

DOROT דורות

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Summer – Fall 2001

Ports and Passages

South Street Seaport Museum, the Eldridge Street Project and the Ellis Island Immigration Museum are jointly presenting a lecture series entitled “Ports and Passages.” Each program focuses on a single European port of embarkation, how the business of immigration was organized in that port, and what immigrants experienced on shipboard as they crossed the Atlantic to a new life. Norman Brouwer, the Seaport Museum’s maritime historian, provides an historical narrative, enhanced by oral histories and dramatic readings.

The schedule: Feb. 19–Liverpool, England; May 21–Genoa, Italy; June 19–Hamburg, Germany. All programs are 6:00-7:30 PM. The Feb. program is at the South Street Seaport Museum, Whitman Gallery, 209 Water Street. The May and June programs are at the Eldridge Street Project, 12 Eldridge Street. Admission: \$6 adults, \$4 students and seniors. Information: 212-748-8600; www.southstseaport.org.

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Toronto 2002: A Meeting Place

22nd IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy – August 4-9, 2002

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto) has completed arrangements to hold the 22nd IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy at the Sheraton Centre Hotel in downtown Toronto on August 4-9, 2002. Peter Jassem, Programme Chair, has announced a Call for Speakers:

“Many of you have addressed previous conferences, some are professional speakers who offer interesting presentations at most conferences, but there are also those who have gained expertise in certain areas of Jewish genealogy and would like to share their knowledge with others. Some of you may know of distinguished speakers, researchers and scholars whom this release will not reach. Please feel free to forward it to them.

“We would like to invite you all to submit your proposals for presentations. We are planning a conference that we hope will be challenging and memorable, with topics covering genealogy, history, cultural heritage, genetics, geography, database management, publishing—a wide spectrum to advance the pursuits of the hundreds of Jewish genealogists who will be attending the conference.

“Please do not limit your imagination. All submissions will be carefully evaluated and innovative subject matter will be very welcome. Those of you who wish to repeat past presentations are asked to provide updates and new visual material. We are also open to suggestions for speakers on subjects that may not have been sufficiently explored in previous conferences.

“Submissions are to be sent by *February 28* to: 2002program@jgstoronto.ca or mailed to Program 2002, c/o Peter Jassem, 178 Dunblaine Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5M 2S5, Canada. Your proposal should include the following:

- complete name, address, telephone and e-mail information
- title of proposed presentation(s)
- a preliminary summary not to exceed 150 words
- a brief biographical sketch of approximately 150 words, highlighting your expertise on the subject of your proposed talk, and listing any publications and past presentations, including subject and year of delivery
- preferred method of presentation (for example, slide show) and special needs

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National Conferences in 2002

- National Genealogical Society Conference in the States – Milwaukee, WI – May 15-18, 2002.
www.ngsgenealogy.org/2002cover.htm
- International Roots Conference – Dearborn, MI - July 14-19, 2002
- Federation of Genealogical Societies – Ontario, CA – August 7-10, 2002.
www.fgs.org/2002conf/fgs-2002.htm

Ellis Island Database

Stephen P. Morse has added two features to his site that allows searching the Ellis Island Database in one step. These features apply only to the “Jewish Passengers” version of his search engine at <http://home.pacbell.net/spmorse/ellis/ellisjw.html>.

The first new feature allows the user to specify a range of years of birth for the person sought. Previously it was only possible to specify an age range. The second new feature is the ability to specify how many hits can appear on each page. Previously the system would display no more than 25 hits at a time; a maximum of 1,000 is now allowed.

One of the most powerful aspects of Morse’s one-step webpage is that it is practical to search using only the initial character of both given name and surname if you can provide such additional information as gender, approximate age, and approximate year of arrival.

In the Nov. 4, 2001 edition of *Nu? What’s New? News About Jewish Genealogy*, editor Gary Mokotoff gives this example: “Requesting all persons whose given name starts with G and whose surname starts with M, who is a single male, between 15-20 years old, and came between 1900-1905, generated only 25 hits at the Jewish site. It is estimated that about one-third of all Jewish immigrants were not classified as Hebrew but were identified with their country’s ethnicity (Russian, Polish, German, etc.) Using the same parameters on Morse’s Non-Jewish search page at <http://home.pacbell.net/spmorse/ellis/ellis.html>, but adding the qualification that the person’s ethnicity must be Hebrew, Polish or Russian...generated...95 hits.”

[*Nu? What’s New?* provides excellent tips for Jewish genealogical research. To be added to this e-mail list, go to www.avotaynu.com/nuwhatsnew.htm.]

Toronto 2002: A Meeting Place

(continued from page 1)

“Should you be selected upon review of all submissions, you will be asked to provide a formal summary and biographical information for the conference syllabus, confirm the title of your talk, and indicate any technical requirements and time restrictions in the event you are not available for the entire conference.”

The registration fee will be waived for all those accepted as speakers. Requests for Special Interest Group and Birds of a Feather meetings should also be submitted to the same address by the Feb. 28 deadline and must include the number of expected participants. The official website for the conference is still in preparation. Registration will start in early 2002. In the meantime, updates on the conference are available at the website of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto) at www.jgstoronto.ca (click on “Conferences”). All inquiries other than programme submissions should be sent to info@jgstoronto.ca.

My Trip to Ukraine, May 2001

by Linda Cantor

Both of my maternal grandparents left their home *shtetlekh* in what is now Ukraine in 1910. I thought it was time to return and investigate these places which I had grown up hearing about. When my friend and fellow genealogist, Lucille Gudis, suggested a trip together, I jumped at the chance to finally “return home.”

After posting a message on JewishGen asking for recommendations for guides and receiving many replies, we decided to follow the advice of the many who highly praised Alexander Dunai and, after an email correspondence with him, hired him as our guide and driver. Alex met us at our first stop, Cracow, Poland, which was a sightseeing rather than genealogical stop for us. We explored Cracow, which is an interesting old city, Kasimierz, the old Jewish section, the Jewish cemetery, and spent part of a day visiting Auschwitz. (Check the Jewish Records Indexing–Poland Project, www.jewishgen.org/JRI-PL, for cemetery and vital records for Cracow.)

From Cracow, we drove to Ukraine, passing through Rzesow and Jaroslaw on our way to Lviv.

Despite reading and hearing horror stories about Ukrainian border crossings, we went ahead after assurances from Alex that it would be fine. He recommended crossing on a Sunday when truck traffic would be light and the crossing, including leaving Poland and entering Ukraine, took twenty minutes. The entire trip took us about four and a half hours. It was a pleasant drive (in Alex’s comfortable VW station wagon) and much easier than the alternative of flying from Cracow to Warsaw and then Warsaw to Lviv. (There are no direct flights.)

Lviv is a lovely old city and I had no trouble visualizing the Lemberg of my grandmother’s youth while looking at all the old turn-of-the-20th century buildings. It is somewhat rundown and could use a great infusion of money to spruce up old buildings but the Hapsburg heritage is obvious. There isn’t much of a Jewish community left but we did visit the one remaining active synagogue as well as the ruins of the

“Goldene Royz” synagogue, destroyed by the Germans during World War II, and the memorial to the Lviv residents who were killed in the Holocaust.

From Lviv, Alex and I drove to Uzhgorod, where I have family living, while Lucille visited other Galician towns of interest to her—Borislav, Rozhnyatov and Drohobych. The drive through the Carpathians to Uzhgorod was lovely and I enjoyed the scenery, including the old men and women selling pickled mushrooms and fresh strawberries and cherries all along the roadside. We took a quick look at downtown Uzhgorod, including the synagogue, but since it was locked, we could only look at the outside. Then we went to visit my cousins, the Krainers.

I now have to back up and describe how I found my cousins. I knew that my grandfather had eight siblings who remained in Ukraine but there had been no contact since the early 1930s. My great-uncle Berel “found” two of these siblings and visited them in the early 1960s. I was a teenager and not interested, so asked no questions. Yes, I know—if only.... By the time I became interested, both my grandfather and great-

uncle were gone, and there was no one to ask any questions. I searched for them in Israel and in Brighton Beach but never had any luck.

One day several years ago, I read a posting on JewishGen describing a trip to Polonnoye, which is next to my grandfather’s town of Poninka. I contacted the writer and she gave me the name of the head of the Jewish community in

Polonnoye. I wrote to him and he was kind enough to visit Poninka and find people who knew my family. One local resident, Sonia Sharko, was able to provide me with the history of my family, who was killed in the Holocaust, who survived, and even the name and address of one of my mother’s first cousins in Israel. Bingo, I had hit pay dirt. I have been corresponding with cousin Mischa in Israel since, and through him have found more of the family. Most have now left Ukraine, either for Israel or Germany. But one family was left and now living in Uzhgorod.

As we pulled up to the Krainers’ door in Uzhgorod, the entire family was there to greet me. The immediate feelings of warmth and kinship were



My Trip to Ukraine, May 2001 continued

apparent through all the language barriers. My cousin Inna, who is my generation although somewhat older than I, her husband Anatoly, their daughter Larissa and her husband Mikhail and their daughters, Erica and Yula, were all there to meet the American cousin. Inna's grandmother, Dina, and my grandfather, Morris, were brother and sister, making us second cousins.

Inna and Larissa had prepared a feast for us, cooking and baking all kinds of delicacies, including homemade pickles, pickled mushrooms, stuffed cabbage, chicken soup and noodles, and on and on. Everything was delicious, and Inna spent the evening encouraging Alex and me to eat. It was like having a Jewish grandmother all over again! Of course we shared photos. I had brought copies of photos of the American branch for them, and they showed me photos of my grandfather's siblings and my mother's first cousins, none of which I had ever seen before (and which I successfully photographed). I was very close to my grandfather, as he lived with us while I was growing up, and I knew that he was there with me that evening in Uzhgorod.

We returned the next morning for breakfast and a tearful goodbye. Only 19-year-old Erica could speak English, so most of our conversations were translated by Alex. But we managed to convey our feelings of happiness in finally meeting. I can only hope that we will do so again one day.

Alex and I then left and drove to Ivano-Frankivsk, Stanislaw in my grandparents' time. Lucille met us there and we continued our tour through Galicia. The next day we drove through Burstyn and Rohatyn on our way to my grandmother's town of Bukaczowze. (See www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/rohatyn/rohatyn.htm for more information.) In Rohatyn we visited the Holocaust memorial on the site of the mass grave, where most of my grandmother's siblings and their families were slaughtered in 1942. I grew up knowing their names and faces from family photos. I am named for one of my great-aunts and there I was standing at her grave. I don't have the words to tell you how I felt. As a history teacher I have taught the story of the Holocaust countless times. As a genealogist I have thought about it many times. But standing at that place where my Mandel family was actually killed brought it home in a way that nothing else ever has.

