Readers of Chronicles may recognize my name along with that of my husband, Jack, as co-authors of recent articles about “acts of genealogical kindness”. When I accepted our editor’s invitation to join the “Chronicles” editing team, I did not anticipate being immediately asked to pen this column. I hope in a future issue to give an account of the longest and most far reaching journey that Jack and I have taken along with a family whose “kindness” request appeared in these pages in 2011. However, that story is still unfolding.

What initially was to be a way for us to pass along the kindness shown to us by JGSGP members and others as we conducted our personal research has become rewarding in its own right. We have also branched beyond the requests that appear in other newsletters and on JewishGen. In some cases, we have found information leading the researcher to conclude that while the names may be the same, they need to continue their search in a different geographic area. Although we have not always found the information or hoped for connections sought, our searches have given researchers access to local sources not yet available online and have saved them valuable time.

Jack and I have wrestled with privacy and ethical concerns. We decided that if we identify what we believe to be a local connection to a living person, we would then send a letter to that person, describing the original request and why we believe they may be connected. We always provide our return address and a phone number to give them the option of responding. Of course, positive connections are highly reinforcing for us.

(Continued on Page 3)
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While email and other electronic files are highly preferred, the editors will be happy to work with you and your material in any form. If you have an idea, please contact Evan Fishman of the Editorial Board by email: editor@jgsgp.org or by phone at 856-667-2077.

SUBSCRIPTIONS - ADDRESS CHANGE
CHRONICLES (ISSN 0893-2921) is the quarterly publication of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Philadelphia. It is free to JGSGP members and to JGS’s in the newsletter courtesy-exchange program. Printed and mailed back issues are available at $4.00 each in the US and $7.00 outside the US. CHRONICLES is published quarterly and distributed electronically in PDF format. Please supply the editor with your updated email address to ensure on-time delivery.

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Nevertheless, the number of people who turn out to not be connected to a specific query but who have still made the effort to reply to us with a phone call, has also been gratifying. Almost invariably they say they are pleased that informal networks exist to help connect people researching families. In a few cases we have been able to give them tips about sources for their own family research.

As we have related the outcomes of some “kindness” stories to our own families, extended family members have later approached us about helping them with their own research. Their reasons are as varied as those sent to this journal or that appear in online forums.

Parents should be prepared the next time their child comes home from school with an assignment to “describe your family’s heritage” or if one wants help organizing the documents and boxes of pictures that s/he has now inherited from his/her parents and grandparents. No matter the stated reason, the desire to discover and preserve family information for the current and future generations is at the core of each request.

Ann Kauffman - Associate Editor

Ann Kauffman is retired from a career in education. She and her husband, Jack, have been JGSGP members since the 2011 Genealogy Fair.

As genealogists we are on the hunt to uncover our family histories. For many of us we learn many tantalizing facts and clues about our ancestors. We learn if they were famous movie actors or horse thieves, politicians or tailors, rabbis or junk peddlers.

As members of our society we all try to help one another to overcome brick walls in our research. Our society has a Speakers Bureau. Steve Schecter, Mark Halpern, myself as well as others are available to speak at different groups and venues to help individuals get started or help overcome challenges in their research. In the past few months I have spoken at the Klein Branch of the JCC in Northeast Philadelphia, several synagogues and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Steve Schecter will be giving his beginner workshops to several groups.

Speaking for myself, I come away with a satisfying feeling that I have helped people to uncover their family history. I am usually asked great questions from the audience and I realize that I am making a difference.

If your group needs a speaker, do not hesitate to reach out to our society's Speakers Bureau.

Fred Blum

WE EXTEND A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

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The deadline for submissions for the summer issue of Chronicles is Monday, June 10, 2013.
Please send your material to editor@jgsgp.org.
IN THE BEGINNING
by Steve Schecter

Why attend an International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) annual conference, especially if you are a beginner? The fact that you are a beginner is exactly the reason to go to a conference. Where else can you find so many knowledgeable Jewish genealogical brains to pick in one spot!

The conference brings together about 1,000 Jewish genealogists from around the globe. Presenters are drawn from experts who are thoughtful speakers on a wide variety of topics. Surprisingly, even the newest beginner will pick up helpful information and pointers while listening to the presentations. In addition there are "Birds of a Feather" or BOF gatherings where people with similar interests gather informally to share ideas and offer help. Conferences also have a resource center to do research and a vendor area to see new and engaging Jewish genealogy products.

Best of all there is plenty of schmooze time. This can be done in the resource center while conducting research, getting a document translated, or buying someone a cup of coffee. Coffee? Yep, coffee cup conversations are a most valuable part of a conference. This is also how we meet with relatives and potential relatives to share information. There is something special about chatting informally over food, coffee or tea. Personally, I've been able to gather critical information, learn techniques, and develop invaluable resource networks through these casual conversations. Information is shared that would have taken months of frustration to uncover. It is amazing how just by offering to fill a cup and asking lots of "dumb" questions, how many people are willing to patiently explain and help you learn. Attending an international conference, especially one in our backyard of Boston, is an awesome opportunity to accelerate your learning.

I hope to see you in Boston. I'll be looking for folks to sit and share over a cup of java. One final tidbit... remember to bring a thumb/flash drive to copy documents and other interesting stuff.

For more info, check out: http://www.iajgs2013.org/

A BRIEF LOOK AT COMPUTER DATA BACKUP
by James Gross

Losing such items as data files, video files, or digital photos will give us genealogists severe aggravation and anxiety. Computers can crash or stop working for a multitude of reasons including events such as power spikes, floods, or hardware failures. Unfortunately, users rarely have advanced warning before their computers crash or stop working. In my opinion, it is very important for computer users to develop a plan for the periodic back-up of their essential data.

The analyst firm, The Diffusion Group or TDG, conducted an industry study on digital media data loss in 2006. Findings from this report included:
(a) 40 - 50% of all backups are not fully recoverable, and up to 60% of all backups fail in general;
(b) Nearly three out of five personal computer users have lost an electronic file they thought they had sufficiently stored;
(c) A hard drive crashes every 15 seconds;
(d) 31% of PC users have lost all of their PC files to events beyond their control;
(e) 25% of lost data is due to the failure of a portable drive;
(f) A 44% of data loss is caused by mechanical [computer] failures (1).

This study suggests spending some time and thought into putting together a usable plan for periodic data backup.

Noted genealogist Dick Eastman posted in his May 7, 2006 column:
“Computer malfunctions can destroy your data at any time without warning. . . Having a recent backup available is the best way to recover from both manmade and other file losses. Computer experts will also tell you to store backup copies of your files “off site” to protect them from major catastrophes, such as fire, flood, tornado, hurricane, or other damage that can destroy computers and backups alike.” (2)

Consider some of the following options for backing up your data: (Note: even automatic backup software systems are fallible.)

1. If you have a larger desktop computer, you can install a second internal hard drive, a backup copy, typically referred to as the D drive. On three occasions my main hard drive, or C drive, was damaged or contained a virus. Having

Author Steve Schecter is JGSGP’s Vice President-Programs and an active advocate for our society. His enthusiasm for teaching beginners and encouraging them to pursue their family connections is infectious and inspiring.
You can contact Steve at: programs@jgsgp.org
a D drive gave me flexibility and a defensive option

2. An external, portable hard drive can be utilized as a tool for a backup copy by simply attaching it to a USB plug and then copying selected folders and files.

3. Copying or burning data files to a CD or DVD. As long as you store the CD or DVD in a plastic or paper storage envelope, the disk should be reasonably secure from becoming scratched and/or unreadable.

4. Another option for both desktops and laptops is an online storage method called “cloud storage which can be purchased through several online companies. I would suggest that you research this to compare costs and options. There may be a monthly fee depending on amount of space needed. In my opinion this should not be the sole method of data backup.

Regardless of your data backup storage choice, be aware that unless you feel it is necessary, you may not need to back up your entire computer. Most of us are focused on saving essential data and personal files. The operating system and other programs can usually be reloaded.

Regardless of your method of data backup, experts generally agree on the following steps:
(a) Take an inventory of what data (and folders) need to be backed up and how often backups should be performed,
(b) Select a backup method that works for you,
(c) Try not to put off backing up your data.
(d) Review how you are securing paper documents and photos. Try to ensure that they are housed in archival acid-free and waterproof containers.

