



זכרונות ZichronNote

The Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

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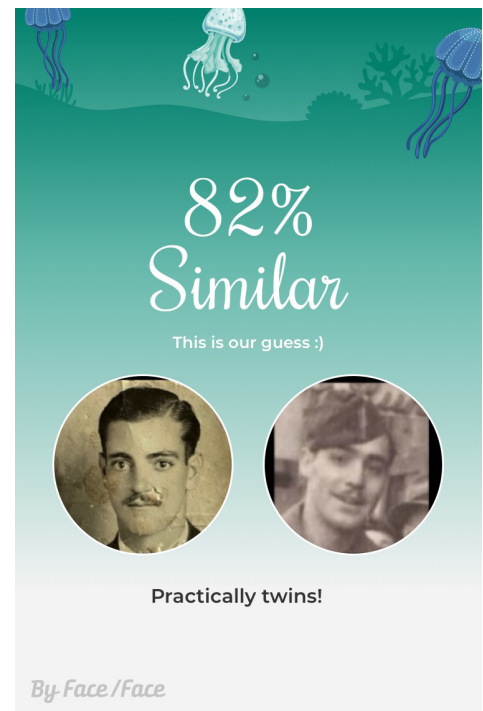
The French Connection

In this issue we feature two serialized stories:

*In the first, Nathan was “shot and killed over France” until he wasn’t
In the second, photos and DNA help ID the American soldier in France
And then, sometimes a French connection changes a life*

In This Issue

President’s Message Jeremy Frankel	2
Editor’s Column Barbara Toby Stack	3
Nathan Gurin and His Cause of Death, part 1 Sharon Fingold.....	4
A Bit of ZN History	6
Toward Identifying the Unknown Fathers of Two Related French Women, part 2 Ann L. Fuller.....	8
Sometimes a French Connection Changes a Life Barbara Toby Stack.....	13
SFBAJGS Activity Report for 2022 Dana Kurtz, SFBAJGS Treasurer.....	16
Our longtime advertiser Sinai Memorial Chapel.....	19



Toward Identifying the Unknown Fathers of
Two Related French Women, part 2, p12
created with [Face/Face](#) software.

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ZichronNote

Journal of the

San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

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President's Message

Help Wanted!

Jeremy Frankel, SFBAJGS President



Because of the ubiquitous phrase about things “happening beyond our control,” right now your board consists of fewer than ten (think *minyán*) board members. It's actually hovering around eight wonderful souls, with four of them being your elected officials.

I like the idea of having an odd number of people sitting around the (currently, virtual) table. This is because, after our usual enthusiastic discussions, any motion won't end up as a tied vote. This means I'd like to see at least eleven, preferably thirteen faces around the table. Hence we are making room for five more chairs! Could you be sitting on one of them?

My Treasurer sent me an “off-the-cuff” list of the kinds of jobs/skills we need to match with new board members. We're not asking you to take over any one task on your own. We'd all be working together, sharing the workload.

The kind of tasks we need help with are as follows: Membership; PayPal integration and automation; Board meeting minutes or even a Board Secretary; Family Finder committee; Transcriptions (when we figure out where things stand). I'm sure there may be some other projects we need help with as well. I've always been a firm believer in utilizing grass-roots support, and getting as many people involved as possible.

As you will have read elsewhere in your election materials, our current Secretary is stepping down after fifteen years. So we need someone, preferably with prior secretarial skills, and I don't mean typing; but someone who may have non-profit experience as a Secretary. If you want to know more, please contact me at president@sfbajgs.org.

In closing, the board hopes that everyone had a good Thanksgiving, and is looking forward to their Chanukah celebrations

Editor's Column



For this issue I reached a modicum of comfort with InDesign, though in no way a mastery. And ever-so-slowly extended the annual pruning of my branching roses. These things take time, and my gratitude, in this season of thanks, is for time.

Our team here at SFBAJGS continues to labor valiantly in the wake of Jeff's passing. As you may have noted in Jeremy's column, we are looking to expand our little genealogical circle. A perk of Board membership: Over the years, I have received considerable genealogical assistance from my fellow Board members. My first ZichronNote article was published in the August, 2017 issue, *Pierre Hahn, G n alogiste Extraordinaire*, this after Pierre got me started in harvesting documents from Paris as I spied upon my Waldman almost-family.

What does a future genealogist look like? They look interested. Engage them. Beguile them. Put them in the story.

What does a future SFBAJGS Board member look like? Probably just like you: interested in your own genealogy and helping the Society support our membership and all present and future genealogists. Our Zoom Board meetings are open to interested members.

I repeat here the second-most-important finding aid in genealogy, and usable on almost any search engine and website:

your name here site:sfbajgs.org

The most important is the search function of your computer's OS.

It's once again time to quote a Jewish philosopher, Diane Warren, in the title and lyrics to her great genealogical song, "If I Could Turn Back Time." May you have the time you need and the time you want and, above all, a good time. Happy Chanukah!

Barbara Toby Stack
November, 2023
Berkeley, CA

Nathan Gurin and His Cause of Death

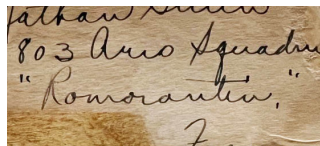
Sharon Fingold



Sharon Fingold first became interested in her family tree while attending Mt. Holyoke College in Massachusetts and her grandmother introduced her to relatives in New Jersey. They in turn introduced her to relatives in New York and England. Since then, she has been meeting relatives and researching her family history in fits and starts. Sharon has been a member of the SFBAJGS for almost 35 years and was the co-coordinator of the JewishGen Belarus SIG for several years. Now retired, she has more time to devote to research and is slowly writing up the stories for her extended family.



While showing me a WWI-era photo of her uncle Nathan Gurin, my grandmother Iola told me all she had heard about Nathan. It was a story she heard from her mother Ada Gurin Alperstein, Nathan's sister. Nathan was "shot and killed over France." That's Nathan's story—all that remained in the family lore. Nathan Gurin, young man, shot and killed over France.



According to the writing on the back of his photo, he had been in an aero squadron in Romorantin, France. A flying ace in the family? Or perhaps he was a gunner? Did airplanes in those days have 2 men in them or just one? Either way, how romantic! He was a flyer in the early days of air warfare, shot and killed over France. It sounded historic and heroic. I had to know more.

In the 1980s and 1990s, before the internet, I went to the local Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormon) Family History Center and did my research. I went through books and microfilms of lists of U.S. casualties during WWI. Nothing. Nothing!?! How could this be?