My mother's first cousin, Sol Mandel, a survivor, had drawn a map of Bukaczowze for me. As we drove into town, the first thing that I saw was the school that Sol had attended. The children were on their lunch recess and we, of course, became an instant object of interest and curiosity. They were all studying English

and were able to answer a few simple questions. Since there was now a mob around us, the adults came to see what was happening. When Alex told an older woman why we were there, she immediately told him that the Mandels had been in the meat business. She even remembered that one of the Mandels who survived had moved to Poland after the war. She was right on both items. She told us to wait until she had led her cow home, and then she would come with us and show us around. (When, after returning home, I told this story to my cousin Sol and mentioned Hanna's name, he instantly remembered who she was. Sixty years didn't seem to affect either of their memories.)

Hanna took us to the site of the Jewish cemetery, which was destroyed by the Soviets, who removed the stones to use for other purposes. She also pointed out where most of the Jewish families had lived. Most of the old houses were gone as they had been destroyed by Russian bombing during the war. The town was very run down and its population was now 2200, down from the 3000 it had been before the war, when it was from one-third to one-half Jewish. We asked at the town hall if there were any records but were told that they were all in Lviv. In fact, some records are in the Archives in Lviv and some 20th-century records are located in the Archives in Warsaw. (Alex had found a few vital records and some school records at the Lviv Archives. Although they were few in number, they did bring me back to my great-great-grandfather and great-great-grandmother. And I now know whom my great-aunt, whom I was named for, was named for.) JRI-Poland is currently working on indexing the Bukaczowze records that are located in the Archiwum Glowne Akt Dawnych, the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw. You can get more information at www.jewishgen.org/JRI-PL/agad/index.htm.

Our next overnight stop was Krasylow, selected because it has a lovely hotel and is centrally located for visits to Polonnoye and Poninka. Poninka was my grandfather's town and I had heard him talk about it countless times. I was finally able to see it for myself. One of the first sights we encountered was the paper factory, where my grandfather had worked before he left in 1910. (It is still the main industry in town.) Once again, I walked around feeling that my grandfather Morris was with me.

We stopped at the post office to buy stamps and told the clerk why we were there. She became very excited because she was a school and childhood friend of my cousin Chava, who now lives in Israel. The postal clerk, Nadia, arranged for the postmaster to take over the counter, and she came with us to show us

My Trip to Ukraine, May 2001 continued

around and bring us to the people who knew my family. (As we discovered, even in Berdichev, a much larger community, it makes sense to go to the post office because the postal workers seem to know everyone in town.)

Nadia was able to show us the houses where my family had lived and brought us to visit the Sharkos, neighbors of my great-aunt and my great-uncle. Sonia Sharko had been the person who had first provided family information for me and I was looking forward to meeting her. However she had passed away three weeks before I came. We did visit with her husband, son and daughter-in-law, and granddaughter-in-law. All were lovely and were able to point out exactly where my family had lived. They had photos of my family going back to before the war. (I was able to take a photograph of a photograph of several of my mother's first cousins who died in the Holocaust.)

A funny little anecdote: I was relating a story that I remembered hearing after my great-uncle Berel had visited Poninka in the 1960s. His siblings were rather poor and he managed to get special permission from the Soviet authorities to buy a refrigerator for them. When Alex translated this story, Vladimir Sharko dragged us into his kitchen to show us "the refrigerator." When my family emigrated, they passed the refrigerator on to their friends, the Sharkos. We all had a good laugh at how this story was known on both sides of the Atlantic. Mr. Sharko also told us a part of the story that I had never heard before. When Berel and his wife, Leah, visited Poninka, they were accompanied by the KGB. Apparently Americans could not visit a small town on their own back in the 1960s. Today, of course, we were free to come and go as we pleased.

Next day, we visited the leader of the Jewish community in Polonnoye, who had done so much to help me find my Popokh family originally. He has been transcribing records from various local archives and has much information on the local Jewish community of Polonnoye, which includes Poninka. (Some of this is on the Polonnoye shtetlinks site, www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Polonnoye.) He escorted us to the Jewish cemetery in Polonnoye. With the help of the caretaker, we located the graves of two of my grandfather's siblings and several of my mother's first cousins. The modern cemetery is in good condition but the older part was destroyed during the war. The residents of the Polonnoye ghetto were forced to remove the stones so that they could be used for construction purposes.

We also visited the site of the mass grave of the Jewish population of Polonnoye, which now has a

memorial on it. (We were unable to visit the mass grave in Poninka because it is very inaccessible and difficult to get to.) I believe that some of my Popokh family were killed in each of the sites. Once again, it was an indescribable feeling to stand on the site of my family's grave and know what happened to them. Since my contact with Sonia Sharko and Mischa Popokh, I now know the names of all my Popokh great-aunts and uncles and cousins who died in the Holocaust. Again, the history which I knew only from books before, seemed much more real and relevant to me.

The rest of our trip was dedicated to Lucille's interests. We stopped in Berdichev, where her father was born, and Zhitomir, in order to visit the Archives there. (We stopped in two archives, both times without previous appointments. Yet the archivists in both Kiev and Zhitomir were friendly, helpful and more than willing to show us what records they had available.) Berdichev, which had over 100,000 Jews before the war, now has about 900. There is still an active synagogue, with an American rabbi, and a huge cemetery. The cemetery is totally overgrown and there are no records. (If you are interested in more information about Berdichev, subscribe to Berdichev-d-request@rootsweb.com.) All the hotels that we stayed in prior to Zhitomir were lovely, with modern conveniences and amenities. But in Zhitomir and Berdichev, we finally met up with the old Soviet Intourist hotels, i.e., horrible by our standards. In Zhitomir there was no hot water. And in Berdichev there was no water at all between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m.

We certainly did appreciate our lovely, if expensive, hotel in Kiev, our last stop. Kiev is a modern, bustling and rather sophisticated city. It would appear that much more capital has been invested in Kiev than in any other Ukrainian cities, which all seem rather run-down and in need of great infusions of money for care of buildings and streets. Kiev, on the other hand, seemed to be in much better shape, at least in the central part of the city.

In Kiev, we visited Babi Yar, where thousands of Jews were killed during the Holocaust, several synagogues, and all the usual sightseeing, including our souvenir buying on Andriyefsky Street. By this time, I was ready to go home, appreciating even more than I had before I left just how lucky I was to be part of the American branch of the family. Alex was a wonderful guide who understood our interests as genealogists, knew his way around, was a pleasure to spend time with, and generally looked after our every need and care. (You can contact him at dunai@dunai.lviv.ua.) I am very glad that I went to Ukraine and visited my maternal ancestral towns, got to meet my family and

My Trip to Ukraine, May 2001 continued

those who knew them, and was able to pay my respects to my family members who died in the Holocaust. I would like to think that my mother and my grandparents know that I was there and share my discoveries.

Helpful E-mail Addresses for Research in Ukraine

Archival Sources in Kharkov, Ukraine	www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/ua-khark.txt
Borislav, Drogobych, Sambor & Vicinity Research Group	www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/borislav2.txt
Ekaterinoslav Area Research Group	www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/ekat2.txt
Gesher Galicia	www.jewishgen.org/galicia
JewishGen	www.jewishgen.org
JRI-Poland / Polish State Archives Project /AGAD Archives Project	www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/agad/index.htm
Lviv Area Research Group	www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/lviv2.txt
ShtetLinks	www.jewishgen.org/shtetlinks/ukraine.html
Suchostav Region Research Group	www.jewishgen.org/shtetlinks/suchostav/SuchostavRegion/srrghome.html
Ukraine SIG	www.jewishgen.org/ukraine
Vital Records in Poland	www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/polandv.html
Yizkor Books	www.jewishgen.org/yizkor

Krakow Banns and Marriage Registers

The following report was provided by Judy Wolkovitch, Krakow Town Leader, JRI-Poland/JGS, Inc. (NY) project at the Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw.

Extracts of the 23,000 Krakow Banns and Marriage Registers (1879-1939) have been uploaded to the Jewish Records Indexing-Poland database and can now be searched via the JRI-Poland web site at www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl. Because the original registers are large, unwieldy and difficult to photocopy, and because a flood of orders for photocopies could overwhelm the staff at the Jewish Historical Institute (JHI), it was decided to fully extract these records. Thus, on-line search results include bride and groom, father and mother's names, mother's maiden name (where available), and town of birth. Search results also include notes indicating when handwriting was impossible to read. In such cases, researchers may want to order copies of the records and do their own investigation. The search results page for the Krakow Banns and Marriages links to an order form that can be sent to the Ronald S. Lauder Genealogy Project at the Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw. Researchers who would like copies of *their* parents', grandparents', etc. banns or marriage registration may order them.

A photograph of a typical register—and additional information on this and other projects at the JHI—is available on the Krakow project web page linked from the main JRI-Poland web page for the JGSNY/JHI project: www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/jri-jhi.htm.

A debt of gratitude is owed to many who made this terrific resource possible—starting with the Jewish

Genealogical Society, Inc. (New York), whose generosity enabled JRI-Poland to launch the project to index all records of genealogical value at the Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw. The Krakow Banns and Marriages are just the first of many projects.

We also would like to thank are Professor Feliks Tych, Director, Jewish Historical Institute, and Yale Reisner, Director, Ronald S. Lauder Genealogy Project, who have played vital roles in this project. Ania Przybyszewska, Yale's assistant, helped move the files up and back from Warsaw as data-entry progressed and the long quality-control phase lingered on. Adriana Choros, JRI-Poland's full-time transliterator at the Jewish Historical Institute, labored so intently to transcribe the data and to ensure that it would be as accurate as possible. Our appreciation also goes to Howard Fink, who did the extensive database manipulation to prepare the file for uploading. Finally we must thank Michael Tobias, who moved quickly to make the data live, and Stanley Diamond, Project Coordinator, Jewish Records Indexing-Poland.

Of course, a hearty "thank you" to all those who helped support the project in one way or another. We hope that this information will help many people in their search for their roots.

World War II "Old Men's" Draft Registrations

A volunteer project is underway at the National Archives-Northeast Region (New York) to alphabetize the World War II "old men's" draft registrations for Brooklyn. These cards are currently arranged alphabetically for each of the 200 local draft boards. There are more than 100,000 cards overall. This fourth registration (1942) applied to men born between April 28, 1877 and February 16, 1897, who were never intended to be drafted. This was a method to find out occupations in case their skills were needed for the war effort.

The cards record the following information: full name, place of residence, mailing address, telephone number, age, date of birth, town and country of birth, name and address of person who will always know address, employer's name and address, place of employment, physical description and signature. The "old men's" cards for Manhattan are already in alphabetical order for the entire borough and are open for research, along with the "old men's" cards for New Jersey, which are alphabetical for each county.

World War II draft registration cards for men born after February 16, 1897 are not available because of confidentiality. Other National Archives branches have the "old men's" records for the states in their respective geographical jurisdictions. The LDS Family History Library is microfilming the registration cards at National Archives branches in Chicago and Philadelphia. The records at the Boston and New York branches are expected to be filmed eventually.