In summary, there does not appear to be a “perfect” method or plan for data backup. Experts seem to agree that secure data backup is essential to preserve one’s data. Data backup depends on the user’s willingness to create or utilize a backup plan. This can be as simple as deciding on one or more formats for backup storage. I personally would recommend burning essential folders to a DVD as well as using a portable or backup hard drive. Together they will give the user two copies of backed up data.

References:

Author James Gross recently graduated with a Master of Library & Information Science (MLIS) from Drexel University. He has been working on his family tree since the early 1990’s and is a periodic contributor to various genealogy newsletters.

James also has a genealogy website: http://tinyurl.com/gross-steinberg He can be reached at: navistar96@yahoo.com

BRUCHA BOBWRO NEIDICH DURING WORLD WAR I
by Susan Neidich

When I was about twelve years old I asked my paternal grandmother about her life in Europe. She responded, “It was bad; you don’t need to know about it.”, essentially ending the conversation. I never doubted that the first part of her response was true, but I have always disagreed with her latter point. Decades later, I finally got around to investigating what I knew about her life during World War I and her immigration to the United States.

The story which my father related to me from childhood onwards went as follows: When World War I began in August 1914, my paternal grandfather, Gad Asher Neidich, was living in the Bronx, New York, while my paternal grandmother, Brucha Bobrow Neidich was living with their four young children in Pinsk, (then part of the Russian Empire, today part of Belarus).

Brucha dug trenches for the German army during the war. In 1916 she was living in Poltusk, north of Warsaw with her children. Her oldest son, Jack, (Yankel) almost died of starvation during the war and was hospitalized for malnutrition in Warsaw. The family traveled on a “sealed train” from Poland (which was German occupied Russian territory at the time) through Germany to the free port of Rotterdam in order to take the Holland American Line ship, the Potsdam, to the United States, arriving in early 1917. During their reunion, after seven years of separation, my grandmother became pregnant with my father, Hyman (Chaim).

Around 1990 I expressed skepticism to my father regarding his mother’s digging trenches for the German army and asked how he knew that. He responded that there were pic-
I told him that I had never seen one. Many months later he gave me a photograph that he had “removed” (“stolen” would be a more accurate word) from his oldest brother Jack’s album which accompanies this article. This photograph has fascinated me ever since I laid eyes on it. It is mounted on a piece of cardboard with no stamp or markings and verifies my father’s assertion that his mother dug trenches for the Germans during World War I. My grandmother, Brucha, is standing fourth from the right in the middle row wearing a white head covering, shovel in hand. I wanted to know whether it was possible to get a little more specific about the details.

Precisely when and where was the picture taken? Who took it and why? More interestingly, how is it that Brucha had a copy of the picture? Lastly are they digging trenches?

According to an article by Professor Azriel Shohat, in *History of the Jews of Pinsk 1881 – 1941*, the Germans arrived in Pinsk in September 1915. Although they treated the Russian and Polish inhabitants of the area almost like POW’s, the Germans did not similarly treat the Jews as hostile elements. Instead they were interested in using the Jews as a labor force. Food confiscation for the Germans and rationing at starvation levels for all occupied residents were instituted immediately after occupation. Almost immediately virtual forced labor of the local populace from skilled worker to potato picker was also implemented. The small salaries that the Germans paid along with the food received while working provided some relief from the widespread starvation.

It is clear that the people in the photograph are not dressed for winter weather. Since the Germans did not reach Pinsk until September 1915, the photograph could not have been taken earlier. By late 1916, my family was in Poltusk.

Therefore, this photograph was taken in Pinsk either in autumn 1915 or spring 1916.

A woman alone with four children under the occupation conditions had to work in order to provide food for her family. I have no doubt that my grandmother was on a forced labor detail. Although trench warfare was not characteristic of the Eastern Front with its much longer, more fluid lines, Pinsk was on the front line surrounded on almost three sides by Russian forces from September 1915 until the Russian
Revolution. I therefore theorize that trenches were built in the Pinsk area.

As for who took the picture and why, I can only speculate. I thought that most likely one of the Germans had a camera and took pictures so the soldiers could send them home to their families. The next step truly intrigues me. Did the photographer then make copies for the forced laborers? Perhaps some authority took the picture, made too many copies for the soldiers, and then distributed the remaining copies to some of the women laborers who appeared in the picture. If anyone reading this knows the answer or has a more plausible theory, I’d be delighted to hear it.

According to Professor Shohat, the Germans evacuated over 9,000 people from Pinsk to the interior of Poland between February and May 1916. I am quite certain this is how my grandmother ended up in Poltusk, north of Warsaw in 1916. A woman with four young, malnourished children would be a good candidate for evacuation. The article also describes the numbers of those who died of starvation in Pinsk. This gives credence to how Jack ended up in a hospital in Warsaw, almost dying from starvation.

Sometime during 1916, my grandfather was able to get the necessary money and paperwork to the correct authorities, and arrangements were made for his family’s immigration. Since they left from Rotterdam, they were probably issued some sort of transit visa and permitted to travel from Warsaw through Germany in a railway car with locked doors.

When I began twenty years ago to investigate my father’s tale that he was the product of his parents’ reunion after a seven year separation, my methodology was quite different than it would be were I to begin my research today. According to my father, his mother and older siblings traveled on the Holland American Line ship, the Potsdam, from Rotterdam to the United States, and the picture postcard I had of the ship was confirmation. I decided to assume that the story was true. My father was born on November 10, 1917. If the alleged conception chronology held up, then my grandmother should have arrived in the U.S. in early February 1917.

I located the nearest library that owned New York Times microfilm dated 1916-1917. When I looked through all of the daily arrival listings covering December 1916 through February 1917, I didn’t find an entry for the Potsdam. On a subsequent trip to the Philadelphia branch of the National Archives, I discovered that neither my grandparents nor my aunt and uncles appeared in the arrivals soundex (the index for locating microfilm by name). I then learned that the ship manifest microfilms and information were available at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. but had to wait a couple of years before I was able to get to the research library on a weekday.

I was directed to the Morton Allen Directory of European Passenger Steamship Arrivals which included all shipping companies, steamship names, and their respective dates and ports of arrival. Imagine my surprise when I discovered that the Potsdam did not sail in 1916 or 1917! I decided that my relatives most likely traveled on another Holland American Line ship. I proceeded to list the arrival dates for all Holland American Line ships that left from Rotterdam bound for the United States from mid-January to mid-February 1917. I obtained the corresponding microfilm and began searching passenger manifests line by line. After an hour or so, I found them: Bruche, Yankel, Leizer, Mordche and Reizel Neiditch. Their last address in Europe was listed as Poltusk. The ship, the Noordam, arrived on February 1, 1917 in the Port of New York, nine months and nine days before my father was born. I was then able to definitively confirm that he was conceived during his parents’ reunion.

The picture postcard of the Potsdam however bothered me. Why would they have it? While still at the National Archives I decided to test a different theory: was the Potsdam the ship on which my grandfather, Gad Asher, traveled to the U.S.? I didn’t know exactly when Gad Asher left Pinsk or how long it took him to get to Rotterdam but leaving a pregnant wife does provide some parameters. He probably would not have left his wife Brucha when she was six or more months pregnant. I thought it was far more likely that my uncle Louis (Leizer) was a parting gift. Uncle Louis was born on June 16, 1911, which meant that Gad Asher would have been in Pinsk in September 1910.

A quick check of the Directory of European Passenger Steamship Arrivals showed that the Potsdam was sailing in 1910 and 1911. I listed all of the Potsdam’s arrival dates from late October 1910 through April 1911 and started examining ship manifest microfilms line by line. A couple of hours later I located “Godoscher Neidicz” on a ship manifest for the arrival of the Potsdam in the Port of New York on February 14, 1911.

I was very excited to have found these two ship manifests. They contained some new information about my grandparents. It was also satisfying to find some verification of parts
of my grandmother’s story and be able to fit them within the historical events of the time.

Author Susan Neidich, VP Membership, is researching Neidich/Nydick from Pinsk, Belarus and Eisenberg from Siedlce, Poland. Contact Susan at: membership@jgs gp.org

THE 1940 CENSUS AND AN UNANSWERED QUESTION ABOUT MY HOMETOWN
By Shelda Carol Bachin Sandler

It's been one year since the release of the 1940 census. Here’s an article that deals with the puzzles and highlights the rewards from that census.

When the 1940 U.S. census was released in April 2012, I knew my family would not appear in the tiny borough of Aldan, Delaware County, Pennsylvania, because my parents did not move there until October 1944; however, I hoped to find some of our neighbors who were living there at the time of the census.

