



דברי הימים

CHRONICLES

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Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Philadelphia

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Annual Membership Dues – Jan. 1 to Dec. 31:

All contributions and dues are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. Make checks payable to **JGSGP** and mail to the address below. Include your zip+4 code.

Individual	\$25
Family of two, per household	\$35
Sponsor	\$50
Patron	\$100
Non-resident (beyond 90 miles)	\$15
Non-resident (with local mailings)	\$25
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Unsolicited Articles on genealogy will be considered for publication. Submit copy typewritten, by E-mail, or on Windows compatible CDs using WordPerfect, Microsoft Word, or ASCII. Editor has sole discretion for acceptance. Articles will be edited for purposes of clarity or space. Deadline for submitting articles is the 15th of February, May, August, November.

Advertisements: The non-member fee for *Family Finder* and *Personal* ads is \$6 for the first 25 words and 25 cents for each additional word. Members are free. Name, address, and phone number are free. Appropriate advertisements, camera ready, true to size (business card), 1/8 page are acceptable at \$25 per issue. Checks should be made out to JGSGP. Specify number of issues.

Correspondence: articles, letters, surname queries, advertisements, and payments for advertisements should be sent to:

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Fred Blum

Dear Fellow Members,

Plans are proceeding nicely in preparation of our co-hosting the International Jewish Genealogy Conference in August 2009. David Mink and his committee are actively planning what will be a great conference. Sub-committees are being formed and hopefully we will have great participation from our membership. We will need volunteers to handle many tasks (see report below).

This coming August will be the IAJGS Conference in Chicago (page 6). I will be in attendance as well as Mark Halpern, David Mink and other members of the Society. We will report on the Chicago Conference at our September meeting.

This September 3 – 6 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center, The Federation of Genealogical Societies will hold their conference (Page 26). Our society is a member of the FGS. Volunteer opportunities also exist for this conference.

Our last meeting, we had the pleasure of hearing Beth Wenger lecture about her book. Beth wrote the book *The Jewish Americans*, which was the basis for the recent PBS documentary (Page 9). After the summer we are planning on having Suzan Wynne. I have heard Suzan speak and she is very interesting. Suzan wrote several books about Galicia.

As I have written before, the Philadelphia Jewish Archives is in desperate need of funding. PJAC has a wealth of information about our ancestors. Please contribute if you can (Page 26).

I need to thank Mark Halpern and David Mink for all their help. They have been doing an outstanding job with the tasks they have accepted.

Hope you all have a wonderful summer. See you all in September. ✨

Fred

A Report on the 2009 Conference from Co-Chair David Mink



Next year this time, we will be almost ready for the big event. The 29TH Annual Conference of the International Association of Jewish Genealogy Societies will be held right here in Philadelphia, August 2-7. Planning started in April with a steering committee appointed by President Fred Blum. The committee includes Mark Halpern, Steve Schechter, Harry Boonin, Evan Fishman, Fred Blum, and me, David Mink. We are working hard to provide a great experience for the attendees. We want the Conference to have a strong Philadelphia flavor by taking advantage of all of the rich local resources as well as offering programs of general interest never before presented.

We are hoping to attract over 1000 genealogists, experts, hobbyists, and beginners from all over the world. Of course, we will market the conference through JewishGen and to all the member societies of the IAJGS. In addition, we plan to have visibility along the I-95 corridor, from Boston to Washington DC. With the

help of the Greater Philadelphia Marketing and Tourism Bureau, we will offer special deals with AMTRAK. Also, we are going to make a special effort to attract people from the Delaware Valley. To do this, we need to reach out to the Jewish community of Greater Philadelphia, beyond the membership of JGSGP. We will have programs of particular interest to Philadelphians, whether experts or novices in genealogy. We will also get the word out to the Jewish Community through synagogues, Kehillot, and many publications. We welcome your suggestions.

Perhaps the most important committee is programming. Mark Halpern is the Co-Chair from JGSGP and Mark Heckman (Sacramento, CA) is the Co-Chair from IAJGS. They are putting together a committee of people from all over the country with broad bases of knowledge and experience. Harry Boonin is leading the effort in developing programs of local interest as well as serving as a liaison with the National Museum

of American Jewish History. Steve Schecter, Chairman of the Resource Directory Committee, has put together a directory with over 100 pages of information specific to the Philadelphia area (see sample below). This resource will be a living work, surviving the conference and constantly being updated and expanded. Our intent is to have this great tool available online. Other committee chairs who have been appointed are Stan & Shelda Sandler, Hospitality; Jeffery Vassar, Publicity; Jim Gross, Resource Room; and Evan Fishman, Tours. We are working to develop our plans so that the committees can begin in earnest at our September meeting.

We have two great opportunities this summer to help us succeed. First is attending to the Chicago Conference in August. We will go with the idea of learning from their experience. We will also be able to promote our Conference and Fred Blum will lead that effort. The Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau has given us a lot of promotional material to help us talk about Philadelphia. Anyone going to Chicago should send me their contact information so that we can meet during the conference to compare notes. Send it to dmink47@yahoo.com.

The second opportunity is the Federation of Genealogy Societies (FGS) Annual Conference in Philadelphia,

this September 3-6. They have a full range of programs on all aspects of genealogy. Their conference will give us a chance to experience local resources, such as NARA, the Philadelphia City Archive, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, while being visited by many experienced researchers. Many JGSGP members have volunteered for the FGS Conference. You can earn credit for programs you want to attend. Volunteers, however, need not register to volunteer. Check out their web site www.fgs.org/ for more information. If you want to volunteer, but have not yet done so, email Selma Neubauer at SelmaN@aol.com. Selma is coordinating our volunteer effort with the FGS. We will have a meeting of all volunteers toward the end of July to discuss our strategy and coordinate our efforts. Should we have enough volunteer hours, then the JGSGP will share a percentage of the profits.

It is summer in the City. But this will be a busy summer planning for the 29TH IAJGS Conference in Philadelphia in 2009. In addition, we have conferences to attend. The more planning we do this summer, the better and easier it will be next summer. Next summer will define the word busy. If we do it right, it should be fun and rewarding. Let the fun begin. ✨

David Mink, Conference Co-Chair

SAMPLE RESOURCE GUIDE ENTRY

Resource: Philadelphia Jewish Archives Center

Address: 125 N 8th ST
Philadelphia, PA 19106 (Entrance on 777 Appletree ST, 6th Floor)

Phone #: (215) 925 8090

Key Personnel: Director: Jon Kligerman
Archivist: Sarah Sherman
Administrative Assistant: David Sullivan

Web: <http://www.philajewisharchives.org>

Hours: Mon-Fri 10-4

Fees: No charge

Accessibility: Handicapped accessible

Public Transportation: Market-Frankford Train east to 8th Street. North on 8th to Appletree. Turn right, entrance is at the center of the building.

Driving Direction from Center City: Not recommended; take taxi.

Jewish Interest: THE primary record of Jewish life in this area. Founded in 1972, a collaboration between the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia and the American Jewish Committee. Original collections were the records of Federation and Federation agencies. Has become the major repository for Jewish community of the Philadelphia region, including the city, Pennsylvania suburbs, and southern New Jersey. Its 3,000-plus collections, dating from 1805, are growing with new contributions. Records include correspondence, journals & memoirs, memorabilia, photographs, immigration papers and a vast array of other types of documents. PJAC actively collects and transcribes oral history materials. Specific records include:

- Minutes of the first Jewish Sunday School in America
- First Jewish Chaplain Commission from Civil War, signed by President Lincoln
- The first "Jewish Cook Book" published in America
- HIAS – Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society records
- Oral testimonies and records from Woodbine, NJ
- Comprehensive records from the Philadelphia Community Relations Council
- Records of the Soviet Jewish Movement

Research Advice: Must call for an appointment

UPCOMING GENERAL MEETINGS
All Meetings at Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel, Elkins Park, PA
***** NO MEETINGS IN JULY OR AUGUST *****

Date	Time	Speaker	Topic
Monday Sept. 8, 2008	7:30 PM	JGSGP Members	Recap of Chicago Jewish Genealogy Conference and Preview of 2009 Philadelphia Conference
Monday Oct. 6, 2008	7:30 PM	Suzan Wynne, Author, <i>The Galitzianers: The Jews of Galicia, 1772-1918</i>	The Lives of Our Galician Ancestors [discounted copies of the book will be available for purchase]
Monday Nov. 10, 2008	7:30 PM	Hands-On Workshop	Overview and "Test Ride" of major Genealogy Software
Monday Dec. 8, 2008	7:30 PM	To Be Announced	To Be Announced

AFFILIATE PROGRAMMING

For information about our Main Line/Delaware County Affiliate, contact Shelda Sandler at 610-544-8586 or stanshel@msn.com. Programs are held at Martins Run Lifecare Community in Media

For information about our South Jersey Affiliate, contact Bernard Cedar at 856-685-7155 or jakes-grandpa@msn.com. Programs are held at Congregation Beth Tikvah in Marlton

WELCOME NEW AND RETURNING MEMBERS

Marcia Bosswick Philadelphia, PA	Lawrence Parish Penn Valley, PA
Hilda Fox Gladwyne, PA	Nelson Pollack Columbia, MD
Linda Joy Goldner Philadelphia, PA	Michelle Rothstein Furlong, PA
Ron Kintisch Abington, PA	Harris Skalr Bala Cynwyd, PA
Gilbert Koff Huntingdon Valley, PA	Anne Wiesenthal Philadelphia, PA
Sol Zeiger Havertown, PA	

THANKS TO CONTRIBUTORS

Martin Fineberg	Kaye Paletz	Selwyn & Judith Torrance
Ruth Kurschner	Michelle Rothstein	David Zubatsky
	Sandy Sobel	

28th IAJGS International
Conference on Jewish Genealogy
CHICAGO
Chicago, Illinois, August 17-22, 2008

LEARN-LISTEN-SEE-HEAR.

Jump on the bandwagon and join genealogy colleagues from all over the world as we explore the fascination of Jewish Genealogy.

Co-hosted by the IAJGS, the Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois, and the Illiana Jewish Genealogical Society, the conference will be held at the Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile from August 17-22, 2008. For more on the over 150 sessions by more than 100 speakers and registering, see <www.chicago2008.org>

SHARE THE EXCITEMENT OF Randy Schoenberg's keynote address: Recovering Nazi-Looted Art - A Genealogist's Tale. **HONOR** Susan King, recently retired founder of JewishGen at our opening reception, co-hosted by the IAJGS and JewishGen, an affiliate of the Museum of Jewish Heritage -- A Living Memorial to the Holocaust; sign a guest book in her tribute! All this on Sunday, August 17.

HOW TO GET STARTED. Terrific beginner's workshop on Sunday, August 17. Plus many other presentations of benefit to beginners.

SPECIFIC GEOGRAPHIC AREAS. Learn from experts on Austria, Canada, Courland, Czechoslovakia, Galicia, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Jamaica, Latin America, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Russia, U.S. and Ukraine. Plus specific programs on genealogical research in Chicago and the Midwest.

DNA AND GENETICS. Become more knowledgeable about the relevance of DNA and genetics for genealogists. Presentations include a mini-seminar sponsored by Genzyme Corp, focusing on Jewish genetic diseases and how genealogists

can play a role in identifying family medical history, DNA basics.

HOLOCAUST RESEARCH. Enhance your ability to search for family displaced or lost in the Shoah in sessions on the International Tracing Service, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and Jewish refugees in Shanghai.

RESEARCH ON AND OFF-LINE. Discover how to research immigration and naturalization, how to use libraries and archives, and how to best utilize on- and off-line resources.

OTHER PROGRAMMING. Broaden your horizons with other programs: organize successful family reunions; family newsletters; write your family history; citations made simple; scanning and restoring old photographs; forensic genealogy; Sephardic ancestry; and "Fire! Fire!" – Prioritizing Your Valuables in an Emergency with Carol Baird, forced to evacuate her home on short notice during the recent fires in Southern California. (Her home was not destroyed.)

FILM FESTIVAL. Films relating to Jewish genealogy showing all week long, included FREE in your general registration

BREAKFASTS, LUNCHEAS AND COMPUTER WORKSHOPS. Each is on a specific topic. They are listed on the conference website <www.chicago.2008.org>, along with the complete program and complete conference information.

BANQUET. An exciting close to the conference on Thursday evening (August 21). Celebrate the winners of the IAJGS Annual Achievement Awards. Enjoy a wonderful entertainer. Catch up with last minute networking. ☆

NOTES FROM JGSGP MEETING PROGRAMS

March 2008 -- Jon Entine, author of *Abraham's Children: Race, Identity and the DNA of the Chosen People on Jewish DNA and It's Role in Defining the Story of the Jews*



Entine started out his talk about Abraham's People, the Chosen people, by saying: "Let me get this straight, the Arabs get the oil and the Jews have to cut off the ends of our what?"

Entine's interest in genetics started when he was a producer of NBC News with Tom Brokaw, who brought up the subject of why professional basketball was dominated by African-American athletes after he attended a New York Knicks game with movie director Spike Lee. Entine produced a one-hour documentary, aired in April 1989 entitled "*Black Athletes: Fact and Fiction*," which led to Entine's book "*Taboo: Why Black Athletes Dominate Sports and Why We're Afraid to Talk About It*."

Entine's interest in his Jewish genes started in 2001 when his sister was diagnosed with breast cancer. Entine's mother, aunt, and grandmother had all died from either breast or ovarian cancer. He found out that breast cancer amongst many Jewish women of Ashke-

nazi heritage was caused by the BRCA2 gene mutation, a mostly Jewish mutation that has been passed on to successive generations for 2000 years. He realized that Jews are Jews by their DNA. Entine's own daughter has a high risk to also have this mutated gene, but standards do not allow testing until she is older.

Entine's question – "Who is a Jew?" – was well documented in culture, geography, and faith, but not in the core of the being, their DNA.

Entine's talk touched on diverse subjects relating to Jews and their genetic heritage:

- The Khazarian Empire – a formerly pagan culture - which existed in the 7th to 10th centuries. The nobility chose to convert to Judaism.
- Jewish genetic diseases and the ancestry of many of today's "Jewish" men and women. Interestingly, 50% or more of Jewish women do not have Jewish Mitochondrial DNA (passed down from female to female to female ...), while 70-80% of Jewish men are Semitic.
- The Cohen DNA markers: 75-80% of Cohanim have DNA markers that indicate a common ancestor.
- Lost African tribes: the black Jews of Ethiopia, who do not have Semitic DNA and were probably converts and the Lemba Tribe of Zimbabwe and South Africa, who have Semitic DNA
- Ashkenazi Jews have a much higher IQ than most other "ethnic" groups.

For more information about Jon Entine and his books, visit his website at <http://www.jonentine.com/index.htm>.

BOOK REVIEW

***Abraham's Children: Race, Identity, and the DNA of the Chosen People*
by Bill Gladstone**

One of the miracles of the modern age is our ability to read and map human DNA. For Jon Entine, an American journalist who was a producer and executive at NBC for 20 years, the scientific advances in genetics in recent years hold a special significance. DNA provided a way for him to unravel his own personal history, which he says was "lost in the fog of the Jewish shtetls of Eastern Europe." Breast cancer linked to BRCA2, a genetic mutation carried almost exclusively by Jews,

had claimed his mother, aunt and grandmother, and also had been diagnosed in his sister. Entine himself carries this genetic marker and his teenaged daughter may as well.

Confronted with this scientific evidence of an ancestral link to Judaism going back centuries, Entine says he was forced to rethink his Jewish identity. Given his longtime professional interest in the genetic revolution,

it also inspired him to write this book.

From a genetic standpoint, all human beings are roughly 99.9 per cent the same, Entine observes. Because all human beings, whether Mediterranean or Mongolian, Jewish or Japanese, are almost all alike, some consider it controversial to focus on the seemingly miniscule differences between races. Entine, however, has a history of exploring these "pinpoints" of difference. He readily convinces us it's a fascinating area and one well worth exploring. Some 20 years ago, he produced a documentary with Tom Brokaw at NBC News, titled "Black Athletes: Fact and Fiction." The research evolved into a noteworthy book, *Taboo: Why Black Athletes Dominate Sports and Why We're Afraid to Talk about It*.



Jon Entine signs book at JGS GP Meeting

Now he's back with a more personalized exploration of genetics and what writers from Josephus to Disraeli proclaimed as their own "Hebrew race." *Abraham's*

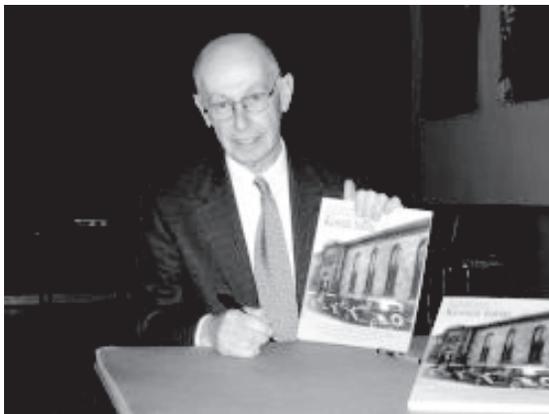
Children presents many intriguing aspects of the subject, including a theological discussion of Jewish beliefs and the Bible as they relate to the topic of genetics.

