundaries changed over time, with states typically carving new, smaller counties out of large ones as population increased. To find the records you seek, you may have to look for those records in a county that is different from today's, and sometimes a specific place may "move" more than once from county to county.

This movement of county boundaries affects not only online indices and records but also the county courthouse or archives holding the original (paper) records. It can be surprising and discouraging to go to a courthouse and be told, "Those records aren't here, they're 40 miles away at the neighboring county courthouse."

To find the name of the relevant county at the time the records were created, a number of sites help identify

counties year by year, including <https://www.mapofus.org/>, <https://publications.newberry.org/ahcbp/>, and <https://www.randymajors.com/>.

Each site has slightly different features, but they all help identify places where county jurisdictions changed. As the Newberry site shows, these changes are not just for long-age periods but continue to the present day.

RandyMajors.com provides jurisdiction information easily, and using the site is free. (Other features of the site aren't described here. Feel free to explore them after you learn to use the site for determining county lines.)

Go to <https://www.randymajors.com/> and notice the menu list at the top left of the page [1].

The area to the menu's right sometimes is blank and sometimes contains an advertisement. Below the menu is an ad, then a request for donations to help fund the RandyMajors site. To the right of those two items is a

The screenshot shows the RandyMajors.com website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the site name, a search icon, and a 'SUBSCRIBE' button. Below the navigation bar, there are two main menu sections. The first section, labeled '1', is titled 'Most Popular Map Tools' and includes links for 'County Lines on Google Maps', 'What County Am I In?', 'ZIP Codes on Google Maps', 'City Limits on Google Maps', 'Elevation on Google Maps', and 'Section Township Range on Google Maps'. The second section, labeled '2', is titled 'Genealogy / Ancestry Tools' and includes links for 'Historical U.S. Counties on Google Maps' and 'AncestorSearch on Google Search'. Below the menus, there is a large advertisement for Trello with the text 'Feels like magic.' and a 'Try it Now' button. To the right of the advertisement, there is a featured article titled 'County information added to Section Township Range on Google Maps tool, plus a tip for historical county research'. The article text explains that sometimes it's hard to determine where you are when using Section, Township and Range Maps, and that county information has been added to the tool. It provides an example of how to use the 'Find parcel' tool, showing a search for 'Section 34, Township 3, South 2, Range 4, East 2, PR' in Idaho. The article then shows a map of the search results, highlighting the county name 'Blaine' and a county line with a red box. Below the map, there is a note about the county name and a link to the Terms of Service, Disclaimer & Privacy Policy.

space which displays varying content from time to time; the screen shot on page 10 shows a description of a feature that had been added to the site recently.

On the menu, click “Historical U.S. Counties on Google Maps” [2]. The content of the home page changes to include a map with its attendant data immediately above it. The current content of the map doesn’t matter, because you soon will set the map to show the place you want. Scroll your screen image down until you can see all of the map that is offered.

In “Search places” [3], type the modern name of the place that interests you. This is required because RandyMajors will search for—and then show you—that place on modern Google Maps. Don’t type the name of the place as it was known at the time of your research. As you type a place name, a drop-down box offers places that RandyMajors recognizes. Keep typing until you see what you want on the list, then click that offering instead of continuing to type.

Next, type a date in the date box [4], using the format shown in the on-screen sample. Click “Go!” [5]. A map appears, zoomed in on the location you specified. County boundaries are shown as they existed on the date you put into the date box.

The next image (see page 12) shows the results of hunting for Glen Union, which now is in Clinton County, Pennsylvania. When I typed the “o” of “glen unio”, the drop-down list offered Glen Union, Grugan Township, PA, USA. (Clinton County was not specified in the name offered, because Glen Union—and Grugan Township, which includes it—did not belong to Clinton County at all times in the past.) I clicked that option because I know that township is in Clinton County and includes this land that used to belong to one of my pioneer ancestors. This screen display appeared immediately:

This map’s data area [6] gives the following information:  
Glen Union, Grugan Township, PA, USA