Since Aldan-only 0.6 square miles in area-is so small, its census records consist of only three enumeration districts (ED). I did not know in which ED our house was located so I began to look for street names. While searching, I located a family name that I recognized. That family lived on the west side of town (the “older” side). We lived on the east side. I then searched the streets of the east side of Aldan and located the streets in the ED where we eventually lived. Our street was not included. Apparently, homes like mine were built or occupied after the census was taken. I did, however, find a few more family names that I recognized on neighboring streets. Out of curiosity, I searched the remaining enumeration district. It is here that my story begins.

The remaining enumeration district for Aldan in 1940 had only one dwelling: Dr. Pickett’s Sanatorium. The “Head” was recorded as Dr. Elizabeth Pickett, a widow. Living with her were her unmarried sister, Cora Lovelace, four resident nurses, and five patients. All were women.

What a surprise! For all the years that I lived in Aldan, I had never heard any mention of a sanatorium or of a Dr. Pickett. I knew the location because I was familiar with the area; however, I was not sure about the exact house number.

If Dr. Pickett’s Sanatorium, located at #7 Springfield Road, was located near the Clifton-Aldan train station, could it have been on the same site where the John J. McFadden Funeral Home stands today? I needed to know the exact address of the funeral home.

My subsequent internet search indicated that the funeral home and Dr. Pickett’s Sanatorium share the same address #7 Springfield Road! I couldn't recall anything being at that location when I was growing up in Aldan. Perhaps the sanatorium had been built further back from the road where it could not easily be seen. Sadly, there is no one in Aldan now who would know. So the search for answers began.

Aldan, typical of a small town, is composed of friendly people who enjoy helping others. First, I telephoned the Aldan Borough Administration Building and asked the receptionist about Dr. Pickett’s Sanatorium. She had never heard of it. I asked her for the name of someone from the Aldan Historical Society who, I hoped, might have some information. Aldan maintains a small museum located in the former Providence Road trolley station. This small, enclosed one-room shelter had once protected passengers waiting for the trolley which ran between Sharon Hill and the 69th Street Terminal.

The receptionist at the Administration Building gave me the name and telephone number of Joyce, the chairperson of the museum. She and I had a wonderful conversation, but there is no mention of a Dr. Pickett or a sanatorium in the museum’s holdings. The museum, Joyce explained, only has items which have been donated. ‘Somebody MUST know something,’ I thought. My next move was to telephone the mayor of Aldan (‘surely he would know’) who returned my call the next night. Remember, this is Aldan and promises are kept! Although unaware of Dr. Pickett or her sanatorium, the mayor told me he would look in Aldan’s Centennial (1893-1993) Book and photocopy some pages from it that might be of interest to me. As promised I received a thick, brown envelope a few days later that contained a treasure trove of information, maps, and pictures about Aldan, including documentation about Union soldiers marching through the town on their way to Brandywine Battlefield.

Earlier census records indicated that Dr. Pickett's Sanatorium existed as early as 1910. I also learned about Elizabeth Pickett, the person, through other sources, but I was perplexed at not being able to recall a large sized building as this must have been. More precise information about the sanatorium and its location eluded me until a year later.
My husband and I were having kitchen cabinets refinished during the middle of April of this year. We had hired Tom, nephew of an elementary school classmate of mine, to do the job. Like his father and grandfather, Tom is a top-notch cabinetmaker, and the family business is a longtime fixture in Aldan. Tom is also very familiar with the area and its past.

I was surprised to later find my husband and Tom engrossed in conversation about Dr. Pickett’s Sanatorium, of all things! Tom was certain that nothing existed on that plot of ground until the funeral home was built. The family business was located toward the back of the property, across from the train station. Tom’s comments seemed to confirm my earlier theory that the sanatorium was located far back from the road, undetectable by passersby and therefore probably unknown to people who lived in Aldan then.

My next step will be to go to the Delaware County courthouse in Media, locate a title deed associated with this property, and gather more precise information about the mysterious sanatorium.

Moral: Never give up hope. Genealogical information can surface when and where it’s least expected.

P.S. Not only did I exercise my detective skills in following the trail uncovered by my examination of 1940 census records for Aldan but I also re-experienced many warm, childhood memories and the friendliness of the small town I will always regard as “my hometown.”

Shelda Carol Bachin Sandler is Co-Chair of the JGSGP Speakers Bureau; she co-chaired the first JGSGP Genealogy Fair in 2011 and was co-chair of Hospitality at the JGSGP-IAJGS Conference in 2009. She is a former school counselor and a teacher of English and Spanish. Shelda may be contacted at stanshel@msn.com

AUNT BETTY
by Martha Goodman

My cousin Joyce and I were pen pals growing up. Her mother and my father were siblings. They were orphaned early on and raised for a time in a Catholic orphanage. Years later, when I was in my twenties, Joyce came to visit— a rare treat. We did what we did whenever we were together— traded the few scraps of information we had about our parents’ lives before we were born. Joyce mentioned an Aunt Betty. I had never heard of Aunt Betty before! Who was she? “Oh, she was your father’s first wife,” Joyce continued. I was shocked; I had always thought my mother was my father’s only wife, lucky to have found her later in life. Joyce explained that Betty had passed away suddenly, childless, and a few years later my father remarried.

Several years later, my father was in the hospital, gravely ill. We called his oldest friend, Joey, inviting him to come and say goodbye. He arrived the next day. I don’t remember much of that visit but I will never forget the drive home. As Joey and I travelled to my parents’ home, he told me how proud he was of my father. When Joey’s parents were killed in an accident, my father and Betty had become his guardians. He then told me Betty’s maiden name and explained that during a phone conversation with his wife, Betty had a heart attack and passed away.

Twenty years passed. My mother called asking me to help my cousin Linda, Joyce’s sister, piece together genealogical information about my father’s family. Linda wanted to know about Betty, but I knew nothing about her. The only thing I could think to do was to call Joey, my father’s friend. Although by that time, he was significantly impacted by Alzheimer’s, he was able to tell me that Betty had died the summer that his son was born. Later in the conversation Joey’s wife told me their son was born in 1956. Joey also mentioned that Betty had some connection to Atlantic City, had a brother named Eddie, and that she had been cremated. I contacted the New York State Health Department’s Bureau of Funeral Directing and was told there was only one crematorium operating in the state in 1956 that was still in business.

When I called it, they had no record of Betty. I asked if perhaps there had been another facility. “Yes”, they said, “and Fresh Ponds is still around, too.” The helpful woman there located Betty’s file and sent it to me. It provided crucial information including her birth date and birthplace. I called the funeral home that was listed, sheepishly introduced myself, and explained my connection to Betty. I couldn’t have anticipated the answer I got when I asked if they knew where the remains were buried. Incredibly, Betty’s ashes were still in the funeral home, sealed away in a can, in a drawer, in a filing cabinet for nearly fifty years.

This might be the closest I would come to a mes mitzva (burying an unattended corpse). A call to my rabbi confirmed that it was a mitzva (good deed) to bury her but because she had been cremated, there would be no marker. I asked if I could use tzedaka (funds donated for charitable purposes) to bury her, and the answer was yes. “But, where should she be
buried?” Since there would be no marker, I wanted to bury her with her family, so the search for her relatives was on.

My mother had given me a suitcase of old photos and papers that had been my father’s. Clearly, the time had come to examine them. The suitcase contained dozens of photos, mostly unmarked, mementos from their wedding day, a women’s gold watch, newspaper clippings of family obituaries, a very sentimental poem entitled “To Mother” which had been written by Betty, and a newsletter dated 1931 from the Jewish Community Center of Atlantic City.

Among the obituaries was one for Betty’s mother, Jenny, which listed the Adath Yeshurun cemetery in Philadelphia. I called and learned that there was a family plot with a space still available. However, the maintenance fees had not been paid in many years and would need to be paid in order to bury anyone there. “Was there another alternative?” They said I could bury Betty’s remains next to her mother’s grave for a modest fee. I readily agreed, but I felt uncomfortable taking her ashes without her family’s knowledge or agreement. I still wanted to find living relatives.