We are introduced to Father William Sanchez, a Catholic priest in Albuquerque, New Mexico, whose DNA indicates Jewish ancestry; one of numerous formerly Spanish CryptoJews living in the American southwest, Sanchez accepts this proudly as an enhancement of his Christian identity. We also meet Tudor Parfitt, the London-based expert on Judaism's lost tribes. Parfitt and numerous genetic specialists have been engaged in testing various groups around the world, like the Lemba of South Africa, who profess a blood kinship with the Jewish people. There are discussions of the first Adam and Eve, the Aaronic priestly gene, genetic diseases, "Abraham's Contested Covenant" and diverse related matters.

For many genealogists, DNA testing has emerged as an important tool (albeit still often indecisive) in attempting to unravel the mystery of one's roots. Those considering the DNA route will find *Abraham's Children* to be a wideranging and thought-provoking summary and happily free of too much technical jargon. Many genealogists may find the appendixes on Genetic Migration Maps, Tracing Your Ancestry and Family History Using DNA, and Jewish Diseases of particular interest. ☆

Bill Gladstone is the author of the new book "One Hundred Years in Canada: the Rubinoff-Naftolin Family Tree" (see his website, <http://rubnaft.com>). This book review was originally published in AVOTAYNU, Volume XXIII, Number 4, Winter 2007. It is republished with the permission of the author.

April 2008 -- Harry Boonin, Author and Founding President JGS GP on His New Book, *The Life and Times of Congregation Keshet Israel*



Courtesy of Jack L. Weinstein

When Harry was researching his first book, *The Jewish Quarter of Philadelphia*, he kept stumbling over stories about Keshet Israel, the *Shul* at Fourth and Lombard. Harry had majored in Russian language and history in college and is interested in the Russian Jews who settled in the South Street area. Harry was interested in the role of Russian immigrants in Jewish history, American history, and family genealogy.

Keshet Israel was the center of Zionism in Philadelphia. The Zionist group in Philadelphia was an outgrowth of meetings at Keshet Israel. In 1896, Charles Hoffman, the co-Editor of the *Jewish Exponent* at the time, founded a Hebrew speaking society in Philadelphia.

Zionism was not well supported in the US or Philadelphia. The Jewish Colonial Trust was founded to start a homeland in Eretz Israel at the turn of the 20th century. Bearer Bonds were sold for one pound sterling to acquire land. Over 300,000 shares were subscribed, but only 458 shares were subscribed in Philadelphia, mostly by Russian immigrants.

One of the leaders of the Zionist movement in Philadelphia was Dr. Benjamin Gordon of Jefferson Medical College. He led the Philadelphia Zionist movement for 25 years. In 1909, he took a trip to Palestine, prepared a presentation, and tried to gather interest in Philadelphia for a Jewish homeland. Much more about Zionism in Philadelphia is in Harry's book.

The building that houses Keshet Israel was built as a Church in 1796. By 1887, this Church building was vacant. Keshet Israel was formed in 1894 through the merger of two Synagogues. In January 1897, Keshet Israel moved into this building. From 1897 through 1905, Keshet Israel was the place for Zionist meetings. KI was the venue for demonstrations against Pogroms

and for a memorial to Theodore Herzl upon his death in 1904. By 1905, KI was a neighborhood *Shul*.

Harry's book covers the neighborhood, including the Dock Street market, the pushcart markets, Yiddish theater, sports, places for celebrations and much more. The book covers the era of mass immigration of Russian Jews, World War I, the Roaring Twenties and prohibition, the Great Depression, and the Holocaust.

Keshet Israel went into decline with the Depression, but remained a place of Jewish worship from 1897 continually to today. In 1998, the building was restored and is now a very active "traditional" Jewish house of worship.

Congregation Keshet Israel, 412 Lombard Street, Philadelphia 19147, 215-922-1776. Rabbi Ira S. Grussgott.

The Life and Times of Congregation Keshet Israel by Harry Boonin sells for \$29.95 plus applicable sales tax (\$1.80 in PA, \$2.10 in Philadelphia) plus shipping and handling of \$4.00. To purchase, make checks payable to JWT of Phila., Inc. and mail to Harry Boonin, 505 Plymouth Court, Warrington, PA 18976. ☆

**May 2008 -- Memorial Lecture in memory of members Marvin Brooks, Paul Rosenberg, and Helen Stein, who had recently passed
Beth Wenger, Author and Katz Chair in American Jewish History, University of Pennsylvania
on *The Jewish Americans: Three Centuries of Jewish Voices in America***



Marvin Brooks family: wife Susan, daughter Sheryl, grandson Brandon



Helen Stein family: daughter Sally and granddaughter

Most JGSGP members have seen the PBS Documentary, *The Jewish Americans*, which was aired in January 2008. Our speaker, Beth Wenger wrote the companion book, *The Jewish Americans: Three Centuries of Jewish Voices in America*, and was an advisor to the producers of the documentary.

Beth started her narrative talking about 23 Jews, who arrived in New Amsterdam in 1654 to find no established Jewish community. These people, like most Jews came from places where the Jewish community controlled life. These 23 Jews built a community and a culture with no restrictions imposed.

Beth wrote this book to accompany the film and wrote it to be different. It is a compendium of Jewish voices over three centuries written in a first person narrative by important Jews in all walks of life, their descendants, or scholars versed in their life stories.



Courtesy of Jack L. Weinstein

Life for Jews started with the founding fathers, where the Constitutional Convention promised equal rights to everyone and the ability to practice religion in freedom. Jews had political equality, although in some States it took a while. A Jew could be President of the United States, but, in some States, could not be elected to any office.

Jewish dietary laws were an issue. In the larger communities like Philadelphia, it was easy. However, outside these larger communities, keeping the Sabbath and a kosher home was difficult. In 1800, there were about 2,500 Jews in America, mainly in five port cities including Philadelphia. The largest of those communities was Charleston, South Carolina.

By 1850, the immigration of Jews from central Europe (mainly the German states) increased Jewish population to 200,000. This immigration changed the geography of the Jews – they spread throughout the country and many were young unmarried men. Their economic niche was as peddlers. Levi Strauss came from Bavaria in 1847 and made his way to San Francisco in 1850.

The book tells the story of Anna Solomon, a 19th century frontier woman who operated a successful store and hotel in an Arizona town that would eventually be named for her family.

The Civil War found Jews fighting Jews, where slavery was the main issue. There were Jews on both sides of this issue. After the pain of the Civil War, life did return to normalcy and, by 1880, the Jewish community was

stable, well established, and with many entrenched Jewish institutions.

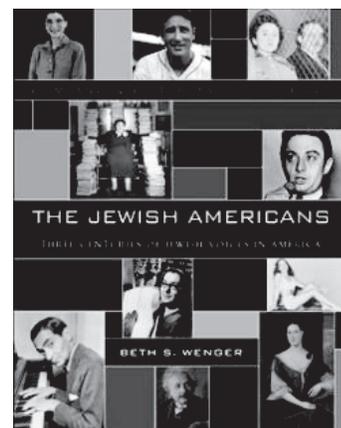
In the period between 1880 and 1920, 2.5 million eastern European Jews immigrated to the US – this was about 25% of all the Jews in the world. In 1880, 3% of world Jewry lived in the US. By 1920, that number was 25%. Although there were many Pogroms in Russia during this period of immigration, the major reason for immigration was the deteriorating economies in eastern Europe and the economic opportunities in the US.

Established Jewish institutions such as HIAS and the National Council of Jewish Women were instrumental in accommodating this large influx of Jews, who could not speak English.

The 1890s saw a backlash against Jewish immigration with anti-Semitism on the rise. This period up through the 1920s also saw the rise of certain Jewish institutions such as Landsmanschaften, the Yiddish press, and Jewish Union activism, amongst others. By 1924, when mass immigration ended with restrictive immigration laws, Jewish institutions were well established and, over the next 20 years, Jews became secure economically.

In spite of more anti-Semitism – quotas on enrollment at the best Universities, workplace bias, Henry Ford, Father Coughlin, etc. – Jews were very successful. When excluded, Jews set up their own law firms, hospitals, country clubs, etc. Personalities like Hank Greenberg in baseball and Gertrude Berg as Molly Goldberg on Television helped define Jews positively.

Beth Wenger's book and the DVD of the PBS Documentary are available for purchase. See <http://www.pbs.org/jewishamericans/about/purchase.html>. Much more information is available at the PBS website at <http://www.pbs.org/jewishamericans/>. ✨



BOOK REVIEW

Hear Their Voices

By Robert Leiter, Literary Editor, Jewish Exponent

A good deal of fuss was made back in January when PBS aired its three-part series called "The Jewish Americans" -- and rightly so. But no such commensurate fuss has been made over the coffee-table-sized book, also called *The Jewish Americans*, that serves as a companion to the TV show -- and that's too bad, since the hefty volume has been published in a lovely format by Doubleday.

The book is the work of the skilled young scholar Beth S. Wenger, who holds the Katz Family Chair in American Jewish History, and is associate professor of history, at the University of Pennsylvania, where she also heads the Jewish Studies Program. She is, appropriately enough, the author of *New York Jews and the Great Depression: Uncertain Promise* and co-editor of both *Remembering the Lower East Side: American Jewish Reflections* and *Encounters With the 'Holy Land': Place, Past and Future in American Jewish Culture*. She also served on the board of scholars who advised producer David Grubin as he helped put together the three-part PBS series.

Wenger begins right at the beginning, with the arrival of the first Jews -- 23 of them -- who disembarked in New Amsterdam (later to become New York) in 1654, and takes us as close to the present moment as possible with a discussion of playwright Tony Kushner's major work *Angels in America* and, by extension, gay Jewish life in America.

The key to the book lies in its subtitle: *Three Centuries of Jewish Voices in America*. Wenger provides a brief introduction to each section but then allows the participants in the events to speak for themselves, whether it's Marcus Spiegel explaining in a letter to his wife what it was like to serve as a colonel in the Civil War, or comedian and actor Carl Reiner discussing the origins of the Mel Brooks character, the 2,000 Year Old Man.

Wenger has also illustrated each section with some splendid images that show a keen attention to detail. The richness of the voices and the beauty of the images are what make this book something other than just a standard history of American Jewry.

For example, here is famed scholar Solomon Schechter noting, in an address he gave just two years after arriving in the United States, that he saw few obstacles standing in the way of American Jews leading fully Jewish lives:

"There is nothing in American citizenship which is incompatible with our observing the dietary laws, our

sanctifying the Sabbath, our fixing a Mezuzah on our doorposts, our refraining from unleavened bread on Passover [sic], or our perpetuating any other law essential to the preservation of Judaism. On the other hand, it is now generally recognized by the leading thinkers that the institutions and observances of religion are part of its nature, a fact that the moribund rationalism of a half century ago failed to realize. In certain parts of Europe every step in our civil and social emancipation demanded from us a corresponding sacrifice of a portion of the glorious heritage bequeathed to us by our fathers. Jews in America, thank God, are no longer haunted by such fears. We live in a commonwealth in which by the blessing of God and the wisdom of the Fathers of the Constitution, each man abiding by its laws has the inalienable right of living in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience. In this great, glorious and free country we Jews need not sacrifice a single iota of our Torah; and, in the enjoyment of absolute equality with our fellow citizens we can live to carry out those ideals for which our ancestors so often had to die."

Or take Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis' exquisitely rendered depiction of his own movement from indifference to a new awareness of Judaism:

"During most of my life my contact with Jews and Judaism was slight. I gave little thought to their problems, save in asking myself, from time to time, whether we were showing by our lives due appreciation of the opportunities which this hospitable country affords.

"My approach to Zionism was through Americanism. In time, practical experience and observation convinced me that Jews were by reason of their traditions and their character peculiarly fitted for the attainment of American ideals. Gradually it became clear to me that to be good Americans, we must be better Jews, and to be better Jews, we must become Zionists."

Wenger understood quite clearly that it's the voices that matter most. She leads us to them, then steps out of the way. And while her book may fit into the traditional format of a coffee-table volume, it ends up being more than that. It begs, in fact, to be read, to be lingered over -- and not simply for its good looks. ✨

Robert Leiter is the Literary Editor of the Jewish Exponent. His "Speaking Volumes" column is published weekly. This column was originally published in the Jewish Exponent in the April 24, 2008 edition. It is republished with the permission of the author.

LOCAL FEATURES FROM PHILADELPHIA AND ENVIRONS

Philadelphia's German Jews, Their Mores & Institutions; A Personal Memoir by Rabbi Malcolm H. Stern z"l

*The following is an unpublished work by Rabbi Malcolm H. Stern written in or about 1989. It has been contributed to **Chronicles** by Dr. Morton (Mickey) Langsfeld III, a JGSGP member and first cousin, once removed of Rabbi Stern.*

Rabbi Stern is considered the "Dean" of Jewish Genealogy, was instrumental in the founding of JGSGP and served as a mentor and friend to founding President Harry Boonin and his successor, Jon Stein z"l.

Biography of Rabbi Stern

extracted from the website of The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Malcolm Henry Stern was born on January 29, 1915, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Stern was the son of Arthur Kaufman and Henrietta Berkowitz Stern. Stern earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1935 and in 1937 became the fifth member of his family to be ordained as a rabbi at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. In 1941 he received a Doctor of Hebrew Letters from Hebrew Union College and was honored in 1966 with a Doctor of Divinity degree from the same school.

In 1941 Stern became assistant rabbi at Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel in Philadelphia. He ministered to the congregation from 1941-1943 and 1947. From 1943 to 1947 Stern took a sabbatical from his congregation to serve as a chaplain in the Army Air Corps. During World War II he survived a plane crash in Casablanca in which thirteen persons were killed. In 1947 Stern was elected Rabbi of Congregation Ohel Shalom in Norfolk, Virginia, serving there for 17 years. While in Norfolk, Stern spoke out strongly against segregation. In 1964 Stern moved to New York City to become the first Director of Rabbinic Placement for Reform Judaism for the Central Conference of American Rabbis. Stern held this position until his retirement in 1980. In 1981 Stern joined the faculty of the New York campus of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. He served as a counselor for student field work and was an adjunct professor of Jewish History.

Genealogy was Stern's great interest in life. His love for genealogy started in grade school when he traced the

descendants of Charlemagne for an assignment. From 1949 until 1994 he served as the genealogist for the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati. His work contributed to making the American Jewish Archives an internationally recognized institution. In 1960 he published *Americans of Jewish Descent* in which he traced members of Jewish immigrant families that arrived in the United States before 1840. Two more editions of the book would follow in 1978 and 1991 as *First American Jewish Families: 600 Genealogies, 1654-1977* and *First American Jewish Families: 600 Genealogies, 1654-1988*. This work was the basis for much of Stephen Birmingham's *The Grandees*.



Stern served the world of genealogy and American Jewish history in many ways and nearly every Jewish genealogical society in the United States was established with his help. He was known as the dean of American Jewish genealogy. Stern served as secretary of the American Society of Genealogists from 1968-1973, as vice president from 1973-1976 and as president from 1976-1979. Stern was the founder of the Jewish Historical Society of New York. He was also a trustee of the American Jewish Historical Society. In 1989 Stern testified before Congress, arguing that the position of Archivist of the United States should be awarded to a scholar and not an administrator. In 1990 he served on a special commission of the National Archives and Records Administration to prepare four American genealogists for a mission to Russia.



On May 25, 1941, Malcolm Stern married Louise Steinhart Bergman. Malcolm Stern died in New York City of a heart attack on January 5, 1994, at the age of 78.

Introduction

This is an attempt to recapture through memory and some research the lifestyle of Philadelphia's German Jews, a lifestyle that ended with the Holocaust and the birth of Israel. This is not a full sociological study, but rather the material from which history is compiled. It is one piece of oral history to which many of you can add data. Primarily it is a memoir of my parents and their generation and my own, told as examples of Philadelphia's German Jewish experience.

In addition to family tales, I have memorabilia that have come down to me or ones that I have preserved. These include the Keneseth Israel Confirmation programs of 1899 and 1900. Since Rabbis Krauskopf of K.I. and Berkowitz of Rodeph Sholom were brothers-in-law, and since many of the families of both congregations were interrelated, the programs included Rodeph Sholom's as well as K.I.'s confirmands. Both programs include relatives and many lifelong friends of my parents, some of whom I shall be mentioning. Incidentally, five members of my mother's confirmation class of 1900 at Rodeph Shalom had children in my class of 1930.

Random issues of *The Jewish Exponent* for the years between 1900 and 1930 gave me a number of insights. An enterprising local printer named Louis Henry Cahan published *The Hebrew Blue Book of Philadelphia* for 1902-1903, in which he attempted to capture every Jew in town, including the teenage children. Obviously, many – notably the so-called "Russian" immigrants – were missed. The overwhelming majority of those listed I could recognize as German Jews.

My cousin, Lucien Katzenberg, Jr., lent me his treasured copy of *The Mercantile Club Souvenir, 1895*, published on the occasion of the opening of that historic Jewish club's handsome building on Broad Street above Master. He also provided a battered clipping from the *Exponent* of September 13, 1957, of the reminiscences of the late Jack Solis-Cohen, Jr. about the founding of Philmont Country Club on that club's fiftieth anniversary.

The *American Jewish Year Books* gave me statistics and other helpful data. Philadelphia City Directories supplied addresses and occupations. These, then, are my chief outside sources. The rest is derived from my memories, perhaps faulty, but certainly cherished.