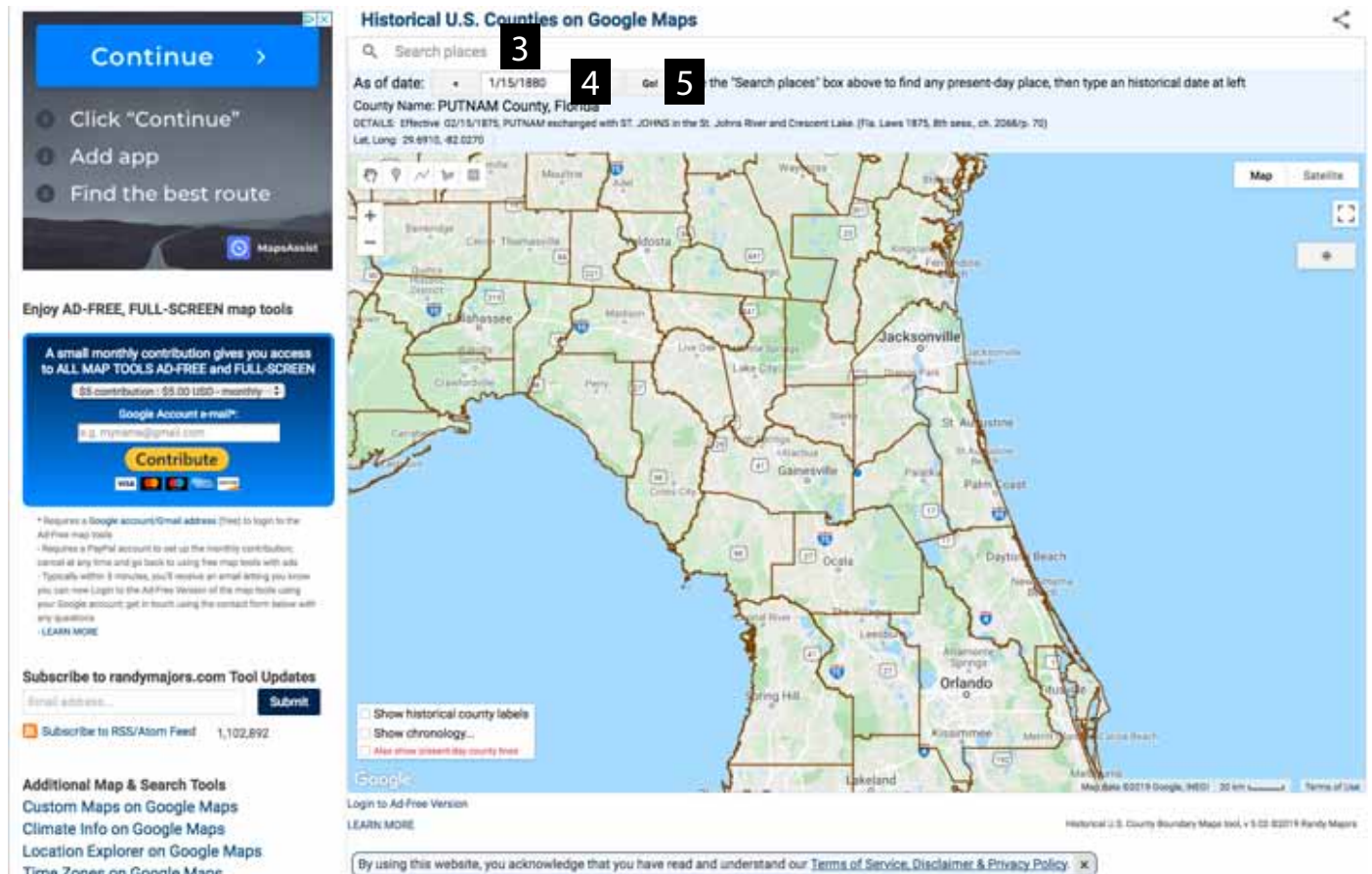
As of date: 12/31/1794

County name: NORTHUMBERLAND County, Pennsylvania

DETAILS: [information about boundary changes, their dates, and the source of that information]

Lat, Long: [latitude and longitude of the specified piece of ground]

The small circle [7] is the site of Glen Union. The line going up the middle of the river [8] is the county boundary on the date requested.



You can pan the map in any direction by dragging it across your screen with your mouse. Use the + and – icons in the top left of the map to zoom in and out. Click the icon in the top right of the map to get a full-screen display of that map. In the bottom left of the map, select each item offered to discover more information about the area.

Now you know which county courthouse should have the records for the date relevant to your research. To obtain the same kind of information about the area at another date, just change the date above the map and click Go! again.

Use a modern map of the indicated state’s (in this example, Pennsylvania) counties and county seats to get to the appropriate courthouse. Locations sometimes even move between states as well as counties (think West Virginia). In such a case, the correct courthouse will not even be in the state that has current jurisdiction over the location you are researching.