The Black Sheep

I placed an ad in a genealogy newsletter in southern California asking if anyone had information on Goldens and Gurins in St Paul, MN. (Before the internet, this is what we had to do.) I got a phone call from a man vacationing in Palm Springs who knew the Goldens! He put me in touch and I talked to descendants of Ada's

uncle Joseph Golden. Had they heard of Nathan Gurin or his brothers? They didn't know anything specific. They just remembered that the Gurin brothers were the "black sheep" of the family and no one talked about them. Interesting! A clue that raised many more questions, but didn't immediately get me any closer to Nathan and how he died.

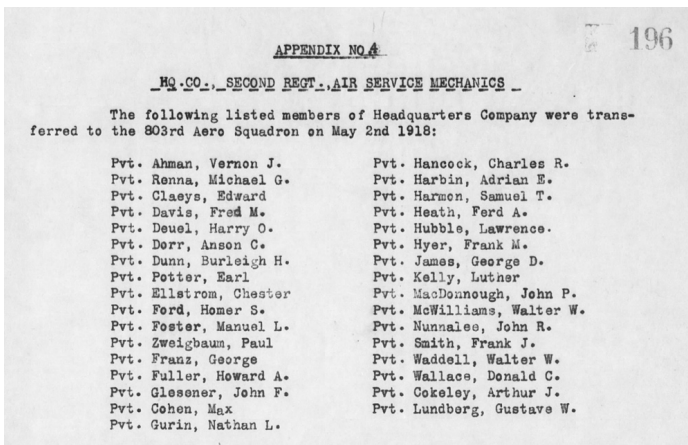
The Flyer Story Begins to Unravel

In 1996, I was working with someone who was an Air Force history buff. I told my colleague about Nathan Gurin. He asked to see the photo. Perhaps, he could help me. So, I brought the photo into the office. Within seconds of looking at the photo, he said to me, "Sharon, he may have served in an aero squadron, but he wasn't a flyer. His uniform doesn't have any of the insignia." What? Nathan Gurin wasn't a flyer? Mind blown, I had to think about what to do next. What could have happened? Did he die in France? Was he shot and killed in some other way during the war? Did he die during the war? Was he really in an aero squadron?

Private Nathan Gurin in Military History

Luckily, with the internet, searching became easier. I searched for anything I could find on aero squadron histories for WWI. I soon found *Correll's History of the American Expeditionary Forces Air Service 1917-1919, Series E: Squadron Histories, Volume 25: 800th-803d, 805th, 806th, 825th-830th, 835th, 837th, 840th, 875th, 1099th, 1101st-1108th, and 1111th Aero Squadrons*. Online and fully searchable. I searched on "Nathan Gurin" and there were two hits. Yes! Nathan was in an aero squadron! Maybe he was a flyer after all! Appendix Number 4, page 10, there he is: "Pvt. Gurin, Nathan L." transferred into the 803 Aero Repair Squadron May 2, 1918 from the HQ Company of the Air Service Mechanics. Repair Squadron? Mechanics!?!

Pvt. Gurin, Nathan L.



Correll's confirmed that the 803rd Aero Repair Squadron was stationed at Romorantin, France as stated on the caption on the back of Nathan's photo.¹ The squadron seemed to have been focused on the ground not the air. **If Nathan Gurin died during WWI, it would NOT have been "over" France but "on" France.**

What did he do in this repair squadron and could he still have lost his life during the war? Gorell's Volume 25 provides a detailed history of the activities of the 803rd: They were:

"assigned to duty with the Transportation Division, Air Service" and were quartered in barracks near the "transportation shops and motor park." "Perhaps the most dangerous and spectacular work performed by the organization during the Great War has been convoy duty...many of the men were detailed to this work.... practically every man in the organization has done duty as driver of some kind of motor vehicle...on several occasions more than half the organization has been absent on convoy duty. This work consisted in conveying truck trains loaded with various kinds of material and equipment from the different base ports and interior supply depots of France to points along the entire line of the battle front from Belgium to the American sector in Alsace-Lorraine."

"In March and June, and again in July, 1918, when the great German drives threatened to smash the lines North of Paris members of the squadron did their bit in helping to stem the tide of the Hun invasion. Some were engaged in hauling troops, ammunition and supplies to the front; while others were held in readiness to assist in the evacuation of Paris should this become necessary. In this work many members of the squadron worked along the firing line, and were present at some of the biggest engagements on the Western Front."

"When the Yanks halted the German's big drive in the memorable fight at Chateau Thierry, for many days and nights members of the 803rd assisted in moving troops and supplies to the front lines and in transporting wounded to the rear. On this and numerous other occasions they also helped the civilian population in escaping from the danger zones. Many thrilling experiences might be told by men serving on these missions."

Many thrilling experiences? None of Nathan's stories survived to be told in our family. Back to the internet to learn more.

Wikipedia's article "Battle of Chateau-Thierry (1918)" provides the following information:

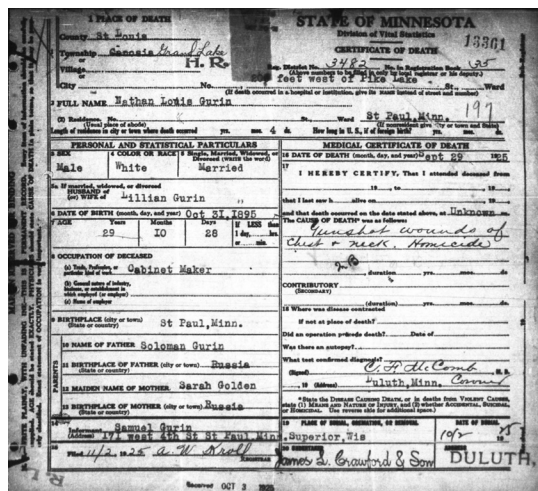
"The Battle of Chateau-Thierry was fought on 31 May 1918 and was one of the first actions of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) under General John J. 'Black Jack' Pershing. It was a battle in World War I as part of the Second Battle of the Marne, initially prompted by a German Spring Offensive. German and local actions at Chateau-Thierry recommenced on 31 May to 22 July 1918, against the AEF, an American Expeditionary Force, consisting of troops from both the United States Army and Marine Corps units. These units were the newest troops on the front in France and just barely out of training.

The AEF counter-offensive combat action at Chateau-Thierry was relatively brief starting on 18 July 1918 and lasting for less than a week and was part of the allied effort to push back the recent German advance. American forces had linked up with their French allies at the Marne River on 3 June 1918 and had forced the Germans back across the river. This set the stage for the action at Chateau-Thierry and at Belleau Wood. However, the later action raged for another three weeks."

But Where, When and How did Nathan Die?