If you would like to help with the Brooklyn alphabetization, ask the staff at the New York branch of the National Archives for details. The phone number is 212-337-1300.

New DORIS Commissioner

Brian G. Andersson, a professional genealogist, has been named Commissioner of the New York City Department of Records and Information Services by incoming mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. Brian had served previously as an assistant commissioner of DORIS under the Giuliani administration. The NYC Municipal Archives operates within DORIS.

Brooklyn Daily Eagle

The Brooklyn Public Library's Brooklyn Collection plans to digitize the microfilm of the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* for its first 62 years (1841-1902) and create a fully-searchable database that will be available online. The two-year, grant-funded project will employ

optical character recognition technology to enhance access to this historic newspaper. Eagle Online, funded by the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services, is expected to be available in 2003.

Lower East Side Tenement Museum

The Levines are coming! On February 5, 2002, the Museum will open its newest apartment: the home and garment shop of the Levine family. Jennie and Harris Levine immigrated to the U.S. from Poland in 1890. Like many newly arrived immigrants, Harris needed money but found few jobs: he could rent a pushcart and peddle, make cigars or enter the needle trades. Harris eventually transformed his apartment in 97 Orchard Street into a small dressmaking factory. The Museum is busy restoring the Levines' home and garment contracting shop to interpret a day in 1897. Follow the progress of the Levine apartment in the Museum's new web feature, *Making History*. Updated every two weeks, *Making History* contains pictures and puzzles that delve into the Museum's process of research and restoration. The URL is www.tenement.org/sweatshop.

History Books Digitized

A History of the City of Brooklyn and Kings County, by Stephen M. Ostrander and Alexander Black, published in 1894 in two volumes, may be read online at <http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/moa/browse.author/o.48.html> as part of Cornell University's Making of America (MOA) website.

MOA is a digital library of primary sources in American social history from the antebellum period through reconstruction. The collection is particularly strong in the subject areas of education, psychology, American history, sociology, religion, and science and technology. The Cornell University site provides access to 267 monograph volumes and over 100,000 journal articles with 19th-century imprints. The project represents a major collaborative endeavor in preservation and electronic access to historical texts. The Making of America collection is comprised of the digitized pages of books and journals. This system allows you to view scanned images of the actual pages of the 19th-century texts. Optical Character Recognition (OCR) has been performed on the images to enhance searching and accessing the texts. Additional information about Making of America is available at <http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/moa/about.html>.

Nassau County Naturalizations

The Italian Genealogical Group has completed indexing Nassau County naturalizations, 1899-1986. Take a look at this new resource from the JGS home page www.jgsny.org/nynats.htm or at www.italiengen.org/databases.stm.

Westchester County Virtual Archives

The Westchester County Virtual Archives is a new website that makes history come alive by bringing together the best examples of government and private records. The pilot project, on the Civil War Era, is the first of many topics and periods of time in Westchester's rich history that will eventually be turned into on-line exhibits. The Westchester County Archives, Westchester County Historical Society, Town of Eastchester and City of White Plains were the key players in developing the Westchester County Virtual Archives site at www.westchesterarchives.com.

The Westchester County Archives website at www.westchestergov.com/wcarchives offers links to indexes for:

- Declarations of Intention, 1808-1927
- Cemetery Records, Veterans, 1775-1918
- Court Records, 1778-1885
- Government Publications by Westchester County Departments, 1915-present
- Historic Preservation Survey Records, 1983
- Incorporation Records, 1876-1926
- Incorporation Records: Personal Names Index, 1848-1906
- Marriage Records, 1910-1927
- Miscellaneous Records, 1840-1916
- Naturalization Records, 1808-1927
- School Reports, 1828-1927

The area now encompassed by Bronx County was at one time all part of Westchester County.

New Census Releases

1901 Census for England and Wales

On January 2, 2002, the **1901 census for England and Wales** goes on-line. This census – taken on March 31, 1901 – holds 32 million names on 1.5 million pages. It will be possible to search the index by name or address for free via the Internet. The Public Record Office (PRO) has scanned all of the images, and, with the help of prison inmates, created an every-name index. There are fees—payable by credit card or prepaid voucher—to view the text transcripts and actual census images. Full transcription details for one person in a household will be £0.50. To view all transcription details for the entire household will cost an additional £0.50. A download of a census page image to view, print or store on your computer will cost £0.75 per page.

The 1901 census recorded: house address, whether house is inhabited or not, name and surname of each person, relationship to head of family, marriage status, age at last birthday, profession/occupation, whether employed or not, where born, and disabilities.

For full details on this census, see the PRO website: www.pro.gov.uk/census/default.htm or www.census.pro.gov.uk. The PRO has plans to scan and index the 1891 census in a similar manner, on a county-by-county basis starting with London. They intend to scan the 1881 British census and then incorporate into their website the existing 1881 British census index that the Family History Library created with the Federation of Family History Societies.

1930 United States Census

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) will release the 1930 Federal population census on April 1, 2002. At that time, the microfilmed copies will be opened for research at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC, at 13 of the National Archives regional facilities across the nation, and through the National Archives rental program. A press event marking the occasion will be held in Washington. The 1930 census, the 15th Federal census mandated by the U.S. Constitution, consists of 2,667 rolls of population schedules and 1,587 rolls of Soundex indexes for 12 southern states, totaling 4,254 rolls. Even though the statistical summaries collected by enumerators are made public shortly after the census is taken, information on individuals and families is restricted by law for privacy reasons for 72 years.

For New York State, there are 269 rolls of film (publication T626, #1401-1670; there is no roll 1602). For New Jersey, there are 84 rolls (#1308-1391). The National Archives branch in New York City will have the complete set of films for the entire country and all available Soundex rolls (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV). NARA has updated its 1930 Federal Population Census webpage at www.nara.gov/genealogy/1930cen.html. Among other things, it includes a new Part 5, "Tutorial—Start Your

(continued on page 19)

JGS New York Programs: 2001/2002

September 16: "Travel and Research in Ukraine"—Linda Cantor and Lucille Gudis

Their trip to Ukraine—starting in Krakow, Poland, traveling to Lviv and other communities in Galicia and Volhynia, culminating in Kiev—archival research in Zhitomir and Kiev, and visits to cemeteries where family members' tombstones were found. See Linda's article, "My Trip to Ukraine, May 2001," in this issue.

October 14: "Tips, Techniques and Tools for Using The Ellis Island Database: Ship Passenger Arrivals in New York, 1892-1924" — Michael Levine

Discussion of the new, on-line database of Ellis Island arrivals available at www.ellisland.org. A "live" presentation showing search techniques—in general and for Jewish immigrants—and how to view actual passenger lists. This program is part of the annual Family History Fair sponsored by the Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan New York, held this year at the City University of New York Graduate Center. JGS is an exhibitor at—and supporter of—the Family History Fair, www.nycarchivists.org/fhf.html.

November 1 and 8: "Researching Your Family History" — Introductory course co-sponsored by JGS and the 92nd Street YM-YWHA, taught by Linda Cantor and Lucille Gudis.

November 18: "Researching Sephardic Genealogy"—Co-sponsored by JGS, Sephardic House, Puerto Rican/Hispanic Genealogical Society and Office of Cultural Affairs, Consulate of Israel in New York. Presentations on:

"Discovering My Sephardic Roots" — Michael Salinas, NYC Outreach Chairperson, Society for Hispanic Historical and Ancestral Research

"The Hidden Jews of New Mexico: Crypto-Jews and Historical Research" — Nan Rubin, Lecturer, Producer of National Public Radio Series

"Sephardic Genealogical Resources: Collections and Archives" — Randall C. Belinfante, Librarian/Archivist, American Sephardi Federation

December 23: "Alien Registration and the Second World War" — Joseph Silinonte, genealogical researcher and author

Discussion of the events leading up to the Alien Registration Act of June 1940, as well as Enemy Alien Registration after the attack on Pearl Harbor (Dec. 7, 1941). The procedures for each registration and how to access the Alien Registration files held by the U.S. Department of Justice. Also a short presentation on the

World War II draft registration cards for men born between April 1877 and February 1897.

January 20: "Ancestors Online" — Michael Levine

Several new genealogical tools—the Ellis Island Database, Russians to America CD-ROM, and Index to the 1910 New York City Census—are available now. Each has idiosyncrasies that have been addressed with additional tools.

February 17: "The 1930 U.S. Census" — John Celardo, National Archives—New York

The 1930 Census will be opened for research on April 1, 2002. An introduction to this census and how to find your family when there is no index.

March 3: "Beyond the Basics" — Annual day-long event offering numerous classes in several simultaneous tracks, including programs for beginners. There will be presentations on vital records, naturalizations, military records, censuses and court records; research in Poland and Belarus; Jewish resources in New York, the Center for Jewish History and the Family History Center; the Ellis Island Database and passenger ship lists; using the computer for research and genealogical software; Holocaust research, the JGS Cemetery Project and landsmanshaftn. Held at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1 West Fourth Street, New York. The fee for JGS members is \$45 if received by February 16, otherwise \$55. Registration information will be mailed to members and posted at the JGS website www.jgsny.org.

March 17: "Toronto 2002" — Garry Stein, Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto)

The International Conference on Jewish Genealogy and resources available in Toronto.

April 21, May 19 and June 16: Program topics to be announced. Check the JGS website www.jgsny.org for details.

JGS monthly programs are held at 2:00 PM at the Center for Jewish History, 15 West 16th Street (between Fifth and Sixth Avenues), New York City. Members should bring their membership cards. Admission for non-members is \$3. Coats, packages and backpacks must be left in the Center checkroom. The Center Genealogy Institute is open from 12:30 to 2:00 for networking with other researchers and access to resource materials and computers.

New and Recent Publications

Of Jewish Interest

Ilana Abramovitch and Sean Galvin, editors. *Jews of Brooklyn*. 2001. University Press of New England. 400 pp. \$55.50 cloth. "Offering historical examinations of population shifts, synagogues and egg creams alongside personal experiences of community, in this encyclopedia the variations are a metaphor for the broad spectrum of experiences of a people in a place. Major themes in traditional Brooklyn–Jewish life, food, tolerance, politics, pride, poverty, family–pull together the shifting perspectives of this wonderful reference."

Judith Levin Cantor. *Jews in Michigan*. 2001. Michigan State University Press. 93 pp. \$9.95 paper. "A useful, brief and lively account of one of the oldest Jewish communities in the U.S."

Rabbi Jo David. *How to Trace Your Jewish Roots: Discovering Your Unique History*. 2000. Citadel Press. 224 pp. \$14.95 paper. "The author speaks directly to the novice Jewish genealogist who wants to uncover his or her Jewish roots."