### 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 for more information.

Upcoming dates:

1 March 2020

5 April 2020

3 May 2020

**Invite a Friend to Join SFBAJGS**  
<http://www.jewishgen.org/sfbajgs/about.html>

## Data Indexing Event: 19 April 2020 in Oakland

Jeff Lewy, SFBAJGS Transcription Coordinator and Treasurer

Volunteer with us to make more Jewish genealogy data available online!

On 19 April 2020, we will have our third (nearly annual) indexing party at the LDS FamilySearch Library in Oakland. This is an afternoon when perhaps 20 people get together to transcribe cemetery data we have collected, and participate in a fun afternoon of good works with other like-minded people.

No previous experience is needed—we can set you up and explain the process at the event. We work from scans of cemetery records to transcribe the data into *Excel* spreadsheets. Previous indexers are also encouraged to come back, to do more work and to help newbies get comfortable with the process.

There will be snacks, fruit, drinks (no caffeine in an LDS facility), and some door prizes! If you have comments, questions, or would like to RSVP (appreciated but not required), contact Jeff Lewy at [transcriptions@sfbajgs.org](mailto:transcriptions@sfbajgs.org).

If you already know about our indexing projects, you can stop reading here. If not, read on . . .

After helping people learn about their ancestors and the special sources and techniques that accompany Jewish genealogy, one of the important missions of SFBAJGS is working to find historical records in the Bay Area that can help genealogists everywhere and make those records available everywhere by putting them online.

Cemetery records are a major source of data in any genealogical research. These records often contain much more information than just the date of death.

Our efforts are part of a worldwide activity to put Jewish burial data all locations online. After transcription is finished, data are uploaded to the Jewish Online Worldwide Burial Registry (JOWBR), hosted by JewishGen. So far, nearly 3.5 million records have been uploaded from almost 8,000 cemeteries in 128 countries.

Groups such as SFBAJGS are encouraged to record data from their own regions. We work with managers of Jewish cemeteries throughout the Bay Area to find original records and transcribe them so the information can be placed online. To date, we have transcribed about 30,000 records from Bay Area cemeteries. We have recorded data from Salem Memorial Park, Home of Peace, and Hills of Eternity in Colma; Home of Peace in San Jose; and Home of Eternity in Oakland. We also transcribed information from the New Cemetery in Szczecin, Poland, where we worked from photographs taken there by a Polish researcher whose work we helped fund. There are many more cemeteries in the Bay Area, and over time we plan to record as many of them as we can.

We also are digitizing synagogue records from Sherith Israel in San Francisco and funeral home records from Sinai Memorial Chapel, which makes arrangements in multiple cemeteries in the Bay Area and beyond.

Join us and experience what indexing means and how it works. After the event, we hope some of you will be willing to do more indexing or file checking at home. Everything goes via e-mail, including any questions you have as you work. We don't have deadlines; you set the pace for yourself. You can use a Mac or a PC.

If you are interested, let me know; send me a message at [transcriptions@sfbajgs.org](mailto:transcriptions@sfbajgs.org). We look forward to seeing former and new volunteers in April! And if you can't attend in April (or even if you can!), consider coming to the Peninsula on 24 August (location being determined), where we are planning to hold our next indexing event.

Thanks again from all of us at the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society!



# JewishGen

## 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](mailto:familyfinder@sfbajgs.org) or at P.O. Box 318214, San Francisco, CA 94131-8214.

