



זכרונות ZichronNote

The Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

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Lost and Found

In this issue we feature two stories of discovery

In the first, a dna match to an adopted man leads to what he was seeking

In the second, a name change causes a man to fall off the tree for many years

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ZichronNote

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Society Addresses

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

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

Society Contacts

President: Jeremy Frankel, president@sfbajgs.org

Vice President: Preeva Tramiel, vicepresident@sfbajgs.org

Secretary: Shellie Wiener, secretary@sfbajgs.org

Treasurer: Jeff Lewy, treasurer@sfbajgs.org

Membership: Jeff Lewy, membership@sfbajgs.org

Programs: Janice Sellers, programs@sfbajgs.org

Publicity: Might this be you?

Webmaster: Barbara Stack, webmaster@sfbajgs.org

Transcription Project Coordinator: Jeff Lewy,

transcriptions@sfbajgs.org

Electronic Newsletter Coordinator: Dana Kurtz,

newsletterexchange@sfbajgs.org

Founder: Martha Wise

ZichronNote

Editor: Barbara Toby Stack, ZichronNote@sfbajgs.org

Back Issues: sfbajgs.org/ZichronNote/ZichronNote.html

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President's Message

Lost and Found

Jeremy Frankel, SFBAJGS President

I was informed by Barbara Stack, our ZN editor, there was a theme for this issue; it was to be "lost and found." How appropriate, I thought, after all, we family historians spend an immeasurable amount of time trying to find lost relatives, then, once we find them, add all their details to the family tree. Our emotional response usually ranges from a quiet smile of satisfaction to getting up and doing the genealogy happy dance. (Feel free to google the expression, it's amazing what you'll find.)

Lost and found also extends to those black and white or sepia photographs, with long-ago relatives staring back, willing us to put names to their faces. All of us have a folder, either a real manila folder, or on the computer (or both) labeled "unknown relatives" or some such title.

There are even people who go through their lives not realizing they are "lost," take a DNA test and suddenly they are found and embraced by the 'tribe' and become a twig on someone's tree.

If I may be permitted to take a little liberty with this theme, something that's not lost and not yet found, but is being sought, and that is a few good people to join the board. Because of recent attrition, we have nine wonderful board members who work really hard to make the society a success. I like to have an "egalitarian minyan" for starters, plus a few more so there is always an odd number. Hence no vote ends in a tie.

The current board members are naturally all enthusiastic family genealogists, but they also bring to the table (at least when we used to meet face-to-face!) other life or business quality skills. The pandemic has caused many of us to adjust our lifestyles, so I'm really hoping a few of you might have a couple of hours to spare. We "meet" once every three months when we have a board meeting, which has been via Zoom, so you don't even have to leave home. If anyone who has such an inclination, please write to me at president@sfbajgs.org.

Lastly, the board wishes everyone a wonderful summer, if you're going on vacation, or attending the conference in London, have a great time; and if you meet up with relatives, old and new, make sure you label all those photographs! Your descendants will thank you!

Editor's Column

For this issue I lost and found my ambition to be an editor, lost and found my facility with InDesign, and lost and found my love of genealogy. It's as if I'd been called upon to renew my vows.

I drifted into genealogy from being the ten-year-old who pointed her camera at any relation who would allow it; by listening to my mother narrate her scrapbooks and guiding me through maintaining my own collections; by asking what my first personal computer could do with the 20-foot tree which came down to me via my mother's cousin; by learning that I didn't have to guess, that there were answers to be had, many in nearby Oakland. By asking *why*.

And as I began to explore the worlds of genealogy, I realized that trees offered a new way of looking at my matrixed world, that I could slither up the lines of ancestry and down the byways of laterals and gain unsuspected reflections and points of view.

In a world dominated by misinformation, impatience, short-term thinking and anomie, genealogy offers a path, colleagues, guidance, and the possibility of meaning. We document our discoveries and processes. We strive to pass along enduring insights, memories, trees, and collections. Let me here suggest that an article published in ZN is a great gift to the family as well as a ticket into the future. ZichronNote is held by genealogy libraries worldwide.

Genealogy is a field which invites and permits so many of us to be not only seekers, but also finders and revealers. Generosity and gallantry abound.

There are so many ways to participate in the team sport which is genealogy. Take some responsibility for passing along the important stuff to the curious ones in the next generations. And you get to decide what's important! Protect the roots, even their outlines. Be a librarian. Be a shepherd of our histories. Be an inspiration to youth. Play some role. There are many to choose from. Just do something!

Wishing you all continued success in genealogy, a deep and worthy education

Barbara Toby Stack
May, 2023
Berkeley, CA

How I Helped An Adoptee Find His Birth Parents

Ann L. Fuller

Ann L. Fuller is an Affiliate Scholar at Oberlin College and a Geni.com volunteer curator. She grew up in Chicago, Illinois, earned an M.A. in history and a Ph.D. in plasma physics, and served for 28 years as executive director of a social services agency serving low-income persons in Oberlin, Ohio. She started doing genealogy as a retirement activity in 2007 by joining Geni.com, the then-new genealogy-social networking site, and has since expanded her research interests into multiple geographical areas and DNA. She has been a member of SFBAJGS since 2010.

My interest in genealogy began in 2007 when I joined [Geni.com](#), a then new collaborative genealogy-social networking website. I initially created a family tree of my known relatives and invited my family members to contribute to it. My presence on Geni enabled me to discover previously unknown cousins around the world. At the same time, I began exploring online Jewish history sites. The big leap from the U.S. back to Europe came when I found records of my ancestors on Jewishgen.org.

My main research focus for several years was my paternal grandmother's family. She was the only grandparent I had known because she lived to be almost 100. Although she had left Vienna to join siblings in Chicago in the late 19th century, her family's roots were in Bohemia. When I attended my first IAJGS conference in 2008, I met members of the Austria-Czech SIG. Through one of them, I connected to the Prague genealogist Julius Müller whom I hired to research my family. As Bohemian sources became available online, I was able to extend Julius's work on my own, sending yearly updates to my family.

I continued to attend IAJGS conferences and began to hear about the application of DNA testing to genealogy. At the end of 2014, I decided to do the family finder (autosomal DNA) test at Family Tree DNA and encouraged my immediate family, siblings, and cousins to test also so I could analyze family patterns. Meanwhile I continued to educate myself by attending lectures and reading genetic genealogy articles.¹ Over the years I have developed my skills and helped more than fifty friends and family members to interpret their DNA test results from different companies. For many of them, I have handled correspondence with their newly discovered relatives.

This is the story of how I helped the Groll² family analyze their close match to a man who had been adopted at birth and how I searched for the identity of his birth parents.

A Close Match

On 27 October 2020, Janice Groll sent me an email about her daughter Kate's **new match to an unknown man in his 60s named Stuart Volkow**,³ with whom Kate shared 6.87% of her DNA. Three-generations of the Groll family had done DNA testing previously: Janice, her father Robert, her daughter Kate, and several cousins. Stuart had included the following biographical information in his 23andme profile:



Atticus and Stuart

Hello! It's about time I investigate my lineage in more detail. I was born in Chicago IL at Cook County Hospital. My adoption was facilitated by our family doctor. Both my adopted mother and her sister had difficulty bearing children and therefore they both adopted. Long ago I searched county records but found nothing regarding birth parents. It makes sense that I am 100% Ashkenazi and matched with great Jewish parents of Ukrainian descent. ...Now I have a son who is turning 9 and has become interested in his roots! So here I am again. Thanks to his mother Kaia Alexander, who gifted me 23andme.