Nathan Gurin wasn't a flying ace, but he was a "first": participating in some way in one of the first actions of the AEF. His service was historic and may even have been heroic. But I still did not know when, where, and how he died. Was he shot and killed?

As more resources came online, I slowly traced Nathan Gurin wherever I could find information. Finally, in 2006, I found Nathan in the Minnesota Historical Society web site's index to Minnesota Death Certificates. He died in Minnesota. In 1925. Nowhere near France. Curious and curiuser, I did what any genealogist worth their salt should do and placed an order for a copy of Nathan's death certificate.



What a revelation! Before me a copy of the death certificate: Nathan Louis Gurin, died September 29, 1925, cause of death "Gunshot wounds of chest and neck" "Homicide." "206 feet west of Pike Lake." Minnesota. Yes, Nathan was shot and killed: In Minnesota in 1925 during Prohibition.



Tombstone for Nathan Gurin,
Hebrew Cemetery, Superior, Wisconsin²
"Nathan L Gurin, Oct 8, 1896, Sept 29, 1925"

Time to Explore the Black Sheep

Was Nathan involved in smuggling liquor during Prohibition? If the Gurin brothers were the "black sheep of the family," what were they all up to? Time to find out!

Endnotes

1. Gorrell's, Volume 25, pages 59-60
2. Find A Grave

**PART 2
IN THE
DECEMBER
ZICHRONNOTE
WILL DELIVER
A BOMBSHELL!**

A Bit of ZN History

May, 1990

This issue we are calling Zichron Note, which in Hebrew means, memories, memorials, remembrances, records or mementos.

August, 1985, page 6

TEL AVIV GENEALOGY CENTER

In June the new computer based genealogy center opened in Tel Aviv. This is the project mentioned in Libby Rosenfield's report on the 1984 seminar in Israel. It is the brainchild of Dr Douglas Goldman, a San Franciscan whom some of us know from seminars.

To enter your family into this computer you send \$5.00 to the Beth Hatefuthsoth Genealogy Project, Dept. A, P.O.Box 39352, Tel Aviv 61392, Israel for a Submitter's Kit. The kit includes instructions, forms etc. The forms are to be completed and returned and will then be entered into the computer.

Any family tree must be at least five generations and include no fewer than fifty family members. In order to cover salaries a charge of \$1.00 for each name submitted is required for up to 500 names. The next 1500 can be entered for 80¢ each after which the price drops to 60¢ for any future names.

This project became The Family Tree of the Jewish People (FTJP) and their Timeline includes:

- 1985 - The Dorot Center, at Beth Hatefuthsoth (Museum of Diaspora) in Tel Aviv, Israel, begins collecting family trees in GEDCOM format. Collects 100,000 entries as of 1990.
- 2023, July - JewishGen FTJP reaches 9.8 million names, from 8,600 contributors.



The reader can find pdfs of back issues of ZichronNote, here.

Issues are made available exclusively to SFBAJGS members for two years and are then posted.

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Society News

SFBAJGS members are urged to VOTE
for your 2023-2024 Officers.

You will have received ballots
via mail and via ConstantContact email.

for more information, email:
nominations@sfbajgs.org

Join! Renew! Donate!
<https://www.sfbajgs.org/JOIN.html>

Janice Sellers has posted the first of the 2024 Zoom Programs

Write for *ZichronNote*
Proofread for *ZichronNote*!
email Barbara at ZichronNote@sfbajgs.org

Attend an SFBAJGS Zoom Board Meeting
next: Sunday, February 4, 2024 at 10:00 am
for more information
email Jeremy at president@sfbajgs.org



Toward Identifying the Unknown Fathers of Two Related French Women

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.

Genealogy is an ever-unfolding quest

As time passes, new information may add to or alter an original story. In May 2021, I published an article in ZichronNote, *Unraveling the Basis of a Mysterious DNA Match*¹, about a close match on MyHeritage between my brother-in-law, Richard Gray, and Christiane R., a previously unknown French woman. Christiane was born in Marseille in November 1946, the daughter of Anne-Marie Delor and an unknown American soldier. Anne-Marie died in 1957 at age 28 without telling Christiane her father's identity. Christiane was raised by her grandmother and her Aunt Janine (her mother's older sister) after Anne-Marie's death, both of whom refused to tell her who her father was. In addition, before her death, Aunt Janine burned some old letters addressed to Anne-Marie that were likely from him.

A DNA Match shows Jewish Ancestry

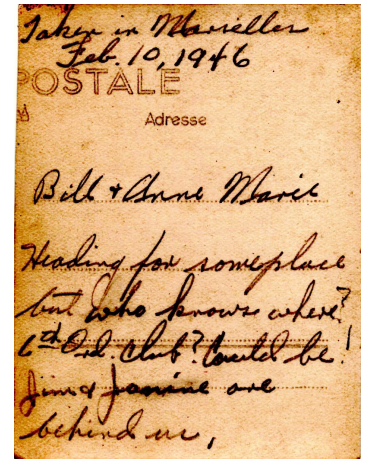
I first became aware of Christiane's match to Richard Gray in June 2020. After Christiane responded to my initial message, she and I carried on an extensive email correspondence in French. Christiane and Richard were likely first cousins once removed given the size of their match and their age difference². Christiane's ethnicity, mainly Spanish and Italian, also included 21.8% Ashkenazi, indicating that she likely had one Jewish grandparent, and 4.8% Mesoamerican. Her Jewish ancestry could have come only from a man in Richard Gray's family and her Mesoamerican ethnicity from the woman with whom he connected³.

Photos prompt a Memory

Two months into our correspondence, Christiane requested photos of the Gray family. After she received them, she recalled an album that had photo postcards of her mother with two different American soldiers, Robert and Bill. The one with Robert was undated⁴, but the other with Bill had an inscription with the date of February 10, 1946, about the time of Christiane's conception, so he seemed a likely candidate to have been her birth father.



February 10, 1946 photo of Bill & Anne-Marie



After much research, I determined that the unknown soldier was likely the unacknowledged son of William Gray, one of Richard Gray's paternal uncles, who had made multiple business trips to Mexico⁵. However, because Christiane was the product of two generations of non-marital births, I was not able to establish her father's surname. Nor was I able, without further DNA matches, to find out the identity of her father's mother, the woman with Mesoamerican ancestry.

Two different subsequent developments resulting from DNA matches have added new dimensions to Christiane's story: one that gives insight into her immediate family and the other that links her to her Mesoamerican heritage.