<b>Surname</b>	<b>Town, Country</b>	<b>Member</b>
Abramowitz	Tolchin?; Baltimore	Sarah Liron
Basha	New York	Misti Reif
Beck/Byk	Korsenai, Lithuania; Philadelphia	Dan Williams
Caplan	London; Philadelphia	Dan Williams
Chafetz/Heifetz	Zhuravichi, Belarus	Shelley Hébert
Cohen	London; Philadelphia	Dan Williams
Ernstein/Ornstein	New York	Misti Reif
Ettinger	Tarnow, Poland	Sarah Liron
Feinberg	Ukraine; New York	Georgia Lupinsky
Feldshtein/Feldstein	Zhornishche, Ilinsty, Vinnitsia, Ukraine; Israel	Georgia Lupinsky
Freedman	Augustow, Poland	Dan Williams
Gast	Rzepiennik, Poland; Philadelphia	Dan Williams
Gindel	Ukraine; Israel	Georgia Lupinsky
Gingold	Lodz?, Poland	Sarah Liron
Glaser	Galicia?	Dan Williams
Greenstein	Tomashov, Poland	Sarah Liron
Groh	Augustow, Poland	Dan Williams
Grosman/Grossman	New York	Misti Reif
Hammersdhlag	Krakow, Poland	Dan Williams
Hecht	Warsaw/Gombin, Poland	Sarah Liron
Herzog	Krakow, Poland	Dan Williams
Indursky	Sztabin, Poland	Dan Williams
Kaufman	Baden, Germany	Dan Williams
Kessler/Tesler	Soroca, Moldova	Dan Williams
Libchak	Sopotskin, Belarus	Dan Williams
Lober	New York	Misti Reif
Luchs	Buttenwiesen, Germany	Dan Williams
Lupinsky	Zhornishche, Ilinsty, Vinnitsia, Ukraine; Israel	Georgia Lupinsky
Marmur	Tolna, Ukraine	Sarah Liron
Meltzer	Augustow, Poland	Dan Williams
Ostrowiak	Wyszkow, Poland	Dan Williams
Plotka	Kolodno, Ukraine	Shelley Hébert
Pripstein	Augustow, Poland; Wilkes-Barre, PA	Dan Williams
Reese/Riskin	Saukenai, Lithuania	Dan Williams
Reginkin	Sopotskin, Belarus	Dan Williams
Ribakow/Riberkoff	Kiev; Baltimore	Sarah Liron
Rombro	Lithuania; Tolchin; Baltimore	Sarah Liron
Rosen	Soroca, Moldova; Odessa, Ukraine	Dan Williams
Rosenfeld	Zaporizhzhya, Ukraine; Israel	Georgia Lupinsky
Sapadin/Zapadinskt	Pryluky, Ukraine	Dan Williams
Satzman	Soroca, Moldova	Dan Williams

*Continued on page 15*

Continued from page 14

### 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](mailto:familyfinder@sfbajgs.org) or at P.O. Box 318214, San Francisco, CA 94131-8214.

<u>Surname</u>	<u>Town, Country</u>	<u>Member</u>
Schultz	Kiev?; Baltimore	Sarah Liron
Sherman	Kaunas/Vilna	Sarah Liron
Slavin	Rahachow and Rehytsa, Belarus; Pryluky, Ukraine	Dan Williams
Smolkin	Zhuravichi, Belarus (Mogilev)	Shelley Hébert
Tirschfeld	New York	Misti Reif
Tirschwell	New York	Misti Reif
Vermizzner	Biecz, Poland	Dan Williams
Winicki/Winitzky	Augustow and Sztabin, Poland; Sopotskin, Belarus	Dan Williams
Yadushliver	Soroca, Moldova	Dan Williams

*Serving the entire Jewish Community for over 110 years*



Honoring the dignity of the deceased  
and providing compassion and support  
for the living

- Advanced planning counseling
- At-need arrangements
- Bereavement support and services
- Burial at all Jewish cemeteries locally and globally

Samuel J. Salkin, Executive Director (FDR 3371)

San Francisco . FD262 . 415.921.3636  
 East Bay . FD1523 . 925.962.3636  
 Peninsula - South Bay . FD1830 . 650.369.3636

[www.sinaichapel.org](http://www.sinaichapel.org)

## Upcoming SFBAJGS Events

**Sunday, 22 March, Oakland:** *Getting Ready for the 1950 Census: Searching with and without a Name Index.* SFBAJGS member Steve Morse will discuss One-Step tools for the 1950 census to use before the indices are created. (Steve will also give this presentation in Palo Alto on 27 April.)

**Sunday, 19 April, Oakland:** *Jewish Records Indexing Day.* Come help create searchable indices for San Francisco–area Jewish cemeteries.

**Sunday, 17 May, Oakland:** *How a Record Match Almost Led Me to an Insane Asylum* and *MyHeritage Unique Technologies to Research Your Family.* In this double-header, Daniel Horowitz, the Genealogy Expert at MyHeritage, will explore Holocaust records at Bad Arolsen and Yad Vashem and also cover features of MyHeritage that can help your research.

**Monday, 15 June, Palo Alto:** *Adoption and Misattributed Parentage Events: DNA-based Research Strategies.* SFBAJGS member Meredith Sellers will discuss her volunteer work helping people find biological family.

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/>.

---