I decided to start with Eddie, Betty’s brother. I quickly learned from the Social Security Death Index that he had died twenty-five years earlier in Montgomery County, Maryland. ‘Well,’ I thought, ‘his widow could still be living there.’ I looked up all the listings for people with the same surname [which begins with L] in the current telephone directory and called each one. I spoke to most of them and got a couple of answering machines, including the voice of one, hip, young guy – clearly nobody’s widow. I tried to get a phone book from the 1970’s, too. At first, the library couldn’t find it.

In a final attempt I found a committed librarian who not only found the lost telephone directory, but suggested that J. Edgar L. might be the right person. I dialed that decades-old number and was connected to an answering machine with the voice of a young, hip guy on the recording. I left a message. A week or so later I got a call back from the rock and roller’s sister. Yes, this was Betty’s family, but they were Eddie’s grandchildren. Their own father was in a nursing home. They hadn’t known Betty, had no idea what I was talking about when I asked if she had a Hebrew name, and had no interest in what I did with her ashes.

I tried another angle. Based on the Atlantic City JCC newsletter, I knew Betty’s home address during her high school years. I called the Atlantic City Board of Education and asked if they could tell me what high school she would have attended, based on that address. “Oh, that’s easy. There is only one high school here and they have their own curator.” Fantastic. I called the curator and told him my now oft-repeated story. He not only found Betty’s yearbook, but also Eddie’s and his transcript as well! A few weeks later, beautiful, satiny copies of their senior portraits and photos from the clubs they participated in arrived.

Betty’s yahrzeit (anniversary of death) was approaching and my goal was to bury her by then. I arranged with the funeral home and Adath Yeshurun cemetery to have her ashes shipped to the cemetery. On one, sunny, crisp May day, I drove to Philadelphia to bury my father’s first wife, a Jewish woman. I had a list of the names of family members from family photos. In addition, I had the name Sylvia B. Her image and name appeared again and again among the mementos, but I didn’t know if she was a friend or a relative. When I arrived at the cemetery, I went straight to the office, and was given access to the cemetery records. As I looked up each name, I learned that five generations of Betty’s family were buried there, dotting the cemetery. Included in the notes was a notation that one of the men had been cremated and was buried there as well.

The caretaker asked me if I wanted their gravedigger to deposit the vessel in the pre-dug grave or if I would like to do it myself. Caught off guard, I explained that I wanted to return Betty’s dust to dust, and I would need the long-sealed can to be opened. As I waited awkwardly, they found a tool and opened it. Just as friends had alerted me, dust is a bit euphemistic, and I had a sense of gravity and awe because I understood that I was burying the bones of a Jewish woman. I placed Betty’s remains in the ground and began to cover them. I recited some Tehillim (Psalms), and read aloud the poem that Betty had written to her mother so many years before. I felt very strongly that they were having a very good mother-daughter reunion day and felt honored that I had a part in it.

Armed with the plot locations, I set out to visit the graves of each of Betty’s relatives. I saw no Hebrew inscriptions on or rocks atop the headstones indicating that visitors had come. As I turned to leave the last of the graves, I saw a double headstone with a pebble on top. The name engraved on the left side was Sylvia B. C. with just the years of her birth and death. Beside her was her husband Albert. That answered one of the remaining questions. Sylvia was indeed a member of Betty’s family. I went back to the office and took down the name and contact information for the individual responsible for the upkeep on that grave which was not part of the family plot. I returned to Baltimore, satisfied with the day.
The next morning, I called the number for Craig C., the contact person. "The number you have dialed is no longer in service. Calls are being taken by...." I punched in that number and got an answering machine. I left my rambling introduction and hoped for the best.

I called a few friends who had followed my research efforts and invited them to come for a commemoration of Betty’s yahrzeit to be held a few days later. I had her watch repaired. I displayed Betty’s graduation portrait and a photo from her wedding day together with some of the mementos I had encountered along the way. I asked my rabbi what Tehillim to say. He suggested that I say a Biblical verse that begins and ends with the initial and final letters of a person’s Hebrew name but I didn’t know Betty’s name. He told me to use Basya – the name I had chosen for myself a dozen years earlier.

Just before my friends were to arrive, the phone rang. It was Craig C., Betty’s second cousin. And that was only the first of a number of surprises. As I explained how I was related, he quickly interjected that he knew who I was. He was the genealogist in his family and had done his own research about Betty, my father, and his second wife, my own incredible mother. He knew where we lived and a few other details. I told him about my conversation with the young L. cousins. He was delighted to renew contact with them. But the best was yet to come. Craig told me that Sylvia B. C. was his paternal grandmother and that her yahrzeit was the very day that I had been at the cemetery. His father had placed the pebble there that very morning! I thanked him so much for calling and asked where he had moved. He answered, “Olney”. In fact he lived less than a mile from the shul (synagogue) headed by my rabbi.

Truly G-d does remember chesed (kindness) for generations. Betty had compassion for an orphan and fifty years later He was instrumental in making burial with her family possible. As Betty’s yearbook quote said, “To me, it’s divine.”

Author Martha Goodman lives in Baltimore, Maryland and is the coordinator of Maryland Special Needs Advocacy Project at the Center for Jewish Education. This article represents her most serious effort in genealogical research. She’s hoping to get more information about the United Order of True Sisters and Beth El Sisterhood in Atlantic City, NJ. Contact her at martha.goodman@comcast.net

Partner’s in Family History

My Journey to Poland

November 27 – December 11, 2012

by Mark Halpern

(Editors Note: JGSGP’s March 10, 2013 meeting featured Mark’s presentation of his recent trip.)

I was invited by the Forum for Dialogue Among Nations for a study tour (more on this later). I added on some Jewish Records Indexing – Poland (JRI-Poland) business and a side trip to Bialystok, my mother’s birthplace.

I spent sixteen days in Poland and experienced the harshness of the winters my ancestors experienced. It was cold and snowy. The lowest temperature was -16º C or 3º F and the warmest was just below freezing.

One of the great joys of this trip was acquiring digital images of my parents’ birth records. My father was born in the small Galician village of Plaucza Wielka, about 15 miles west of Tarnopol and now in Ukraine. He was born, as I was told, on April 6, 1903. His name in the U.S. was Julius Aaron and his Hebrew name was Yehuda, so I expected to find his birth record would be Juda Aron. It was Arie Juda. My mother was born in the city of Bialystok, then in Grodno Gubernia of the Russian Empire, but now in Poland. Her name in the U.S. was Nettie and her Hebrew/Yiddish name was Nechama. No surprise that her birth record would identify her as Necha. However, her birth date was listed as November 3, 1910, not August 26 that we always celebrated.

Organized at Temple Emanu-El in New York City, the United Order of True Sisters (UOTS) held its first meeting on April 25, 1846. Conceived as a female counterpart to the male Jewish B’nai B’rith organization (founded in 1843), but functioning separately, UOTS claims to be the first independent national women’s organization in the United States. Some of the Order’s goals resembled those of earlier Jewish women’s mutual aid and charitable societies. The Sisters sought “refinement of the heart and mind and moral improvement,” and paid regular dues to be used for burial fees and material aid to members struck by illness or sudden poverty.

Editor’s Note: The following information is from the Jewish Women’s Archive website http://jwa.org/thisweek/apr/25/1846/uots

Mark Halpern
The Forum for Dialogue Among Nations is a non-profit Polish organization whose mission is to foster Polish-Jewish dialogue, eradicate anti-Semitism and teach tolerance through education. The Forum fulfills its mission through seminars, publications, exhibitions, and exchange programs targeted at Polish and Jewish youth and leaders. One of the exchange programs they sponsor is an American Jewish leaders study trip to Poland. I was fortunate to be invited along with nine others from North America.

The main objectives of this trip were:
• Looking for new ways to build cooperation between Poles and Jews
• Introducing institutions concerned with the preservation of Jewish memory and development of Polish-Jewish relations.

The study group met with Polish leaders like the Poland director for the Joint Distribution Committee, the head of the exhibits for the new Museum of the History of Polish Jews, the Chief Rabbi of Poland, the Ambassador for Jewish Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the director of the Jewish Historical Institute Genealogy Center, and the Director of the Krakow JCC.

The main event of the tour, however, was a visit with students from School No. 1, a high school, in Wadowice which participated in the School of Dialogue, the main focus of the Forum. This is an educational program that engages youth from former shtetlach (towns) where Jews lived before the war. It helps broaden these young people’s knowledge, provides room for self-exploration and commemorates the pre-war Jewish history of the town. The Forum believes that reaching middle school and high school students is the best way to reduce or remove bias against Jews in Poland.