History repeats itself

On 3 February 2021, a French woman named Natacha M. sent the following message to Christiane on MyHeritage⁶:

Good evening, Christiane 😊 I have just received my DNA results and we have a lot in common, you are the sister of my grandmother or my grandmother on my father's side, I don't really understand! Anyway, I can't wait to chat with you 😊

Startling New Message

Natacha also sent a message to me because I had uploaded Christiane's raw data to my own MyHeritage account to make it easier for me to work with her DNA matches:

Hello Ann 😊 Do You speak French? You are my grandmother 😊

Startled by her message, I answered that I was not her grandmother and explained why I was connected to Christiane's profile. As we communicated back and forth in French, I soon learned that Natacha who was born in 1985, had an eerily similar story to Christiane's. Her mother had died in 2018 without divulging the identity of her father, whom she now learned was related to Christiane.

I initially questioned whether Christiane could be Natacha's grandmother; Christiane had talked about her daughter, but she had never mentioned a son. I first ruled out that Natacha had descended from Christiane's maternal aunt or uncles. Christiane's maternal first cousin, Bernard Delor, the son of one uncle, had tested on MyHeritage, but his match to Natacha⁷ was too small to have come directly through his father. In addition, Natacha (but not Bernard Delor) matched Richard Gray⁸ so she had to have descended directly from Christiane. When I looked up what different relationships were possible between Natacha and Christiane given the size of their match⁹, I found that grandmother was included. If Christiane was Natacha's grandmother, then Richard Gray was Natacha's first cousin three times removed (1C3R)¹⁰ and Bernard Delor, her first cousin twice removed (1C2R)¹¹, both statistically possible relationships.

I next looked at the age difference between Christiane and Natacha. Christiane was born in 1946 and Natacha in 1985. Natacha's mother was born in 1962, so her unknown father might have been born at about the same time. I hypothesized that if he was Christiane's son, Christiane may have given birth to him at age 16 and her family would have been aware of the situation, (probably not a welcome development).

On 5 February 2021, just two days after Natacha had sent her first message to Christiane, she wrote me that she had not received a reply. I urged her to be patient, telling her that Christiane and her husband had health issues and that she had taken six weeks to answer my initial message to her in 2020. Natacha replied on 8 February 2021:

OK Ann thank you! Yes, you are right, I will wait and be patient, there is nothing more I can do ... no I think she is not at all aware of my existence ... My mother at the time of my birth had psychological problems and was never able to answer me. She died 2 years ago. I'll tell you when I hear back, thank you for everything!

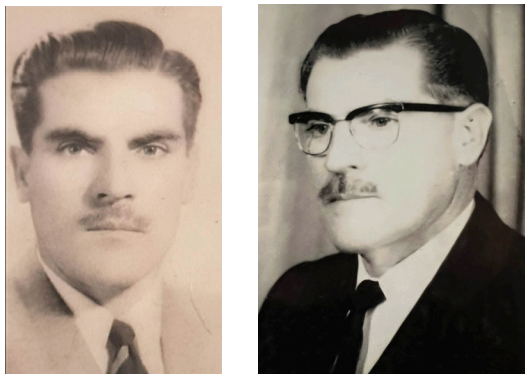
My correspondence with Christiane had slowed by this time due to her deteriorating health and her husband's worsening dementia, so I didn't think that she would see Natacha's message or respond to her quickly. Natacha sought information about Christiane from me including the name of Christiane's husband. I felt torn: while I wanted to help her, I did not want to betray Christiane's confidences or give her Christiane's direct email address. However, I did answer her question about the city in which Christiane resided and learned that Natacha lived nearby in Aix-en-Provence. By then, I felt obligated to inform Christiane of this potentially momentous development. I decided with some reluctance to let her know of Natacha's existence and the size of her match, not necessarily expecting a reply. I then stopped answering Natacha's questions, hoping that Christiane, once aware of the match and given her own history, would tell Natacha about her father.

On 12 February 2021, Natacha wrote me that once she had learned from me that Christiane was in Marseille, she had located her and spoken to her on the phone. She reported that Christiane admitted that she was her grandmother, and her deceased son was Natacha's father. She seemed tired and sick and told her to contact her daughter, Alix, for more information. Natacha called and later met with Alix who filled in more details about her deceased half-brother, Patrice, Christiane's son from her first marriage. He had gotten together with Natacha's mother when he was 18 and she was 23.

I looked for Patrice's death record and found one for a Patrick R. (1963-1995) who was born and had died in Marseille. When I shared this with Natacha on 15 February 2021, she said that her father was not Patrick R: He was Patrice Bernardi (born in 1966), who had died of a stroke in Orleans in 2010. Alix had told her that he and Christiane had been estranged in his last years, likely another reason for Christiane's ongoing melancholy. Alix sent Natacha a blurry photo of herself, Patrice, with Aunt Janine. After seeing the photo, Natacha's maternal grandmother remembered having seen Patrice in her daughter's house.

A clue about Christiane's Mesoamerican Heritage

In September 2023, I noticed a new second cousin match to Christiane on MyHeritage, a Peruvian-American woman in her 70s named Petu Pérez-P. She had included a family tree which showed that all her grandparents were born in Peru except her paternal grandfather, Nicolas Pérez, who was born in Mexico. I wrote to Petu about her match to Christiane, told her about Christiane's search for the identity of her unknown father, and asked her what she knew about Nicolas Pérez. She replied quickly saying that she knew nothing about Nicolas Pérez and was hoping that I could tell her something about him. By the size of her match to Christiane¹², Christiane's father could have been the son of Nicolas Pérez's sister. I sent Petu the 1946 photo of Anne-Marie and Bill hoping that she would recognize Bill. She did not, but when she sent the photo to her sister in Lima, they agreed that Bill resembled their father as a young man. She sent me a photo of him at an older age,¹³ the only one she had.



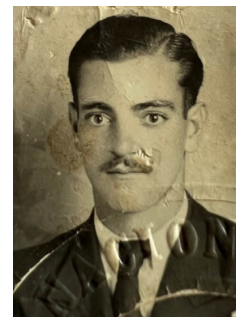
Guillermo Perez Fajardo

Since Petu had no information about Nicolas Pérez, she asked me to contact her first cousin, Alfonso Pérez-T., a retired doctor in his 70s living in Illinois who was working on a Pérez family tree. She didn't have his email address, so she suggested that I write him on Facebook, but I was skeptical about whether he would notice a message. Having no alternative, I eventually contacted him on Facebook Messenger and as I expected, received no reply. When I told Petu, she revealed that she hadn't talked to her cousin for thirty years due to something that had happened long ago. Motivated by my request, she got his cell phone number in Lima, where he was on a visit. After she reconnected with him and filled him in about my quest, she told me to phone him. Rather than make a cold call to a stranger, I preferred to text him so that he would have time to consider his reply. After explaining my interest in helping Christiane, I told him about Petu's close

match to her and what I knew about Christiane's unknown father; I attached the 1946 photo postcard of Anne-Marie and Bill to my text and asked him for his email address to make future communication easier. Once received, I emailed him the following message:

I did find a marriage record for Nicolas Pérez Martinez and Sara Fajardo. It says that he was born in Tampico, Mexico. I couldn't find any other records that showed Nicolas's siblings. I am hoping that you know more about Nicolas than Petu does. While I don't know whether Christiane's father, Bill, comes from the Pérez family, it is a good place to start. Her paternal grandfather (William Gray) travelled in Mexico, so I think it is likely that he met Bill's mother there. However, since Christiane's father Bill served in the U.S. army in WWII, I assume he lived in the U.S. I have a passport document for William Gray that shows that he was traveling on at least two trips to Mexico and possibly Peru in 1920. From that, I think that Bill would have been born in about 1921. Is there anyone in your family (possibly a first cousin to your father and Guillermo), who would fit that description and could possibly resemble the man in the photo I sent you in the text? I realize that you may not have any information, but thanks for any help here.

Alfonso replied with information about the Pérez family and included a photo of his father, Alfonso Pérez Fajardo, but did not mention any cousin who fit Bill's description.

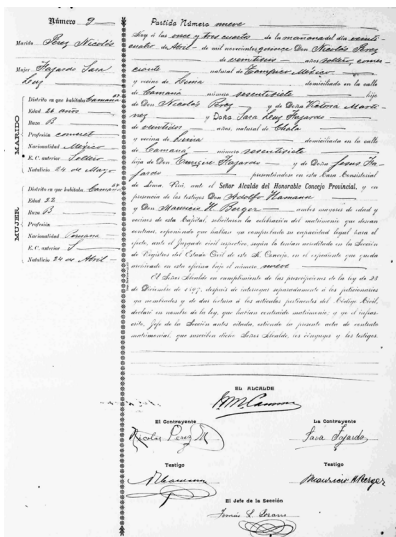


Alfonso Pérez Fajardo

My grandparents Nicolas and Sara married in Lima in 1915; they have 3 children: Alfonso born in November 1915, Guillermo born in 1916 and Sara born in 1918; all of them were born in Lima. In 1919 all of them move to Mexico and live in Mexico DF until 1926 when they return to Lima. I hear stories from my grandmother Sara that the family had business in San Francisco and part of the family was planning to move (there)...; my

grandmother refuse to go to San Francisco for language issues as they didn't speak English. She remembers that Nicolas went to San Francisco in various occasions (1919 to 1926) with some members of his family. Nicolas died in Lima in the 1930's. The family contact Sara and offer to receive all of them in Mexico but an uncle (I hear his name was Eulalio) was traveling by plane with this purpose but the plane had an accident and the uncle died. After this Sara decided to stay in Lima and lost communication with the family. I hear that the family (Pérez), had houses in Cuernavaca (Mexico DF), and a farm in Veracruz. Unfortunately, I don't have more information of Nicolas's family. I am sending some pictures of my father Alfonso that looks very similar to the picture that you sent.

Although Alfonso had limited knowledge about Nicolas Pérez's Mexican relatives, he had given me some new information to research. I was able to find Lima documents for some of Petu's family members on Ancestry and Familysearch, using her MyHeritage tree as a basis. They included, besides Nicolas's and Sara's 1915 marriage registration, Christening and marriage registrations for their three children Alfonso, Guillermo, and Sara. When I extended my search to Mexican records, I relied on the marriage registration for Nicolas and Sara for the names of his parents (Nicolas Pérez and Victoria Martinez) and for his birthplace (Tampico, Mexico). Although Mexican birth records are available on Familysearch for a variety of time periods and locations, including Tampico, I could not find one listing for Nicholas or his parents in any part of Mexico, searching for the right Pérez or Martinez, singly or together¹⁴. Nor was I able to find any reference to Uncle Eulalio.



Marriage record of Nicolas Pérez and Sara Fajardo

The DNA Evidence

I am aware of the limits to the research I have been able to do so far. I would have liked Alfonso to take a DNA test so I could confirm that the Pérez family was the source of the match, but I didn't have enough contact with him to make that suggestion. I might have found more sizeable DNA matches with Mesoamerican ancestry if Christiane and Petu had tested at other companies besides MyHeritage. Christiane was unable to test at Ancestry due to French restrictions on DNA testing, but I had uploaded her raw data to FamilytreeDNA and Gedmatch. Fortunately, Petu had also uploaded her results to FamilytreeDNA, reconfirming a close match to Christiane and giving me Petu's direct email address. In addition, my Mexican record search might have been more successful, if I had found more than one document that included the names of Nicolas's parents.

Common Ancestors

Thus far, without relevant Mexican records and other close DNA test results, I only had indirect ways to support my hypothesis that the Pérez family was the source of the match between Petu and Christiane. These included an ethnicity comparison and AutoCluster and photo analyses. Petu and Christiane both have Mesoamerican ancestry (Petu: 22.2% and Christiane: 4.8%). In an analysis using the MyHeritage AutoCluster tool, I found that Petu and Christiane shared a cluster with three others of Mexican ancestry, indicating that all those matches descend from a common ancestral couple.

Facial Similarity Software

The other indirect evidence came from a photographic comparison of Bill, as pictured in the 1946 photo, with photos of Petu's and Alfonso's fathers, Guillermo and Alfonso Pérez Fajardo. Petu and Alfonso had both remarked on the resemblance between Bill and their fathers. I was interested in comparing the few photos, using a facial recognition program. The results using the app Face/Face¹⁵ are shown below. The two Pérez Fajardo brothers (using the two photos of Guillermo and one of Alfonso) share a 72% or 73% similarity. When I compared Guillermo's two photos with the one of Bill, they were rated as 66% and 70% similar with the comment, "noticeably alike." The photos of Alfonso and Bill are rated as 82% similar with the comment "practically twins."



Guillermo older-Alfonso Alfonso-Guillermo younger



Guillermo older-Bill Guillermo younger-Bill Alfonso-Bill

I wondered whether the Face/Face similarity ratings would be consistent with those in four other free facial recognition programs using the same photos. While all five programs¹⁶ correctly identified two different photos of the same person, the similarity comparisons of two different people varied greatly. (See table below.) The variation may be due to the poor quality of the photos: For a good comparison, the faces must be in a frontal view and the photos well-lit and of decent resolution. None of the photos used for this test met those criteria. In addition, there was no available way to evaluate the quality of different programs or to compare the algorithms they used.