To understand the German Jews of the first half of this century, one needs to recognize the rampant antisemitism that characterized American life in that period. Ivy League and many other colleges had Jewish quotas for admission, severely limiting the opportunities for Jews to enter the professions. Resort hotels blatantly advertised, "Gentiles only." In 1912, for example, *The Exponent* editorialized about discrimination in the nearby Poconos. This evoked a reader's letter, stating that he had received literature from ten Pocono resorts, seven of which stated baldly, "No Hebrews desired as guests." Until World War II, the term "Jew" was considered a pejorative; "Hebrew" was the polite label. As late as 1947, when I moved from Philadelphia to Norfolk, Virginia, the highway to nearby Virginia Beach was adorned with billboards for resort hotels, at least one of which proclaimed "Christian Clientele." As for social clubs, all of us are aware of those that still bar Jews from membership, or – as in the case of Norfolk's Yacht and Country Club -- admit a token Jew or two to avoid the embarrassment of lawsuits.

From our present-day vantage point it may be difficult to comprehend why the Jews chose the path of extreme assimilation, but for those who grew up here prior to World War II, the entire emphasis of American life was on Americanization of the newcomers. It was the era of the "Melting Pot" theory. By the beginning of this century, the Jews of German extraction were children of American-born parents. They were convinced that they were full-blooded Americans and that it would be only a matter of time until the rest of America would find them totally acceptable. Read the published Sunday lectures of Rabbi Krauskopf and you will hear this message sounded loud and clear. The blatant antisemitism that rebuffed these Americanized German Jews caused them to create institutions of their own that copied those they were prohibited from entering.



Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf

Who were the German Jews of Philadelphia at the turn of this century? Almost all of them were identified with one of four congregations, each of which had a different complexion:

Mikveh Israel, Sephardic in ritual, had from its inception before the Revolution a majority of German Jews, and through half of the last century had attracted those more successful German immigrants who had originally joined Rodeph Shalom. But with the growth of Rodeph Shalom after 1850, Mikveh Israel was composed of descendants of its earlier membership and new accretions of Sephardim from North Africa and the Middle East. From the very beginning, its synagogues were located in center city, which certainly affected its growth. By 1900, it was located on 7th Street between



Mikveh Israel

Arch and Cherry, and reported a membership of 287 families.

Rodeph Shalom, under the leadership of Rabbi Berkowitz, who arrived in 1892, had moved from the traditionalism of Rabbi Jastrow into the Reform camp. Its prestige was definitely enhanced by its handsome Moorish building, erected in 1867 at Broad & Mount Vernon, the first synagogue on Broad Street. By 1900 it was Philadelphia's largest congregation with 860 families.



Rodeph Shalom

Keneseth Israel, Philadelphia's first and most radically Reform congregation was growing under the dynamic leadership of Joseph Krauskopf. In 1892, it moved to its architecturally striking facility as Philadelphia's first uptown synagogue, on Broad Street above Columbia. By 1900 it could boast a membership of 621 families.



Keneseth Israel

Adath Jeshurun, the most traditional of the German congregations, located at 7th and Columbia in 1900 had 160 member families.

If we assume that each family averaged four persons, we get a total for the four congregations of slightly under 8000 German Jews in Philadelphia at the turn of the century. By 1907, each of these congregations had grown at least 1/3 larger.

Their locations give some indication of where their leadership lived. The majority of the Jews resided east of Broad Street. Rodeph Shalom's leading families: the Tellers, Wolfs, and Fleishers lived just west of the synagogue on Spring Garden, Green, Mt. Vernon, etc.

By 1900, residential development was expanding north of Girard Avenue and from Broad Street west. 23 of the combined 55 confirmands of K.I. and R.S. were in the newer neighborhoods.

In my own family, my father was born in 1885 on Marshall Street near Poplar. In the 1890's, my Grandfather Stern bought the house at 1609 Diamond Street where my grandmother and her oldest daughter, Bessie Langsfeld, resided until the beginning of World War II, when they moved to 1530 Locust Street.

On the Berkowitz side: Rabbi Berkowitz came to Philadelphia in 1892 from Kansas City at the instigation of his brother-in-law, Joseph Krauskopf. Joseph Krauskopf found it advantageous to live well away from congregants and built a home at 4815 Pulaski Avenue in the then remote suburb of Germantown. So undeveloped was the area that an 1899 Rodeph Shalom confirmand, Gertrude Fleischman, recorded her address simply as Germantown. Rabbi Henry Berkowitz first lived at 2129 N. Gratz Street, but in 1900 moved to the new suburb of Strawberry Mansion, living at 1539 North 33rd Street for the remainder of his active career. My grandfather, Albert Berkowitz, adored his brother Henry, and followed him from Kansas City to Philadelphia in 1896, settling his growing family at 2335 N. 19th Street, and then moving in 1900 to Strawberry Mansion at 3129 Clifford. Their eventual six children forced the family to move to a larger house at 3225 Turner Street. This pattern of families living in close proximity was usual among the German Jews of Philadelphia. When my parents married, my father purchased 2034 North 18th Street, the house in which I was born, just two blocks from his mother and sister on Diamond Street. His brother Charles brought his bride to the house across narrow Fontaine Street from ours;

and their third brother, Frank, began housekeeping further down 18th Street, near Columbia. (My two uncles subsequently moved to Chicago, so they have no further role in this narrative). A few years after the death of my Grandfather Berkowitz in 1918, Grannie Berkowitz moved her brood two blocks from our 18th Street home to 1739 Berks Street.



Rabbi Henry Berkowitz

Back in the 1890's my grandfather, Moses Stern, joined Keneseth Israel and became so active as Chairman of its Religious School Committee that on his untimely death at age 54 in 1908, the Board of K.I. presented his family with a hand-engrossed, leather bound volume of memorial tribute. His oldest son-in-law, Dr. Morton Langsfeld, Sr. became a lifelong board member of K. I., to be followed in that role by his son, the recently deceased Dr. Morton Langsfeld, Jr. My grandmother Stern was a regular attender at K.I. services, usually on Saturday mornings. Aunt Bessie and Uncle "Doc" Langsfeld attended the Sunday services that were a K.I. institution until World War II. All five of my Stern grandparents' children attended religious school and were confirmed by Rabbi Krauskopf.

My mother's Berkowitz family were even more involved in Rodeph Shalom. Not only did they all attend religious school and were confirmed by their uncle, but Mother became the librarian in the old Benjamin F. Teller Religious School building at Broad and Jefferson, where I first attended Sunday School under the direction of Rabbi Ettelson. When the present building was erected during Rabbi Wolsey's administration, he persuaded mother to become the tenth grade teacher, a role for which she was affectionately remembered by her students. In 1930, my Dad's cousins, Milton Katzenberg and his sister, Bessie Kind, were living in adjacent houses on Township Line, Jenkintown. They prevailed

on mother and her friend, Irma Ancker Benjamin, to run a private religious school in their homes for several years. These classes were held on Saturdays, so both could teach at Rodeph Shalom on Sundays. Subsequently, Rabbi Fineshriber of Keneseth Israel asked mother to teach classes in Oak Lane out of which Temple Judea was born under the leadership of Rodeph Shalom's former assistant, Rabbi Sidney Unger.

A long standing group of Rodeph Shalom ex-confirmands functioned as teachers in the religious school, many of them close friends of our family. From the 1920's, I can recall Hortense Nathan, whose training as a junior high school principal, qualified her to be Principal. Among the other teachers in the Benjamin F. Teller Building were Sadie Roggenburger, Alice de Ford, and Nell Schwab (who married Rabbi Ettelson). Rabbi Wolsey enlarged the faculty, especially to include Hebrew teaching, by bringing in such outsiders as David Cherashore, Israel Lerner, and the beloved Samuel Samitz. The Hebrew curriculum consisted of a volume called *Reshis Daas* (the beginning of knowledge) in which we studied the alphabet through endless drills, starting with "Bah-bah, baw-baw, beh-beh." The third year I was exposed to this identical curriculum, I got permission to skip the Hebrew session and became assistant to Bernice Tumen in the Temple Library.

Mother's younger brother, David Berkowitz, joined the Rodeph Shalom boys' choir instituted by one of Rabbi Berkowitz's assistants, Rabbi Eli Mayer. Out of that experience, David became the congregation's cantor for thirty-five years. As many remember, after he retired, he remained active on the temple's music committee, and every Yom Kippur afternoon led the congregation in singing the Sephardic melody of "Eil Nora Alilah." His oldest brother and business partner, Leon, was a lifelong board member of Rodeph Shalom, rising to the Vice-Presidency, but declining the office of President.

In my childhood, Friday night in my Grandmother Berkowitz's household was sacred. The entire family would gather to read the Kiddush prayers from Rabbi Berkowitz's innovative Sabbath Sentiment. Some years later, the Langsfeld clan decided to observe Kiddush too. I shall defer describing our family Seders.

Not only my family, but many of the German Jews had a piety all their own. It was minimalist in ceremonial, but maximal in spirit and devotion. Anyone who has been a member of Rodeph Shalom for more than a generation recalls the dedication of Blanche Kohn and Hortense Fox, the latter refusing to sit through a Bar Mitzvah, but returning to her seat after that ceremony was over.

Educationally the grandchildren of the German immigrants of my parents' generation were, for the most part, not college bred. In their upwardly mobile society, a high school diploma sufficed to get on in the world. In 1903, Philadelphia's old Central High School [across Broad Street from Rodeph Shalom] had so eminent a faculty in liberal arts that it was authorized to give my father and his contemporaries a Bachelor of Arts degree. The only member of our immediate family in my Dad's



Central High School

generation to attend college was his brother-in-law, Morton Langsfeld, who graduated in 1902 from the Pennsylvania College of Dentistry (now part of the University of Pennsylvania). The few Jewish doctors we knew included Louis Jurist, the general practitioner who ministered to the family's ills for two generations and brought me into the world; Harry Lowenberg, my pediatrician, and later, David Kapp, who replaced Dr. Jurist. The lawyers of whom we knew included the senior partners of Wolf, Block, Schorr, and Solis-Cohen, and of Fox, Rothschild, O'Brien and Frankel, but the only one of these with whom my parents socialized was Bernard Frankel. Later Leon Obermayer became a close family friend. I can think of only two other close friends of my parents who went to college: Jacob Goldbaum, who became chemist for Fels & Company; and Stella Nathan, who won a scholarship to Bryn Mawr where she and Blanche Kahn were probably the first Jewish students. Their other contemporary males usually went into a family business. My father became a part of Jacob Stern & Sons, hides and tallow processors, the business begun by his grandfather, and continued by his father, Moses Stern, and the latter's brother-in-law, Isaac Katzenberg. In the expansive 1920's, Dad sold his share of the business to the Katzenbergs and retired to a farm in Fox Chase where he attempted to be an author, playwright, and painter, as well as gentleman farmer. When the crash came, Dad found his way into real estate with Lionel Friedman and later operated independently.

Most German-Jewish social life revolved about the home. In an age when most Philadelphians lived in individual houses with live-in servants, usually immigrants who were cheap and plentiful, entertaining at home was easy. For most of the wives the only career was home and family, and many prided themselves on the quality of their tables. For nearly thirty years, we had a black cook who was like a Southern mammy to my brother and me. Mother was not much of a cook, but could direct Annie to culinary heights. Aunt Bessie Langsfeld had an Irish nursemaid for Mildred and Morton, Jr., and later, a pair of marvelous German live-ins who made her home the most hospitable in the family. Indeed, it was taken for granted that any members of the family could stay with any others, so that my Philadelphia first cousins were as close to me as my brother.



Mercantile Club

For many German Jews, the Mercantile Club, founded in 1853, was the center of their social life until the 1920's move to the suburbs. As I have already mentioned, in 1895 it dedicated the large facility occupying 1422 to 1426 North Broad Street. At that point, my grandfather, Moses Stern, and his brother-in-law, Isaac Katzenberg, were members. My parents never joined, as my father was more interested in cultural activities, but the Langsfeld clan were members throughout my growing up years. My Grandmother Stern celebrated her birthdays there, until her love of lobster moved the annual celebration to Old Original Bookbinders. In his bachelor days, Dad was an active member of the YMHA's Balbazoo Club, which produced periodic skits, usually in drag. Their activities were held at the Mercantile. These clubs and the YMHA were exclusively German Jewish until the great depression.

In 1907, Ellis Gimbel and his brother-in-law, Jules Mastbaum, bought a farm near Bethayres and created



YMHA

Philmont Country Club. It, too, admitted only German Jews. Of our family, the Katzenbergs and the Langsfelds became active members. Shortly after we moved to Fox Chase in 1923, a group of friends persuaded the Frank Bachmans of Rydal to sell off their private nine-hole golf course, and Rydal Country Club was born. Dad became a founding member, and for many years, Rydal was limited to a close circle of friends. My Berkowitz uncles, Leon and David, began their golfing interests at the less costly Ashbourne Club, but Leon eventually joined Philmont, while David became a ring-leader in Rydal's occasional stunt nights. About a year after Rydal was formed, Dad suggested to my two grandmothers that it would offer the opportunity for both families to combine for Passover Seder, and a family tradition grew. That Seder is in its 65th year, expanded with both new generations and cousins of cousins. For many ears, David Berkowitz conducted, but as his hearing became impaired, he decided that it was time for me to take over. Rydal was also second home for my Dad's younger sister, Sadie, and her husband, Stanley Goldsmith. Uncle "Stutz" as we called him actually died on the tennis court in 1940. Sadie outlived him by many years, becoming club tennis champion and then golf champion. On her 80th birthday she was made an honorary member. Since the bus line, free to senior citizens, ran from the corner of her Lakeside Apartment to the Rydal entrance, she said, "Every day I don't play golf, I'm losing money!" When she died at 86, I conducted her memorial service - at Rydal.

Before she married, Mother initiated a social club that went on for years. It began after her beloved friend, Stella Nathan, graduated from Bryn Mawr and moved to Buffalo as the bride of Charles Bock of that city. Out of her sense of loss, mother invited a group of Stella's

friends to her home who did not all know one another. In came an uninvited guest who was not very well liked. When she realized that she had dropped in on an invited gathering, she left, and the relief was expressed in such catty remarks that a club was formed on the spot, dubbed the *Meows*. For years thereafter, they would meet in one another's homes for food and conversation, and would bestow on one another gifts with cat motifs whenever they could find them.

Pi Tau Pi was a German-Jewish social and philanthropic fraternity. It had been founded elsewhere in 1908, and a Philadelphia chapter was formed in the late 1920's. My cousins, Morton Langsfeld, Jr. and Lucien Katzenberg, Jr., became active members along with many of their contemporaries. I was occasionally invited to some of their doings, but was not a member until many years later, when as a rabbi, I became their National Chaplain for several years. This was the result of my creating for their annual Mother's Day service a liturgy that got national use.

Card playing was endemic among the German-Jewish matrons who had the leisure for it. For a while in the 20's and 30's mah jongg was the rage. Mother had no interest in cards, but Dad's mother and sisters had regular games at the homes of various friends or at the Mercantile or Philmont.

Social doings were important to the German Jews. *The Jewish Exponent* for many years had columns devoted to the goings and comings of those who considered themselves important enough. Visitors from and to out-of-town were carefully noted, and so were guest lists at parties. Paid notices of births, marriages, and deaths continued in the *Exponent* long after this German era to the point where one member of the family gave the ultimate "Our Crowd" remark, "I don't even know anyone who's dead in the *Exponent*!"



Academy of Music

My parents and their social friends were more interested in things cultural. During the more affluent 1920's, my folks held box seats for the Philadelphia Orchestra's Saturday night concerts, and regularly subscribed to the Metropolitan Opera's Tuesday night performances at the Academy of Music. During World War II, as a fundraiser, the Academy sold shares of stock. Dad, then a widower, living on 16th Street below Locust, purchased two shares, that entitled him and my Grandmother Berkowitz to free seats to all Academy performances. Grannie B., who lived directly behind the Academy, enjoyed ill health, but made miraculous recoveries whenever a favorite opera or desirable concert was being performed.

Although my cousins all began their education in public schools, mine started with an interesting German-Jewish experiment. In the fall of 1918, a group of families residing west of Broad Street, between Jefferson and Diamond Streets, were invited to send their pre-schoolers to a kindergarten being held in a room over the garage of the Clarence Wolf home on 16th Street below Oxford. A fine Quaker teacher, Margaret Shippen Crowther ("Miss Peggy" to her pupils) was engaged. The following year, the school moved to the home of Dr. Bernard Kohn on 15th Street, and another class was added with a teacher of Miss Peggy's choice. A year or two later, the parents rented a house at the southeast corner of Broad and Diamond for what was then known as the Progress School and Kindergarten. By the spring of 1923, our class had reached the fourth grade - divided by birthdays into A and B, each with three students. 4B contained Robert Wolf, Gordon Block, and Harriet Weiler; 4A had Elise Kohn (now Freedman), Jeanne Friedman (now Westheimer), and yours truly. I can't recall all the other attendees, but I do remember: Bernard Rothschild, now a retired Atlanta architect, Helen Solis-Cohen (now Sax), Jane Sunstein (now Abrahams), Benjamin Wolf, the Sinberg girls (Jane Bacharach and Ann), Ida Marie Fleisher (later Becker), Blanche Langsdorf, Vera Steppacher (now Strauss) and Carolyn Kohn (first wife of Samuel Blumenthal). The migration to the suburbs buried the school.