Searching for Stuart's Biological Father

I determined from the match size and the generational difference between Stuart and Kate, that he was Kate's first cousin once removed (and therefore Janice's first cousin). I was intrigued and began to look for any available information about him online, discovering sound videos and photos of him at various ages. He resembled Groll family members and his voice sounded similar to some. An analysis of his matches in common with Kate and other Groll relatives indicated that he was related through the Groll line. His Y-DNA was consistent with Robert's Haplogroup, which meant that **one of Robert's brothers was likely Stuart's biological father. But which one?**

On 6 November 2020, Janice decided to write Stuart on Kate's 23andme account and sent a duplicate message to a publicly listed email address. She said she was reaching out to him because she had determined, due to his match size and information about other Groll relatives, that he could be related to her as a first cousin, likely through one of her father's four brothers. She gave him some background about herself and her family, telling him that her father had passed away in May 2018 and that the family were non-observant Jews who had lived on the south side of Chicago. She added, at my suggestion, that we might be able to narrow down the possibilities if he uploaded his raw data to MyHeritage where some other Groll relatives had tested.⁴

Contact with Stuart

Stuart replied the next day:

Great hearing from you. Will do. My 8 YO son is anxious to know. He's also chiding me to be sure I'm not being scammed!⁵

To reassure him, Janice followed up by sending him a photo of herself with her three-year old granddaughter but received no acknowledgment. Nor did he upload his data to MyHeritage.

More DNA Testing and New Matches

Sometime in late November 2020, Janice decided to take a DNA test at Ancestry. When she received her results, she found to her surprise that Stuart had tested there in 2015; he had a 14% match to her and was predicted to be a first cousin. Janice wrote Stuart once again to let him know about their Ancestry match but still received no answer. Gradually over the next few months, Janice talked with some of her first cousins about Stuart and some earlier research I had done on the Groll family. As a result, four cousins decided to do DNA testing or make a previous test

visible and as expected, all of them were identified as first cousin matches to Stuart. Several sent him messages on 23andme and speculated whether he would ever see the messages and respond.

As months passed, I continued to monitor Kate's 23andme matches. **On 20 February 2021, I noticed that Robert Groll's only living sibling, Max, was listed as a new match to Kate and was identified as Stuart's father!** I was incredulous and wondered what was behind the sudden appearance of his match. I recalled that Max had tested at 23andme a few years earlier. I had many questions: Had he tested again or just changed the privacy setting for a previous test? I assumed that he had looked at his matches and had seen that Stuart was labelled as his son, though some test takers are only interested in their ethnicity projections. I looked more closely at the chronology. Stuart was born in 195*, so he was conceived when Max was single and was entering his third year at an out-of-town law school. I wondered: Did he know about the pregnancy at the time? If not, would he be able to identify Stuart's mother after so much time had elapsed?

Janice wrote to Stuart again on 22 February 2021. He hadn't logged into his 23andme account for over six months, so she used an alternative publicly available email address. She said she wanted to let him know that he had another close DNA match that had turned up on 23andMe recently. She had no clue why the person decided to test now, but if he wanted to know more, he should check on the 23andme site. She then offered to answer questions he might have about the new information.⁶ Stuart didn't reply to Janice. Nor had he responded to his other cousins' messages.

Seven months later, in late September 2021, Linda, one of the cousins who had tested on 23andme, **sent a friend request to Stuart on Facebook.** He responded by asking her who she was. After she explained, they had a video chat during which she told him about his connection to the Groll family and alerted him to his unread messages from several cousins. Soon afterward, she contacted one of Max's sons, her cousin Peter, and told him about Stuart.

Stuart, now aware of his biological father's family, began to reach out to his newly found relatives, one by one. He sent messages to Max on 23andme and LinkedIn:

Hello from your son Stuart.⁷ I would love to meet in person! You also have a ... grandson, 9-year-old Atticus!⁸

He exchanged some emails with Peter, who said he was shaken by the news and would wait to ask his father about

it until he could talk to him in person. Stuart also responded to and had phone conversations with four other cousins. On 5 October 2021, Stuart sent Kate the following message:

Hello! Well, there is no doubt. Max Groll is my biological father! I grew up in Skokie! Lived in Chicago over half my life! ...I've reached out to Max. Emailed with my half-brother Peter and spoken with Linda! OMG! I've spent much [time] in Evanston. Even worked at NU for couple summers. Much to discuss.

I did the upload [to MyHeritage].

A few weeks later, Peter reported to Stuart that his father had reacted with shock when he was told about Stuart, saying that he had no prior knowledge of his existence. **Apparently, Max had not looked at his 23andme matches or read the messages that Stuart had sent him.** Soon afterward, Max disappeared from Kate's list of matches.

Searching for Stuart's Biological Mother

When Max did not respond to Stuart, it seemed unlikely that he would help him to identify his birth mother any time soon. The remaining alternative was to use DNA to find her identity, but there was no guarantee of success. One of Janice's Groll cousins who was aware of my genealogical skill, wrote me to seek my help.

Would you be willing to meet Stuart? He contacted us this week, and I mentioned how extraordinary you are at genealogy and searches - he would like to find his birth mom.⁹

I answered her on 11 October 2021:

Great that Stuart has connected with some of his first cousins who are welcoming him into the family. I would certainly like to help Stuart find out who his biological mother was. I am hoping that Max will be willing to have contact with Stuart and tell him what he knows about the circumstances of his birth and the identity of his birth mother. But that will likely take time. If Stuart had a name, I could look to see what I could find out about her. In the meanwhile, I can help him look at his DNA matches to see if there are any close ones that may come from his maternal side.¹⁰

I established good rapport with Stuart on a long introductory phone call on 17 October 2021. I assured him that I was eager to help him find his birth mother but cautioned that my success would depend on the existence of good maternal matches. I told him about my earlier Groll family research.

Soon afterward I had a lengthy second phone conversation with Stuart now joined by Kaia. She and I, both mothers, acknowledged the life-long trauma Stuart's mother likely experienced from giving up a baby after going through a complete pregnancy. We agreed that she might feel some relief from finding her long lost child so many years later.

I began my search for Stuart's mother by researching his matches on 23andme, Ancestry, and MyHeritage, making use of any existing attached family trees. I tried to separate off the paternal matches by looking at shared matches with his Groll cousins and found very few maternal ones. After two weeks, I realized that I needed greater access to his accounts to go further. During another long phone conversation on 31 October 2021, he granted me collaborator status on his Ancestry account, the login information for his 23andme account, and his raw DNA data file so I could upload it to FamilyTreeDna and GEDmatch. For the next several weeks, I examined his matches on all the sites. I also did cluster analysis on My Heritage, Genetic Affairs, and GEDmatch, attempting to separate his ancestral lines, but it didn't seem to work.

I was temporarily stuck, so my next step was to seek help from more experienced researchers. **I posted a query to the Genetic Affairs Facebook group** about the problems I was having with my cluster analysis. I received a few suggestions to try and the observation that the cluster analysis may not work well because of Jewish endogamy. Seeing that approach as a temporary dead end, I abandoned it and sought further help.