Face Similarity Rating by Program						
Program/Faces Compared	Face/Face	Compare a Face	PicTrieve	Face Comparison	Face Shape	
Guillermo older - Alfonso	73%	80%	75%	55%	55%	
Guillermo younger - Alfonso	72%	74%	69%	65%	53%	
Guillermo older - Bill	66%	51%	33%	38%	17%	
Guillermo younger - Bill	70%	58%	55%	22%	11%	
Alfonso - Bill	82%	58%	55%	29%	24%	

Conclusion

There are always loose ends in any genealogical exploration. In the three years since I first became aware of the match between Christiane R. and my brother-in-law, Richard Gray, two significant new DNA matches to

Christiane have emerged, Natacha M. and Petu Pérez-P. Natacha M. sought the identity of her birth father and discovered that he was Christiane's late son, Patrice. Christiane's tantalizing match to Petu shed light on the source of her Mesoamerican ancestry but did not lead to the identification of her father. It is possible that more close matches will appear in the future and that someone will emerge who has knowledge of Nicolas Pérez's Mexican relatives. Patience and persistence will be required along with luck that the right persons will eventually test.

Endnotes

1. ZichronNote, Volume XLI, number 2, May 2021, p. 4, See <https://www.sfbajgs.org/ZichronNote/ZichronNote.html>
2. Richard Gray was born on 30 December 1928.
3. Christiane's maternal relatives have no Ashkenazi or Mesoamerican ancestry.
4. Christiane thought that the undated photo of Anne-Marie with Robert was also taken in 1946. Anne-Marie is wearing the same coat and shoes in both photos.
5. Although I had documentary proof, William Gray was the most likely candidate by process of elimination. See ZichronNote, Volume XLI, number 2, May 2021, p. 4, See <https://www.sfbajgs.org/ZichronNote/ZichronNote.html>
6. Christiane had given me the username and password for her MyHeritage account.
7. Match between Bernard Delor and Natacha M.: Total 279.8 cM. largest segment 71.4 cM.
8. Match between Richard Gray and Natacha M.: Total 59.9 cM. largest segment 32.9 cM.
9. I used the Shared cM Project 4.0 tool v4 on DNAPainter.com.
10. A relationship with 13% probability, using the Shared cM Project 4.0 tool v4 on DNAPainter.com.
11. A relationship with 60% probability using the Shared cM Project 4.0 tool v4 on DNAPainter.com.
12. Match between Christiane and Petu Pérez-P: Total 215.5 cM. largest segment 52.6 cM.
13. I later found a photo of Guillermo at a younger age on her sister's Facebook page.
14. Mexican surnames combine surnames of father and mother. I was relying on the parental information on Nicolas' and Sara's marriage registration, which said that Nicolas' father was also Nicolas Pérez, and his mother was Victoria Martinez, so he was Nicholas Pérez Martinez..
15. Face/Face is a free app from the Apple store.
16. [Face/Face](#), [Compare a Face](#) on [Family Search](#), [PicTrieve](#), [Face Comparison](#), and [Face Shape](#).

Sometimes a French Connection Changes a Life

Barbara Toby Stack

Barbara has been researching her family roots in Poland and Ukraine since the late 1980s when her sister met a maternal cousin, Joseph Chandler, of Portland, Maine, who had made an enormous hand-written family tree. Barbara began to map it into Reunion software and started exchanging letters with far-flung aunts and uncles. In late 2009, a mutual friend introduced her to Jeremy Frankel, who pointed to the LDS Family History Library in Oakland and to the SFBAJGS. She joined in 2010. Barbara's most recent pleasures have been in reintroducing members of long-separated branches of the family. In her professional life Barbara has been a systems analyst, a fiddler, a youth orchestra ED, and most recently an archivist, editor, and writing coach.

These days the genealogy community is worrying about the next generation. We've always worried about the kids. This time the concern is whether they will step up with an interest and a sense of responsibility in the passing-on of accumulated family history to the generations to come.

We can worry and wait and see or we can create the future we wish to see.

When I consider my own history I can clearly see that I was set up. In another use of a word we see these days, I was "recruited" to be a family historian. My mother made family photo scrapbooks a part of our lives. My uncle gave me a camera when I was 10. And my father's sister's husbands's sister from Paris picked me out to draw into her family.

Rachel Waldman, *née* Chazanoff, was born in 1906 in Stepan, Volhynia, Ukraine. Her parents and their children arrived in Paris around 1910. Her father died at Auschwitz, my aunt and uncle and a son, American citizens, were interned at Camp Vittel, and Rachel and some of the others were imprisoned at the Drancy camp and survived in ways I have not yet discovered.

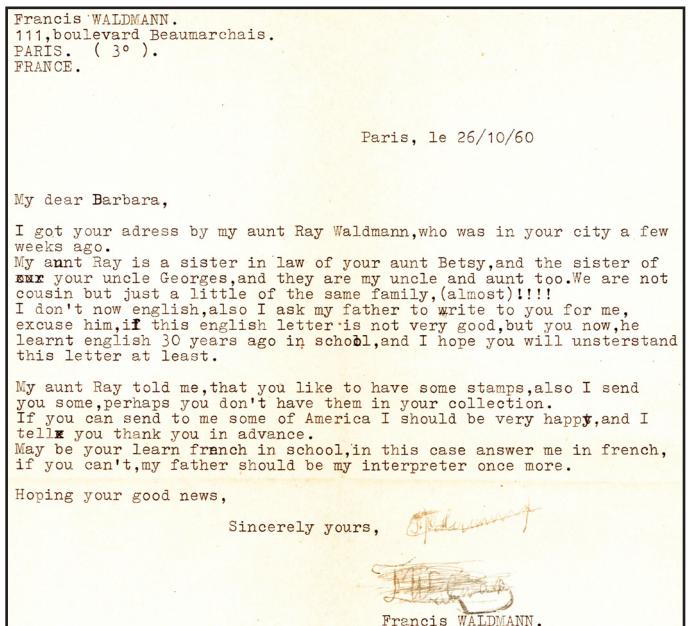
By the 1950s Rachel, also known as Rochel and Ray, was divorced and had become the warm heart of the family. Here's a photo of her 1952 visit to my aunt and uncle, then living in Massachusetts.



Rachel Waldman visiting in 1952

I so clearly remember what great fun everyone had when Rachel came to town, each speaking in ever-changing combinations of English, Yiddish, and French. The one time she visited our home in New Hampshire my dad shared his Mickey Katz recording of *C'est Si Bon*, with puns flying in all three languages. I had never seen adults in my family so utterly gleeful, nearly toppling from their chairs, as they, all in varying degrees fluent in the languages, shared Katz' wicked humor.