Many of the attendees and other German Jewish kids went on to Oak Lane Country Day School on Oak Lane Road and New Second Street, later taken over by Temple University. My family's move to Fox Chase, as that neighborhood's first Jews, plummeted my brother and me into lower middle class Fox Chase School where I met antisemitism head-on, getting chased home with "dirty Jew!" My parents handled it well, and we children had no idea that the neighborhood Ku Klux Klan's burning a cross in a neighbor's field had anything

to do with us.



Majestic Hotel

Our social group was set for us by the dancing class we attended. My Langsfeld cousins and their generation of German Jews went to Miss Waltz's class at the old Majestic Hotel, then at Broad and Girard. The move to the suburbs introduced my age group to the Oak Lane Review Club at 70th and Lakeside, where our Saturday night attempts at dancing were instructed first by a Miss Miller, and later by John and Lotte Bernheimer. I vividly remember my first two formal parties, both held at the Bellevue-Stratford. At 13, I could wear my father's tuxedo to attend the dinner-dance given for the late Rosemary Feustman (Markowitz) who was then visiting from Baltimore with her great-aunt and uncle, the Joseph Rubins. The following year, nouveau-riche Albert M. Greenfield tried to push his children into German-Jewish "society" with a dinner-dance for his daughter Betty at which a different wine was served with every course and cigars were passed after dessert, much to the bewilderment of the assembled 13 and 14-year-olds. For that occasion, I initiated my own tuxedo as I had outgrown my father's.

Soon thereafter came the stock market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression, seriously curtailing my generation's social doings. Fortunately, the mother's of teenage daughters felt impelled to keep their daughters in circulation by giving parties at home or with groups of parents at larger facilities. One ill-advised adventure was an attempt by a group of mothers to stage a Cotillion in December of 1933 for their daughters. The affair was to be held at the new Hotel Warwick and the subscription was \$1.75, a very high price in 1933, when movies were 25 cents. My impecunious state coupled with the embryonic rabbi in me prompted me to write a letter protesting such extravagance when so many were hungry. I don't know if my letter was the sole reason the affair was cancelled, but I subsequently received a

rather pointed invitation from Mr. & Mrs. Morris Wolf to a party at their home "to meet their niece, Harriet Fleisher," (a young lady I knew well). Harriet's mother had helped sponsor the Cotillion.

The summer mecca of Philadelphia's German Jews was Atlantic City. Before World War I, those who went usually stayed in one of that resort's many boarding houses, often operated by relatives. Following the first World War, families began buying or renting their summer homes. Grandma Stern and her two daughters, Bessie Langsfeld and Sadie Goldsmith, rented a house on Kingston Avenue in 1917. A year later, they began an annual sojourn at 2 South Elberon Avenue that was to last until World War II. My father rented a house up the block for a year, then bought one in more fashionable Ventnor on Nashville Avenue, until in 1923, he sold it to purchase his Fox Chase farm.



Atlantic City in 1920s

A year earlier, Dad and Mother had taken us and my Grandmother Berkowitz abroad, hiring a German governess in Hamburg to babysit and teach us German as we travelled. Three years later, we again went to Europe and my brother and I spent seven months in school in Lausanne, Switzerland, while our parents wandered. This was far from the German-Jewish norm. When my Langsfeld uncle and aunt travelled anywhere, it was invariably with one or two couples among their close friends. For the majority of the Mercantile-Philmont set, travel was happiest when other Philadelphians were there.

Did you ever hear of Camp Arden? I didn't until I read about it in the columns of the *Exponent* for the first decade of this century. It was located not too far from Philadelphia and it became the meeting-place for German Jewish singles. My uncle Leon Berkowitz, and his

cousin Max, the rabbi's son, are mentioned on the guest list several times. That seems to be where Max met Miss Emma Cerf of Pittsburgh who became his bride. World War I ended Camp Arden. But the idea of sleep-away camps for teenagers was pervading the German Jewish community. For some reason, Maine was considered the ideal spot. In 1913, Louis Fleisher and "Brud" Friedman opened Camp Kennebec for boys; Corinne Arnold created Camp Accomac for girls, and two New York ladies founded Tripp Lake, also for girls. Kennebec maintained a monopoly on Philadelphia's German Jewish boys. The two girls' camps vied for Philadelphia attendees, when Tripp Lake hired our cousin Edith Katzenberg Stern to be head counselor as its beloved "Miss Kitty", and later involved Carolyn Lavenson in the administration. Their success inspired other camps like Dolly Steppacher's Woodmere.

Corinne Arnold's death coincided with the stock market crash of 1929, and my mother persuaded Alice Garson Wolf to join her in purchasing Camp Accomac. My brother and I had been sent, a year earlier, to the much closer Camp Kewanee, above Scranton. After her first year at Accomac, Mother recognized the qualities of Kennebec and enrolled my brother. I preferred summer school to camp. The depression years were hard ones for camp owners, and I believe that mother's death in 1938 was hastened by her exertions in traveling the country seeking campers. I well remember the debate over whether snobbish German Jewish parents would be antagonized if Accomac accepted Zara and Felicia Lamport from Brooklyn, whose antecedents came from farther east. Economic necessity and Lamport charm won the day!

Even in death the German Jews preserved their separateness. Rodeph Shalom and Adath Jeshurun congregations had their own burial grounds, the former abandoned some years ago. Mt. Sinai, an independent entity, became the last resting-place of many of the more affluent families. My immigrant paternal forebears were buried in Adath Jeshurun Cemetery, and their children and grandchildren joined them there. The Berkowitz clan obviously opted for Rodeph Shalom.

Unquestionably, the issue that separated the German Jews from the later arrivals - especially in Philadelphia - was their antizionism. Rabbis Berkowitz and Krauskopf had both espoused it. Rabbi Wolsey institutionalized it by organizing the American Council for Judaism in the summer of 1942. I had just become assistant to Rabbi Fineshriber. Steeped in the antizionist traditions of Reform Judaism, I became the organization's first Secretary. Recognizing their need for lay

financial support, Rabbi Fineshriber persuaded Lessing Rosenwald to take the Presidency of the Council, a post he held for the rest of his life. By 1948, when Israel was born, I had moved to my own pulpit in Norfolk, Virginia. I wrote Dr. Fineshriber, "We've been outvoted. It's time for the Council to go out of existence." Wolsey soon thereafter resigned, but Fineshriber never did. The Six-Day War of 1967 effectively silenced the Council.



Rabbi William Fineshriber

Charitable endeavors were important to these German Jews. Then, as now, community leaders headed the Federation of Jewish Charities. My Grandmother Berkowitz was a founding Vice-President of the Philadelphia Section of the Council of Jewish Women, and mother was active in Council. From her Accomac expertise, Mother offered guidance to the leaders who ran Camp Council, a summer camp for underprivileged Jewish children where many of my contemporaries were volunteer counselors. Mother was also actively involved, as were many of her family, in the doings of the National Farm School (now the Delaware Valley College of Science and Agriculture), founded by her uncle, Rabbi Krauskopf in 1896. Mother's ashes were interred on its grounds.



National Farm School

Her favorite charity, however, was the Juvenile Aid Society that supervised on an individual case-work basis, Jewish children placed in foster homes. Our Fox Chase home provided Sunday outings for some of these children who were Mother's charges.

To some German Jews, being Jewish was a decided burden, as these two examples show: Ida Bachman, the original owner of Rydal, was traveling on a suburban train with our cousin Bessie Katzenberg Kind Wolf. Said Ida in a penetrating voice, "You know I was operated on for HEMORRHOIDS at the [whisper] **Jewish** Hospital! The other tale came from Mother's Rodeph Shalom Sisterhood presidency in the late 1920's: An appeal was read from the Falashas (black Jews) of Abyssinia. One of the Louchheim ladies was seated on the back row, knitting. Said she, "Did you say they were black?" "Yes." "Did you say they were Jewish. Receiving an affirmative reply, she commented, "With that kind of double trouble I move that we give them a donation!"

Individuals of our acquaintance left their mark on the city; for example: Charles Edwin Fox became long-time District Attorney, Leon Obermayer was for years Chairman of the Board of Education, Samuel Fleisher created the Graphic Sketch Club. These and many other German Jews helped not only to mold the tight little community that I have described, but opened doors that made it possible for the succeeding generations of Philadelphia Jewry to attend the schools of their choice, enter whatever careers they wished, and to serve on boards and committees that affect the entire city. Those of us who were reared in their homes admit honestly that they were snobbish to newcomers, but only because they felt that the newcomers were not yet suitably acculturated in the "WASP" American way of life. Their achievements far outweigh their all too human shortcomings. All of us are their heirs, and as such, owe them an immense debt of gratitude. ✨

Most of the photographs used in this article are from the websites of Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel, PhillyHistory.org, and the American Jewish Archives.

My Philadelphia Story by Peggy Morrow

It was the great tragedy of my father's life that his father, Harry Morrowitz, died in 1917, in Philadelphia, at the age of twenty-nine. My father Bernard was two years old when my twenty-one year old, pregnant grandmother Sarah became a widow.

My grandmother moved back home to St. Louis where my Aunt Harriet, named after her father, was born. Due to financial hardship and with no father to help support them, both my father and aunt were raised in an orphanage until they were teenagers. My grandmother worked as a maid and then as a salesperson.

My father and aunt have long ago passed away, but my cousins, sisters and I still wondered: what country did our family come from and do we have any living relatives from our grandfather's side of the family?

The family had a few documents: my father's birth and death certificates, my grandparents' marriage license, the document legally changing our last name from Morrowitz to Morrow, and a letter my grandfather wrote to my grandmother shortly before he died.

My grandfather's letter was written on business letter-head and provided several pieces of information: the name of the family business – "S. Morrowitz and Son,"

the type of business - "Manufacturers of Ladies' and Childrens' Aprons and Novelties" the address of the business, and the date the letter was written.

Family stories told that my grandfather had a sister named Bertha Silverstein, who lived in St. Louis, but the family lost contact with her soon after my father's Bar Mitzvah.

A few searches in a large fee-based genealogy database yielded quick results. I was thrilled to find my grandfather's WWI draft registration, filled out in his own hand. With this document, I now knew his birth date, his address in 1917, and had his signature. I cried when I found the 1920 census record of my father in the orphanage. I always knew that he was raised there but reality was harsh: Bernard Morrowitz, age five, orphan.

My letter writing campaign to government agencies yielded more valuable information: my grandfather's, his sister's, and her husband's death certificates. Those documents provided the names of my great-grandparents, Samuel and Katie (Goldstein) Morrowitz, and that they had immigrated in 1882 from Iasi, Romania. I was then able to obtain Katie's, but not Samuel's, death certificate, and to my amazement, now knew the names of one set of great-great-grandparents – Abraham Gold-

stein and (first name missing) Perova.

My search of business directories, city directories, and census records for the Morrowitz's was unsuccessful. I contacted the Levine Funeral Home, but they did not have records going back to 1917. I also obtained property records for the address in Philadelphia and learned that my family had not owned the property. I found contact information for the orphanage in St. Louis but neither snail nor e-mail was answered. I researched the Yiddish newspapers with no luck.

I also had no luck writing to every William Goldstein in Pennsylvania, the informant on my great-grandmother's death certificate. Obviously, the same William Goldstein would not be alive, but I thought I might find his family. There are thirty-eight William Goldsteins in Pennsylvania. I received one phone call – from an African-American William Goldstein – who quickly established that I was white and Jewish and probably not a relative of his. I also was unsuccessful writing to every Morrowitz in the U.S.

The turning point in my research came when I called the cemetery listed on my grandfather's death certificate and asked whether they had anyone else with our last name buried there. Ten minutes later, I found out that, in addition to my grandfather and great-grandmother, my great-grandfather and two other people were buried at Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Philadelphia – Barnett and Morris Morrowitz.

I had no idea who these two men were, but my father Bernard was born seven months after Barnett's death and I wondered if my father had been named after him.

I also learned that my great-grandfather had died three days after his son, my grandfather. It left me reeling – one day my great-grandmother Katie was living with her husband, son, pregnant daughter-in-law, and grandson – and a few days later, she had lost her son and her husband, and her daughter-in-law and grandson had moved from Philadelphia to St. Louis.

My sister and I decided to travel from Indianapolis and Chicago to Philadelphia to walk in our family's footsteps.

To prepare for the trip, I e-mailed the Jewish Genealogy Society of Greater Philadelphia and received a several page response full of good advice and suggestions. I thank those good people again.

I had previously viewed Google Satellite on what we now called the family home and also found that the house was listed on the National Historic Register. Now, I wrote to the current property owner of the house in Philadelphia, enclosing the letterhead from my grandfather's letter so she would not think I was a crackpot. File this under "nothing ventured, nothing gained" – she very graciously invited us to visit the inside of her home.

Through Google, I also learned that a synagogue founded by Romanian immigrants was three blocks from the house.



With an agenda including the family home, the synagogue, the cemetery, two Jewish delis, a meeting of the Jewish Genealogy Society of Greater Philadelphia, dinner with family friends, and a visit to Valley Forge, my sister and I set out on our big adventure.

The caretaker of Mt. Carmel cemetery was able to provide row and grave numbers for two out of the five graves. However, they could not tell us where the row or grave was in the cemetery. Since both graves were in row C, I naively thought that the row we sought would be three from something. And, even more naively, I thought that the two graves listed in row C would actually be in the same row.

My sister and I spent many hours walking up and down rows of the cemetery looking for our family graves. Although we had purposely scheduled our trip for October to avoid the heat, it was 89 degrees and the sun beat down on us.

We found three of the five graves: our grandfather Harry's, our great-grandmother Katie's, and Morris's grave. We found the two graves that were both supposed to be in row C roughly in the middle of the cemetery and a few rows apart.

I posted photos of the headstones on JewishGen Viewmate and was amazed by, and grateful to, the number of people who provided translations of the Hebrew. My great-grandmother, with the unlikely name of Katie, had been named Gittel and Samuel had been named Shmuel. Once I received the translation of Morris's (Moshe's) headstone, I realized that he was my grandfather Harry's brother.

The cemetery again provided our genealogical breakthrough. Although the cemetery had given me Morris's name as a Morrowitz, what their paper records didn't show or didn't mention was that his last name on the tombstone was not spelled Morrowitz but Morovitz.



I now was able to find 1900 and 1910 census records with the names of my grandfather's five additional siblings and wrote for birth records and marriage licenses. After receiving many unsuccessful responses, the information-rich marriage license of the youngest brother arrived.

Now, I had the name of the bride but still did not have any luck with 1920 or 1930 census records. Because

both he and his bride had been under the age of 21, the license contained witness statements with names and addresses. When I searched on the name of the bride's father, not only did I find that family, but learned that the bride and groom were living with the in-laws! My grandfather's brother had changed his last name again – to Morrow – the same as mine! And, the other witness statement turned out to be one of my grandfather's married sisters and her husband.

With the "current" names of two siblings and their spouses, I was able to find Social Security death records for three out of the four. I found the 1990 obituary of one spouse online through the Philadelphia newspaper's web site, which gave me the married name of their daughter and the names of the grandchildren – my generation!

Luckily, their last name was not very common and I received only one hit on each grandchild when I searched online white page directories. Both brothers lived in the same town and I used Google to determine that it was a suburb of Philadelphia with a large Jewish population.

I wrote each brother a letter explaining who I was and enclosed a photo of my grandfather. Four days later, to my great joy, I received an e-mail with the subject line "Hello Cousin".

My sisters, cousins and I are busy exchanging photos and stories with our new cousins, including my father's first cousin who was named after my grandfather. I am delighted to report that they were as happy to be found as we were to find them.

We are just getting to know each other and there is more to learn. But, after eighteen months of research and many dead ends, I am very pleased to tell you that my Philadelphia story has a happy ending. ✨

Peggy Morrow is a marketing consultant in the Chicago area. She started working on her family's genealogy in late 2006 with the primary goal of locating her grandfather's family and has since expanded into other family branches. Peggy is active in the Jewish Genealogy Society of Illinois and co-editor of its newsletter.

A few JGSGP members helped Peggy before she and her sister visited Philadelphia. Peggy is very thankful for this help and wanted to share her success with us.

Philadelphia Ward Atlases Showing Names of Property Owners by Harry D. Boonin

Most of us have had the opportunity to learn more about our families and where they lived by using the Federal Census schedules for 1900, 1910 and 1920. Since there are no readily available census schedules for 1890, the schedules for the above three censuses are the best we really have for the crucial 30 year period from 1890 to 1920 - except for city directories - when most east European immigrants came to Philadelphia and other cities and towns in the United States. This article will address only Philadelphia.

There are basically two kinds of atlases in Philadelphia: one that shows much information about a property but does not show the owners name, and the other that does show who owned the property. By far the largest number of Atlases do not show the names of the owners. The atlases may be found in many places in Philadelphia, but for this article I used the atlases located in the Map Reading Room of the Logan Square Library, 2nd Floor, 19th & Benjamin Franklin Parkway. Dr. Richard Boardman is in charge of the maps and is extremely helpful.