Hasia R. Diner, Jeffrey Shandler and Beth S. Wenger, editors. *Remembering the Lower East Side: American Jewish Reflections*. 2000. Indiana University Press. 291 pp. \$24.95 cloth. "For more than a century, the Lower East Side of New York City has been recognized and scrutinized as the largest and most vibrant immigrant Jewish neighborhood in America. In recent years a spate of art works, performances, and tourist productions has fostered increased interest in the neighborhood as a place of American Jewish heritage. This lively book explores the dynamics of Lower East Side memory and considers the changing ways that this unique neighborhood has been embraced by American Jews over the course of a century."

Nancy Foner. *From Ellis Island to JFK: New York's Two Great Waves of Immigration*. 2000. Yale University Press. 334 pp. \$35.00 cloth, \$17.95 paper. "In the history, the very personality, of New York City, few events loom larger than the wave of immigration at the turn of the twentieth century. Today a similar influx is once again transforming the city. More than once in three New Yorkers are now immigrants. This book is the first in-depth study that compares these two huge social changes."

Chaim Freedman. *Beit Rabbanan: Sources of Rabbinical Genealogy*. 2001. \$20, including air mail shipping. An English-language review of 130 books that are the major sources for rabbinical genealogy. Freedman examines the structure, contents and reliability of the works, and explores the historical and sociological background of rabbinical genealogy. Includes photographs and documents from the sources. Order from the author at Hayasmin 7/2, Petah Tikvah 49650, Israel; e-mail: chaimjan@zahav.net.il.

Andrew Godley. *Jewish Immigrant Entrepreneurship in New York and London, 1880-1914: Enterprise and Culture*. 2001. St. Martin's Press. \$60.00 cloth. "Using new evidence of Jewish immigration, mobility and assimilation, the author shows that despite similar backgrounds and opportunities, the Jews in London were far less entrepreneurial, preferring to remain as workers. However, in America Jews moved en masse into self-employment, creating an innovative, dynamic economy while Britain remained stagnant and conservative."

Jan T. Gross. *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland*. 2001. Princeton University Press. 216 pp. \$19.95 cloth. "One summer day in 1941, half of the Polish town of Jedwabne murdered the other half—1,600 men, women and children, all but seven of the town's Jews. Neighbors tell their story. This is a shocking, brutal story that has never before been told. It is the most important study of Polish-Jewish relations to be published in decades and should become a classic of Holocaust literature." National Book Award finalist.

Walter Laqueur. *Generation Exodus: The Fate of Young Jewish Refugees from Nazi Germany*. 2001. University Press of New England. 388 pp. \$29.95 cloth. "The collective biography...of the children of the German-Jewish families who fled Germany in the 1930s...how they adapted and as a group went on to lead unusually productive lives..."

Kenneth Libo and Abigail Kursheedt Hoffman. *The Seixas-Kursheedts and the Rise of Early American Jewry*. 2001. Bloch Publishing Co. in conjunction with the American Jewish Historical Society. 101 pp. \$12.95 paper. "The Seixas-Kursheedt family is remarkable in the annals of American Jewish history for having provided American Jewry with spiritual guidance and enrichment from the Revolutionary War well into the nineteenth century."

Robert Perlman. *From Shtetl to Milltown: Litvaks, Hungarians, and Galizianers in Western Pennsylvania 1875-1925*. 2002. Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. \$18.95 paper. "The story of Jews who left their *shtetlach* in Eastern Europe and settled in the small industrial towns of Western Pennsylvania."

Robert Singerman. *Jewish Given Names and Family Names: A New Bibliography*. 2001. Brill Academic Publishers. 256 pp. \$59.00 cloth. "This work identifies and describes over 3,000 books, essays in books, and articles on Jewish given names and family names throughout history."

Hungarian Jewish Publications

The following books are available from Dan Wyman, Books, 47 Dartmouth Street, Springfield, MA 01109; 413-846-6357; dan@danwymanbooks.com; www.danwymanbooks.com. U.S. postage is \$4 per volume, or \$5 total if two or more are ordered together.

- *Magyar Zsidó Lexikon*. Photostatic reprint of 1929 edition. 2000. \$75, faux leather. This Hungarian-language biographical encyclopedia is the standard Jewish encyclopedic reference work of its era.
- Ágnes Szegő Orbán. *A Tiszafüredi Zsidóság Története És Demográfiája*. Tiszafüred, 1995. 177 pp. \$25.00, paper. Includes 22 pages of photos. Memorial book for Tiszafüred.
- Ágnes Szegő Orbán. *A Heves Megyei Zsidóság Története A XVIII. Századtól A Holocaustig*. Tiszafüred, 2001. 259 (10) pp. \$30.00, paper. Includes "A Brief History of the Jews in Heves County: Summary in English" (5 pp.), index (16 pp.) and bibliography (5 pp.). \$30.00. Memorial book for Heves County. A review of this work follows:

Review by Randolph L. Braham

In historical terms, the Jewish communities of Heves County were relatively short-lived. As was the case of their counterparts in virtually all other provinces of Hungary, most of these communities lasted just a little over one hundred years. While some of the settlements were established toward the end of the eighteenth century, most came into being only during the nineteenth century. The Jews were originally encouraged to settle on the estates of the feudal landlords, who were eager to see them engage in trade and commerce—economic pursuits the landed aristocracy found demeaning and the basically illiterate peasantry was not qualified to fill. By 1840, the number of Jews living in the county was 1,953; it reached a peak of

10,928 in 1880. During the decades that followed, the size of the county's Jewish population gradually declined, and by the time of the anti-Semitic drive of the 1940s was only a little over 7,000.

The many historical, political, and socioeconomic factors determining the rise and fall of the Jewish communities in the county, including, among others, those of Eger, Gyöngyös, Hatvan, Heves, and Tiszafüred, are described and analyzed in this well-documented work by Dr. Ágnes Szegő Orbán, head of the public library of Tiszafüred. The author of *A tiszafüredi zsidóság története és demográfiája* (1995), Orbán skillfully exploits the archival resources of the county to document the evolution of the communities, differentiating between the various phases of Hungary's national history. Using the tools of the social sciences, she highlights the social structure and the religious and welfare organizations of the communities, identifies the branches of trade, commerce and industry in which Jews played a pioneering role, and documents the increasingly difficult political climate in which the communities struggled to survive, especially after the end of World War I.

As elsewhere in truncated Hungary, the anti-Jewish drive in Heves County intensified in 1938, following the adoption of the First Anti-Jewish Law. This was followed in rapid succession by many increasingly more ominous anti-Semitic acts, culminating in the tragedy that engulfed all of the Jews of Hungary after the German occupation of March 19, 1944. The last section of the book is devoted to the Holocaust era. It succinctly describes the measures that were enacted by the central and local authorities, including the humiliation, isolation and expropriation of the Jews. It also reveals the horrible conditions that prevailed in the various ghettos, including those of Eger, Gyöngyös, Hatvan, Szúcsi-Bagólyuk, and Tiszafüred, and documents the inhumane conditions under which the Hungarian instruments of state power—the civil service, the police and gendarmerie—carried out the deportations.

The attempt to reestablish some of the communities after the war was basically unsuccessful. It was doomed to failure from the beginning. For one thing, only a pitiful number of the relatively few survivors were eager to establish new roots in the towns and villages from which their loved ones had been so brutally deported to Auschwitz. Some of the survivors decided to relocate in the larger cities that—for a while at least—still had viable Jewish communities; others decided to emigrate at the first opportunity. Moreover, the policies of the Soviet-supported Communist

New and Recent Publications continued

regime that came to power shortly after the war discouraged the nurturing of traditional Jewish values or the reinvigoration of religious communities.

The once-flourishing Jewish communities of Heves County, like those of the other provincial towns and villages of Hungary, are now virtually extinct; they are remembered only in scholarly and memorial works. The Jews of Heves County can be proud that their history and memory are preserved in this well-written and fully documented work. For this, Dr. Agnes Orbán Szegő has earned not only their gratitude but also the thanks of all people—Jews and Christians alike—who are dedicated to the preservation of historical truth.

Dr. Randolph L. Braham is Distinguished Professor Emeritus, City University of New York Graduate Center.

Of General Interest

1910 New York City Census Index CD-ROM [New York City and Long Island]. 2001. Heritage Quest. \$49.95.

1910 New York–Upstate Census Index CD-ROM. 2001. Heritage Quest. \$49.95.

These indexes allow genealogists to sort through 1.8 million New York City and Long Island entries, and 1.55 million upstate New York entries, to find their families in the heretofore unindexed 1910 federal census. The 1910 Heritage Quest Census series is primarily a head-of-household extraction from the original records held by the National Archives. These indexes also include any person in a household with a different surname than the head of that household. The

index includes the person's name, age, sex, race, birthplace and locality. While the index does *not* include the street address—which appears on the actual census—the microfilm roll and page numbers are provided. An in-depth review of these indexes will appear in a future issue of *Dorot*. For more information consult the publisher's website www.heritagequest.com.

Hunting for Your Heritage. 2001. National Genealogical Society. 16 pp. Priced according to quantity purchased. A comic book that introduces children to genealogy. Full-color adventure story teaches children about ancestors, descendants, generations and family trees. Includes a blank pedigree chart and family group sheet that researchers can copy and use. Order from the publisher at 4527 17th Street North, Arlington, VA 22207-2399; 800-473-0060, x116; bookstore@ngsgenealogy.org; www.ngsgenealogy.org/comic.htm.

Rhonda R. McClure. *The Genealogist's Computer Companion*. 2001. Betterway Books. 176 pp. \$18.99 paper. "Using a computer and the resources of the Internet can provide genealogists with some of their best and their worst research experiences, as countless hours can be wasted aimlessly surfing for surnames and many hours saved by entering data into a genealogical program. This book explains how anyone can use a computer, genealogical software and the Internet to optimize research."

JGS Welcomes New Members

Daphne Abrams Great Neck NY
John Baxt Houston TX
Ted Brooks Parsippany NJ
Joanne Clements Oxford OH
Florence Diamond New York NY
Kenneth Drexler Washington DC
Richard Fuhrman Great Neck NY
Larry Grant Brooklyn NY
Heritage Quest North Salt Lake UT
Jay Francine Jupiter Alexandria VA
Fran Kastin Staten Island NY
Jeff Levenson New York NY

Paulette Lieberman Brooklyn NY
Ryan Luft New York NY
Cynthia Parr Augusta GA
Frank Ritter New York NY
Lawrence Rosenstock Boynton Beach FL
Claudia Schellenberg Jackson Heights NY
Simon Schneebalg New York NY
Roz Nancy Seelig New York NY
Marcia Shulman New York NY
Nina Spooner Irvington NY
Marjorie Tiven New York NY
Daniel Weine Milledgeville GA
Alan Wurtzelman New York NY

Miscellaneous Notes

Genealogy Month Observances

Avotaynu, Inc. has announced that **Jewish Genealogy Month 2002** will be Nisan 5762, March 14–April 12, with the theme “From Generation to Generation.” A poster is being created again by Caroline Guillot of GenAmi that has as its central theme a family album. Five copies of the poster will be distributed to each Jewish genealogical society in February.