In 1960 I was 13, and was busy in music and school. I received a letter from Paris, from Rachel's nephew Roger, on behalf of his son Francis, then age 9:



"We are not cousin but just a little of the same family, (almost)!!!"

I admit that the motivation for such a declaration might not have been entirely a matter of genealogy. The family was then engaged in businesses with international markets and Francis' education was undoubtedly even more important to Rachel and Roger than my own.

But there is no doubt that the correspondence which followed had a profound effect on me and on my future. The Waldman family became even more real to me. The

stamp collecting, which I had already begun, turned out to be a template for my seeing matrixed arrays as something beautiful and interesting. I started studying French in school, though that never did turn out to be a strong suit. And, finally, the Waldmans, Paris, and the fascinating interconnections among family members became a permanent part of my own life.

Here is a phot I took of Rachel in Paris in December of 1970.

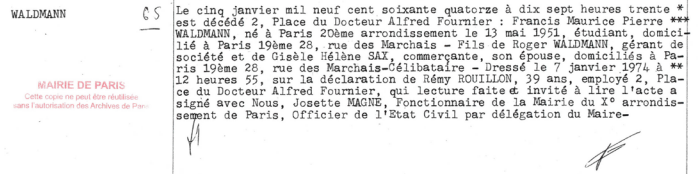


Rachel Waldman (BT Stack photo)



Roger Waldman (BT Stack photo)

Alas, I didn't meet Francis. When I visited his father Roger he told me that the then-19-year-old student was busy and couldn't make it.



January 5, 1974 Death of Francis Maurice Pierre Waldmann
On the fifth day of January, nineteen hundred and seventy-four, and at seven-thirty, died. 2 Place du Docteur Alfred Fournier: Francis Maurice Pierre WALDMANN, born in Paris 20th arrondissement on May 3, 1951, student, domiciled in Paris 19th, Des Marchais - Son of Roger WALDMANN, manager of a company and Gisèle Hélène SAX, merchant, his wife, domiciled in Paris 19ème 28, rue des Marchais-Célibataire - Settled on January 7, 1974. Rémy ROUILLON, 39, employee 2, Place du Docteur Alfred Fournier, who read the guest's letter, signed with us, Josette MAGNE, Official of the City Council of the X° arrondissement of Paris, By delegation of the Mayor-

Why did Francis die at age 23? I was told by one of his cousins that it had been a motorcycle accident. I've not been able to find a newspaper story. Roger, his father, died later the same year. And I have never returned to Paris.

But I finally did get to genealogy, and my curiosity, with Pierre Hahn's help, pointed me to unmistakable clues to the discovery of living members of this Waldman family in France.

Simultaneous with this research was the documenting of the American family, whom I'd not seen since my 1969 Brandeis graduation. Aunt Betsy had died in 1970, before I went to France, and Uncle George, in 1972. They had two granddaughters who had been very cute 10-year-olds in 1969. I found one on Facebook and learned she'd long before lost contact with her only Waldman first cousin—and yearned to find her. I put a note on my website and on Christmas eve, 2015, the lost one found my website, found the note and contacted her cousin who contacted me! We had our own joyous eve!

The story of how we made contact with the French family is a tale for another time. Figuring prominently in the sleuthing was a shoe in a photo I'd taken in 1960.



But where the leather meets the pavement, what counts is shoehorning those kids into the story, their own story.

Some Resources for Exploring French Genealogy

This is meant to help you get started. Note that for BMD documents your sources will be local, not regional.



JewishGen France Database

<https://www.jewishgen.org/databases/France/>

Bernard Flam's article on JewishGen

<https://groups.jewishgen.org/g/main/message/646211>



FamilySearch Research Wiki France

https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/France_Genealogy



Paris Archives Decennial Tables

<https://archives.paris.fr/s/7/tables-decennales/?>

Tables of Births, Marriages and Deaths (1860-1932), Tables of Marriages (1955-1974) and Tables of Deaths (1955-1984) The decennial tables, alphabetical lists compiled for a period of ten years, are kept by type of certificate (birth, marriage, death) for each of the 20 arrondissements.

Arranged in alphabetical order by surname, they present for each act, the surname and first names of the person concerned as well as his date.

Please note: for the period from 1933 to 1954, there are no decennial tables. You have to do your research year after year in the annual tables:

<https://archives.paris.fr/s/6/tables-annuelles/?>

European Borders 1000-year History of Changes (

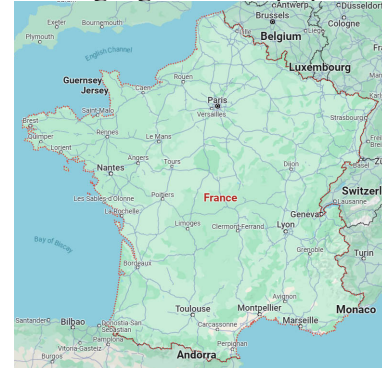


Digital French-Language Newspaper Portal

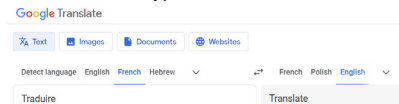
https://eudocs.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Digital_French-Language_Newspaper_Portal

Google Maps

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/France>



Google Translate



Filae

French subscription Genealogy Site

<https://en.filae.com/v4/genealogie/homepage.mvc/welcome>

FamilySearch Alsace-Lorraine, France Genealogy

https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Alsace-Lorraine_France_Genealogy



Finding your ancestors in France: where to start

My French Roots

Finding your ancestors in France: where to start

<https://www.myfrenchroots.com/finding-your-ancestors-in-france-where-to-start/>

Facebook Groups

Genealogical Translations

French Genealogy

Tracing the Tribe

SFBAJGS Activity Report for 2022

Dana Kurtz, SFBAJGS Treasurer



An IT project management consultant and 30+ year-member, Dana returns to the Board after a long hiatus. In the late 1980s, when searching for her grandmother's birth certificate to ensure a proper 90th birthday celebration, she discovered her grandmother was already 93! Dana provided research for her brother Glenn, author of the highly acclaimed book *Three Minutes in Poland: Discovering a Lost World in a 1938 Family Film*. The story traces Glenn's journey to identify people in movie film shot by their grandfather in a return visit to the town of his birth. The book and film inspired the award-winning documentary *Three Minutes: A Lengthening*. Dana continues researching her ancestors and descendants, still excited to find and connect with "new" family.

Overview

by Jeremy Frankel

This annual report to our members covers our 2022 activities, financial results, and grants to other organizations.

We continued running the society the same way as in the previous year. Our meetings were all online, 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 was disseminated to members of SFBAJGS and other subscribers about our online activities and those of other groups. Our quarterly *ZichronNote* journal continues to offer 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 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 the majority of our members reside here. However, 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 information continues to become available online, and we continue to field and answer questions from researchers near and far.