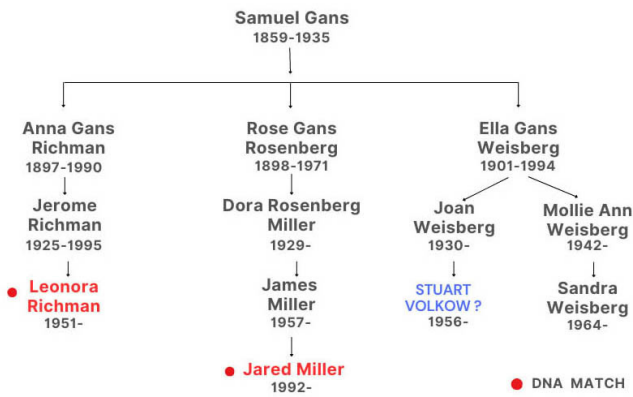
A few days later, on 15 November 2021, **I posted a query to the Jewish DNA for Genetic Genealogy and Family Research Facebook group**, summarizing what I knew and describing what steps I had taken so far to identify Stuart's birth mother. I asked for advice about how to proceed further and received many useful replies. **Kitty Munson Cooper**, the genetic genealogist said: "feel free to PM me for some help." I was thrilled by her generous offer and responded immediately. We had a lengthy Zoom session on 17 November 2021 during which I shared my screen to show her Stuart's matches on three different sites, noting the ones I thought had come from his mother. She gave me a lot of invaluable advice and confirmation that I was pursuing the right direction. **Her primary recommendation was to create a private, unindexed tree on Ancestry for Stuart's largest maternal match with as much detail as possible, starting with his furthest back ancestral couple and then extending it down to their descendants.**

I had already built a small tree for Stuart's largest 23andme maternal match before my Zoom session with Kitty

Cooper. Jared Miller, a man in his 30s, was predicted to be a second cousin. His total match size was 220 cM. with the largest segment nearly 40 cM. Since Stuart was

have descended instead from Dora's family. I needed more information about Dora's parents, Max and Rose Rosenberg. I found documents for Max, but little about the elusive Rose, concluding that "hints" that Ancestry generated were for a different Rose Rosenberg. Fortunately, I eventually found Rose's maiden name, Gans, in Max's 1966 obituary.¹² With that surname, I was able to find U.S. census documents, starting in 1900, for the family of Samuel Gans and Mary Cohen¹³ in Chicago that listed their children, Rose and her siblings.

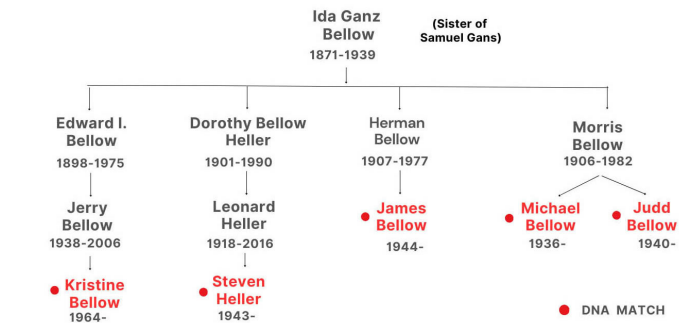
While I was extending Jared Miller's tree, I was also trying to determine how Stuart's closest matches on multiple genealogy sites were related to him.¹⁴ I found three maternal matches on Ancestry in the second cousin range: (Leonora, James Bellow, and Judd Bellow). Leonora had included



Gans Family Tree (simplified)

100% Ashkenazi and I had determined that Jared's mother was not Jewish, I concentrated my search on his father's family. I had found 2021 obituaries for Jared's aunt and grandfather, Jack Miller, that listed the names of their living relatives. At first, I didn't realize that Jack's widow was not Jared's grandmother: Jared's biological grandparents, Jack and Dora, had been divorced and Jack had remarried. While much documentation was available for Jack's family, I found very little information for Dora beyond newspaper announcements of her 1951 engagement and marriage to Jack which showed that her father's name was Max Rosenberg.¹¹ Even though Dora would have been in her 90s, the absence of an obituary seemed to indicate that she was still living.

When Kitty looked at my Jared Miller tree, she thought that Stuart's mother had likely descended from one of Jack Miller's brothers. In the next few days after the call with Kitty, I added to my Ancestry tree but did not find any known Miller candidates of the right age and gender to be Stuart's mother. I then realized that his mother might



Bellow Family Tree (simplified)

a four-person tree with her father's surname, Richman, which enabled me to connect her to the Gans family. Her grandmother, Anna Gans Richman, was a sister of Dora Miller's mother, Rose Gans Rosenberg. In addition, I was able to connect first cousins James Bellow and Judd Bellow to the Gans family through their shared grandmother, Ida Ganz¹⁵ Bellow. Ida, the mother of ten children, was a sister of Samuel Gans and the aunt of Rose Gans Rosenberg and Anna Gans Richman. Somewhat later, I found one more match on Ancestry and two on MyHeritage in the second

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND LABOR BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
THIRTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1910 - POPULATION 296

STATE: Illinois COUNTY: Cook TOWNSHIP OR OTHER DIVISION OF COUNTY: District 38 (Part of) NAME OF INCORPORATED PLACE: Chicago City, Ill. WARD OF CITY: 20 (PART) SUPERVISOR'S DISTRICT No. 1st ENUMERATION DISTRICT No. 849 WARD OF CITY: 20 (PART) DAY OF April 1910

FAMILY NUMBER	LOCAL NUMBER	NAME	RELATION	PERSONAL DESCRIPTION	SATISFY	OCCUPATION	EDUCATION										
							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
13	732	Samuel	Head	27 W 51 71 25	Illinois	Retail Merchant	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
14		Mary	Wife	7 W 42 71 25	New York	None	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
15		William	Son	7 W 23 5	New York	None	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
16		Joseph	Son	7 W 16 5	Illinois	None	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
17		Anna	Daughter	7 W 13 5	Illinois	None	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
18		Rose	Daughter	7 W 11 8	Illinois	None	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
19		Ella	Daughter	7 W 9 8	Illinois	None	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

1910 US Census Samuel Gans and Mary Cohen

to third cousin range, another grandson and two great-grandchildren of Ida Ganz Bellow.

Stuart's Mother would be a Gans Family Member

With seven matches to Stuart who descended from the same ancestral couple (the parents of brother and sister Samuel Gans and Ida Ganz Bellow), I became convinced that Stuart's mother was also related to the Gans family. I added the four remaining siblings of Anna and Rose to my tree and then all their descendants who were listed in the 1930 and 1940 censuses. Most of the Gans siblings had small families and male children. However, one sister, Ella Gans Weisberg, had two daughters, one of whom was approximately the right age to have been Stuart's mother. I therefore tried to gather more information about Ella's daughters. I let Stuart know that I had probably identified the family from which his birth mother descended but did not give him any more specifics to avoid raising his hopes prematurely.

On 21 November 2021, I wrote Kitty, who was on a several week vacation, about my theory that Stuart's mother was a member of the Gans family:

My prime candidate is Joan Weisberg, the daughter of Ella Gans... Joan was born in December 1930. She is slightly older than Max Groll who was born in May 1932. I didn't find an obit, so she may still be alive. I found her address and phone number. She had at least two brief marriages...and appears to have no known children... She worked as a publicist at the public library and maybe elsewhere. I found a high school picture of Joan's younger sister, Mollie Ann Weisberg, who was born in 1942. I found a photo of a Joan Weisberg, but I don't think she is the right person¹⁶ Mollie Ann ... lives in CA and does counseling; her daughter is the actress, Sandra M... To my eye, Mollie Ann looks like she could be a relative.¹⁷

Kitty responded the next day (22 November 2021)

Yes, I am on vacation, but I did read it and I think you are right about it being in the Gans family.

You should try putting these matches in a WATO tree (what are the odds tool at DNAPainter) to see if your theory works.