In late September, the U.S. Senate unanimously approved legislation designating October as **Family History Month**. The bill was introduced by Utah Senator Orrin G. Hatch. An announcement is posted at <http://hatch.senate.gov/pressapp/record.cfm?id=178829>.

Sudilkov: 103 Years Later

Paul Wilcher Ginsburg of Rockville, MD has developed a website to commemorate the Jewish community of Sudilkov, Ukraine. Historically Sudilkov was known throughout the Jewish world as a center of the Hasidic movement, for manufacturing *taleisim* (prayer shawls) and printing Jewish books. It was the home of the famous rebbe and author of *Degel Machaneh Ephraim*, Rabbi Moshe Chaim Ephraim, grandson of the Baal Shem Tov. The website may be viewed at www.sudilkov.com. Paul’s recent trip overseas, “Sudilkov: 103 Years Later,” is presented with numerous photos at <http://members.bellatlantic.net/~pauldana/103.htm>. His essay also will appear in *Shemot* (JGS of Great Britain), December 2001 (9:4).

Czernowitz Records Filmed

Bruce Reisch of Geneva, NY reported in November: “I called the LDS Family History Library in Salt Lake City for an update on the project to film Jewish records in Chernivtsi/Czernowitz. I reached a gentleman there who seemed to be coordinating the overseas microfilming efforts. A team from the library is at the Chernivtsi State Archives right now filming vital records for the various faiths...Among non-Jewish records, they are filming 1,108 volumes of material from Fond 1245. These include vital records for about half the districts in Chernivtsi for the period 1784-1937. From another fond, they are filming approximately 115 volumes of Jewish records for Chernivtsi for the period 1857-1940, plus one volume from 1841. I could not ascertain whether the filming will include Jewish records for other nearby villages (like Sadagora), and I don’t think the person I spoke with knew the answer. But it’s possible that all the Jewish records for the region are in the same Fond and will therefore be included among the 115 volumes men-

tioned. So, that’s the good news. Here’s the rest of the story: A filming project of this size might take two years to complete. It then takes 6 to 12 months for the material to be processed and made available via the LDS library system. I wasn’t clear on this point, but I believe that increments of filmed records will be added to the catalog as they are received over the course of the next two years. Eventually all of these microfilms will become publicly available via Family History Centers around the world (except in Israel, unfortunately, where there are no Family History Centers).”

Lithuania Records Filmed

The Family History Library has almost completed its filming of Jewish vital records in the State Archives of Lithuania. According to Kahlile Mehr of the FHL, the collection parallels, with scattered differences, the inventory printed in *Jewish Vital Records Revision Lists and Other Jewish Holdings in the Lithuanian Archives* published by Avotaynu (www.avotaynu.com). Films are arriving at the Library regularly. The best way to determine if records of interest are now available is to check the online catalog at www.familysearch.org.

Luria Family Research

Chaim Luria of Jerusalem is gathering Luria genealogical information—all variants of the name Luria, Lurie, Lourie etc.—from three major periods: rabbinical 1350-1750, middle 1750-1939, recent 1940-present. His current effort is to survey and document all living Luria families who can trace their roots to Europe, and to correlate this information with vital records of Eastern and Western Europe. He needs as many family tree donors as possible, as well as volunteers in the U.S., South Africa and Australia to help find potential donors.

The rabbinical period information has been collected by many famous genealogists and only has to be correlated with the latter phases when they are completed. Collecting Luria genealogical information from JewishGen and other sources is underway. Gathering family tree information from living Luria families has just started with a survey project in Israel and requests for information in various JewishGen forums. Over 40 Luria family trees have already been collected.

Luria family trees in gedcom or another format may be sent for inclusion in this project. Information should include dates and places, not only names. Updates will be provided by e-mail to submitters of information. Information and inquiries may be sent to: Chaim Luria, P.O.B. 23442, Jerusalem 91233, Israel; chaim@selajerusalem.co.il; fax 972-2-5714981

Miscellaneous Notes continued

Dachau Prisoner Information

Dachau Prisoner Information: Taken From Captured German Records, a 5-CD-ROM collection, is available from JewishGenMall, a division of JewishGen, Inc. This is the first time that Holocaust prisoner/victim lists have been made available in CD-ROM form. The CDs contain information on approximately 122,000 prisoners who were held at Dachau concentration camp. Family names are listed in alphabetical order with some minor variances. Other significant information provided: given name, date and place of birth, last place of residence, street or other address (often omitted), prisoner number and category of prisoner (usually includes nationality), when arrived and from where, what happened to the prisoner.

This information, obtained from five reels of microfilm prepared after the end of World War II and part of the larger "Captured German Records" collection, was previously only available on microfilm of poor quality from the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland. The CD-ROM works on either Windows or Mac platforms. In addition to the convenience of immediate access to information, there is greatly improved legibility due to the digitization process.

Established in 1933, Dachau was one of the first Nazi concentration camps. Until it was liberated on April 29, 1945, over 206,000 prisoners from all over Europe, Jews and non-Jews, were held there. Some, particularly in the early years, were released, and

transfers to and from Dachau were common. The first prisoners were political, Jews and non-Jews, primarily Communists and Social Democrats. In later years such other groups as Jehovah's Witnesses, gypsies, homosexuals and anyone considered a Nazi opponent were placed there. Beginning in 1938, more than 10,000 German Jews were imprisoned in Dachau. Over the years virtually every European nationality was represented with the largest numbers from Poland, Germany, the former Soviet Union, Hungary and France, but there were substantial numbers of Italians, Lithuanians, Czechs, Slovenes and Belgians.

More information about this collection is available at www.jewishgen.org/infocfiles/CapturedGermanRecords.html. The cost for this CD-ROM set is \$130 including shipping. Overseas orders will be shipped by air at no additional charge. Orders may be placed online at www.jewishgen.org/jewishgenmall (go to *Browse Mall*, then *Software and CD-ROMS*, and scroll down to *Dachau Prisoner Information*). Mail orders may be sent to JewishGen, Inc., 2951 Marina Bay Drive Suite 130-472, League City, TX 77573; 281-535-2200; fax 281-535-2204. Proceeds from sales of all items in the JewishGen Mall help support the operating costs of JewishGen, Inc., the primary non-profit Internet source connecting researchers of Jewish genealogy worldwide. Sandra and Donald Hirschhorn are the managers of JewishGen Mall.

JGS Website News

Brooklyn (Kings County) Naturalization Project

The JGS is pleased to announce the completion of the Brooklyn Naturalization project, including petitions and declarations filed in State Supreme Court, Kings County, 1907-1924. The 253,400 records now on-line can be searched at www.jgsny.org. A new feature of the database, the Comments column, will provide information on name changes and alternate names appearing on declarations, petitions and certificates of arrival, as well as other genealogically useful information. Please read the updated FAQ before using the information in the Comments column.

This project came to fruition under Estelle Guzik's leadership, thanks to more than 100 volunteers who keyed the data and proofread every entry against the original records. Kudos to all for an amazing job! Instructions for ordering copies of the records are found on the website.

Landsmanshaftn Incorporations

Ada Greenblatt has contributed another important database listing more than 3,000 Landsmanshaftn and other town- and country-related organizations incorporated in New York County (1848-1920). Copies of these incorporation papers are available on microfilm at the Center for Jewish History in the American Jewish Historical Society's Incorporations Collection [I-154]. The database can be accessed on the JGS website www.jgsny.org or at <http://home.att.net/~jgsnyCem/ajhs.htm>.

World War I Draft Registrations

JGS member Carole Glick Feinberg has contributed a new 13,000-name database—World War I Draft Registrations for three Manhattan draft boards: #150 at Public School #151, 91st Street and First Avenue; #151 at 240 E. 105th Street; #152 at 231 E. 104th Street. Check out this source at www.jgsny.org/database/WWI_draft_1.html.

International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies

Board Elections

At its annual meeting in London on July 11, the following were elected as IAJGS officers and directors: Hal Bookbinder (Oak Park, CA), president; Anne Feder Lee (Honolulu, HI), vice president; Joel Spector (Cherry Hill, NJ), secretary; Michael Posnick (Minneapolis, MN), treasurer; Arnold Tolkin (Palm Beach Gardens, FL), director. At the board meeting on July 12, Judith Frazin (Northbrook, IL) was elected to fill the director position opened through Anne Feder Lee's election to vice president. The directors also include Michael Brenner (Teaneck, NJ), Anthony Joseph (Birmingham, England), Howard Margol (Atlanta, GA), Daniel Schlyter (Salt Lake City, UT) and Garry Stein (Toronto, Canada).

Stern Awards

The IAJGS collects voluntary donations from its members for the specific purpose of making focused awards to those who support our avocation. These are designated the Stern Awards in continuing recognition of the late Rabbi Malcolm Stern, who contributed so much to Jewish genealogy. Over the past two years, \$2,800 was donated by member societies for this purpose, including \$1,000 contributed by JGS-NY. \$2,200 was added to this from general IAJGS funds, allowing for the distribution of \$5,000 this year. The Stern Awards Committee made the following awards of \$1,000 each:

- Genealogy Institute of the Center For Jewish History (New York), to support the creation of a web-accessible bibliography of family histories in the libraries of the American Jewish Historical Society, the American Sephardi Federation and the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research.
- Central Zionist Archives (Jerusalem) for computers to facilitate a cataloging project of applications for immigration to Israel from the 1940s to the 1960s.
- Philadelphia Jewish Archives Center for a microfilm printer/reader (given in memory of Jon Stein, founding president of IAJGS and long-time president of the JGS of Greater Philadelphia).
- Center for Judaic Studies, University of Latvia for their continuing contributions to the All Latvia Database, including extractions of the Courland Voters database. This Holocaust memorial project will not only act as a memorial for the perished but also provide important data for genealogical study.
- JewishGen for support of the Holocaust Database, which will contain data from Yad Vashem and the

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum including such files as residents lists, victims lists, survivor lists and prisoner/transport/deportation lists.

Achievement Awards

Each year the IAJGS presents achievement awards to recognize excellence within our avocation. Award plaques were presented at the at the Conference banquet in London to:

- Dan and Rosanne Leeson (San Francisco) – Outstanding Contribution via Print Award – for their indexes of the 1784 Alsatian Jewish Census and of 18th-century Alsatian marriages. Dan and Rosanne have worked tirelessly in making Alsatian resources available to Jewish genealogical researchers. The 1784 Alsatian Census was organized by villages, making its use difficult. Their published index, originally in book form, continues to be available through microfiche. Their more recent publication of an index to 18th-century marriage contracts allows researchers to reach back beyond 1784.
- Nancy Goodstein (Salt Lake City) – Outstanding Contribution via Electronic Media Award – for the Index of Jewish Records in the Family History Library. The index created by Nancy provides a crucial key to unlocking the vast Jewish genealogical resources contained within the Family History Library. In addition to all of the generally-known records, Nancy located and made more accessible many Jewish records not previously known, including obscure records not otherwise easily found. The resultant index has been made available both through both CD-ROM and on the Internet at www.jewishgen.org/databases/fhlc.
- Michael Tobias (Glasgow) – Outstanding Contribution via the Internet Award – for Jewish genealogical database development. Michael has rapidly developed the technology behind numerous databases benefitting Jewish genealogists across the world, including, among others, the Jewish Records Indexing–Poland Database and the JewishGen Family Finder, ShtetlSeeker, Family Tree of the Jewish People and Discussion Group Archives. His efforts have made vast amounts of material readily available to the Jewish genealogical community.
- Asociación de Genealogía Judía de Argentina – Outstanding Publication Award – in recognition of *Toldot* for the scope and quality of its articles.