Located 30 miles southwest of Krakow, Wadowice is a town of 19,000 people and the birthplace of Pope John Paul II. The pre-war population was 10,000, 2,000 of whom were Jewish. The School of Dialogue trains educators from the University in Warsaw to lead students in four sessions. The culmination of the School of Dialogue is a project and in the case of this school, the project was a tour of Jewish Wadowice.

Meeting and talking to the students was the most important part of our day. The students all had a very good appreciation of their town’s Jewish history and were eager to find out more about my family history. Our first stop on the tour was Wadowice's Jewish cemetery which was the best maintained Jewish cemetery I had seen in Poland outside of Warsaw and Lodz. Sadly there is no Jewish community left in Wadowice.

A Catholic couple was at the cemetery to greet us. They take care of the cemetery without financial support and at their own expense because there are no families left to do this. This selflessness left many in our group in tears. Four of the students volunteered on the spot to help these two angels. Among my fellow study trip participants was a retired cantor from Los Angeles who led us in reciting the mourner's kaddish (a hymn of praises to G-d in the Jewish prayer service) at the cemetery.

The result of this study trip with the Forum is a proposal to the boards of JRI-Poland and Forum for Dialogue Among Nations for collaboration.
From 1997 to 2006 JRI-Poland had a formal agreement with the Polish State Archives (PSA) to index records and operate an order processing system for researchers to obtain copies of records. In November 2006, the newly appointed Director General terminated those agreements. JRI-Poland worked the political system to reopen the doors with this Director General. He offered a revised agreement, but was unwilling to negotiate some items that were much too restrictive to JRI-Poland and researchers. In February 2011, this Director General passed away.

New discussions and negotiations began, and a new Director General was appointed. Unfortunately it took until November 2012 before JRI-Poland was confident that new agreements would be completed. My trip to Poland gave us a chance to talk directly to some of the parties. Fellow board member Michael Tobias and I met with representatives of the PSA Headquarters, the National Digital Archive, and the Central Archive of Historical Records (AGAD). These meetings helped cement the relationship, and on February 15, 2013, the new agreements for indexing, order processing, and digital imaging were signed.

Indexing and order processing will begin on an archive by archive basis. The master agreement with PSA Headquarters requires JRI-Poland to execute individual agreements with each regional archive based on model agreements.

This process has begun. Orders will be processed online, and credit cards will be the only recognized method of payment. Orders will automatically be entered by clicking on index entries, verifying the order and making credit card payment. Copies of the requested records will be delivered to researchers via email as high resolution jpeg images.

The PSA has a very aggressive program to digitize their holdings and place the images online for the public to access freely. This project is starting with vital records that are over 100 years old. PSA, through its National Digital Archive branch (NDAP), will be placing those images online. For Jewish records, JRI-Poland will create links to those records associated with online indices. When images are available and after the linking is complete, a search of the JRI-Poland database will have a live link to the image of the actual record. This process will be rolled out over a number of years. In the meantime, the order processing system will allow researchers to obtain copies for a fee.

NDAP has a website with record images. Right now that website is only in Polish and is difficult to navigate. Some records were added in March, and more are expected in June. The list of records that have already been added and those scheduled to be added are on a PDF file. The operative Polish words when searching for Jewish records include bożniczego (synagogue), żydowska (Jew), Izraelickiej (Israelite), mojżeszowe (the faith of Moses) or derivates of these same words.

If you find records of interest, search the name of the town by entering that name in the box at http://szukajwarchiwach.pl/, clicking on “Akta metrykalne i stanu Cywilnego” and then clicking “Szukaj.” There is still a lot of searching to do. You can decide to continue or just wait until JRI-Poland links to these images.

For those researching family from Galician towns now in Ukraine, the AGAD Archive plans to add scans, possibly in April, of many of the Jewish records to their own website.

Genealogia Polski (GenPol), a Polish genealogical society, is working in certain archives to create digital images of vital records that will be placed online at http://metryki.genbaza.pl/. Here you will currently find record images from the Grodzisk Mazowiecki Archive (AP Grodzisk) near Warsaw. Click on “AP_Grodzisk” and a list of towns/records appears. The Jewish records will be identified by “moj” or “mojz.”
Bialystok
Six years have passed since my last visit to the city of my mother's birth. Much has changed, not the least of which is the availability of bialys, the round, baked Jewish rolls with indentations in the middle filled with poppy seeds and onions, at the Esperanto Cafe in Bialystok. Before World War II, the bialy flourished as a staple of the local diet.

Much has been done to enhance Jewish Bialystok's stature, both past and present. Lucy Lisowska, the Jewish Community of Poland representative in Bialystok, and the administration of Mayor Tadeusz Truskolawski can proudly point to the following accomplishments:

• Protecting and securing the Wschodnia Street Cemetery, by building a wall to separate the Jewish from the Catholic cemetery, reinforcing all the gates, and straightening and cleaning the remaining matzevot (tombstones).
• Honoring the departed with a memorial on the ground of the Bema Street Cemetery.
• Planning and supporting the annual Zachor Festival of Jewish Culture
• Planning and supporting the annual commemoration of the liquidation of the Bialystok Ghetto
• Donation of a building for a future Jewish museum

And finally, my visit to the archive in Bialystok was excellent. They are ready to receive JRI-Poland back as if the last six years did not happen.

For more details about the signing of this historic agreement and related video clip, see:
http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/announcements.htm#psa-agreement

Mark Halpern, Immediate Past President of JGSGP, is a member of the JRI-Poland Board and Executive Committee - http://www.jri-poland.org/ He is actively working on projects for the upcoming IAJGS conference this summer in Boston, MA. Contact Mark at mark@halpern.com

Walking in the Footsteps of My Great Great Great Grandparents:
A Visit to My German Ancestral Towns Through the Generosity of Cousin Uli:
A Postscript

by Joan F. Pollak

After the formal presentation of “Misa’s Fugue” at our February meeting, Chronicles editor, Evan Fishman, told me he was fascinated by my experience with my German sixth cousin, Uli, and asked me for more information: How did we find each other and how did our family backgrounds connect? He also requested a photo of Uli and me together (below) which I had neglected to include in my article that appeared in the recent winter 2012-2013 issue of Chronicles, vol. 29-4, pp. 11-13).

Of course, when you are a genealogist there is never a short answer to a question about how you found your cousin. There are always a lot of seeds planted that may yield a few sprouts and many nets cast that catch a few fish. All this occurs over the period of many years. In 1994 I was researching the town of Tarboro, North Carolina, where my ancestors, the Heilbroners had settled during the German emigration to the U.S. in the 1860’s. (see Avotaynu, vol. xix, #4, winter 2003, pp. 59-62).

In 1869 my great great grandfather, Louis Heilbroner, who emigrated from Binswangen, Bavaria, married my great great grandmother Fannie Alexander who emigrated from Hengstfeld, Wurttemberg. I had sent a query to USGenWeb specific...
to Edgecombe County, North Carolina which was subsequently read by a member of that county’s genealogy society who began to help me find family records. She pointed me towards volume II of *Edgecombe County*, which mentioned a Heilbroner ancestor. I contacted the author, Monika Fleming, a historian at the local community college, who was very interested in documenting the Jewish history of Tarboro.

Monika shared the emails of a previously unknown cousin, Peter, doing research on his Alexander family, and we learned that his great great grandmother, Rachel Alexander Feldenheimer, was the sister of my great great grandmother Fannie Alexander Heilbroner. Peter then connected me with other relatives of his who were also doing family research on the Tarboro ancestors, and Monika shared historical material from the local newspaper, census records and other local documents with all of us.

Fifteen years went by bringing us to 2009 when Uli was beginning to research his Jandorf ancestors. Rufen Jandorf, the great great grandfather of Fannie Alexander, was Uli’s direct ancestor as well as mine. Through internet postings, Uli found a cousin of Peter’s who had held on to my email for over ten years and thought I might have additional information on the Jandorfs. I actually had quite a bit from research I had commissioned in Germany tracing my Alexander family line back a number of generations which included a large branch of Jandorfs. My family tree already had included the name of Uli’s grandfather, and I was more than happy to share my information with him.

Uli’s story was gripping. He had only recently learned about who his grandfather was when his Christian, paternal grandmother, revealed to him that his father was fathered by a Jewish man named Moritz Jandorf. This affair presumably occurred around the time she was working in his house as a maid. The man, already married with a family, provided some child support but then left for the U.S. in 1933, and she never heard from him again.