Next step would be to get in touch with Mollie Ann since you seem to have found her, and ask her to do a DNA test
tell her the story ... carefully.¹⁸

I applied the WATO tool from DNAPainter.com¹⁹ to test how Stuart might fit into the Gans family tree and to determine which family members were most likely to be his mother. I uploaded a GEDcom of the tree for the ancestral couple from which all seven of Stuart's identified Gans matches had descended. I then entered the sizes of their matches to him. I used the tool to generate relationship hypotheses including ones that involved NPEs (not expected parentage) and to calculate their probabilities. I could eliminate certain hypotheses based on my knowledge of the family, e.g, wrong age or gender. The WATO analysis seemed to confirm my view that Ella Gans Weisberg's daughters were the most likely candidates to be Stuart's mother.

Which Family Member to Contact?

With more confidence in my theory, I mulled over which Weisberg family member to contact, Joan, Mollie Ann, or Sandra. How much of the story should I share and what should I ask for? I had possible mailing addresses obtained online for each of them, but I preferred to connect by email. All three had Facebook profiles, so I could also try to contact them on Facebook Messenger. Joan was 91 and I had no knowledge of her health or her comfort with electronic media. Mollie Ann did not make an ideal contact either and the address I found for her was iffy. Mollie Ann's daughter, Sandra, formerly an actress, owned a children's clothing company that she had founded about fourteen years ago. In a video on her business site, she told her personal story which included having experienced sexual abuse between the ages of 7 and 12. Her company donated a share of its profits to a non-profit organization dedicated to helping victims of child abuse and neglect.

I decided that Sandra was the best person to approach: Given her own history, she might be more open to helping Stuart than her mother or aunt would be. I could reach her by direct email to her business, but I didn't know if it was private. It seemed that, given the sensitive nature of my mission, I should find that out before I told her much, but that would have required a somewhat awkward extra step. In principle, Stuart should have been the person to contact her, but if so, I would have had to coach him on the details and perhaps ghost write his message. Stuart had authorized me in a broad sense to reach out to people as I thought appropriate. It seemed preferable in terms of my knowledge and experience for me to do the initial approach as a "search angel." I did not think I should ask any of them to test in a first request. However, If I could get Sandra or her mother or aunt to test later, I would have asked them to use 23andme because it could show not only an autosomal match but also a MtDNA one.

Action Takes Courage

I was hoping for some input from Kitty as I made these decisions, so I wrote her again on 2 December 2021. When a week or so had gone by and I had gotten no reply, I **realized that it was up to me to overcome my reluctance and fear of taking the wrong action.** I woke up one morning with sufficient courage to act. I had searched the Internet for a personal email for Sandra and found two Gmail addresses that I thought might work. On 16 December 2021, I sent the following message to Sandra requesting her help to figure out how Stuart might fit into the Gans family:

I hope that this email reaches you at this address which I found online. Since this inquiry is personal, I didn't want to write you at your business email.

I read about your personal story and how it inspired you to found ... your business, with its unique mission. I am a retired social service administrator who lives in Oberlin OH. I grew up in Chicago and some of my family still lives there. As a genealogist, I am a "search angel" who helps adoptees identify their biological parents. I think you may be able to help me.

Stuart Volkow was born */*/195* at Cook County hospital in Chicago. He was adopted at birth and grew up in Skokie IL. He now lives in southern California with his 10-year-old son and works as a program manager for... (*a university research center.*) I got in touch with him a few months ago to help with his search for the identity of his biological father. Stuart has authorized me to try to determine the identity of his biological mother.

Stuart has done DNA testing and I have been analyzing his DNA matches. Among his closest maternal matches (at about the 2nd cousin level) are Jared Miller and Leonora Richman, who I believe are related to you. In addition, I have found five other matches that also descend from the Gans family in Chicago. My analysis has led me to believe that Stuart's biological mother was likely a Gans family descendant who lived in Chicago in 195*.

Would you be willing to help Stuart and me go further with this? He is available to contact you directly, if desirable. I can also send you additional information.

I realize that this is an unusual request coming out of the blue. Thank you very much for your consideration.

No Response and Then a Message

Two days later, on 18 December 2021, when I hadn't received an email reply from Sandra, I decided to send a similar message to her on Facebook Messenger in case she hadn't received the Gmail messages. When two more weeks had passed and I had still gotten no reply, I assumed that I had blown my chance with Sandra. Then at dinnertime on New Year's Day while talking to someone else on the phone, I felt a vibration on my wrist from my Apple watch alerting me to the following Facebook Messenger text from Sandra:

Hi Ann, WOW! Your message knocked me off my chair. Yes, I just spoke to my aunt and we both would love to talk with you about this further. My cell number is ... and my email is ... - amazing work you have done! HAPPY NEW YEAR! I'm still shocked...

A little later she added:

I literally just found this FB message TODAY! I see you wrote on 12/18.

Stuart's Biological Mother on the Phone

I was stunned and paralyzed. I called Janice to tell her about Sandra's text and then finished my dinner and collected my wits before I called Sandra. She answered my call and then patched her aunt Joan into it. I started out saying that I was as shocked to hear from Sandra as they were to hear the news. What followed was an amazing conversation. Sandra came across as in her business video, a warm, friendly, spirited person. Joan was forthright but low-key emotionally as she told me about what had happened. She had gone out with a guy two or three times. They had (in Joan's words) "unprotected sex." He didn't call her back. When she found out she was pregnant, her parents refused to take care of a child and convinced her that she couldn't either, so they arranged with a lawyer to have the child adopted. They sent her to live with a family friend during the pregnancy and she gave birth without ever seeing her baby. Her parents kept the pregnancy a secret from everyone including her teenage younger sister. Joan noted the contrast between today and the era in which this had occurred: Abortion was not legal then²⁰ and society was less open-minded about out of wedlock births. She did not tell Max that she was pregnant, in part so that he wouldn't interfere with the family's decision to place the baby for adoption.

Sandra asked me about what the next steps should be. I replied that it was up to her and Joan. They were respectful

of Stuart's position and said that he should make the first overture. Joan said she was willing to talk to him but couldn't really say much. She was at the end of her life (at 91) but seemed to indicate that it was good that this information had come out. Sandra asked permission from Joan to share her phone number and email address, which she then sent to me.

I couldn't contain my euphoria about the successful culmination of a long effort to find Stuart's mother. Even though it was night in my time zone (and New Year's Day), I didn't want to hold the news until the next day. When I called Stuart, he did not answer his cell phone, so I left a message, blurting out all that I had learned, in my excitement. I followed it with a calmer text explaining my find and summarizing my conversation with Sandra and Joan. He called me back at 9:45 that evening. Kaia was present and I repeated all that I had found out. Stuart seemed to absorb the news calmly; Kaia reacted with awe and expressed her gratitude to me. I followed up the call with an email with contact information for both Joan and Sandra.

Stuart Speaks to His Birth Mother

Stuart waited a day and then spoke separately to Joan and Sandra. He told me later that he had followed up with several Facetime calls with Joan, introducing her to his son and Kaia. He reassured her that he had had a good set of adoptive parents and she told him that she thought she had done the right thing to give him up to a family that was better equipped to raise him than she was as a single woman in the 1950s without family support.

Reflections

My formal role as a "search angel" ended when I identified Stuart's birth parents. I had felt from the beginning, along with some Groll cousins, that Stuart deserved answers, which motivated me to develop the skills to help him. Once I learned that both birth parents were living, I hoped that they would relate to him positively. The window of opportunity was limited because of their advanced ages. Stuart has now met his birth mother and some of his paternal cousins. However, his birth father's refusal to connect has been disappointing. In view of this, I asked Stuart a month and a half after he first spoke to Joan,²¹ whether the search had been worth it to him. He affirmed that it had and then added that by gaining knowledge of his genetic origins, he had "connected the dots."