International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies *continued*

Each issue is filled with original material, impressive both in its scholarly content and in its readability. The journal's layout is clear, clean, and professional. Each issue adds to the knowledge base of the worldwide Jewish experience and is anxiously anticipated by its readers around the globe.

- Jewish Genealogical Society of Palm Beach County, Inc. – Outstanding Programming Award – in recognition of its efforts to spread awareness of Jewish genealogy through its extensive local publicizing of Jewish Genealogy Month, 25 March to 23 April 2001. This included arranging for the publication of articles in various newspapers across Palm Beach County, sponsoring a lecture series, distributing posters and conducting exhibits at local public and academic libraries.
- Jewish Genealogical Society, Inc. (New York) – Outstanding Project Award – in recognition of several of the Society's projects aimed at making historical records in the New York area more available to researchers everywhere. These include indexing projects for Brooklyn naturalization records, burial societies in the New York Metropolitan area, and New York *landsmanshaftn* and other Jewish organizations. The results of these projects have been made generally available through the website of JGS, Inc. at www.jgsny.org.
- Peter Landé (Washington, DC) – Lifetime Achievement Award – in deep appreciation of Peter's contributions to the world of Jewish genealogy, both in his selfless assistance to others in pursuing their own research, and in his efforts in gathering and indexing genealogical materials for the benefit of all. Among these are his outstanding work on identifying resources and creating finding aids at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, his extensive support for the Yizkor Book Project, and his ongoing contributions to *Stammbaum*.

Cemetery Project

Several years ago, through the initiative and hard work of Arline and Sid Sacks and many volunteers, the IAJGS Cemetery Project was born. It resulted in the cataloging of thousands of Jewish cemeteries around the world and hundreds of thousands of burials. These results were made available on CD-ROM. More recently Ellen Renck has done an outstanding job in cleaning up the list of cemeteries. The results of her efforts are available at www.jewishgen.org/cemetery. Although IAJGS plans to continue to refine and expand this listing of cemeteries, they have suspended further efforts regarding burial information. JewishGen has now initiated the JewishGen Online Worldwide Burials Registry at www.jewishgen.org/databases/cemetery. You may check out the JOWBR website and the various agreements which can be accessed from it, then consider submitting your burial data to the JewishGen Online Worldwide Burials Registry.

North American Jewish Community Books

The Bibliography of North American Jewish Community Books is now on-line. It was originally included in the syllabus of the 20th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy, Salt Lake City (2000). This bibliography is the most extensive yet produced on the subject, with over 1,000 references across the United States, Canada, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. It may be accessed at the IAJGS website, www.iajgs.org. Additional bibliographic citations—author, title, publisher, publishing location and year of publication—should be sent to Hal Bookbinder at bookbinder@loop.com.

Jewish Genealogy Yearbook

Jewish Genealogy Yearbook 2001 is now available on-line at www.iajgs.org, providing reference information about more than 100 organizations dedicated to Jewish genealogy, including contacts and activities.

Gentech2002: Conference for Technology and Genealogy – Family History at the Speed of Light – Hynes Convention Center, Boston – January 24-26, 2002

Gentech's mission is to bridge technology and genealogy through the conference and its related events. This 10th annual Gentech conference, hosted by the New England Historic Genealogical Society, offers dozens of workshops each day from 9:00 to 6:00. Exhibitors from across the U.S. and U.K. will fill an exhibit hall at the Hynes Center in downtown Boston. Librarian's Day on January 24 is an additional event within Gentech2002. Full program and registration details are available at www.gentech.org or by contacting Gentech2002, c/o NEHGS, 101 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116; e-mail info02@gentech.org.

Do You Know When You Were Born?

by Nolan Altman

Here's a simple question for you. Do you know when you were born? Easy, right? Or is it? Think about it...how do you really know the right date?

Well, if you were born in the U.S. in the last 50 years or so, chances are you were born in a hospital where your birth was recorded at that time. As I've seen with my own children, as soon as the umbilical cord was cut, a wristband was slapped on their wrist and in our "organized bureaucracy" (is that an oxymoron?) the birth was recorded.

But what if you or your ancestors were not born in a hospital? Or in the U.S.? Would their birth get recorded and how? With all the press about Little Leaguer Danny Almonte's age and birth certificates, I was surprised how, in some cases, recording births hasn't changed in over 130 years!

The Curious Case of Aunt Mollie's Birthdate

My Aunt Mollie told me that she was born in 1913 and celebrated her birthday each March 21st. She was born in Demblin, a *shtetl* southeast of Warsaw, Poland. But was March 21 the day she was born? After finding her father's naturalization papers, I learned that Mollie's birth date was listed as June 10, 1912. Now I was faced with the possibility of two different birth dates and two different years. But I wasn't done yet! According to my aunt's school records, she was born in November! Alright, now I had three dates! What would explain these differences? Which was right?

Being an amateur genealogist means trying to sort out the best information available and making reasonable decisions. When I spoke to my aunt about the discrepancies, she helped to explain some of the differences.

Her mother told her that she was born the first night of Passover. That seems to be a rather significant date and easy way of remembering such an event. Therefore, I give it the most believability. Chances are that in Europe, her birthday was remembered and celebrated based on the Hebrew (lunar) calendar. On our Gregorian calendar, Passover is celebrated in March or April—and that makes March 21 a reasonable date. November made sense when I was told that my grandfather used that date to enroll Aunt Mollie in school when she arrived in the U.S. from Poland at the age of 7.

And what about June 21, 1912? Let's just say that I don't think my grandfather was very good with dates! None of the dates or years he listed on his naturalization papers match other recollections or documents. Maybe he was unsure with the language or

flustered by the process—or just wanted to get through the paperwork. In any case, I gave that date the least credibility. Oddly enough, of four children, three were born on the 21st. Was that coincidence or some affinity for the number 21? I will never know.

So I was willing to go with my aunt's date of March 21, 1913. But do we really know for sure? No. Will I ever know? Not really. And that's where we get to the recording process.

Great Uncle Abraham...the Twin

Listening to my favorite sports radio station, I heard the report of how Danny Almonte's father procured his son's birth certificates. Mr. Almonte went to the town clerk, who had a large handwritten register. He told the clerk that a son was born to him on a given date, and the clerk recorded it in the book. Mr. Almonte did not have to do this on the day of Danny's birth, nor even during that year. In fact, he might not have registered the birth at all if it wasn't for the fact that a birth certificate was needed to bring Danny to the U.S. Did the clerk check the actual date of Danny's birth? No. How could he know? And there you have the very imprecise procedure for registering births in the Dominican Republic. (Keep in mind there might be different procedures for city and rural areas.)

As I heard this, I realized that this was exactly the same procedure that my great-grandfather went through to record the birth of his first son in 1870! All of this was explained in my most prized genealogical document, which came from the administrative birth records of Ryki, Poland. The handwritten birth certificate is written in Polish script and documents not only my great-uncle's birth, but facts about his parents—my great-grandparents. The translation is as follows:

Meeting in Irena 14 December 1870 at 3 p.m., there appeared in person the Jew Muniyish Altman, 24 years of age, residing in Stezyce, accompanied by the witness Gabrijel Szed, 73, literate, and Michael Cytrinbaum, 47, homeowner, both residing in Irena, and announced to us twin male babies. Further, they were born in Stezyca on the 6th of December of this year to his legal wife Zlata, nee Rozenwajn, 24 years of age. The children were named Abram and Josef. This act was read to those present and signed by the witnesses and this official.

The Bottom Line

As we've seen, the answer to the simple question posed above may not be so simple. If you don't have an "immediate and timely" birth recording, chances

Slovak Database Initiative

by Debbi Korman

Volunteers interested in Hungary and Slovakia are about to start a major database initiative. Yad Vashem is providing deportation lists from Slovakia's four major assembling/labor camps—Zilina (the largest), Novaky, Vyhne and Sered. Zilina was used during the 1942 mass deportations because it was the closest to Auschwitz. However, Yad Vashem has more hidden treasures totaling 100 different lists including Supis Zidov (Jewish conscription) lists of several major towns, regional lists of Jews compiled by local Judenrats, lists of Jews who received special permits to work, military listings, Hlinka Guard lists and several other, plus many more deportation and transports lists. There are thousands of pages of data which at present are only available in two places—Yad Vashem and the archives in Bratislava.

More pages means more volunteers are needed to create the databases, but the effort will be well worthwhile. I have used some of these lists at the archives in Bratislava and they are invaluable.

So, which towns are represented in these lists? Nearly all of the towns that belonged to the Slovak fascist state between 1939 and 1945. It should be noted that for towns that were centralized gathering places for Jews of the region, the information in the lists virtually always includes towns of origin of the deportees. The major towns are: Banska Bystrica, Bardejov, Bratislava, Cadca, Giraltovce, Humenne, Kezmarok, Levoca, Lipiany, Liptovsky Svaty Mikulas, Medzilaborce, Michalovce, Myjava, Nitra, Novaky labor camp, Nove Mesto nad Vahom, Piestany, Pohradie, Poprad, Presov, Ruzomberok, Sabinov, Sered labor camp, Spiska Nova Ves, Stropkov, Topolcany, Trebisov, Trencin, Trnava, Turcansky Svaty Martin, Vranov nad Toplou, Vyhne labor camp, Zilina, Zilina labor camp, Zlate Moravce and Zvolen.

It should be remembered that after the Munich pact, the Czechoslovak Republic was divided into a

German protectorat and the Slovak independent fascist state. The Slovaks had to surrender to the Hungarians a large portion of territory that previously belonged to Czechoslovakia—principally that which was south of Presov and east of Michalovce, Subcarpathian Ruthenia (now Ukraine) and Romania (Transylvania). Transports began in Slovakia in 1942. They only included people from those territories which then belonged to the Slovak state. The transports from Subcarpathian Ruthenia and Transylvania took place in spring and summer 1944.

Participation in the project requires only basic typing skills. The lists are typewritten, so there are no problems with illegible handwriting. You are provided with an Excel database, all set up with the proper columns. Detailed instructions are provided regarding what information goes into what column. All you have to do is enter the data and send it to the project coordinator. Or if you don't like to type but can do proof-reading, you can act as a validator and check for typographical errors in the data input. I worked on the Debrecen deportation lists database that is now in the validation stage. I input about two, sometimes three, pages a day, which took less and less time as I got into the rhythm of the project. And, as a bonus, on the last page I found a family member whom I never would have dreamed ended up in Debrecen since the rest of the family lived considerably farther north.