Uli’s father, Heinz, was happily raised by his mother and stepfather and never inquired about his biological father. Additionally, his Christian identity saved his life during the Holocaust. Uli, however, was curious to learn more, especially because he’s an only child and doesn’t have a large family. His grandmother’s information started an extensive search for his genealogical roots.

After tracing his grandfather’s life in Germany extensively, Uli got stuck trying to find records in the United States. That’s when he found me through a cousin of Peter’s. I was drawn to the challenge of learning more about Uli’s grandfather who was my distant cousin and of perhaps finding more immediate family for Uli. I began to work with him on locating the census records available on Ancestry.com, which led us to the names of Uli’s half first cousins in the U.S., descendants of his grandfather Jandorf’s marriage. A public record search for a mere three dollars revealed the address of one of those half first cousins. Uli was then able to correspond with him and obtain their grandfather’s photograph and other limited information about their grandfather’s life in the U.S., all of which held great meaning for him.

And so when I began to plan a vacation to Berlin last year, Uli was quite anxious to have me visit him in Munich. You can reread my account about the wonderful trip through my ancestral German villages that we shared with our respective families, in the Winter 2012-2013 issue of *Chronicles*.

Joan F. Pollak has actively researched her family genealogy for the past 17 years. Her ancestors emigrated from Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, and Russia, and she has traced her ancestral towns on all family branches. Family names of interest include Heilbronner/Heilbroner, Alexander, Rund, Feigenbaum, Eichberg and Jandorf from Germany; Pollak, Steiner from Czech Republic; Reiter, Moskowitz/Muskovits from Hungary; Zuckerman/Zucker from Russia. Contact Joan at JFPollak@gmail.com

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**U.K. RESEARCHER LOOKING FOR PHILADELPHIA RELATIVES**

by Evan Fishman

Helping another genealogist further his or her research is a generous act; helping that person find living relatives is an even more gratifying accomplishment.

Beginning in May 2009 I was feverishly involved in helping Jeanette from London, U.K. locate Philadelphia relatives with whom there had been no contact in over fifty years. The serendipitous sequence of discoveries that ensued proved fascinating along with its share of roller coaster emotional moments. On May 24, I read a request on the JewishGen discussion group digest in which Jeanette mentioned she was looking for three relatives, all from the same branch of her family. She later provided a photograph from 1956 of the three Schubach sisters and their father, taken when Jeanette’s mother visited them in Philadelphia. This was a key piece to the puzzle that unfolded.
Within a span of fifteen hours that day, Jeanette and I exchanged more than ten email messages during which I became quite familiar with the details of her search and concomitant family history. She had done extensive research in locating death and burial records about the parents and siblings of these three relatives but was stymied in her efforts to establish direct contact with any of them because they all had unlisted telephone numbers.

During the course of that Sunday afternoon I perused an online version of Allen Meyers’ *The Jewish Community of West Philadelphia* and, to my amazement, one of Jeanette’s long lost cousins was mentioned in connection with a popular eatery in that section of the city. In addition I posted a message from Jeanette to JGSGP members in which she explained the relevant family tree, gave the names of various Philadelphia relatives, living and deceased, and asked for help in locating living relatives currently residing in Philadelphia whom she hoped to meet at the upcoming Jewish genealogy conference being held in our fair city. I also mentioned the name of the eatery cited in Allen Meyers’ book.

I was so intrigued with this story that I used www.switchboard.com to see if one of the individuals associated with the eatery still lived in the greater Philadelphia area. Sure enough, one of the results indicated a man with that name living in Marlton, New Jersey. I contacted him, and he was the perfect match. Moreover, Dennis volunteered to do some detective work to locate Jeanette’s elusive cousin, Ed. In addition, within days, JGSGP member, Harold Yaskin, wrote to Jeanette with helpful information, and JGSGP President, Fred Blum, utilizing his uncanny skills as a private investigator, provided Jeanette with addresses for all three of the cousins she was seeking.

We also hit pay dirt when Dennis contacted Jeanette two days after the whole caper began with the following message:

Jeanette,
It took a few minutes, but I found Ed just now. Just got off the phone with him. He doesn’t use a computer, so we had to do it the "old fashioned way": Talking!!!

I haven’t been in touch with him for more than 30 years, so it was great talking to him!

He doesn’t publish his phone number, but if you'll give me yours, I’ll pass it on to him and he can get in touch with you. . . .He also knew about the Jewish genealogy convention this August: they discussed it at his local synagogue recently.

This sort of stuff is amazing, no?? . . .

Regards
Dennis

PS: he told me that he has this same picture, by the way!!!

Jeanette in turn replied:

Dennis (cc Evan - for info)

It's almost 5 am - I just got up and saw your email, I am really excited to hear this wonderful news. I am so very grateful to you for your help. Oh wow! I am very excited to have finally found someone who knew this part of
my family.

In subsequent communication, Dennis indicated that he knew Ed very well even though Ed was much older. Ed lived around the corner from the sandwich shop his father owned. Dennis’ mother also knew Ed, Ed’s mother, and a couple of her sisters, all of whom lived in close proximity to Dennis’ family. Since the sandwich shop was very popular, Dennis’ parents “knew everyone.”

Jeanette and her husband, Mark, arrived in Philadelphia, and I met them the first day of the conference. Sadly Jeanette hadn’t had any direct communication from her cousin, even though Dennis had provided him with contact information. As a result she was crestfallen and had little hope that she would meet Ed.

Late Monday afternoon I ran into Jeanette and Mark, and she was beaming. Dennis had convinced Ed to come to the hotel on Wednesday to meet his “new” cousin. Jeanette invited me to join them because I had been so involved, and she indicated that Dennis would also be there. Forty-eight hours later, I linked with Jeanette and Mark, and finally met Dennis who was a lively, gracious person. We waited anxiously for Ed’s arrival but Dennis was concerned he wouldn’t recognize him because he hadn’t seen him in decades.

Finally Ed appeared, and he and Jeanette conferred quietly and privately. In the meantime I schmoozed with Dennis. When I phoned initially, his wife answered, speaking with a decided Israeli accent. I asked him about his Israel connections and learned that he and his wife had met while employed at the Plaza Hotel in Tiberias. I mentioned that a former roommate of mine was the longtime comptroller at the flagship property in Jerusalem, and when I revealed his name, Dennis enthusiastically replied that he knew him! Jewish geography reigns!

Jeanette had some photographs taken at this momentous occasion and insisted that Dennis and I be included. At the conclusion of the conference Jeanette told me that she and Ed had a cordial first meeting, after initial hesitation on his part. It turned out that Ed was serving in the military when Jeanette’s mother visited his mother in Philadelphia in 1956. She never told him about any British relatives, and consequently he was suspect when Dennis first told him about Jeanette. Jeanette, Mark, and Ed enjoyed dinner together the following evening. She thanked me profusely. I saw Jeanette at the Washington, D.C. conference in 2011, and she happily informed me that she and Ed were still in contact. Her gratitude extended to helping me with research requiring access to 19th century English records. One random act of genealogical kindness begat another. ❖

Evan Fishman is editor of “Chronicles” and has always been interested in learning about his extended family. He began to methodically research his family history in 2000 and has been amazed by the stories and experiences he’s encountered. Some of the surnames he’s researching include Mandelstein, Lissner, Adelman, Pressisen, Fishman, Udin, Burstein, Winarsky, all of which (except Fishman) originate in present day Ukraine. Evan also does private genealogical research.

Contact Evan at: editor@jgsgp.org

BRICK WALL QUERIES
Jan Sokolovsky, Jerusalem asks for help as follows:

I received your name from Shalom Bronstein, who suggested that I write to you about my maternal grandfather, Friedman Benjamin, who was admitted to U.S. citizenship in Philadelphia in 1887, at the 4th Court of Common Pleas, a federal court. I have the original certificate, but it is framed, and I can’t copy or scan it at home. There is no index number. It occurred on the eighth day of some month, but the month is blank.

Here is what I know:
He was born in Suvalk, which was then in Lithuania. According to his death certificate from Chicago in 1926, he was born in November 1854, but according to his gravestone, he was born on November 18, 1855. His name was originally Ben Zion Friedmansky, and his father’s name as listed in his death certificate was Zalman Friedmansky. I believe he was a rabbi. However, at some point during his immigration to America, the name was reversed, and he became Friedman Benjamin. My mother’s maiden name was Rose Benjamin.