Endnotes

1. A comprehensive list of genetic genealogy references can be found on the International Society of Genetic Genealogy (ISOGG) wiki, (https://isogg.org/wiki/Wiki_Welcome_Page). The wiki also provides references and resources on DNA testing for adoptees: (https://isogg.org/wiki/DNA_testing_for_adoptees)
2. I have changed most names and some identifying details to protect privacy.
3. His real name.
4. Message from Janice Groll in Kate's 23andme account, 6 November 2020
5. Email from Stuart Volkow to Janice Groll, 7 November 2020
6. Email from Janice Groll to Stuart Volkow, 21 February 2021
7. Message from Stuart Volkow to Max Groll on 23andme, 18 September 2021
8. Ibid. 28 September 2021
9. Email from a Groll cousin to author, 10 October 2021
10. Email to a Groll cousin from author, 11 October 2021
11. *Chicago Tribune*, 1 October 1950 Sun page 65
12. *Chicago Tribune*, 1 May 1966 Sun page 51
13. Samuel Gans (1859-1935) and Mary Cohen (c.1860-1950)
14. Gans DNA matches to Stuart Volkow: Jared Miller (2C1R), Leonora Richman (2C), James Bellow (2C1R), Judd Bellow (2C1R), Michael Bellow (2C1R), Kristine Bellow (3C), and Steven Heller (3C).
15. The surname appears as Gans, Ganz, and Gantz in different places.
16. The photo actually was Joan Weisberg.
17. Email to Kitty Munson Cooper from author, 21 November 2021
18. Email from Kitty Munson Cooper to author, 22 November 2021
19. This tool has been built to help solve DNA puzzles (including unknown parentage cases) by undertaking the calculations described by Leah Larkin in her series [Science the heck out of your DNA...](#) © DNA Painter 2018-2020
20. This conversation occurred before the June 2022 Supreme Court decision overturning the constitutional right to an abortion.
21. Phone conversation between Stuart Volkow and author, 18 February 2022.



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

Ann Fuller Reflects

What are the major lessons I learned?

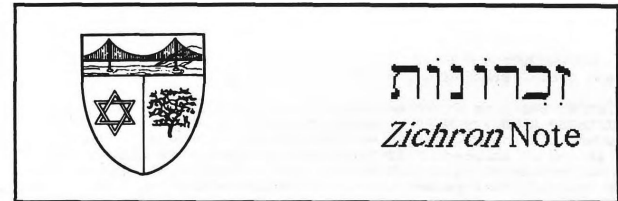
1) **To Persist:** I spent more than a year unearthing family information, analyzing the DNA matches from different testing companies, searching for relevant family tree information, talking to Groll family members, and building trust with Stuart. Throughout I tried to remain realistic about my chances for success.

2) **To seek help when needed:** Research is a collaborative effort. When I got stuck, I reached out to various Facebook groups which led me to Kitty Munson Cooper, an experienced researcher who gave me useful tips and a boost in self-confidence.

3) **To show empathy:** Adoption situations are emotionally complex. I tried to employ tact and understanding in my interactions with all involved parties and suspend judgment as much as possible.

4) **The role of luck:** While the search require skill, luck certainly played a role in my success. Although I might have figured out which of Robert Groll's brothers was Stuart's father with further DNA testing, the appearance of Max's test result on 23andme provided the answer serendipitously. Once I had identified the Gans family as my maternal target, I was fortunate that there were few candidates of the right gender and age in the Gans family tree to be Stuart's mother. Finally, when I successfully contacted Sandra on Facebook, she and her aunt Joan were willing to talk to me and they trusted me enough to acknowledge immediately that Joan was Stuart's mother, filling in some of the details of the circumstances of his birth.

A Bit of ZN History



The Newsletter of the San Francisco Bay Area
Jewish Genealogical Society

VOLUME X, NUMBER 2

SPRING 1990



The Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area
Jewish Genealogical Society

Volume XV, Number 2

May 1995



The Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area
Jewish Genealogical Society

Volume XXIX, Number 2

May 2009

The title *ZichronNote* made its debut in the Spring of 1990. From September 1981 through February 1990 the name of our Society doubled as the name of our publication. Printing developed from dot-matrix technology and color popped onto the scene in May, 2009!

Since the founding by Martha Wise, our editors have included Janice M. Sellers Beth Galletto, Dana L. Kurtz, Robert Weiss, Martha L. Wise, and Peter Tannen.

The reader can find pdfs of back issues of *ZichronNote*, September, 1981 through November 2021, here:

<https://www.sfbajgs.org/ZichronNote/ZichronNote.html>

Issues are made available exclusively to SFBAJGS members for one year and are then posted for everyone.

Copyright for individual articles remains with the authors.

Your Story Belongs in *ZichronNote*

Have you had a breakthrough in your family research, solved a family mystery through a novel resource, pulled together a team of cousins to reconstruct a branch, or walked where your ancestors walked? Have your projects moved forward with the help of online assistance? Has your family's history or pursuing your family's history taught you something about life? Tell us your story, share your discovery! We want to read about it in *ZichronNote*. Please submit materials to zichronnote@sfbajgs.org.

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On Solving the Disappearance of My Father's Cousin, Barney

Len Jacobson

A native of San Francisco, I was born in 1942 to a father also born in San Francisco and a mother born in Pittsburgh, PA, but who moved to San Francisco prior to her first birthday. My father's side stems from Lithuania/Latvia, and my mother's from today's Ukraine. A true mixed marriage—Litvak/Galitzianer.

My wife, Jane, and our two sons, Dan and David, and I lived in Israel in the 1980s, and still have very close ties there to family and friends.

Upon retirement in 2007, I fulfilled a desire that I'd had for years: I took two years of Yiddish at Stanford University and loved every minute of it. Not fluent at all, but I can butcher the language rather well.

I've been researching our families since about 2014, joined SFBAJGS on November 28, 2016, and am loving every new factoid I come across. Most members of the family run away as soon as I start telling them about my latest find.

Growing up, the one thing my father told us was that our **family name was Baltruschansky in "Russia."** He never knew anything more about where they came from. Today I know that they lived in the Marijampolė County of Lithuania, in the city Vilkaviškis.¹ Nineteen kilometers northeast of Vilkaviškis, there is a tiny town that is called Baltrušiai. My guess is that in 1804, when Lithuania required all Lithuanians to take on a family name, the family actually lived in Baltrušiai, and they took on the family name of Baltruschansky, to indicate where they were from. But I repeat, that is a pure guess on my part.

As it turned out, every known member of my Baltruschansky family who immigrated to the United States changed his or her family name to Jacobson. Why they chose Jacobson is a mystery that I still hope to solve.