Several members attended the 42nd annual conference of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS), held virtually in August 2022. 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 further 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 consistent with these objectives. We have ongoing volunteer projects to transcribe data from local cemeteries, and continue to seek out 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.

**In 2022, we donated \$5,450
to other organizations.**

Donations to other organizations working in ways that support our mission

As a result of our members generous donations, in 2022, we donated \$5,450 to organizations for their activities. We present the purpose of our donations and links to 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 SF 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 Regional FamilySearch Center:** to expand its collection of materials for Jewish research which may be available through access via the FamilySearch website https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Oakland_California_FamilySearch_Center

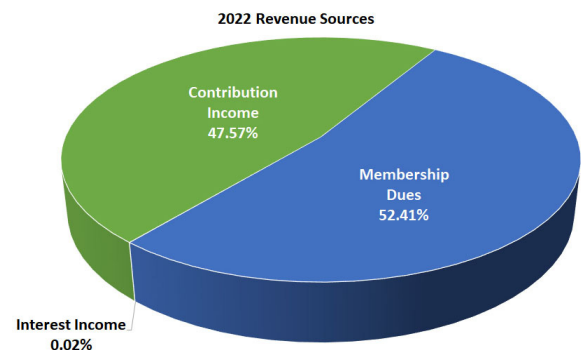
National and International

- **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

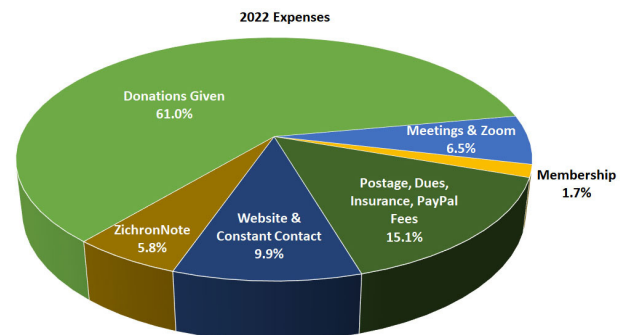
remaining signs of the pre-war presence of the Polish Jewish community. <http://cmentarze-zydowskie.pl/indexang.htm>

- **JewishGen: to their General Fund** supporting the primary online site of Jewish genealogical records and instruction for researchers. <https://www.jewishgen.org>
- **Ukraine – The Krakovsky Project:** to support Alex Krakovsky and his team in gaining access to and scanning metric books, indexes, name lists, revision lists, and censuses in Ukrainian historical government archives. Scans (unindexed, untranslated), are posted to his wiki page. Some of this work continues despite the war in Ukraine. <https://tinyurl.com/bdz5yx4x> (Google Chrome browser can automatically translate the page)
- **Reclaim the Records:** to support their efforts to identify and obtain important genealogical records sets that ought to be in the public domain but which are being wrongly restricted. Everything obtained is digitized and put online for free. <https://www.reclaimtherecords.org/>

SFBAJGS Revenue for 2022



SFBAJGS Expenses for 2022



From Jeff Lewy's 11/13/2022 *Transcriptions Report*:

● **Sinai Memorial Chapel Funeral Arrangement Cards**

We have finished transcribing a total of 47,500 cards. The data run from about 1920 to about 2012. At the moment, 3 people are proofing the transcriptions, and have completed proofing about 11,000 cards. Since the data covers multiple cemeteries, it doesn't fit into the cemetery-based context of JOWBR. However, it will be a good resource in the JewishGen USA Database.

● **Eternal Home Cemetery, Colma**

Pierre and Jeff photographed all of the 1903-2010 records, estimated at 16,000 burials. Data from all six ledgers has been transcribed and proofed. The five ledgers maintained by Eternal Home are ready for upload to our website. We have extracted and submitted the limited data accepted by JOWBR. We will also send the data from the sixth ledger, the 1903-35 ledger originally maintained by Sinai, to JewishGen for inclusion in the USA database.

● **Salem Cemetery – Beth Israel Synagogue**

In 2019, we completed the Salem Cemetery book for Beth Israel Synagogue from the 1890s to 1929. Lori Ganz, administrator of Beth Israel Judea found another cemetery book, for the period from the 1930s to the early 2000s. She has given it to us to transcribe and keep. Also enclosed in the book are unidentified plat records, for what we believe is a section of Salem Memorial Park. It may not be worth transcribing this very limited data.

● **Sherith Israel burial slips and permits**

These records from the 19th century have been transcribed and are about 1/3 proofed, although proofing proceeds slowly.

● **Home of Peace - Oakland**

As of January 2022, Home of Peace in Oakland (HPO) is no longer operated by Beth Jacob synagogue, and is now operated by Sinai Memorial Chapel. We've asked Sam Salkin of Sinai to advise us if there are records we can scan and transcribe for JOWBR. HPO is not yet in JOWBR.

Future Projects

- Gain access to, photograph, and transcribe records for the Beth David section of Oak Hill Cemetery, San Jose.
- San Jose Home of Peace
- Emanu-El Synagogue – Early marriage records 1860-1883

SF Jewish Newspaper Digitization Project

This year brought a new project under the leadership of Steve Harris. The goal is to provide on-line access to San Francisco Jewish newspapers of the nineteenth century. In most cases the issues have already been scanned to microfilm. The Project seeks to identify available series and shepherd the material through digitization to posting by a publicly accessible host like the California Digital Newspaper Collection (CDNC) where they may be freely searched and viewed by the public.

Photoshop at Work

Here are examples of how Photoshop was used to improve two images provided for this issue of *ZichronNote*. In each case the image on the left is the original submission and the image on the right is the result after editing in Photoshop.



Guillermo Perez Fajardo in Ann Fuller's article, p10
This image was cropped, rotated slightly in the plane around its midpoint, then rotated top-to-bottom to decrease the size of the top of the head, and then rotated right to left. Then cropped once again.



Tombstone for Nathan Gurin from Sharon Fingold's article, p6
This image was cropped and the darkness and contrast were manipulated to maximize legibility.

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*.

And you don't have to do it alone. *ZichronNote* will help you tell your tale, perfect your images, and create a layout you'll be proud to share with friends and family. Remember, you retain the copyright!

Please submit materials to zichronnote@sfbajgs.org.

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Gan Shalom Cemetery, Briones • (925) 228-3636
Home of Eternity Cemetery, Oakland • (925) 962-3636

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*Zichron*Note

זְכֵרֹנוֹת

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San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society**

Volume XLIII, Number 3

November 2023

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
a project of CA State Library Sutro Library

Change Service Requested

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