The citizenship certificate from Philadelphia says “minor blank” in the upper right hand corner, which
from the text means that he arrived in the U.S. before he was 21, before 1874 or so. This is consistent with family lore that he left home when he was quite young. He may have stopped in Glasgow before arriving in the U.S. I believe he may have had cousins in Philadelphia, or even an older married sister, whose name was Wolffson. I'm looking for a picture from that family to him, which I've seen many times.

By September 1893, he had married my grandmother in Chicago and lived there the remainder of his life.

I have three major inquiries: First, I would like to obtain the back-up data for his citizenship application, including information on his arrival in the U.S. How would I do that?

Second, I would like to know if there is a record of a previous marriage. According to what I recall, I believe he had been married before, for about 10 years, and had no children, so they were divorced, and then he married my grandmother, who lived in Chicago. Perhaps he was introduced to her by a landsman, since she was also born in Suvalk. He was in his late thirties when he married my grandmother, so the story [about a previous marriage] may be true.

And if possible, I would like to know with whom he lived while he was in Philadelphia. Is there any listing of him in city directories, etc? How would I find this information? I would be very grateful for any information or suggestions that you can give me.

**JGSGP reply:**

_**Much of the information you’re seeking is potentially available at the Philadelphia City Archives.**_

According to JewishGen FAQ (http://www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/faq.html#Naturalization) it’s essential that you know in which court the naturalization occurred. Since you have that information you can search naturalization records of City and County Courts for the period 1794-1904 at the City Archives. Naturalization records from Federal courts located in the Philadelphia area can be found at the Philadelphia branch of the National Archives. Finally, the LDS (Latter Day Saints) have microfilmed naturalization papers (up thru 1929) at many county courthouses. To find them, look in the FHLC Locality section under the heading: "[State], [County] - NATURALIZATION AND CITIZENSHIP". Hopefully, images of naturalization documents that preceded the certificate of citizenship (which you have) will be available.

The City Archives holds marriage records from July 1, 1860 to December 31, 1885 for which it issues certificates and copies of marriages from the Orphans Court Division that date from 1886 to 1915. You might find a record of your grandfather’s alleged first marriage there.

Philadelphia city directories are available at the City Archives, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and the Free Library of Philadelphia.

Since you live in Israel, you’ll need to resort to email communication with these various repositories and rely on their respective abilities to perform research on your behalf. Check their respective websites for email addresses. Let us know how you make out. Perhaps a JGSGP member will come forward and offer to help you.

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**Ian McCrimmon posted the following query:**

My 4th great grandfather, Mattias Simon, came to Philadelphia from Wurttemberg sometime before 1860. In 1861 he lived at 608 North 3rd Street in Philadelphia and was a “rag man.” Growing up my mother’s great aunt always said her father was Jewish. He died young so we don't really have any information on him other than some census records. My question is: Would there be any records that would list him in a congregation or burial [cemetery] to prove whether the family folklore [that he was Jewish] was true or not?

**JGSGP response:**

The first method would be to try to obtain his death certificate from the Philadelphia City Archives. The death certificates usually have the name of the undertaker and the name of the cemetery in which the burial took place. You could also check Philadelphia County court house records which maintain death records prior to 1906.

If you fail to find the certificate, I would suggest checking all the Jewish burial grounds that existed at approximate time of his death. There were far fewer cemeteries for Jewish burials then. The JGSGP website has an online Resource Guide which provides the date/time period in which the cemeteries were founded and current contact information. You could also check the archives at Congregation Rodeph Shalom and Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel.
HOW TO ENJOY YOUR FAMILY PHOTOS NOW

by Marge Farbman

We have all our photos in boxes or albums, saving them for future generations. Will those future generations enjoy them? Will they appreciate the photos that we have so meticulously preserved? Will they care?

Perhaps if we "use" the photos now, our children and grandchildren will learn to appreciate them. Saving the photos in scrapbooks or boxes cuts them off from easy access by family now. So how to do it? How to make them accessible? The best way is to make copies! Copy family photos of parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, make copies, and then have them sized to a similar dimension. Frame the copies in complimentary frames and hang them on the wall so as to resemble a family tree. Be sure to include your children and grandchildren’s pictures, shifting into color in the modern generations if you have color photos. Let the kids enjoy their heritage, ask questions, and get a feel for their own family history.

If your photo history goes back far enough to include the generations with many children and therefore a large extended family, make your photocopies smaller, perhaps 5”x 7” or 3”x 5” so you can include all or most of them.

Your family tree can be multiple trees or a mini-forest! Perhaps your forest can grow up a stairway wall, or down a long hallway, or around the walls of your family room. You could draw trees with branches placed to hold the photos in family groupings. . . .

If this forest is getting out of hand, make smaller photocopies, mount them on photo-mounting paper cut slightly larger than the photo itself, and attach them without a frame or slip them into clear photo protector envelopes to keep them clean. Your paper-mounted photos can be stuck to the wall with wall putty that the teens use to mount posters on their bedroom walls.

Enjoy your family tree or family forest. Use the opportunity of getting together at family gatherings for holidays or celebrations to recount your personal family history.

Marge Farbman has a varied and concurrent career background: 30 years in interior design, 15 years as a fundraiser, 12 years as a scrapbooking teacher; consultant and scrapbook designer for clients. In the odd hours not taken by these enterprises, she and her husband have raised four children, enjoy eight grandchildren and managed to do a bit of gardening and traveling to boot! Marge loves sending video email to family, friends and clients to keep them updated on her latest adventures. You can reach Marge at: margefarb@aol.com or 610-291-8988.

“MISA’S FUGUE”
FEBRUARY JGSGP MEETING HIGHLIGHT

by Felicia Mode Alexander

In a previous issue of Chronicles, I wrote about the world premiere of the documentary film “Misa’s Fugue.” I’m now thrilled to share this follow-up story. The original article can be found at: http://www.jgsgp.org/Documents/Chronicles_Vol_29-2_Summer_2012.pdf

For those who did not see the first piece on this film, let me recap. “Misa’s Fugue” is a full length documentary that chronicles the life of Frank “Misa” Grunwald, a small child at the onset of World War II, who was displaced from his home in Prague, incarcerated at the Terezin Ghetto with his family and eventually sent to Auschwitz, where his mother and brother were murdered. The brilliance of this film is found in both the storyteller and in those who worked so hard to bring his story to life on screen. Frank, eloquently and candidly, speaks on camera about the events that so ravaged his life, then and now.

His story is brought to the world by a cadre of students and teachers from the Fleetwood Area High School (FAHS) under the leadership of FAHS teachers/producers Jennifer Gilbert Goss and Sean D. Gaston. The film reflects a truly collaborative effort of many different departments at FAHS. Students in Communication/Media classes edited the film, while others transcribed Frank’s testimony into computers; alumni volunteered to help students compose and perform the score for the film, and talented young people produced the artwork which was utilized as background in various ways.

In February a full house of JGSGP members and guests were treated to our own private screening of “Misa’s Fugue,” followed by a question and answer session with its producers. It seems hard to believe that a little over two years ago, our society first learned of this film, still in pre-production. At that time, my friend Jennifer Gilbert Goss
and her colleague Sean D. Gaston attended one of our general meetings, showed us the official trailer for “Misa’s Fugue” and shared their plans for the feature length film being made with their students at Fleetwood Area High School outside Reading, PA.

This endeavor was definitely of interest to us, and JGSGP became a sponsor. JGSGP members overwhelmingly endorsed continued support for the film at the February 10th meeting and posed many new questions to Sean and Jennifer! In fact, it was nearly impossible to break up the meeting; so many people stayed to chat and ask about the impact of the film on the students and on Misa’s own family (see end note). We are proud to be among Jennifer and Sean’s early and continuing sponsors.

With over 1000 copies of the film in circulation and a second printing ready to go, this initially humble endeavor is starting to have a greater reach than just eastern Pennsylvania. “Misa’s Fugue” has been selected for screening at the Phoenix Film Festival in April and is also an official entry into the prestigious New Hope Film Festival this coming August! It has also received critical acclaim in the press.

Fans of the film can follow its trajectory and post comments as well. There is a website: www.Misa’sFugue.com which includes links for teachers to obtain classroom use copies of the DVD and study guides or for generous souls to donate. The producers do not draw any salary from this film and welcome donations to offset their expenses. (Donations can be made securely on the website as well.)