Grandfather Had a Brother

My father's parents, Simon (Baltruschansky) and Perle Jacobson died before my father even met my mother, so, obviously, I never knew either of them. I say this to emphasize that I grew up with virtually no association to

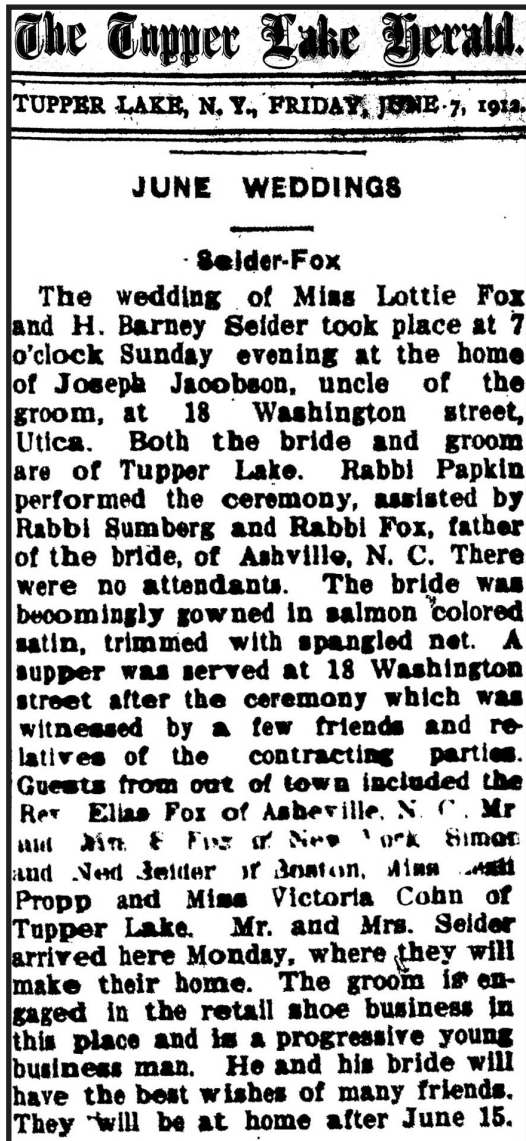
Logged in: Leonard Jay Jacobson

JewishGen
LitvakSIG [Lithuania Deaths](#)

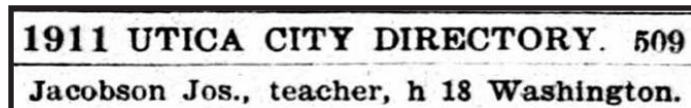
Searching for Surname (phonetically like) : **BALTRUSCHANSKY**
3 matching records found.
Run on Tue, 25 Apr 2023 11:01:50 -0600

Name of Deceased	Father Mother Spouse	Type of Record	Place of Death (Town Uyezd Gubernia)	Place Recorded Year recorded Record#	Residence Cause of Death	Film link Image# Archive/Fond/ Inventory/File	Comments Credit
		Date of Death (D-M-Y) Hebrew date Age or Date of Birth					
BALTRUSHANSKI, Beyla	David	Death	Wladislawow	Wladislawow / [Kudirkos Naumiestis]	Wladislawow	not filmed LVIA/1236 /4/143	Witnesses: David BALTRUSHANSKI, David YEZNER This record is from the LitvakSIG All Lithuania Database (about LitvakSIG)
	Leya	6 - 8 - 1846	Wladislawow	1846			
		2	Suwalki	310			
BALTRUSHANSKI, Khaim	David	Death	Wladislawow	Wladislawow / [Kudirkos Naumiestis]	Wladislawow	not filmed LVIA/1236 /4/149	Witnesses: Leyb BALTRUSHANSKI, Leyb BRANDSHTEYN This record is from the LitvakSIG All Lithuania Database (about LitvakSIG)
	Leya	14 - 1 - 1848	Wladislawow	1848			
		6 months	Suwalki	5			

my father's parents and their history. But one of the first finds that I made is that my Grandfather Simon had an older brother who was a Cantor and who immigrated to the United States in 1878 and lived in Utica, New York. His name was Joseph Jacobson. What I didn't know at that point is that Simon and Joseph had an older sister named Feyga Mira Baltruschansky.



I found several newspaper articles that mentioned Joseph. One was from June 7, 1912² that said, "The wedding of Miss Lottie Fox and H. Barney Seider took place at 7 o'clock last evening at the home of Joseph Jacobson, uncle of the groom, at 18 Washington Street." With the address given, I



knew without a doubt that this was my Great Uncle Joseph, as multiple directories³ for the City of Utica, NY, showed Joseph at that address. And since I knew the maiden name of Joseph's wife, Anna, was Jaffe, I knew that the nephew, Barney, could not have been related to Joseph through his wife. So now I knew that Joseph (and, therefore, my own grandfather, Simon) had to have had a sister who married a man named Seider. But how could I find this sister?

And Grandfather Had a Sister

It was about two years after discovering the existence of Barney that I found his mother, the sister of my grandfather, Simon, and his brother, Joseph.

A Lucky Find

One evening, I did a Google search on simply the name, "Baltruschansky." The particular spelling of the name that I chose to use was somewhat arbitrary, and exactly two hits appeared using the same spelling that I had used. Both hits were from a Hebrew language webpage on the website, MyHeritage. What I saw was that the owner of that family tree had had a great-grandmother named Feyga Mera Baltruschansky, and she had married a man named Schoel Seider in Riga, Latvia. The Hebrew text of the marriage record said that she was the daughter of David Baltruschansky. This woman, I was certain, had to be the sister of my grandfather, Simon (Baltruschansky) Jacobson!! [See image at top of next page.]

Request for DNA Test

I sent a message to the owner of the family tree on MyHeritage and said that I strongly believed that we were related, and I told her exactly what I assumed the relationship to be. I asked her if she would be willing to take a DNA test to test what I had said, and she agreed. Shortly thereafter, my wife and I went to Israel (with a DNA test package in hand) and we met this woman. She took the DNA test and when we returned to the United States, I sent the DNA test to Ancestry for their analysis. Sure enough, the results indicated precisely what I had figured: she and I were 2nd cousins once removed. (As an aside, multiple other DNA tests that others in the family have since taken have shown consistent results.)

From this new cousin, I now had more information on my grandfather's sister. Feyga Mira Baltruschansky was born in Lithuania in 1852, but moved to Riga, Latvia, with her parents and siblings sometime between 1856 and 1863.⁴ Feyga Mira married Schoel Seider in Riga on December 8, 1874. They had seven children, the second of whom was

No.		Имя	Кто венчал объект	Дата и место	Где венчался или место	Кто венчался с кем	Имя отца	Имя матери	Имя отца	Имя матери
70	22	40	Seider	26 29	Latvia	Seider	Seider	Seider	Seider	Seider

Latvian State Archives Marriage Record for Feiga Mera Baltruschansky and Schoel Seider.⁵

Herman Barney Seider, born October 29, 1877, in Riga. Herman Barney was my father's 1st cousin.

The only other newspaper article I found that mentioned Barney Seider came from the Syracuse Journal on Thursday, September 25, 1913.⁶ The article said that the bankruptcy of H. Barney Seider was discharged, which I learned meant that Barney's assets were no longer protected by bankruptcy laws.

SYRACUSE JOURNAL

Page Sixteen September 25, 1913

DISCHARGE DUNFEE FROM BANKRUPTCY

United States Judge Ray has discharged from bankruptcy Joseph Dunfee of Syracuse. Mr. Dunfee was a contractor who entered bankruptcy owing \$310,421 and having assets of \$45,900.

Other Syracuse bankrupts have been discharged from bankruptcy as follows: Fred H. Yorman, whose liabilities were \$2,560 and nominal assets \$2,461; Frank H. Woods, \$655-0; Geo. H. Lyons, \$1,023-\$257; Henry A. Wood, \$610-\$25, and Margaret E. Hayes, \$6,981-\$1,925.

John H. McCaslin of Lysander, who owed \$2,565 and had \$3,903 assets, has also been discharged. Objections have been filed to the discharge of W. H. Parmelee & Son of Onida, on the ground that they have not conformed to the bankruptcy law, and similar objections have been made to the discharge of H. Barney Seider, merchant at Tupper Lake.

William J. D. Crawford of Canastota, who owed \$2,430 and had assets of \$25, was discharged.

Search as I would, I never found anything more on H. Barney Seider.