The project is sponsored by JewishGen and also by the Hungarian SIG. Many thanks must be given to the numerous people who have supported and already worked hard on this project—principally Rachel Reisman, Joyce Field and Louis Schonfeld. The project coordinator is Tom Venetianer, who lives in Brazil. I encourage all Hungary and Slovak researchers to participate in this golden opportunity to make some valuable information readily available on the Web. Tom's e-mail address is tom.vene@uol.com.br.



Do You Know When You Were Born?

(continued from page 17)

are you would celebrate your birthday on the day your parents told you that you were born. Why not...you wouldn't remember it! Whether it's my great-uncle Abraham's birth in 1870 or Aunt Mollie's birth in 1913, the same procedures are still used in some places in the world today. It's just one of the interesting things about genealogy. My next simple question...where were you born?

News from the Center for Jewish History

Visitors to the Center for Jewish History may combine a Center tour with admission to the Yeshiva University Museum (YUM) galleries. The fees for individual tickets and combined tickets are: Adults: \$6 for Center tour, \$6 for YUM admission, \$10 for combined tour and YUM admission. Students/Seniors: \$4 for Center tour, \$4 for YUM admission, \$6 for combined tour and YUM admission. The Center's address is 15 West 16th Street, New York.

A five-year grant from the Samberg Family Foundation will make it possible for the Center to offer a groundbreaking program to strengthen the Jewish identity of high school students. "The Samberg Foundation Family History Project," to be co-sponsored with the American Jewish Historical Society, is planned as a two-week intensive summer workshop that will give teens the opportunity to research their own family history at the Center and utilize the original source materials in all of the Center's collections.

Center Genealogy Institute

The Genealogy Institute at the Center for Jewish History is a welcoming place where individuals can begin a challenging, exciting and emotional search for their own family history. The Center is home to the combined collections of the American Jewish Historical Society, American Sephardi Federation, Leo Baeck Institute, Yeshiva University Museum and YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, encompassing 100 million archival documents, one-half million books, and tens of thousands of photographs and other materials. Center Genealogy staff and volunteers can show nearly everyone of Jewish descent how to find some information that is relevant to his or her own history.

All basic services are provided free of charge. The Center Genealogy Institute, which can be reached at 212-294-8324, is open Monday through Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The Institute also is open one Sunday a month from 12:30 to 2:00 PM, when the

Jewish Genealogical Society hosts its monthly meeting at the Center. Please call the Genealogy Institute to schedule group visits and to register for Family History Workshops.

The Genealogy Institute participated for the first time in the annual Family History Fair in New York City on October 14. The Institute and the Jewish Genealogical Society had adjacent exhibit tables and cooperatively offered a wide range of information about Jewish genealogical research to hundreds of visitors. On November 4, the Center presented "Climbing the Family Tree: A Day of Films and Workshops Exploring Jewish Family History."

YIVO Institute for Jewish Research

The YIVO Library has placed an initial part of its catalog on-line. This first edition includes 50,000 database records, mostly for monographic books, in all European languages as well as in transcribed (Romanized) Yiddish, Hebrew and Russian. This catalog represents only a fraction of YIVO's extensive holdings and is very much a work in progress! The catalog, which is on the Center for Jewish History website, can also be accessed from the front page and Library page of the YIVO website. The direct URL is www.cjh.org/about/yivo_catalog.html.

Past editions of *Yedies* (*News from YIVO*) are available online as an Adobe Acrobat file at www.yivo.org/yedies/yedies_fr.htm.

Leo Baeck Institute

The Leo Baeck Institute catalog of its library and archival holdings are available online at www.lbi.org/mclinkpage.html. The master catalog provides information on and descriptions of more than 10,000 archival records, 1,250 memoirs, 70,000 books and 750 periodicals. It also contains unique access to the LBI's Austrian Heritage Collection.

New Census Releases (continued from page 8)

1930 Census Research Now!" to help people get their information organized so they can be ready to see the microfilm beginning April 1. This page will continue to be updated frequently as April 1 approaches.

NARA has posted a list of the city directories in their collection that date from around 1930. Since the

1930 census has a Soundex index for only 12 southern states, there will be considerable interest in these city directories. www.nara.gov/genealogy/citydirs.html. These directories are available on microfilm at all National Archives branches.

London 2001: 21st International Conference on Jewish Genealogy

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain presented an outstanding conference July 8-13 at the Hotel Inter-Continental, Hyde Park, London. Conference co-chairs George Anticoni and Saul Issroff, JGSGB president Anthony Joseph, and the members of the JGSGB organized a week of interesting sessions, fascinating field trips and walking tours, and numerous opportunities for networking among the six hundred genealogists in attendance from around the world.

Each attendee received an attractive *Syllabus* (a book of almost 500 unnumbered pages) containing summaries of most presentations and biographical notes on the speakers; a *Resource Book* outlining relevant London library and archival resources; the *Family Finder* of participant information and the towns and surnames they are researching, and a *Daily Planner*.



JGS-NY contingent in London.

A gallery of conference photographs may be viewed at www.jewishgen.org/london2001/PostConf/Postconf.html.

The conference concluded with a banquet at which the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) presented achievement awards in seven categories. Jewish Genealogical Society–New York received the award for Outstanding Project in recognition of making historical records in the New York area more available to researchers everywhere. Additional details on this and the other awards are reported in the IAJGS article in this issue.

The following Conference recollections were prepared by several JGS-NY members. These write-ups could not possibly reflect the depth and breadth of the conference.

Linda Cantor–

A Jewish genealogical conference in London was a wonderful excuse to spend a week in London, one of my favorite cities. But the conference was so chock full of wonderful lectures and meetings that I hardly left the Inter-Continental Hotel to take advantage of being in London.

This was a particularly good conference for Litvaks. Three Lithuanian archivists, three Latvian archivists, and a curator from the Jewish museum in Vilnius gave talks on their respective archives and their materials, as well as how these various records could help the genealogist. These included the 1942 Lithuanian Census, genealogically-relevant records housed in the Lithuanian State Historical Archives and the Kaunas Regional Archives, older records such as 18th-century census and tax lists in Lithuania, and the holdings of the Latvian State Historical Archives.

Jeff Cymbler's very informative talk on the 16th-20th Century Censuses of the Lands of the Polish-

Lithuanian Commonwealth, which I had missed in New York [see *Dorot*, Spring 2001, p. 8], was one of the conference highlights. I enjoyed the several SIG meetings that I attended, as this enabled me to network with

many of the European members who do not usually attend conferences in North America. This, in turn, led to my "discovery" of several people with whom I share an ancestral *shtetl* and whom I did not know before. Furthermore, I found that an added bonus was getting better acquainted with the other New Yorkers at the conference, because we were socializing, having dinner and spending more time with each other.

Genealogical conferences are a great place to learn about the latest developments and discoveries in genealogy, to meet others who share your interest, to network with *landsmen*, and to have an enjoyable time. Plan to attend next year's conference in Toronto–August 4-9, 2002.

Marsha Saron Dennis–

My biggest frustration with the London Conference was that I couldn't be in two places at the same time. The city of London itself versus the very varied and enticing programs being offered at the Conference were constantly pulling me in two directions. (As my mother used to say, "All my other problems should go away and this one should remain!")

London 2001 *continued*

Although I did finally get to a number of lectures (mostly, but not all, about my Litvak roots), the most un-usual lecture I've ever been to at a JGS conference was Henry Roche's talk about his great-great-grandfather, Ignaz Moscheles (1794-1870), a 19th-century Jewish composer and pianist. Moscheles was born in Prague, but his career took him to Vienna, London and Leipzig.

Not Jewish himself, Mr. Roche is an authority on the pre-1880 Jews of Hampshire, England and is Head of Music Staff with the Royal Ballet, Covent Garden.

I attended the conference with my husband, composer Robert Dennis. We'd been looking forward to attending Mr. Roche's lecture as soon as we read about it—and we weren't disappointed. Because not only did Mr. Roche talk about the Moscheles family history, he actually played—both a recording and live on the piano—music written by his illustrious ancestor. (Well, to be accurate, he played the music until attendees from other lectures in adjacent rooms complained.) There was some “show and tell,” such as family photos and trees for the genealogists among us; and there were musical scores for the musicians to look at.

Moscheles made it a little easier for his great-great-grandson to study and write about him, not only by leaving published music, but also by leaving behind a diary which his widow used as a basis for the biography she published about him after his death.

All in all, Mr. Roche's program was informative and fun—and we not only learned about Mr. Roche's genealogy, we got to hear the work of a relatively unknown composer.

Oh—and by the way—the Tate Britain (formerly the Tate Gallery) was wonderful, too!

Paula M. Zieselman—

Although this was my first IAJGS Conference, I had attended many professional conferences in my career as a librarian, as had my husband, a retired attorney. Having the Conference in a city we were quite familiar with was a bonus, for it meant that we did not have to agonize over whether to attend sessions or sightsee! Being in London also meant an easy trip to the Family Records Centre to try to find the birth record of a great-uncle supposedly born in England (record not found).

My husband and I had volunteered our help to the organizers and were assigned to the registration desk. What fun and a wonderful way to meet people! I was so glad to finally put faces to names of those with whom I corresponded. Some firm friendships were established that way.

As co-coordinator of the Romania SIG on JewishGen, I had scheduled a meeting of the SIG on Sunday at 4 PM. A query of the SIG discussion group turned up ten other souls who claimed they would attend. I decided a casual tea party would help break the ice. Imagine my surprise when over 30 people showed up. Costly, but gratifying! We were able to discuss the current position of the SIG, etc.

I had been asked to participate in a panel discussion of the Ellis Island Data Base and had accepted. However, the planners changed the time and I was promised elsewhere. Having worked with those films extensively, I know the problems the transcribers faced!

As a member of the Early American SIG on JewishGen, I was pleased to attend that meeting and meet the coordinator, Rachel Unkfer, as well as other SIG members.

“Open Access to Archives,” a panel chaired by Sallyann Sack, was a very interesting discussion of access to European archives, especially EU members and wannabes. Peter Landé discussed the International Tracing Service Holocaust files and the seemingly insurmountable problems of getting these files opened.

“Open Access to Archives”—reported by Rachel Fisher—

Sallyann Amdur Sack, chair; Else Churchill, Peter Landé and Constance Whippman, panelists.

This two-hour session consisted of a wide-ranging discussion about the practical and ethical issues involved in attempts to increase access to archives. First, an overview of the European Union regulations concerning archival access was provided. These regulations attempt to balance the right to privacy with the right to freedom of information. Most EU countries offer relatively easy and modern methods of accessing archival materials held by the government. However, many materials of recent origin are restricted in order to maintain the privacy of living people. A panelist pointed out that Eastern European countries hoping to enter the EU may begin to formulate policies that conform to EU standards in order to demonstrate that they are ready for inclusion. It was suggested that the Jewish genealogical community become familiar with the EU regulations and prepare to work with them.