We have all wondered where our relatives lived in years when a census was not taken, and have relied upon city directories to fill in these gaps. But there is another little used source that may be of help to some of us. I say some of us because the Ward Atlases showing names of property owners covers only a few wards, but important ones. The atlases that cover wards, where the property owners are indicated on each property, are atlases for the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th wards for the years 1896 and 1908 (the Smith and Bromley Ward Atlases). The years 1896 and 1908 are obviously important years in that they do not duplicate the years of the decennial census. A drawback of these atlases is that they do not show boarders or renters which, of course, the census data does reveal.

Whether the names of property owners were taken from deeds, or from interviews with the occupants of the house, or from another source is not known. Sometimes you can find alternate spellings that either are mistakes or may have been spellings used by the family when they first came to this country. You can also find the names of the owners of nearby properties. Many marriages years ago occurred between neighbors. This becomes quite apparent when looking at these special atlases.

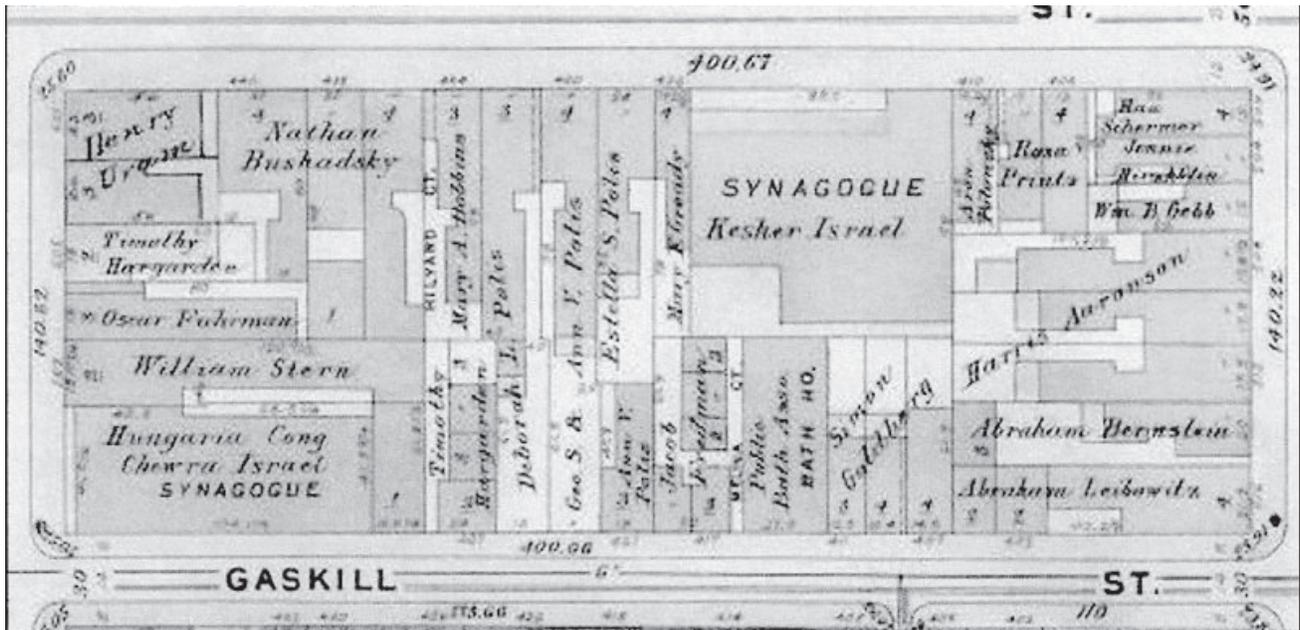
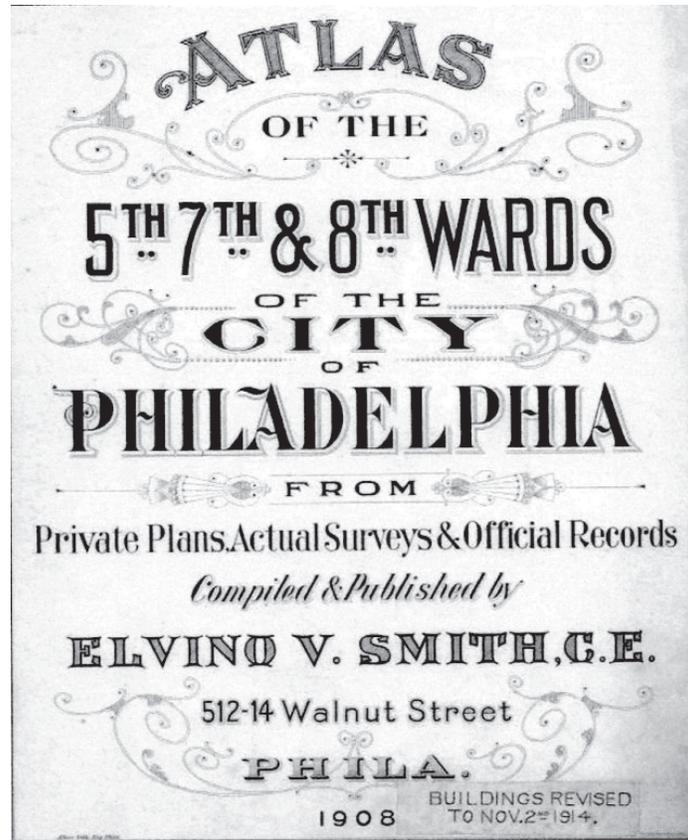
Not only are the names informative, but like other atlases, other information is helpful. This includes things such as businesses. You can identify whiskey stores; restaurants; refreshment saloons; bar rooms; dwellings and offices; buildings with a skylight; and manufacturing establishments in the area. From one atlas of the 5th ward between Pine and Spruce streets, we learn that in 1897 there were, on one block of a little perpendicular street, eight (8) stables, one wheelwright, one blacksmith, and one machine shop. All this in a residential neighborhood. You can imagine your grandparents as young children feeding the horses, walking them, and helping in the stables and barns. Many times synagogues in the area are also named, but not always. In the Wards of Northern Liberties, many manufacturing establishments and wholesale outlets are identified by name, and so, if the family worked there, the names of these places may prove helpful. With respect to the houses, you can determine if they had porches, how many stories, whether built of brick or frame, lot dimensions, and house numbers, to name just a few things you can find out about each property. Most are in brilliant colors and are easy to read. They have been well preserved.

Concerning all the atlases (i.e., the ones that show names and the ones that do not), Mr. Boardman has an eight (8) page index to atlases for Wards 1 through 49. Most do not have the names of property owners (except for the ones noted above) and they cover the years 1860 (the earliest) to 1939 (the last). For example, for the 2nd Ward in South Philadelphia, there are 12 atlases, none of which are "Property Owner atlases." They are for the years: 1860, 1863, 1875, 1877, 1887, 1888, 1895, 1895, 1901, 1905, 1910, and 1917. Some have more information than others. Generally, the newer the atlas, the more information it has.

If you have not looked through this source, you may be surprised at what you will find. The Free Library of Philadelphia is located at 1901 Vine Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103. The web site is: www.library.phila.gov/

For more information on Philadelphia Ward Atlases, see <http://www.brynmawr.edu/iconog/atlaslist/phil.html> (Bryn Mawr College's "Historical Documentation of Place in Greater Philadelphia" and Historic Map Works Residential Genealogy (use Town & City Search) at <http://www.historicmapworks.com/> ☆

EXAMPLE OF PHILADELPHIA CITY ATLAS FROM 1908



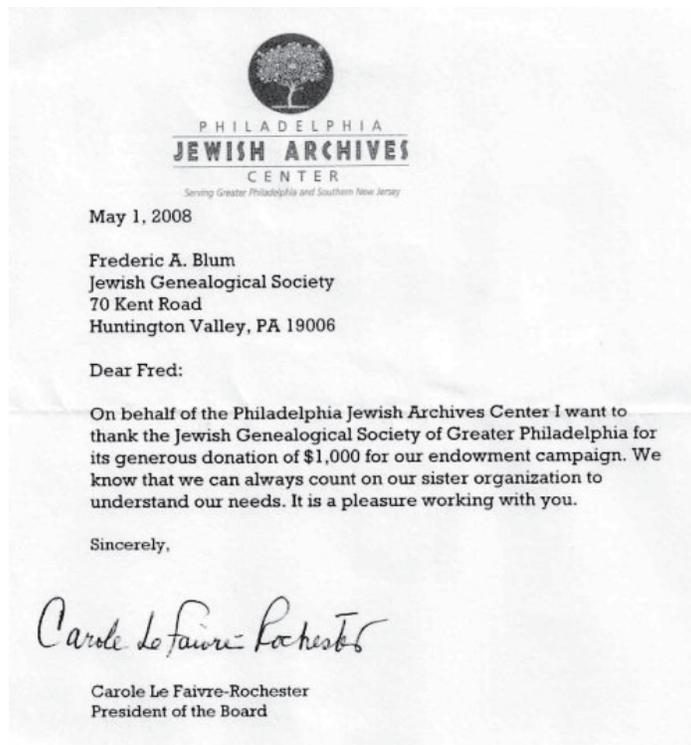
Philadelphia Jewish Archives Center Needs Our Support

PJAC's website has been upgraded. Take a look at <http://www.jewisharchives.net/index.php>.

At its May Meeting, your Board voted unanimously to make a contribution of \$1,000 to PJAC's Endowment in appreciation of our partnership to increase access to PJAC's genealogical holdings as well as PJAC's need for funds, documented in March 2008 Chronicles.

Below is a letter of appreciation from PJAC President, Carole Le Faivre-Rochester.

A generous donor has pledged to match up to \$250,000 that is raised ! There is a time limit on that commitment, however. Please help with your contribution and identify your contribution for the Endowment.



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FEATURE ARTICLES

The Search for My Aunt, Jeanette Sandel, in Austria During 1930-1940's by Stanley R. Sandler

Oral history from my mother indicated that her sister, Jeanette Sandel, lived someplace in Vienna, Austria during the 1930-1940's. My mother's details were very sketchy. She said that Jeanette was her younger sister, who from very early childhood or birth had a disability with her legs. I have a picture of her sitting in a chair in 1936 (see cover page). My mother said she was not able to walk very well. Some time after 1923, the year when my mother immigrated to the USA from Kolomyja, Poland, Jeanette had gone to Vienna to stay at a rehabilitation facility in order to obtain medical help. She also may have used at times the surnames of Thau or Horowitz in addition to Sandel.

In 1938, when Austria was taken over by Germany (*Der Anschluss*), my mother lost touch with her unmarried sister Jeanette. According to my younger brother, Baruch, my mother searched for her sister after World War II. According to my brother, my mother received a letter from the Austrian Embassy stating that Jeanette Sandel had died in a facility in Vienna which my brother remembered had a name starting with "*Barmherzigkeit*". He further recalled that she was listed as a Catholic and was buried in the courtyard of this facility during the early part of WW II.

In December 2007, while writing my family history, I decided I needed to get actual documented details about my Aunt. I contacted the Austrian State Archives* in Vienna to help me in this quest. I asked them to carry out a search about my Aunt and to provide me with details on exactly where she had been located in Vienna and how she had died. I had always been wondering whether she died at the hands of the Nazis or if she had died a natural death due to complications from her disability. The Austrian State Archives was very responsive and asked me for her date of birth and her country of origin. From the genealogical search of my mother's family, I estimated that she was born circa 1902 in Kolomyja, (then Austria, now Ukraine). I also gave them the details about what I knew of her as described above.

On January 10, 2008, I received an e-mail from the Austrian Archives indicating that they may have found someone who closely matched the description of my Aunt. They had found a **Johanna Sandel** who was born

on May 12, 1904 in Kolomea, Polen (Poland), was a single woman employed as a manual worker, and was of the Catholic religion. She was a resident from September 6, 1924 – February 1, 1941 at the "*Haus der Barmherzigkeit zur unentgeltlichen Pflege armer schwerkranker Unheilbarer*" [translation: "House of Mercy for the Nursing Without Any Cost for the Very Sick and Incurable Poor"].

The Archive further mentioned that my Aunt died on February 1, 1941 in Vienna. This information appears to match very closely to what my mother and brother had told me according to the information that they had received after WW II from the Austrian Embassy. That letter cannot be found.

In addition, I again wrote to this Archive and requested a copy of her Death Certificate to get more details about the cause of her death and to see whether her parents' names were listed to verify beyond the shadow of any doubt that this was indeed my aunt. The Archive sent me a certified copy of her Death Certificate which stated that the cause of death was valvular heart failure. Unfortunately, the names of her parents were not listed.

Although I cannot be 100 percent certain from this documentation that this is my aunt, I believe that from all circumstantial evidence from my family's oral history that I have truly located her.

In closing, I want to share with others the positive experience I had with the Austrian State Archives. They are truly a first class operation and they were extremely helpful in enabling me to complete another chapter in my family's genealogy. ✨

*Address of the Vienna Archive:
Direktor: Univ.-Prof. Dr. Ferdinand Opll
Magistrat der Stadt Wien, Magistratsabteilung 8, Wiener
Stadt-und Landesarchiv Gasometer D, Wien 11, Guglgasse 14
Postanschrift: Rathaus, A-1082, Wien,
Vienna, Austria

E-Mail: post@ma08.wien.gv.at and
post@ma08.magwien.gv.at

Web sites: www.archiv.wien.at and
www.gv.at/english/municipalarchiv

Sometimes There is More in the Archives than You Expect by Inge Heiman Karo

Trying to obtain records from government agencies outside of the United States can be frustrating. In my case, however, I got much more than I expected.

In November 1938, during *Krystallnacht*, the "Night of Broken Glass," my family and I narrowly escaped being burned alive in our house (see photo on cover page). Our "savior" was a high-ranking German officer who wanted this house as a wedding present for his son, and made my parents an offer they could not refuse. Give him the house and sign papers that made this transaction look like a legitimate sale, or let the mob burn it down with us in it. Of course, my parents agreed. He put up a large sign that the house was now in Aryan hands and ordered the mob to leave.

Decades later, while writing my family history, I could not recall where we lived between the time the house was "sold" in November 1938 and when we finally got out of Germany in November 1939. So I wrote to the "Alte Synagoge Essen," which is now a museum and memorial for the Jews of Essen, to find out if the real estate records of 1938-1939 were still available. If these records showed that, for some reason, the house was not transferred until 1939, my problem would be solved. They referred me to the Main Public Record Office of the Provincial Archives of Nordrhein-Westfalen.



The Archive replied promptly. Their records, a copy of which they enclosed, showed that the house was transferred on December 22, 1938 and completely destroyed in the war during the many bombardments of Essen. The site itself, and the ruins of the house, were sold again July 1, 1946 and completely rebuilt by the new owners. This took three years. Instead of being a German version of the now popular "McMansions," it is now a two story apartment house with eight apartments. As an afterthought, the Archive also mentioned that the

Gestapo, the Secret Police, had compiled a file on my father, Joseph Heiman, which was in another branch of the Provincial Archives, in case I was interested.

Getting the real estate records had been no problem, but the Archive that had the *Gestapo* records wanted to be paid in advance in a specific manner. I was not able to find any bank, telegraph office or post office that would transfer funds their way. After much correspondence back and forth, they agreed to accept my check. Because they billed me in Euros, I sent them a little more money than they asked for just in case the US Dollar dropped in value before they received my check.

As to my father's Personal *Gestapo* File, while it sometimes reads like a comedy of errors, it also shows the very real danger my father was in. Starting in 1936, the *Gestapo* and the German police tried very hard to find something incriminating about my father so that they could arrest him and also deprive him and his family of their German citizenship. They looked into his taxes, but they were always paid on time. They searched for any unreported assets or hidden wealth, but there were none. They investigated his political outlook and activities, but again found nothing incriminating. Finally, they accused him of "*Rassen Schande*" [Defiling the German Race] which was a capital crime. This was based on an anonymous letter stating that my father had sexual relations with his German Aryan secretary. The records contain the Depositions and the Defense of my father and the secretary, as well as a statement from a co-worker. The charges were dropped because there was no evidence at all to support this accusation.

But all was not lost. The *Gestapo* discovered a crime my father could not deny: he belonged to the *B'nai Brith*. They decided that this was reason enough to take away the family's German citizenship. Numerous letters were exchanged between various branches of the Secret Police and the Essen police about this matter, sometimes with five copies. They all basically said the same thing. This went on until May 1940, years after we immigrated to the United States. At least that is where the copies they sent me stopped. It is amazing that they had time for this in the middle of fighting World War II. It is also surprising that the Secret Police went by the book. You would expect them to arrest any Jew they wanted to without any real proof. Thank G-d my father was lucky. While he was detained for interrogation several times, he was never taken into custody. ✨

Polish Declarations of Admiration and Friendship for the United States
by Susana Leistner Bloch

*Editors Note: I received the following email message from JGSGP member Florence Klevit and, at her suggestion, decided to publish this article, which was first published in **The Galitzianer**, Volume 13, Number 1, November 2005.*

Mark –

I recently received from Susana Leistner Bloch, our Special Interest Coordinator, the names of the students in our home shtetl (Janow/Yanov) who had signed the “Polish Declarations of Friendship.” It took several years to receive these, but so well worth waiting for. I found among the names a cousin who survived the Holocaust and two of his very dear friends, but I was disappointed not to find others. In response to my request of Susana for more information about the “Polish Declarations” she sent me the below very helpful and enlightening explanatory comments about the history of the project. I was especially moved as she described her feelings when she witnessed these signatures for the first time in the Library of Congress. I thought you might want to share the below article with our members.