Uncle Barney with a Different Last Name

However, a few years later, I found a relative whose family name was Goodman. He was a great-grandson of Feiga Mera Baltruschansky Seider, and he mentioned that his grandfather, Edward Seider (one of the sons of Feiga Mera), had a brother with a different last name; it was Aronson. He thought it strange that his grandfather's brother had a different last name. He also said that he didn't remember the brother's first name. He said that the whole family lived in Texas.

In another conversation with this newly found relative, he mentioned that his mother, Irene Seider Goodman, had an Uncle Barney, whom she loved dearly. He didn't remember Uncle Barney's last name. But he did remember that Uncle Barney had a son named, "Sig."

Barney's Wife Leah

Taking a leap of logic, I wondered if "Uncle Barney" might be Barney Aronson. It didn't take me long at all to find a "Sigmund Aronson" in Texas, whose father's name was H. Barney Aronson and whose mother was Leah Aronson. I found a death notice for Leah Aronson, who died on February 20, 1920, in Beaumont, Texas. And that led me to finding her tombstone.⁷

The Hebrew text on her tombstone says that Leah was the daughter of Rabbi Eliyahu Fox!!!

The Decisive Clue

But back now to that June 7, 1912, newspaper article: it also mentioned that Barney's bride was the daughter of Rev. (i.e., "Rabbi") Elias Fox of Asheville, NC. (That specific reference to the bride's father was the decisive clue in finding my father's cousin, Barney!! But it takes a bit more of the story to see why.)

And since the newspaper article from 1912 that announced the wedding of H. Barney Seider and Lotte Fox had said that Lotte was the daughter of Rabbi Elias Fox of Asheville, NC, the next quick find was the tombstone of Rabbi Elias Fox.⁸



I now knew without a doubt that H. Barney Seider and H. Barney Aronson were one and the same person, and Lotte Fox Seider and Leah Fox Aronson were the same individual.

My guess is that after Barney lost the protection of the bankruptcy court, he and his wife fled New York and wound up in Texas, where she apparently lived just seven more years. Barney died in 1947.

It probably took four years, maybe a bit more, from start to finish. But now I know I know the long, winding, and tangled story of my father's elusive cousin, Barney.



Endnotes

1. Two death records found on JewishGen report the deaths of the first two children of my great-grandparents, David and Lea Baltruschansky.
2. Marriage announcement: The Tupper Lake Herald, Jun 7, 1912
3. Ancestry.com. U.S., City Directories, 1822-1995
4. I give those dates for the move to Riga, Latvia, because my grandfather's brother, Joseph, was born in Lithuania in 1856 and the next sibling, a daughter named Olga Golda Baltruschansky, was born in Riga in 1863.
5. I contracted with the Latvian State Archive office in Riga three times to find information on my family, and my wife and I even went to their office once.
6. Source was <https://fultonhistory.com>, a free historic newspaper website of over 1,000 New York newspapers, as well as collections from other states and Canada.
7. Find a Grave, a free database with images
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/40050831/leah-aronson>
8. Find a Grave, a free database with images
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/50494123/elias-fox>



At my very first meeting of SFBAJGS, a fellow saw my name tag and noticed my last name. He said, "Do you have any relatives that lived in Utica, NY?" I told him that I did. He then said that his great-grandfather was Barney Jacobson, and he lived in Utica. I told him that there is a Barney Jacobson in my family. Long story made short, it was the same person. That fellow member is Mike Lipsie. He and I are 3rd cousins, once removed. DNA tests corroborate the assumption of our family connection.—LJ

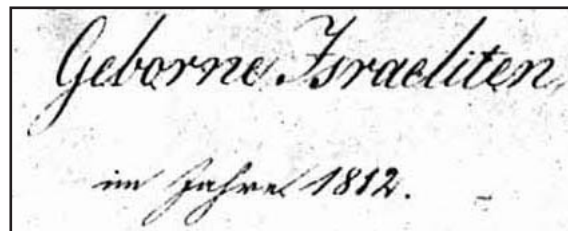
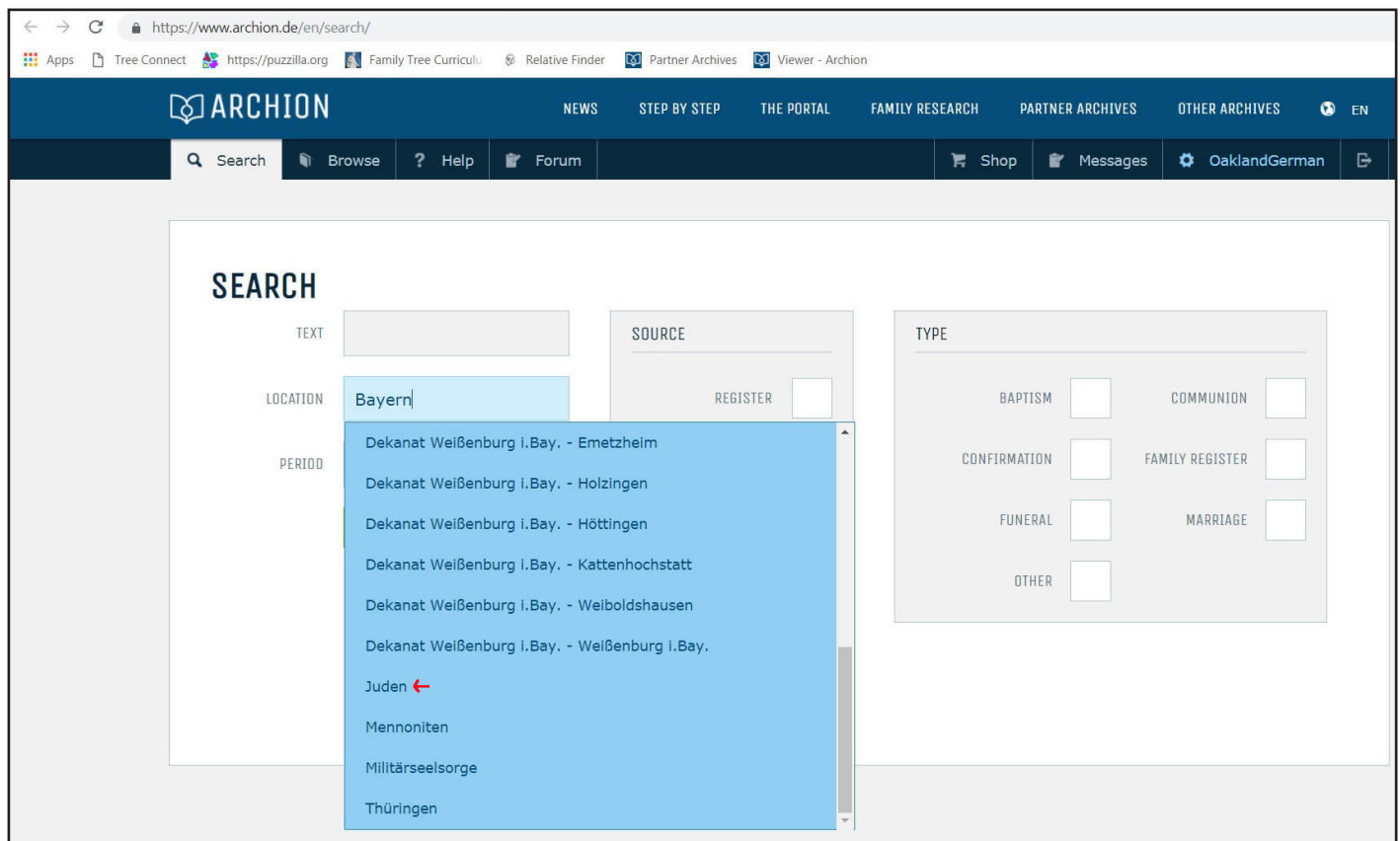
German Jewish Records on Archion

Archion is a subscription site available without charge to visitors to the Oakland FamilySearch Center. It represents itself as “German Church Books Online.” It is perhaps not widely known that its holdings also include German Synagogue records.