“Misa’s Fugue” is now active on social networking sites using the following links:
Twitter: https://twitter.com/misasfugue:
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/pages/Misas-Fugue/214696225214152
YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/user/MisasFugueFAHS
The YouTube site includes film clips and interviews on local television stations!

Jennifer and Sean deserve our gratitude for bringing Frank’s story to us all. Once all production costs are covered, their eventual goal is to stream the film on the internet. “Misa’s Fugue” would then be accessible to any school, college or community group. End note: Until the film was screened for Frank’s grown children, they never knew much about his life during the war years. Like many other Holocaust survivors, he did not want to burden them with this information. Now they know. This film is Frank’s powerful legacy for his children, grandchildren and all of us.

A special education teacher in the East Windsor, NJ Regional School District, Felicia Mode Alexander has taught both middle and high school world history and has been actively involved in Holocaust education, connecting her students with survivors and escorting them to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington D.C. each year. Her passion for genealogy research and Holocaust education came to fruition when she discovered a long lost cousin, the only child of a sole survivor, living in Israel.

Originally from the Boston area Felicia has been actively researching her family for more than twenty years. She is a member of the Jewish Genealogical Societies of Greater Philadelphia and Boston and is researching Mode, Shuman, Abrahams, Bornstein in Berlin and Posen; Grossman, Longbord and Taliafsky in Kiev region.
You can contact Felicia at fmode@verizon.net

A MESSAGE FROM JEWISHGEN

Dear Friends, 1 million records. More than 41,000 new users. Nearly 8,000 donors.

These figures demonstrate tremendous accomplishment by JewishGen in 2012. As we wrote a few months ago, we are actively growing our databases to meet the demand of our constantly expanding user base. Second, our users continue to appreciate the free service provided by JewishGen, and are willing to financially support its mission.

There is still so much more to do.
We added more than 1 million records last year (surpassing 21 million records in total!), hundreds of Yizkor Book translations and many other important items of interest to Jewish genealogists - but there remain millions of records throughout the world that have yet to be digitized, indexed, and made searchable on JewishGen.

Some for-profit companies seek to obtain these records, and then charge to access them. It is our belief that Jewish family research should be freely accessible, and we are doing everything we can to keep it that way.

With this in mind, we are proud to publish our "2012 Review," highlighting JewishGen's accomplishments over the course of the previous year. As you may have noticed, many of our most popular features (such as the Family Finder and Burial Registry) now have distinctively branded logos, making it easier to identify the information you are viewing. A project that has generated particular enthusiasm is our "Memorial Plaques" project, whereby volunteers throughout the world are indexing the names appearing on Memorial (Yizkor) plaques in their synagogues.

As always, major and significant improvements (with the rapid advance of technology, these improvements are always significant) have continued to be made "behind the scenes" to help ensure an easy, powerful, and secure web experience.

This past July, JewishGen's ViewMate project won the "Outstanding Program or Project Award" at the IAJGS conference in Paris. We'd like to congratulate the team of JewishGen volunteers who created and maintain ViewMate: Sam Eneman, Administrator; Gary Sandler, Programmer; and Bernard Kouchel, who envisioned the original concept.

Finally, and most importantly, our loyal users continued to provide us with a strong base of financial support - we received nearly 8,000 donations last year - allowing us to operate within our budget for the third year in a row despite global economic uncertainty.

Running more than 40 pages, the 2012 Review covers these, and other topics as well. Last year's report was viewed more than 20,000 times, and we are confident that this year's report will reach an even wider audience. The 2012 Review can be accessed here: http://issuu.com/jewishgen/docs/jg_annual_0221?mode=window

Regardless of your level of financial support, we are glad that you are part of the global JewishGen community - the JewishGen family - and we hope you will enjoy reading about our accomplishments in 2012, along with our plans for what we hope will be an even better 2013.

Warren Blatt, Managing Director & Avraham Groll, Director of Business Operations, JewishGen

FYI
FAMILY FACES IN UNEXPECTED PLACES

Learn about materials in Temple University Libraries' Special Collections Research Center that document Philadelphia residents, including documents in the Urban Archives, Philadelphia Jewish Archives, and Temple University Archives.

Did your ancestor work for the Pennsylvania Railroad? Live in a Philadelphia neighborhood? Pay for tickets to bring a relative from Ukraine? Attend Temple? Temple's archives may hold the answers to your questions.

Wed., May 29, 2013 – 12 noon to 2pm
National Archives at 9th & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA
Please register: Phone: 215-606-0100
E-mail: philadelphia.archives@nara.gov

SUGGESTIONS WHEN YOU (THINK YOU) CAN'T FIND ANY RECORDS

By Carol Rombro Rider
(Taken from JewishGen's March 19, 2013 discussion group digest)

If you can't go in the front door, you must learn to go in the side door, back door or crawl space. You may **never** find the exact record on the **exact** person you are looking for. I would ask you how common a name FALKSON is. [Are] the records you are finding [from the same] city or shtetl [that YOUR] FALKSON family came from? Are you keeping a note of everyone you are finding with the surname?
If you can’t find the person you are searching for, begin to go sideways. Who were they related to? What about the other surnames you mentioned? Make a lateral family tree. Eventually you will be able to start to connect families.

You may never be able to do it with 100% certainty, as you will find old records are much more fluid than what you are used to in the present time. Keep at it. Don’t give up. This is not a hobby for someone who wants things done "now". It just ain’t gonna happen like that......and that is why the chase is often more exciting than the find.

I think this is as good a time as any to remind you and many others to go back to the JewishGen Info Files and re-read Dan Leeson's "A Jewish Genealogical Fable." ❖

Carol Rombro Rider’s "addiction" to genealogy began thirty-five years ago. A native Baltimorean, she’s attended many Jewish genealogy conferences and enjoys teaching "newcomers" the strategies she’s learned.

Please contact her at cromrider@aol.com.

SPEAKERS BUREAU UPDATE
JGSGP WORKSHOPS & LECTURES

Overview: One of our missions as a society is to educate the community about genealogy. We’ve successfully offered many programs/workshops geared to various levels of knowledge and expertise. They were all highly interactive and encouraged a lot of exchange between facilitator and participants.

Each program can be tailored to the specific needs of your group. Costs are modest, and relevant materials are provided. Spread the word amongst your friends, relatives, and organizational colleagues that we offer workshops and presentations.

For information about the continuing outreach efforts of the JGSGP Speakers Bureau please see our web site at: http://www.jgsgp.org/outreach/
Please print, complete and mail this form with your check to our NEW ADDRESS:
JGSGP, 1657 The Fairway, #145, Jenkintown, PA 19046

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<th>New Member</th>
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<td>Family - $35 (2 Members, Same Household)</td>
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<td>Sponsor - $50</td>
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<td>Patron - $100</td>
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<td>Non-Resident $15 (more than 100 miles from Phila.)</td>
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(Dues are for the calendar year, January 1-December 31. Members joining after September 30 will receive membership through the end of the following year.) Contributions and dues are tax deductible within the limits of the law.

What are the most important surnames and their associated ancestral towns that you are researching?
Provide up to six surnames, towns and countries which will later be shared with other members.

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<th>Surname</th>
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JGSGP CALENDAR & REMINDERS

Please note that our mailing address has changed to: 1657 The Fairway, #145 Jenkintown, PA 19046
Please direct all U.S. mail correspondence to this new address.
Look for information about other IAJGS member societies: http://www.iajgs.org/members/members.html
Join the JGSGP Facebook group: http://tinyurl.com/jgsgp. Our members are continually posting fascinating news and developments which impact on genealogy and important related areas.

The first thirty minutes of each meeting are devoted to browsing reference books and getting help from mentors.

Program details will be posted on the JGSGP website as soon as they are complete: www.jgsgp.org

Monday, May 13, 7:00 PM at Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel (KI)
8339 Old York Road • Elkins Park PA 19027
Ellen Cassedy, author of We Are Here: Memories of the Lithuanian Holocaust
Go to: http://www.ellencassedy.com/ for more information.

Sunday, June 9, 1-5 PM, JGSGP Genealogy Fair, Congregation Tifereth Israel of Lower Bucks County
2909 Bristol Road, Bensalem, PA 19020
Check our web site for complete details: http://jgsgp.org

DUES REMINDER
If you haven’t paid your dues for 2013, please complete the Membership Renewal form on the preceeding page.
Send it promptly with your check to our new mailing address.
Remember: paid-up members receive the electronic version of Chronicles as it is published.