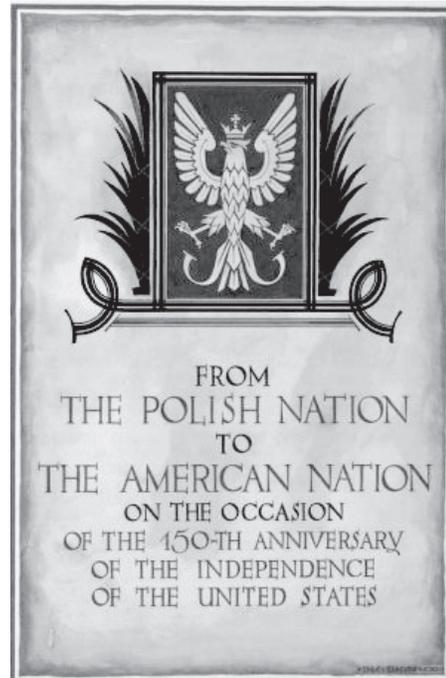
Florence Klevit

This article is re-published here with permission of the author, Susana Leistner Bloch, coordinator of the Kolbuszowa Region Research Group [<http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Kolbuszowa/>] and the Suchostaw Region Research Group [<http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Suchostaw/>].

In November 2004, I visited the Library of Congress (LOC) in Washington DC. I was looking for some specific material that I thought was to be found there. After searching the catalogues, the librarian on duty suggested that I speak with Ron Bachman, Area Specialist for Poland - European Division. She placed a phone call and Ron came up to meet me. The material I was looking for was not to be found at the LOC, but, if I were interested, he would tell me about something new he was working on. Ron then showed me samples of the material that would soon be available to the public. I can't begin to describe the emotions that ran through me when I saw the material. I wanted to run out and tell everyone about it. But ... since the material was still being catalogued and prepared, he asked me to "keep it under my hat."

I received an e-mail from Ron Bachman just before *Pesach* telling me the project was finished and giving me permission to "spread the word." This I am doing with great pleasure!

The *Polish Declarations of Admiration and Friendship for the United States* consist of a collection of 111 manuscript volumes compiled in Poland in 1926 and delivered to President Calvin Coolidge to honor the 150th anniversary of the US Declaration of Independence. Richly illustrated with original works by prominent Polish graphic artists, the collection includes the greetings and signatures of national, provincial and local government officials, representatives of religious, social, business, academic, and military institutions, and school children.



President Coolidge asked that this collection be transferred to the Library of Congress where it remained “forgotten” for some 70 years. In 1996, during the visit of Polish First Lady Jolanta Kwasniewska and other Polish dignitaries, the collection was serendipitously “rediscovered.” It generated such great interest that the Library, in collaboration with the Polish Embassy, organized a special event on May 2, 1997 to showcase it.

What exactly are these books? They represent entries from hundreds of elementary and secondary schools

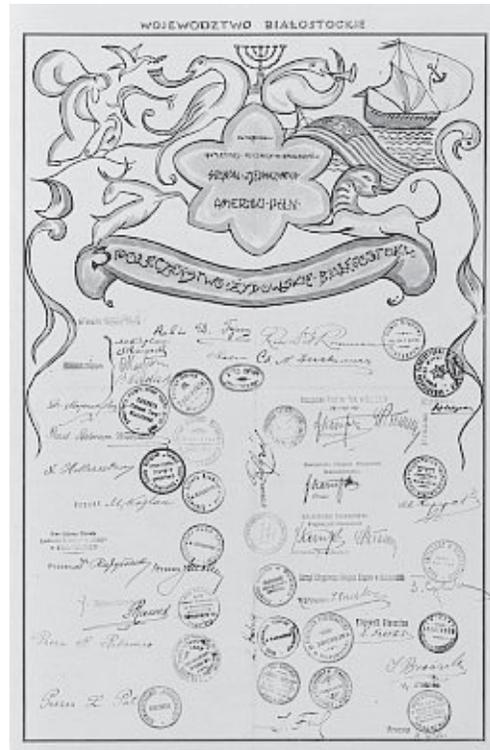
throughout Poland, including *shtetlach* in former Galicia that were part of Poland in the inter-war years. Almost every town, village and *shtetl* that had a school are represented. Almost every pupil in every class signed his/her name. I looked, of course, at the pages for the schools in the *shtetlach* from where my family came and recognized surnames, saw their handwriting and, with tears in my eyes, turned the pages to see more.



As I viewed the volumes and the list of towns, my excitement grew as I came to realize the importance of what I was seeing. The Manuscript Volumes include signatures of nearly one-sixth of the population of Poland as it existed in 1926. More than 5.5 million signatures were collected, many from villages so small that they are not even listed in most Gazetteers and Geographic Dictionaries.

The collection is an important source for genealogical, historical, and sociological research. Renee S. Steinig described it best when I shared this wonderful resource with her: “Now that I have viewed the town list, I better understand your excitement about this source. If it includes two pages from my mother's little village (population ca. 600), the coverage must be sweeping. This is a very important Holocaust resource, in which we may be able to retrieve the names of our cousins who were 20-35 when they perished. Many of us know we have unnamed cousins on our lists of victims (e.g.

Uncle Yankel's six children). This source presents an opportunity to rescue them from anonymity. In the words of Isaiah, quoted on Yad Vashem's Pages of Testimony: ‘And I shall give them in My house and within My walls a memorial and a name that they shall not be cut off.’ The town list is also a good informal gazetteer of interwar Poland.”



The collection consists of 111 manuscript volumes:

Volume 1, the most impressive of all the volumes in the collection, is bound in red leather and contains 135 pages of signatures. The cover is gilded and blind stamped with an eagle. It is richly illustrated and consists of signatures of central government officials including President Ignacy Moscicki, members of the Senate and Sejm, the Council of Ministers, the General Staff and the Supreme Court; religious dignitaries and officers and rank-and-file members of a wide range of national professional associations, institutes, and social organizations based in the capital city, Warsaw. Many of the signed sheets have finely drawn illustrations of buildings, coats of arms, historical monuments, rural and city scenes, and portraits of famous historical figures. Signatures are often accompanied by official seals.

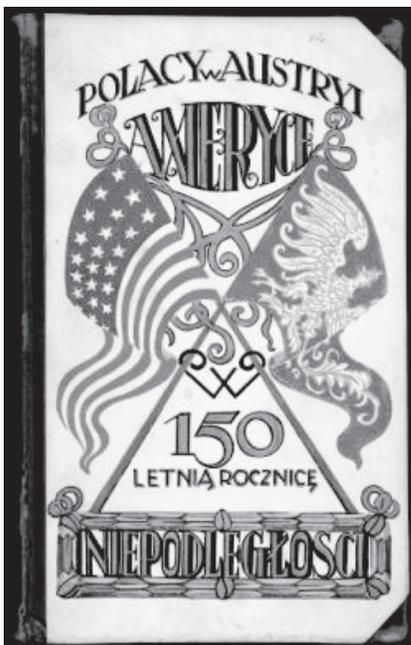
Volume 2 is bound in white leather and contains 281 pages of signatures in addition to separate sheets devoted to art. The front and back covers are gilded and blind stamped with emblems of Polish provinces

(województwo). It presents the signatures of dignitaries on the provincial, district, and local levels. Preceding each provincial section are poster-size original works by prominent artists. The final quarter of this volume is devoted to institutions of higher learning and includes signatures of administrators, faculty, and students.



Volumes 3 through 5 have signatures from three separate institutions of higher learning: Jagiellonian University in Craców, the Mining Academy of Craców and the State Dental Institute in Warsaw.

Volume 6 represents the Polish émigré community mainly a cross-section of the Polish population of Austria.



Volumes 7 through 13 are bound in linen and adorned with Polish and American emblems. Many of the sheets are adorned with drawings and photographs of schools, students, and teachers and contain the signatures of the students and faculty of 1,170 mostly secondary schools, although some primary schools are included.

These volumes have been digitized. This searchable presentation is a complete facsimile of the six oversized presentation volumes and the seven volumes of secondary school signatures. Researchers are now able to search by keyword (English or Polish without diacritics) and locate information about particular villages, cities, districts, provinces, institutions, or organizations.

An overview of the collection can be seen at: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/european/egw/polishex.html>

The digitalized secondary school volumes are at: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/european/egwinv/egwdir.html>

Ron Bachman did a heroic amount of work to create the page-level indexing that is crucial for making these materials work on the Internet.

The best way to enlarge the pages to view them (especially the individual signatures):

1. Click on the thumbnail
2. When the larger image appears, do not choose "Higher quality image (JPEG - xxx K), but look to the top right or bottom right of the image, and you will see "Zoom View." Click on "Zoom View."
3. Two images will appear. A larger and a smaller one. Scroll down to the bottom and you will see five Zoom buttons. The most useful, in my opinion, is the second from the left. Click on that.
4. Now move the cursor onto the larger image to the spot you want to enlarge and click.
5. *Voila!* You can then choose where to zoom by clicking on the appropriate spot on the smaller image.

The image is more legible than the original. And you can print whatever you have zoomed in on - an individual name, a group of names, a photo of one person, etc.

Volumes 14-109 contain sheets bearing the names or signatures of teachers and pupils of some 20,000 elementary schools. Each sheet is decorated with a letterhead that reads "Szkolnictwo polskie w holdzie narodowi amerykanskiemu na pamiatke 150-lecia niepodleglosci Stanow Zjednoczonych" [The Polish Educational System in Tribute to the American Nation on the Occasion of the 150th Year of American Independence]. Below this are boxes for the name of the school, location, administrative district, school trustee, school

principal and school inspector. The total number of names or signatures contained in these volumes is estimated at about five million. These volumes also include photographs of schools, teachers, and pupils. Some 235 school districts are represented including the Galician School Districts

It appears that the "*szkola powszechna*" entries in volumes 7-13 are primary schools, as opposed to the "*gimnazjum*," "*seminarium*," "*szkola wyzsza*," "*szkola handlowa*," "*szkola przemysłowa*," "*szkola zawodowa*," etc. entries, which clearly are secondary schools. What is interesting is that in the digitized school volumes (7-13), the penmanship is so uniform and mature-looking, and there was such an effort to arrange the signatures in an eye-appealing way. Perhaps the faculty signed the pupils' names. The "*szkola powszechna*" entries in volumes 14-110, on the other hand, usually appear to have been signed by the children themselves.

Only the secondary school volumes are available online. There are no plans to digitize the primary school volumes but they have been catalogued and indexed by Ron Bachman:

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/european/egwinv/index.html>

There are reasons why you might not find the page for a town or *shtetl* - maybe they failed to get the forms completed and returned by the deadline. Volume 110 is a portfolio of loose sheets, which apparently arrived too late to be bound. In fact, the towns in volumes 94-110 are in random order, probably because the sheets arrived too late to be bound with their respective *powiats*. The two volumes that were not included because they could not be located for scanning (we hope they will show up eventually) are Volume 45 (Krotoszyn through Lipno powiats) and Volume 73 (Sanok through Siedlce powiats). ☆

GENEALOGY NEWS

U.S. News

Americans Lack Family History Knowledge

From Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter, March 31, 2008. Information about the newsletter is available at <http://www.eogn.com>.

A survey conducted a few months ago by The Generations Network reports that few Americans know very much about their family trees. Among other facts, the survey discovered that:

- One-third of Americans cannot name any of their great-grandparents
- Half of Americans know the name of only one or none of their great-grandparents.
- Six out of ten Americans do not know both of their grandmothers' maiden names
- Twenty-two percent of Americans don't know what either of their grandfathers do or did for a living.
- Although America is known as a nation of immigrants, 27 percent don't know where their family lived before they came to America.

Is this a problem or an opportunity?

Commissioned by Ancestry.com and conducted by zOmnibus Survey, the survey does make some positive statements. For one, the survey reports that 83 percent of 18- to 34-year-olds are interested in learning their

family history. Following closely are the 35- to 54-year-olds at 77 percent and Americans aged 55+ at 73 percent. It strikes me that there are millions of Americans who have at least a casual interest in their family trees but have no idea how to get started. I am particularly impressed that younger Americans reportedly are more likely to be interested in their ancestry than are senior citizens. That is the reverse of what I would have expected.

USCIS Publishes Final Rule on Charging for Records

IAJGS Leadership Forum posting by Jan Meisels Allen on May 17, 2008

Two years ago the US Citizenship and Immigration Service (CIS), formerly called the INS, proposed rules to establish a fee-for-service genealogy program. The final rule was published in the Federal Register on May 15, 2008. You may view/download the final rule at:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-10651.pdf>. The final rule goes into effect on August 13, 2008.

The reason for the rule was to streamline and improve the process for acquiring genealogically relevant historical records of deceased individuals. Due to the demand for documents which created a backlog, requests under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) took months if

not years to complete.

As a result of the comments made to the proposed rule, the amount per index or record/file request (from a microfilm) will be \$20 and \$35 for a textual record. The original proposal was a range of \$16-\$45 for an index search and \$16 to \$45 for a record/file microfilm request and \$26 to \$55 for a copy of a textual document. The reason the USCIS must charge for the documents and any search for the records is due to other regulations by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB rule from 1993). All government offices are required that user fees recover the full cost of services provided. USCIS is also mandated to charge a fee to recover the full costs of providing research and information due to the Immigration and Nationality Act.

The types of historical records available under the new program are:

Naturalization certificate files (C-files) from September 27, 1906-April 1, 1956 (from all federal, state, municipal courts and more);

Microfilmed alien registration forms from August 1, 1940 to March 31, 1944;

Visa files from July 1, 1924 to March 31, 1944;

Registry files from March 2, 1929 to March 31, 1944;

Alien files numbered below 8 million and dated prior to May 1, 1951;

More information on each of these is contained in the final rule.

To request records under this new program, a special form must be used: Form G-1041 for index or Form G 1041A for records request. I did not find the new forms posted as yet to the USCIS website. Once the program begins, requests may be submitted electronically on the electronic forms through its site <http://www.USCIS.gov>. When requests are made online, the payment form used must be a credit card. Information that must be contained on the form is included in the new rule. When submitting a written request, the only forms of payment accepted are a cashier's check or money order in the exact amount. As genealogical request information may only be obtained on deceased individuals, the subject is presumed dead if their birth date is over 100 years old. For those less than 100, information (primary or secondary document - such as death record, published obituary, etc.) must be provided to the satisfaction of the USCIS that the individual is indeed deceased.

Index to Russians/German/Italians to America Now Online

From Nu? What's Nu?, Volume 9, Number 6, March 16, 2008

The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration has placed on the Internet three important immigration indexes previously available only in book and CD form. They are "Germans to America (1850-1897)," "Italians to America (1855-1900)" and "Russians to America (1834-1897)." These lists are also more comprehensive.

For "Russians to America," the database consists of records of 527,394 passengers who arrived in the United States between 1834 through 1897 and identified their country of origin or nationality as Armenia, Finland, Galicia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Russian Poland or Ukraine. There are records of passengers who were U.S. citizens or non-U.S. citizens planning to continue their travels, returning to the U.S., or staying in the U.S. There are records of passengers arriving at the following ports: Baltimore, Boston, New Orleans, New York, and Philadelphia; the bulk of the records are for passengers arriving at the Port of New York. Each of the passenger records may include name, age, town of last residence, destination, and codes for passenger's sex, occupation, literacy, country of origin, transit and/or travel compartment, and the identification number for the ship manifest.

For "Germans to America," the series consists of records of 4,048,907 passengers who arrived at the United States between 1850 through 1897; about 90 percent identified their country of origin or nationality as Germany or a "German" state, city, or region. In about 10 percent of the records, passengers identified their country of origin or nationality as France, Luxemburg, Switzerland, United States, and other places.

The database should be accessed through the Stephen P. Morse One-Step site at <http://stevemorse.org>. It is a superior portal to the NARA site.

HIAS Cards Available

JewishGen posting by Steve Lasky on April 28, 2008.

You can obtain the Arrival Card for one of your ancestors from HIAS. You can find more about this, as well as find a Record Request form at <http://hias.org:80/programs/find-family/arrival-cards>. It should be noted that each request cost \$30. I know nothing more about this, but you can visit the webpage in order to learn more.

These cards list the immigrant's name, sex, age, town of previous residence, as well as the name of their contact in the US, relationship of that person, and their address in the US, i.e. their destination. ☆

Jewish Genealogical Research Trip to Salt Lake City Planned

Press Release from Gary Mokotoff - March 24, 2008

For the sixteenth consecutive year, veteran Jewish genealogists Gary Mokotoff and Eileen Polakoff will be offering a research trip to the LDS (Mormon) Family History Library in Salt Lake City from October 23-October 30, 2008. To date, more than 350 Jewish genealogists from the U.S., Canada, South America, Australia, Israel and Europe have taken advantage of this program.



The program offers genealogists the opportunity to spend an entire week of research at the Library under the guidance and assistance of professional genealogists who have made more than a three dozen trips to Salt Lake City. Each person has access to trip leaders each day except Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Library for on-site assistance and personal consultations. There is also a planned program that includes a three-hour class on day of arrival introducing the participants to the facilities and resources of the Family History Library; a mid-week informal group discussion of progress and problem-solving. For those new to genealogy, a beginners workshop on the first morning of the trip introduces them to the wonderful world of Hamburg immigration lists, U.S. passenger arrival lists, naturalization records and census records and other record groups important to Jewish genealogy. In addition to the beginners workshop, classes are given on other contemporary topics such as Holocaust research.