For several years a friendly researcher in Oakland has shared his finds of Jewish records on Archion with SFBAJGS. A link from our home page menu will take the reader to a collection of his discoveries.

Take a look for yourself!

https://www.sfbajgs.org/Jewish_Synagogue_Records_on_German_Protestant_Church_Records_Site_Archion.html



SFBAJGS Activity Report for 2021

Jeff Lewy, SFBAJGS Treasurer

This annual report to our members covers our 2021 activities, financial results, and our grants to other organizations.

This year continued in the same pattern as 2020. Our meetings were all virtual, via Zoom. Although we were not able to meet in person, our meetings expanded our reach to include members and non-members from far and wide who otherwise would not have had the opportunity to hear our presentations. Our virtual audience continued to be larger than our in-person meetings last held in 2019. Our free online SFBAJGS News continues to inform members of SFBAJGS and other subscribers about our online activities and those of other groups, and our quarterly ZichronNote journal presents interesting articles about Jewish genealogy, many of them written by our members.

We are one of the larger societies in the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS), with about 200 members. The volunteer work of our members makes us one of the most active Jewish genealogical societies, and we take active roles in moderating Research Groups (RGs) online for JewishGen and participating in other efforts to find and provide public and online access to vital records and other records of genealogical interest.

Our name says we are the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society, but we remind you that the “San Francisco Bay Area” part of our name merely means that we reside here. Our members and our interests are worldwide, as are our ancestors and living relatives. We can be as helpful to our members with ancestors in Ukraine, Bohemia, Galicia, Russia or South Africa as to those whose families have been in the Bay Area for four generations or more. All of our families, like yours, originally came from “someplace else,” and we have knowledge of and connections to many of those places.

Our members have continued to research their family histories, as more data continues to become available online, and we continue to field and answer questions from researchers near and far.

Several members attended the 41st annual conference of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS), held virtually in August 2021, and other Society members helped organize the conference and made presentations.

Our members continue to make generous donations to the Society in addition to paying dues, giving us the opportunity to support our objectives:

- Support and improve online sharing of data useful to researchers everywhere doing Jewish genealogy
- Make formerly closed or unavailable records available online 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 these objectives. We have ongoing volunteer projects to transcribe data from local cemeteries and other sources of birth, marriage, and death records and make those data available online for researchers everywhere. These projects are described below under “Transcriptions.”

Other work fulfilling these objectives takes place wherever Jewish communities and records are located, often far from us. Therefore, we continue our practice of making donations to other organizations that are working in those communities and archives. We support projects 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 access restrictions.

Donations to other organizations working in ways that support our mission

This year, as a result of our members generous donations, we were able to donate a record \$6,500 to 11 organizations for their activities. We present the purpose of our donations and the URLs of these organizations so that you can learn more about their activities if you wish.

Local

- **Jewish Community Library in San Francisco:** to maintain and expand the very strong collection of materials related to Jewish genealogy and history, especially in the San Francisco Bay Area. <https://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 Sierra foothills. <https://www.pioneerjewishcemeteries.org/>
- **Oakland FamilySearch Library:** to expand its collection of materials for Jewish research which may be available through access via the FamilySearch website

https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Oakland_California_FamilySearch_Library/Contact_Information

National and International

- **Italian Genealogical Group**: to support its ongoing online indexing of New York City records, including New York City death records and the index for New York naturalization records. <https://www.italiangen.org/>

- **International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) Stern Fund**: to encourage non-profit institutions or organizations, Jewish or not, to pursue projects, activities and acquisitions that provide new or enhanced resources to benefit Jewish genealogists. <https://www.iajgs.org/>

- **Jewish Records Indexing–Poland**: to support ongoing digitization and indexing of Jewish records, primarily from Polish archives, but also from Ukraine and other locations where Polish records were formerly recorded. JRI-Poland now contains 5.8 million records from 550 Polish towns. <https://jri-poland.org/>

- **Kirkuty – Jewish Cemeteries in Poland**: to support photography of Jewish cemeteries in Poland, both extant and desecrated, drawing attention to the remaining signs of the pre-war presence of the Polish Jewish community. <http://cmentarze-zydowskie.pl/indexang.htm>

- **JewishGen: to their General Fund** supporting the primary online site of Jewish genealogical records and instruction for researchers. <https://www.jewishgen.org>

- **Ukraine Documents Acquisition Project at JewishGen**: to support digitization and placement online of records from Ukrainian national archives. Some of this work continues despite the war in Ukraine. <https://www.jewishgen.org/Ukraine/>

- **Gesher Galicia–Przemysl Project**: to identify the towns of origin of 577 books of Jewish index books held in the Przemysl State Archive in Ukraine and to preserve at Gesher Galicia the images of these record books. This identification project is now complete. Gesher Galicia is now comparing the data from these towns to determine which records might be newly digitized. <https://www.geshergalicia.org/>

Transcriptions

- We have transcribed more than 46,000 burial cards from Sinai Memorial Chapel in San Francisco dating back to the early 1920s when Sinai Memorial was established. These records are not limited to a single cemetery. As the only

nonprofit Jewish funeral home in Northern California, Sinai Memorial arranges for burials and cremations at cemeteries throughout the Bay Area and in other cities in the U.S. and overseas. The cremation records do not appear in any cemetery records, providing a new source of information regarding deaths that do not include burials.

- Our volunteers completed transcribing the 17,000 records of Eternal Home Cemetery in Colma. These records from six bound ledgers cover the years from the opening of the cemetery in 1903 until 2010. Those records will be publicly available on JewishGen’s Jewish Online Worldwide Burial Registry (JOWBR) when they are posted in mid-2022. Records after 2010 are maintained by Eternal Home on their computer system.

- We are transcribing burial records for Sherith Israel Synagogue in San Francisco dating from about 1861 to 1889. These records come from synagogue meeting minutes and copies of the related City health records kept by the synagogue. These records are particularly valuable since they provide a partial substitute for San Francisco City records destroyed in the 1906 earthquake

Financial Results for 2021

Revenues for 2021 were nearly \$9,800, very slightly more than in past years, with about \$4,600 in dues from 201 members and nearly \$5,000 in donations and other income. Thank you for your membership dues and generous 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 about \$10,100, generating a small loss of about \$300. This loss resulted from our grants in contributions to other groups of \$6,500. Those contributions are described above. Other significant categories of expenses were publication of four issues of *ZichronNote*, \$1,100; membership acquisition and retention, \$500; web site maintenance and management, \$400. All other expenses, including insurance and other administrative expenses totaled about \$1,500.

We thank you again as we do every year, for your membership, your donations, and your interest in Jewish genealogy and family history. Please let us know if you have any questions or suggestions to improve 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 another year of accomplishments in 2022, and hope we will be able to return to in-person meetings in addition to our outreach via Zoom meetings.

*Zichron*Note

זְכֵרֹנוֹת

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For more SFBAJGS program information and to register for a presentation, visit <https://www.sfbajgs.org>
Feel free to invite friends!

For genealogical programs offered by other groups throughout the Bay Area

Bay Area Genealogy Calendar

CA State Library Sutro Library

facilitated by SFBAJGS member and former Boardmember Dvorah Lewis

Change Service Requested

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SFBAJGS
PO Box 318214
San Francisco, CA 94131-8214