Social events include a mid-week Sunday brunch for camaraderie and discussion of successes (and failures); attendance at the Sunday morning broadcast of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir; informal group dinners; and group planning parties.

Additional information can be found at <http://www.avotaynu.com/slctrip.htm>; by email at mokotoff@earthlink.net or call 201-387-7200.

Vatican Orders Records Withheld from Mormons

From *Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter*, May 12, 2008. Information about the newsletter is available at <http://www.eogn.com>.

The Catholic News Service has published an article about new Vatican orders to not cooperate with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the microfilming of records. The Vatican wishes to block posthumous rebaptisms by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, a practice that Catholics, Jews, and some others find objectionable.

Catholic dioceses throughout the world have been directed by the Vatican not to give information in parish registers to the Mormons' Genealogical Society of Utah.

An April 5 letter from the Vatican Congregation for Clergy, obtained by Catholic News Service in late April, asks episcopal conferences to direct all bishops to keep the Latter-day Saints from microfilming and digitizing information contained in those registers.

The order came in light of "grave reservations" expressed in a January 29 letter from the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the clergy congregation's letter said.

You can read more at:

<http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0802443.htm>.

FamilySearch.org Will Have a New Look

From *Nu? What's Nu?*, Volume 9, Number 14, June 1, 2008

FamilySearch.org, the online genealogy site of the Mormon Church, is developing a new search engine site at <http://pilot.familysearch.org>.

Some of the databases are of value in Jewish genealogical research. Examples are the 1880 and 1900 census and death certificates from Georgia, Ohio, Ontario, Philadelphia, Texas, Utah and Washington State. Also included is the Ellis Island Database, but since the Church was the original source of the database used by JewishGen and the Statue of Liberty - Ellis Island Organization, FamilySearch will produce the same results as the other two sites. There is also the Social Security Death Index which is available at a number of locations on the Internet. ✨

European and Middle Eastern News

British Jewish Marriage Authorisation Certificates Available

From Nu? What's Nu?, Volume 9, Number 12, May 18, 2008

It is now possible to order online copies of Marriage Authorisation Certificates for marriages that took place under the auspices of the Office of the Chief Rabbi of England from 1880–1886. Plans call for including the years 1845–1907. The project is a collaborative effort between the United Synagogue and the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain.

Marriage Authorisations granted by The United Synagogue (from c.1845) give permission to a local rabbi to conduct a marriage ceremony. The Authorisation is granted after the authorities are satisfied that both parties are halachically Jewish or that they have an acceptable Certificate of Conversion. Information of the Marriage Authorisation gives among other information:

- The proposed place and date of marriage
- The Hebrew and English names of the bride and groom
- Their addresses
- Their country of origin
- The Hebrew names of the bride's father and groom's father
- The Hebrew names of the groom's unmarried brothers and which ones intend to attend the marriage ceremony

The first batch of records (3,900) within this database are those from 17th February 1880 - 30th December 1886. Records cost £15 for United Synagogue and JGSGB members and £20 for non-members. The site is located at:

http://www.theus.org.uk/support_services/find_your_family/marriage_records

Old Bailey Online

JewishGen posting by Ben Forman on April 29, 2008.

The records of the English Old Bailey have now gone online at <http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/>. The records span 1674-1913 and deal with the criminal trials held at London's central criminal court. The records are fully searchable. Searching for the word "Jew" for instance returns 1,508 results, the first referring to a theft of a ring in December 1679 which relates that:

"A Young woman was prosecuted by, one she had formerly lived with, for stealing a Gold-Ring set with a Ruby, value 14 l. a Silver Plate, and some other things. The Prosecutor and his Witnesses were Jews, and so

were sworn on the Pentateuch; the things were taken on the Prisoner, who to excuse her self from being a Thief, acknowledged her self to be a Whore, and told a scandalous story, that the things were privately given her upon a Debauch, &c. Which not being regardable, she was found Guilty."

the final result being from September 1908

"Thomas William HAWKINS, Frederick RAYNER, (20, labourer), and Elias WOOLF, (24, porter); all feloniously robbing James Halliday and stealing from his person the sum of 4s. 6d., his moneys, and at the time of such robbery did use personal violence to the said James Halliday."

If your ancestor was a victim, witness or, dare I say it, perpetrator of crime in London serious enough to go to the Old Bailey, then they will appear in these records.

Findmypast.com Passenger Lists Now Complete

Leading UK family history website *findmypast.com* has completed its project to scan and index the complete set of outbound passenger lists for long-distance voyages from all British ports between 1890 and 1960.

Working in association with The National Archives of the United Kingdom, the project took a team of 125 people over a year to scan in the 1.1 million full colour individual pages - some handwritten, some typed. In total, 24 million passengers are recorded traveling between these dates. Their reasons for traveling varied from emigration to diplomatic missions, to business trips or purely for pleasure.

All seven decades of the passenger lists are free to search at *findmypast.com*. The images and transcripts can be viewed with either a 12 month Explorer or a 1 month Voyager subscription to *findmypast.com*, or alternatively with pay-per-view units or vouchers.

Online Directories in Berlin

JewishGen Galicia SIG posting by Renee Steinig on May 6, 2008

Those whose Galitzianer relatives moved to Berlin will want to explore the digitized copies of the *Berlin Adressbuecher*, 1799 to 1943, at <http://adressbuch.zlb.de/> To find an individual listing click on "*Suche in den Berliner Adressbuchern*," then a year range, then on the folder icon for a specific year (not on the notepad icon below it), then on "*Einwohnerverzeichnis*" (English:

listing of inhabitants), then on a letter of the alphabet and finally, on the appropriate page

Other sections contain business and government listings, street listings, and more.

The text is in Gothic characters, which take some getting used to.

The site was described in fall 2004 on the JewishGen Discussion Group and the GerSIG list and there's been discussion about it on GerSIG since. According to a message from Roger Lustig in Jan. 2007, the site had recently been revamped, so some of the earlier advice about navigating the site is no longer relevant.

I will soon travel to Berlin, and thanks to these directories, I will be able to visit the streets there where some of my Galitzianer cousins lived and worked before they perished.

Egypt: Jews appeal for records access

From Tracing the Tribe by Schelly Dardashti, June 8, 2008

What would you do if all the records of your family, your synagogue, and your community were to suddenly disappear? What if those records were hundreds, even thousands of years old?

Births, deaths, weddings, divorces - the history of an entire community, gone.

According to an appeal from a New York-based non-profit group - *The Historical Society of Jews from Egypt* - whose members are from the diaspora of Jews exiled from Egypt since the 1950s, this is what might happen if the new minister of culture has his way. He has offered to personally burn any Jewish books he finds in Egypt.

Descendants of this community number about a half-million. According to the Egyptian Jewish group:

Years of requests to the Egyptian authorities for access and the right to photocopy the documents of the Jewish patrimony were met with obfuscation and silence. In view of the candidacy of Egypt's Minister of Culture to head the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Historical Society of Jews from Egypt (HSJE) has asked UNESCO to convince Egypt on its behalf and take custody of a copy of these archives under the Organization's World Heritage protection.

In response to its members' expressions of concern at the controversy surrounding press reports of Minister Farouk Hosni's 10th of May statement that he "would himself, burn any Israeli book found in Egypt", HSJE has appealed directly to UNESCO.

The group states that registries and archives in Cairo and Alexandria represent the history and identity of Egyptian Jews. All attempts over the past decade to get access from the Egyptian authorities to photocopy these documents have failed.

UNESCO was urged to take custody of this "intangible heritage" of the Jews from Egypt, by negotiating with Mr. Hosni to photocopy the registers and archives in Egypt and to hold these copies under UNESCO World Heritage protection.

Poland Investigates Communist Era Anti-Semitism

From Reuters, July 26, 2007

Polish prosecutors have begun investigating former communist officials for promoting anti-Semitism in the 1960s when thousands of Jews who survived the Nazi Holocaust were driven from Poland, investigators said.

The Institute of National Remembrance said on Thursday it had found evidence of propaganda in the archives as well as copies of speeches and press articles that made clear the anti-Semitic agenda of the Government of the time.

Arkadiusz Galaj told Reuters his unit would try to find some of the Jews who left Poland around 1968-1969 to identify potential witnesses. Thousands of survivors emigrated after the anti-Semitic campaign in the late 1960s.

Poland, like many other Communist states, broke off relations with Israel after it defeated Soviet aligned Arab states in the 1967 Middle East war and occupied swathes of land.

The institute said former communist party general secretary Wladyslaw Gomulka had called Jews an "imperialistically Zionist fifth column" -- a statement later repeated and developed by Gomulka and other members of his party. Gomulka died in 1982.

Galaj said some 3,900 Jews applied to emigrate from Poland in 1968 and almost 7,300 in the first eight months of 1969. That compared to an estimate of between 500 and 900 Jews leaving Poland between 1961 and 1967. ✨

Polish Holocaust Hero, Irena Sendler, Dies at 98



Irena Sendler, a Polish social worker who organized the rescue of some 2,500 Jewish children from the Nazis and was later honored by Israel's Yad Vashem memorial, died in Warsaw on May 12, 2008.

Sendler was born Irena Krzyzanowska in Otwock, some 15 miles southeast of Warsaw on Feb. 15, 1910. As a social worker with Warsaw's welfare department, Sendler masterminded risky rescue operations of Jewish children from the Warsaw Ghetto during Nazi Germany's brutal World War II occupation.

Records show Sendler's team of some 20 people saved almost 2,500 children from the Warsaw Ghetto between October 1940 and April 1943, when the Nazis burned the ghetto, shooting the residents or sending them to death camps.

She found a home for each child. Each was given a new name and a new identity as a Christian. Others were saving Jewish children, but many of those children were saved only in body; tragically, they disappeared from the Jewish people. Irena did all she could to ensure that "her children" would have a future as part of their own people.

Mrs. Sendler listed the name and new identity of every rescued child on thin cigarette papers or tissue paper. She hid the list in glass jars and buried them under an apple tree in her friend's backyard. Her hope was to reunite the children with their families after the war.

Indeed, though most of their parents perished in the Warsaw Ghetto or in Treblinka, those children who had surviving relatives were returned to them after the war.

Though she received the Yad Vashem medal for the *Righteous Among the Nations* in 1965, Irena Sendler's story was virtually unknown. But in 1999 the silence was broken by some unlikely candidates: four Protestant high-school girls in rural Kansas. The girls were looking for a subject for the Kansas State National History Day competition. Their teacher, Norm Conard, gave them a short paragraph about Mrs. Sendler, from a 1994 *U.S. News & World Report* story, "The Other Schindlers."

Conard encouraged the girls to investigate and unearth the true story. With his help, the girls began to reconstruct the life of this courageous woman. Searching for her burial records, they discovered, to their surprise, that she was still alive, ninety years old and living in Warsaw. The girls compiled many details of Mrs. Sendler's life, which they eventually made into a short play, "Life in a Jar." The play has since been performed hundreds of times in the United States, Canada, and Poland, and has been broadcast over radio and television, publicizing the silent heroine to the world.

The above was taken from some of the following websites, which describe the life-saving deeds of Irena Sendler and the discovery of Irena's courage.

Irena's Children by Gavriel Horan
http://richards-creations.net/Pages/8/_Irena-s_Children.html

Life in a Jar: The Irena Sendler Project
<http://www.irenasendler.org/>

Irena Sendler -- Wikipedia entry
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irena_Sendler

Hiding in History's Shadows
Today Show Segment Video
<http://video.msn.com/?mkt=en-us&brand=msnbc&vid=0dc6de0b-b148-442a-ae33-3708dc48809d>

Yad Vashem
The Righteous Among the Nations
Tribute to Irena Sendler
http://www1.yadvashem.org/righteous_new/sendlerova.html

Update on International Tracing Service Records and Availability

Editors Note: The following articles and extracts are provided to help members understand the contents of the ITS records (so-called Hitler's Secret Archive) and how to gain access.

Handover of Data on Displaced Persons

Extracts from ITS Press Release of March 20, 2008

Yesterday the International Tracing Service (ITS) based at Bad Arolsen handed over further documents to the Yad Vashem Memorial in Jerusalem, the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington and the National Institute of Remembrance in Warsaw. The material encloses digital copies of index cards relating to Displaced Persons compiled after the end of the Second World War.

The index, which the International Tracing Service transferred yesterday, bears witness to the fate of approximately 3.5 million people, the so-called Displaced Persons, who were freed from concentration camps, forced labour or partly also from captivity as prisoners of war at the end of the Second World War.

Until now, around 67 million images of documents have been transferred to the organizations of three of the Member States of the International Commission, among them incarceration documents (approximately 18 million images), the ITS's Central Name Index (approximately 42 million images), and now the Index on Displaced Persons (approximately 7 million images). The complete documentary unit relating to forced labour will follow in the summer of this year. Around 70 percent of the documents at ITS have, in the meantime, been scanned. The entire archival holdings are expected to be digitalized by 2011.

Beginning of Family Research at ITS

Extracts from ITS Press release

This week [May 4-9, 2008], 42 genealogists are carrying out research at the International Tracing Service (ITS) in Arolsen. They are, in the main, Jewish name researchers from the USA, Australia, Israel and Great Britain, who are compiling data on Holocaust victims and survivors.

As Gary Mokotoff explains, the ITS documents are a particularly rich treasure trove for family historians. "The Nazis took away the names of six million Holocaust victims and replaced them with numbers. It is our

task to put faces to the names and give them back their family tree. Here at the ITS, we can find valuable clues and information to fill in the gaps". The US-citizen, a leading Jewish genealogist, organised his colleagues' visit to Arolsen.

Even though some of the ITS documents can be viewed in the USA or Israel, says Mokotoff, the correspondence files between inquirers and ITS have so far not been scanned and handed over.

A Genealogical Research Trip to Bad Arolsen, Germany

Extracts from Nu? What's New? From Avotaynu, Volume 9, Number 11, May 12, 2008

Have you ever wished you could go on the perfect genealogical research trip? One on which:

- * you had ready access to the records of the archives
- * there was a friendly staff at the archives that was anxious to please
- * the staff used their skills to personally assist you in searching the record collection of the facility
- * there was an excellent hotel within walking distance and good restaurants in the area
- * the camaraderie of being part of a group meant evenings sitting at an outside café, a restaurant, or in the lobby of the hotel discussing successes and failures
- * there were trips to local sites of interest
- * the weather was perfect; temperature in the 70s (25C) and not a cloud in the sky

That was the experience of 42 genealogists who made a trip to Bad Arolsen, Germany last week to do five days of research at the International Tracing Service—the first group of any type to be welcomed by ITS.

Every comment made to me by those who attended was that it was a positive experience. Valery Bazarov, Director of the Location and Family History Service of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) in New York, stated it was the most fantastic research trip he has ever made.

The International Tracing Service (ITS) was dubbed "Hitler's Secret Archives" by the popular American news documentary show *60 Minutes*. ITS contains information about more than 17 million people persecuted by the Nazis before and during World War II. More than 50 million index cards place an individual in a certain place at a certain time. For more than 60 years, the ITS was off limits to the public. Inquiries took as long as three years to process. In 2006, ITS had a

backlog of 140,000 inquiries; today the number is less than 13,000 and people can expect turnaround time in about 8 weeks...and the turnaround is still improving.

For the trip, ITS officials installed 20 terminals in a number of rooms of their facility. Twenty of their English-speaking staff members were assigned to the terminals to teach researchers how to use the Central Names Index and to aid in accessing the records that were the basis for the index. Additional staff members were used as translators and to pull files from their record collection.

The process was to work with an ITS staff member at a terminal using the Central Names Index (CNI) to locate information about family members. Copies of the actual documents could then be requested. Many of the CNI cards led to one of the 2.8 million T/D files that provided greater information about the individual. T/D (Trace Documentation) files are case files. When an inquiry was made in the past 60 years about a person, all material about the individual was placed in a T/D folder. These files were located about 5 km (3 miles) from the main ITS facilities and were retrieved in a half day or less. Results of research were made available in paper form when requested. Researchers could also save images in a file that was transferred onto a CD and given to the researcher on the last day.

If you want to make a personal trip to ITS, they recommend that you contact them at least one month in advance. It will also speed up the research process if you give them the information you are researching. A number of attendees indicated they were planning to go back to their societies and recommend group trips to Bad Arolsen.

Editors Note: The following is extracted from a story written by a non-Jew who was part of the trip to Arolsen explained above. Written by Tom Sadauskas and previously published by Gen Dobry! Vol. IX, No. 5, 31 May 2008, PolishRoots(R): <http://www.PolishRoots.org/>.

My Trip to ITS by Tom Sadauskas

One surprise was that I found out what happened to my grandfather's nephew, Kazys Baltramonaitis, who was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1913 after his parents and infant sister emigrated to the U.S. in 1912.

Kazys' father took the family back to Lithuania after World War I ended because Kazys' mother died circa 1916 in the Chicago area. I still have to find where his mother, Agota, is buried. Kazys lived in Virbalis, Lith-

uania until fleeing the advancing Russian army in summer 1944. By a fluke, I found Kazys' refugee card, filled out in Lithuanian and completed on 2 July 1945 while he was in an American DP camp in Wiesbaden, Germany.

He indicated he was born in "Cikaga JAV" (Chicago, United States of America) and that he did not want to return to Lietuva since it was controlled by the Bolsheviks. He only listed "Lithuanian" under "language spoken"; he would have been about 7 years old when his father took the family back to Lithuania from the U.S., and likely he had forgotten most of the English that he had known at one time. The card indicates that he was returned by the American authorities to the SSSR (i.e., Soviet Union) on 17 August 1945 and spent the rest of his life behind the Iron Curtain in Lithuania, despite being a U.S. born citizen. This is a family story that no one had ever spoken about.

Accessing the ITS Information

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

<http://www.ushmm.org/remembrance/registry/services/>

The Museum is committed to making the information in these records accessible to Holocaust survivors as rapidly as possible.

Using these records plus other relevant archival documents in its already extensive collection, Museum staff will search for documentation about the fates of individuals during the Holocaust.

Survivors and their families may submit requests for information to the Museum as follows:

- Use the online form available at: http://itsrequest.ushmm.org/its/getting_started.php
- Submit your request on paper using the Paper Request Form, that can be printed and submitted by postal mail or fax.
- Survivors and their families are welcome to visit the Museum to directly access the archive, but this is not required to request a search of the ITS records.

Requestors will receive a response within 8 - 10 weeks.

All others interested in accessing the ITS records--scholars, authors, genealogists and other researchers--must visit the Museum in person to examine the records. Access to the ITS records, like all of the Museum's archival material, will be free and open to the public.

Yad Vashem

<http://www1.yadvashem.org/Arolsen/tofes/engarolsen.asp>

The public is welcome to come to Yad Vashem to search all of our archival material, including information we have from the ITS. Our reading room is open 08:30-17:00 Sunday-Thursday.

Starting in February 2008, our Reference and Information unit will respond to queries sent by mail, e-mail, or fax (+972 2 644 3669). Requests can be submitted via a downloadable form or an online form.

Yad Vashem will answer a reasonable amount of queries per person free of charge. If you have a request that entails extensive research it may entail a fee to cover expenses.

International Tracing Service in Arolsen

http://www.its-arolsen.org/en/key_activities/tracing_service/index.html

The general public has been granted access for research purposes as of 28th November 2007. Anyone wishing to gain access should fill out a research request.

Effective immediately, you can submit a tracing request or an inquiry for information on imprisonment/ labour/ whereabouts by completing our online inquiry form.

You will receive an answer to your inquiry either by post or, if requested, by email.

We will continue to accept informal inquiries by post. Alternatively, you can download and print out an inquiry form.

Catholic Priest from France Uncovers Holocaust Mass Graves

Ukrainian men and women in their 70s and 80s across Ukraine are, for the first time, recounting how their Jewish neighbors were murdered during the Holocaust.

French Catholic priest Patrik Desbois is gathering oral testimonies from these last eyewitnesses and using this information to locate every mass grave of Jews killed during the Holocaust.

So far, Father Desbois has identified 700 mass graves out of an estimated 2,000.

See *YouTube* report from NBC Nightly News at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VeMDHoTCHdA>.

Yad Vashem launches English, Arabic YouTube channels

From Tracing the Tribe by Schelly Dardashti, April 29, 2008

Yad Vashem, the Holocaust remembrance and education center in Jerusalem, has launched two *YouTube* channels in advance of Holocaust Remembrance Day on May 1. The channels, in English and Arabic, went live today.

The English channel contains testimonies from Holocaust survivors, including archival footage, historians' lectures on key issues related to the Holocaust, footage from visits to Yad Vashem, including those of President George W. Bush in January 2008, and Pope John Paul II in March 2000, as well as human interest stories, such as family reunions.

The Arabic channel has testimonies and archival footage about the Holocaust, with Arabic subtitles.

The channels are dynamic, and new videos will be added frequently. Channels in additional languages will be added soon. The English channel is <http://www.youtube.com/user/YadVashem>.

Yad Vashem: Online Photo Archive opens May 1

From Tracing the Tribe by Schelly Dardashti, April 30, 2008

Marking Holocaust Remembrance Day tomorrow (May 1), Yad Vashem will upload its photo archives to its website. Some 130,000 images from the collection - the largest of its kind in the world - will be uploaded on Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day, May 1.

Images include photographs taken in ghettos, during deportations, slave labor, camps, liberation and others. They represent an invaluable asset to historians, educators, writers, filmmakers and the public.

Users will be able to search the database by topic, name or location. High quality scans of images may be ordered for a fee via a site link.

As an additional feature, the images are also linked to existing information about the content.

Find the Archives at:

<http://www6.yadvashem.org/wps/portal/photo?lang=en&homepage=true>

Lists of Persons Caught Up in the Holocaust

From Nu? What's New? From Avotaynu, Volume 9, Number 9, April 13, 2008

A posting to the German Special Interest Group reminded me that the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum has a "Name Lists Catalog" that can be searched at <http://resources.ushmm.org/Holocaust-Names/List-Catalog/search>. Where USHMM has digitized the list, it is available online. Many of the entries are from Yad Vashem's "Shoah-Related List" online database and the USHMM site links directly to the Yad Vashem site.

Search by town name. Be sure to check the box that states "Check here to automatically include variant place names in the search."

On-line Memorial Database of Jewish Soldiers, Partisans and Workers

JewishGen posting by Gloria Berkenstat Freund on May 12, 2008

The Jewish Genealogical Society, Inc. (JGSNY) is pleased to announce that it now making the searchable "Memorial Database of Jewish Soldiers, Partisans and Workers Killed in Action during the Nazi era" on its website available to everyone. It was previously available only to members of JGSNY.

The database was created using the memorial books published in Moscow, Kiev, Zhitomir and other cities and regions of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldavia, Khazakhstan and elsewhere, containing the names of soldiers and officers killed or missing in action. The names of partisans and workers who fell during the Nazi era are also included.

Alexander Zaslavsky, who lives in Israel, has undertaken a project to pull together the information from these sources, which are predominantly in Russian and use the Cyrillic alphabet. He has created his own Electronic Memorial Book, where he has so far collected 115,000 names from the different published sources.

He has kindly agreed to share his collection exclusively with JGSNY, helping us to create and index the names in Roman letters, so those in the West who want to learn about the military history of members of their families can now do so. The "Memorial Database of Jewish Soldiers, Partisans and Workers Killed in Action during the Nazi era" can be accessed at the JGSNY website at <http://www.jgsny.org/russianintro.htm> The answers to questions about this database can be found in FAQs at the website.

Shanghai to Preserve Holocaust Refugee Testimony

Summarized from Associated Press Story of June 6, 2008

The Shanghai Jewish community has launched a database that will document the stories of the thousands of refugees who found a safe haven in China's commercial capital during World War II.

The database currently lists the names of about 600 of the 30,000 Jews who fled to Shanghai in the 1930s and 1940s.

The database is supported by the Israeli and Chinese governments and, is housed in a museum in the city's former Ohel Moshe Synagogue.

Read the entire story at:

<http://www.ujc.org/page.html?ArticleID=177529>

Bulgaria Accepts Responsibility for Wiping Out 98% of Macedonian Jews

Summarized from Macedonian Independent News Agency <http://macedoniaonline.eu/>

Bulgaria accepts responsibility for the genocide of more than 11,000 Jews in its jurisdiction during World War II, President Georgi Parvanov said during a visit to Israel this week.

The 11,000 Jewish victims were residents of Macedonia and Thrace in Greece, areas annexed to Bulgaria in April 1941. Nazi Germany awarded these regions to Bulgaria as gratitude for joining the Axis Alliance.

Bulgarian soldiers, acting under Nazi orders, arrested around 8000 Jews from Macedonia and 3000 from Thrace and deported them to Treblinka in 1943. In parallel, Bulgarian church and political leaders saved the Bulgarian Jews living in Bulgaria proper.

After the fall of the Communist regime in the 1990s, Bulgarian leaders refused to take responsibility for the deeds. Parvanov, a member of the Socialist (formerly Communist) party, is the first to do so.

Israeli President Shimon Peres also emphasized the historical dichotomy in Bulgaria during World War II. A monument to King Boris was removed from a Jerusalem Hills forest in 2000 after protests by Macedonian Jews. Israel quickly removed the monument. Not one Macedonian Jew is known to have survived the Concentration Camps. ☆

Interesting Resources

A Yiddish Glossary

For JGSGP members challenged by lack of knowledge of our ancestors's common language, Steve Schechter recommends *The Gantseh Megillah's* [Big Deal!] Yiddish Glossary of Words and Expressions at <http://www.pass.to/glossary/Default.htm>.

Translation Tools

From Family Tree Magazine, June 2006

For old German script (Alte Deutsche Schrift) -- Scriptrans - a free transcription service - at <http://home.centurytel.net/Wright/scriptrans.htm>

Online translators:

Babel Fish at <http://babelfish.yahoo.com/>

Google Language Tools at

http://www.google.com/language_tools?hl=EN

FamilySearch (LDS Church) Letter Writing Guides: Search by country at

http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/search/RG/frameset_rhelps.asp

List of Translations Aids:

<http://www.cyndislist.com/language.htm>

The Map of History

Found in Gen Dobry! Vol. IX, No. 3, 30 March 2008, PolishRoots(R): <http://www.PolishRoots.org>

<http://www.the-map-as-history.com/>

This is a commercial website, but a few demos gives a really nice, animated history of what happened in a region during certain important historical eras that affected Jewish history.

Europe at the Time of the Congress of Vienna (1815-1848): <http://www.the-map-as-history.com/demos/tome01/>

The Middle East at Beginning of the Twentieth Century: <http://www.the-map-as-history.com/demos/tome02/>

Europe at the End of the First World War:

<http://www.the-map-as-history.com/demos/tome03/>

Europe and the Cold War

<http://www.the-map-as-history.com/demos/tome04/>

Jewish Genealogy: From A to Z

From Tracing the Tribe by Schelly Dardashti, May 20, 2008

Did you know that there are nearly 90 Jewish genealogy online discussion groups, ranging from A to Z - AustriaCzech to Zdunska Wola (Poland)?

These groups are excellent resources for people researching specific Jewish genealogy topics (such as Judeo-Alsatian) or geographical locations (JRI-Poland) as members share knowledge and network.

This list provides subscription information for each. They are variously hosted by JewishGen, Rootsweb, Yahoo, or others. Some are sponsored by Jewish genealogy societies (e.g., JGS Sacramento, JFRA Israel). Full list is at:

http://rootsweb.ancestry.com/~jfuller/gen_mail_jewish.html

New Features on Steve Morse's Website

From a JewishGen Posting by Dick Plotz on June 6, 2008

Steve Morse has announced several new features of interest to Jewish genealogists on his One-Step website, <http://www.stevemorse.org>.

1. The Vital Records section includes a One-Step search form for naturalization records for several U.S. states available on [footnote.com](http://www.footnote.com). Basic information from these records is available free; access to the full record requires a subscription.
2. The Holocaust and Eastern Europe section now includes a One-Step form for Jewish surnames found in reference books by Alexander Beider and Lars Menk. The form tells which books contain the name entered, but not the full entries.
3. The Other Ports section has added New Orleans to the ports in the One-Step form for ancestry.com passenger lists.
4. An Arabic transliterator has been added to the Foreign Language section, joining transliterators for Hebrew, Cyrillic, and Greek alphabets.
5. Finally, and most intriguing, Steve and Alexander Beider have joined forces to introduce a "phonetic name matching" utility as an alternative to the existing Soundex methods of finding variant spellings of names. This utility determines the likely language of the name, finds the pronunciation in that language, and displays results for names with similar pronunciations. The number of false hits is thereby greatly reduced. The utility has been incorporated into the two new One-Step forms described above, as well as the Dachau records One-Step form. A full description can be found on the site.

Links to Holocaust Websites

Jacob Richman has posted on his website 166 links to learn about the Holocaust. The website address is <http://www.jr.co.il/hotsites/j-holoc.htm>.

Research Guides from the Center for Jewish History

The Center for Jewish History's Ackman & Ziff Family Genealogy Institute has over 30 research guides on their website that can be downloaded and printed at no cost. These guides cover "Getting Started," US Research, Foreign Research, and Jewish Research. <http://www.cjh.org/collections/genealogy/factsheets.php>

50 Most Popular Genealogy Websites for 2008

From Tracing the Tribe by Schelly Dardashti, March 21, 2008

Kory L. Meyerink's posting on *ProGenealogists.com* ranks the 50 most popular genealogy sites for 2008. <http://www.progenealogists.com/top50genealogy2008.htm>

I was very happy to see MyHeritage.com at #3, Family Tree DNA at #27, JewishGen at #28, and other sites I use, such as GenBank (#41).

According to the WorldVitalRecords (#10) blog posting, Meyerink gave this presentation at the recent Conference on Computerized Family History and Genealogy in Utah. That posting also explains how Meyerink calculated rankings:

Meyerink felt this list was needed to minimize opinion ranking and to provide a useful list based on an extensive study of genealogical Web traffic. He first merged the rankings from Alexa.com, Quantacast.com, Compete.com and Google PageRank. Then he used Alexa's top 100 under Genealogy, Kip Sperry's Link List, Genealogy Sleuth List, cross-linked sites noted on Alexa.com as similar, and Yahoo and Google Directories to compile the list.

Meyerink used sites that were specifically designed for genealogical purposes (free sites, as well as paid), multiple sites from the same owner (if they had a different URL), sites of primary interest to genealogists, and sites that had a ranking of 2-3 ranking services. He did not include the following type of sites in the list: government, repository, general sites (Google.com, Wikipedia.org), and general reference sites (dictionaries, gazetteers, calendars, etc.).

Information About Storing and Preserving Paper Documents

The following is extracted from the article "How Safe Are Your Old Documents?" in Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter of May 12, 2008 and is copyright 1996 - 2008 by Richard W. Eastman. Information about the newsletter is available at <http://www.eogn.com>.

For more information about storing and preserving paper documents, look at the following:

Library of Congress information on paper preservation: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/preserv/care/paper.html>
Digging in Granny's Attic: Proper Care and Preservation: by Dewayne J. Lener (a leading expert in the area of document preservation): <http://www.ancestry.com/learn/library/article.aspx?article=2665>
Document and Photo Preservation FAQ by Linda L. Beyea: <http://loricase.com/faq.html>
Preservation Links and resources: <http://www.ancestry.com/library/view/news/articles/1272.asp>

A number of companies sell preservation products, including the following:

The Document Preservation Center:

<http://www.cohascodpc.com/dpc.html>

Archival Methods: <http://www.archivalmethods.com/>

Get Smart Products: <http://www.pfile.com>

American Jewish Committee Archives Searchable Digital Archives

Filled with more than a million documents and hundreds of movies and radio shows, the New York-based American Jewish Committee Archives house an extraordinary range of resources on the past century of American Jewish history.

This web site makes an ever-expanding portion of their physical archives instantly accessible.

Use the search engines, basic or advanced, to take you directly to archival material on a particular topic of interest.

<http://www.ajcarchives.org/ajcarchive/DigitalArchive.aspx>

North American Jewish Data Bank

This is the central repository of social scientific studies of North American Jewry: <http://www.jewishdatabank.org/>

American Jewish Year Book, published by the American Jewish Committee articles on America's Jewish population and demographics:

<http://www.jewishdatabank.org/ajyb.asp> ☆

SURNAMES AND TOWNS BEING RESEARCHED BY MEMBERS

JGSGP no longer maintains the *Registry of Roots* for our members. We encourage all members to register their ancestral surnames and towns with the JewishGen Family Finder (JGFF) at <http://www.jewishgen.org/jgff/>. In lieu of the *Registry of Roots*, we will list the Surnames and Towns provided to us by members in most editions of *Chronicles*. We hope this will bring some of our families together.

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AARONSON/ ARENSEN	Vitebsk	Belarus	Malvin Aaronson [jsgsp@comcast.net]
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The Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Philadelphia, founded in 1979, gives members opportunities to meet and share experiences in genealogy. Expert guests are invited to speak at meetings. Mentoring is provided to new members.

Meetings are usually held at 7:30 p.m on the second Monday of each month (except January, July, and August) at Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel, Old York Road (PA 611) and Township Line Road (US 73) in Elkins Park, PA. Free parking is available.

Affiliate Meetings: The South Jersey affiliate meets periodically at Congregation Beth Tikvah, 115 Evesboro-Medford Road, Marlton, NJ.

The Delaware County-Main Line affiliate meets 4 times a year at Martins Run Life Care Community at 11 Martins Run, Media, PA.

The Russian Interest Group specializing in areas of the former Russian Empire meets 4 times a year.

JGSGP Website, www.jewishgen.org/jgsp, has the calendar of meetings, a description of JGSGP, links to Jewish genealogy websites, and local genealogical resources.

JGSGP Library, a reference collection, has a dedicated area in the Tuttleman Jewish Public Library at Gratz College, Old York Road in Melrose Park, PA. It is available during normal Library hours. Call (215) 635-7300 ext. 169 for the schedule. The JGSGP library catalog is available on our website, via a link to the Tuttleman computerized library catalog, marked either JGSP or JGSGP. Donations of books, tapes, etc. to the JGSGP Library are welcome.

The Tuttleman Library is available as a reference library. JGSGP members and the public have access to the Tuttleman computers, microfilm and microfiche readers, and a copying machine (fee).

Index to *Chronicles* is available in the JGSGP Library and on our website.