Much of the subsequent discussion focused on the “Arolsen records,” the records held by the International Red Cross at Arolsen, Germany, and a debate over access to them. Peter Landé provided a very helpful overview of the history of these records and their administration. As many genealogists know, these records, indexed by surname, are not open to the public

London 2001 *continued*

and can only be consulted by Arolsen staff, who are currently overwhelmed with requests relating to slave labor and other urgent cases. While Yad Vashem does have copies of the records, these were obtained decades ago, and the number of records has increased considerably since then. Some genealogists are advocating that the Arolsen index be placed on the Internet in a searchable database. One reason this is problematic is that the names of people who have requested information through the Red Cross are interfiled with the names of individuals who appear in the records. In addition, some of the people whose names appear in the records are still living.

These complexities provoked a discussion of the ethical pros and cons of searchable databases versus name lists, and the ethical pros and cons of searchable databases on the Internet versus databases that can be searched by staff only. While many genealogists are inclined by instinct to advocate for the most open option, we might reconsider when we realize that information about us could be available for the world to see. The discussion also touched on the “voyeuristic” nature of genealogical and indeed all historical research, particularly relating to the Holocaust. While we all feel that individuals should have access to information about their ancestors, we may not be comfortable with lists of disembodied names on the Internet, available for anyone to copy and use in whatever way they please. While the panel was far from conclusive, the discussion raised issues for every genealogist, and organized Jewish genealogy, to consider.

Robert M. Kern—

On the first day of the Conference, there was, as always, the Orientation. Normally I would have made a point of attending this. But there was another event that same day that I felt almost obligated to go to instead: an all-day field trip to Nottingham, in the north of England. The place there to be visited by our group was the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre, a Holocaust museum that was conceived in 1991 by a non-Jewish English family. From the outside, it appears to be just an ordinary, if somewhat large English manor. But the inside is devoted entirely to the complete history of the Holocaust. While it is in no way a rival of either the United States Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC, or the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City, it is surprisingly comprehensive in both range and diversity of scope. Among the many displays are video interviews with death camp survivors and various artifacts that were saved by survivors of these camps. Perhaps most chilling of

all is a small-scale replica of the Treblinka death camp, with a detailed description of how it operated—beginning with the arrival of the Jews at the camp and culminating with their deaths in the gas chambers.

Upon our arrival at the Holocaust Centre, we were given an oral introduction by its co-founder, Stephen D. Smith. He explained how this is the first Holocaust Memorial in the United Kingdom and, currently, the *only* one. He also detailed how, in the coming years, the museum would be expanded to the grounds outside of the estate. But perhaps most moving of all was the fact that, while he is not Jewish himself, he and his family—who have all been involved in this gargantuan project—are totally empathetic of the plight of the Jewish people. This, for obvious reasons, carries added weight to the relevance of this most innovative English exhibit.

Stephen Smith is an expert in the field of the Holocaust, holds a doctorate, is a Member of the British Empire (MBE), and is the author of several books including *Making Memory: Creating Britain's First Holocaust Centre*. In fact, during the course of the Conference, he came down from Nottingham to offer a lecture entitled “In Search of the Forgotten: Memory, History, Dignity and the Genealogy of Holocaust Victims.”

After the Conference concluded, I went on a personal genealogical binge of my own in England. During the next five days, I set about meeting with two different families in two different parts of the country. I had been in contact with both of those families for some time now, so they were, and are, in no way, strangers. They are both related to me on the same side of my family—my maternal grandmother—and are thus not only distantly related to me, but also to each other.

My first trip was to Lytham, Lancashire, way north of London. This turned out to be an all-day outing, simply because of the travel time involved. It took more than three hours going in each direction by train from and returning to London. My second genealogical venture was another all-day trip, two days later, this time to Fareham, in the county of Hampshire, which is west of London.

If one *really* wants to learn about life in a foreign land, it is always so much more convenient to visit with relatives, no matter how distantly related they may be, in order to be toured around to places that have a somewhat personal connotation to them. This, as opposed to the tour packages that can be attained at any time, anywhere. Having contacts with relatives will almost certainly add a “personal touch,” as it were. And, with regard to meeting these distant cousins, it can only be a bonding experience, because

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you feel afterward that you now really “know” them in a way that you previously hadn’t, no matter how long you had been in correspondence with them.

“Restitution of Looted Cultural Property from Europe”—*reported by Rachel Fisher—*

Abba Dunner, chair; Karen Franklin, Tom Freudenheim, Max Polonovski and Anne Weber, panelists.

This panel provided the audience with a picture of the complex world of policies, guidelines and actions taken around the world relating to art and artifacts looted during World War II. The panel chair, Rabbi Abba Dunner, secretary general of the Conference of European Rabbis, also asked the audience members for their ideas and opinions regarding what should be considered looted art, to whom the art should be returned, and how nations and institutions, such as museums, should approach the issue.

Karen Franklin, director of the Judaica Museum of the Hebrew Home at Riverdale and director of family research at the Leo Baeck Institute, provided an overview of how American museums are dealing with the question of looted art. In accordance with guidelines established at an international conference in Washington, DC in 1998, and with the policies set by the American Association of Museums, many American museums have undertaken the expensive and laborious task of researching the provenance of their collections, and identifying which artworks have an uncertain provenance during the WWII period. This information is becoming available on museum web sites. Ms. Franklin noted that Jewish museums have been among the slowest to undertake this research, perhaps partly due to lack of resources. Ironically, however, one of the priorities established in Washington in 1998 was identifying the provenance of Judaica, much of which resides in Jewish museums. She also noted that art museums might approach Jewish museums for consultation on identifying Judaica, as well as on the ethics of returning art, so Jewish museums may want to prepare to serve this role.

Max Polonovski, curator of the Musée des Plans-Reliefs in Paris, who also serves as the undersecretary an overview of the French government’s approach to identifying and returning looted art. In his view,

French museums had done an admirable job of identifying art that may have been looted. However, he felt that the government had not provided the necessary support for taking the next step, identifying the families to whom the art belongs.

Anne Weber, co-chair of the Commission for Looted Art in Europe, an independent, non-profit organization, related several stories of locating looted art and the families to whom it belonged. She stressed the symbolic and emotional significance of the art, suggesting that the art is more important as a representative piece of a shattered past than as a commodity. The power of the looted works to represent a shattered past means that there are bound to be competing claims for looted artwork, from individual families, communities, museums and even nations. Ms. Weber and a colleague also discussed a website currently under

construction,

www.lootedartcommission.com, an international database of all information and research on works of art, books, Judaica and other cultural objects seized by the Nazis. Information about the laws and policies of different nations and institutions concerning looted art will be available on this site.

Questions regarding the ethics of “returning” art and what “returning” means were raised repeatedly in this discussion. If the actual family to which a work belonged cannot be identified, should art be returned to communities? What if the community is now bereft of



Ada Greenblatt and Estelle Guzik with the IAJGS award presented for Outstanding Project.

Jews, or the Jewish community in place is made up of immigrants from elsewhere? What if the community does not have the means to care for the work art, such as proper storage or display environments? Should art be “returned” to Jewish museums? Should art identified as Jewish go to museums in Israel?

Similarly, the question of what constitutes looting was also raised. Tom Freudenheim, director of the Gilbert Collection in London, noted that much of the African, Native American and other art that fills European and American museums was stolen from indigenous people during very violent periods of colonization. In claiming works looted during the Holocaust, the Jewish community should consider the broader ethic it is summoning and try to be consistent. Similarly, Mr. Freudenheim cautioned, Jewish museums should be careful about pointing fingers at other types of museums, when their own collections may also

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contain looted art. This point was also raised by several panelists who strongly disapproved of the manner in which Yad Vashem removed paintings by Bruno Schultz from a house in Drohobycz, Ukraine. As European Jews who are attempting to rebuild Jewish communities in Europe and to persuade European governments and communities to value and protect Jewish sites and objects as part of both European and Jewish history, several panelists were dismayed at the perceived message that Jewish art belongs only in Israel and cannot be cared for elsewhere. Several audience members took exception to the panelists' statements of disapproval, and there was a lively debate on the controversy.

Paul Silverstone—

On Sunday I attended a talk about the Wiener Library, which has a collection of materials covering the anti-Jewish actions of the Nazis during the 1930s. This led me to visit the library later in the week. They were very accommodating and I was able to obtain some copies of items of interest.

Sunday evening we arranged a dinner (pay your own way) for all New Yorkers and some former New Yorkers, too. Over 30 people had a good time together at Sofra, a local Turkish restaurant.

I spent all day Monday at the Public Record Office researching Colonial Office records on the subject of Aliyah Bet.

The lecture by Dr. Michael Jolles on "Distinguished and Relatively Unknown British Jews" was interesting but could have been better. Nevertheless, I purchased his book on the subject. This was followed by Geoffrey L. Green's very informative talk on "The Royal Navy and Anglo-Jewry." Many of the suppliers to sailors were Jewish merchants who established themselves near the Royal dockyards to sell to seamen of the Royal Navy who had prize money to spend.

Henry Wellisch spoke about "Canadian Sources"—which was useful to me as one with Canadian roots. Next year's conference apparently will offer access to some new records previously unseen, including Quebec vital records.

Wednesday afternoon saw Morris Beckmann's talk on "The Jewish Brigade," an aspect of Jewish history of World War II which deserves more attention. I was fortunate to be able to purchase his book. The activities of the men of the Brigade at the end of the war in saving Holocaust survivors should be better known. These veterans made up the nucleus of the soon-to-be Israeli Army with their invaluable knowledge of how an army is formed.

On Thursday morning, I introduced Ralph Yodaiken, whose talk on "Genealogy and Israel's War of Liberation" was really about the role of the Irgun and not much about genealogy. This was very fascinating as the speaker was a participant and member of the Irgun who helped imprisoned Irgun leaders escape from camps in Kenya.

My own talk on Thursday, "Aliyah-Bet: Clandestine Jewish Immigration to Palestine," was attended by about 30 people. The talk on Jews of Wales, which was supposed to be at the same time and which I had wanted to attend, was canceled. Also canceled was the talk on Russian Jewish partisans later that afternoon. But I attended Stephen D. Smith's very moving and thoughtful presentation, "In Search of the Forgotten: Memory, History, Dignity and the Genealogy of Holocaust Victims."

The dinner was a fitting end to the conference. Hoping for something other than vegetarian or fish, I opted for the kosher choice and had fish. Nevertheless, it was very well presented.

Mila Begun—

I connected to another line of my Befeler family, thanks to a response to a note I posted on the message board. We knew that one female line of descendants of my grandfather's brother settled in the UK and that, according to my Polish-accented cousin, their name was Vroobel. I had an address from the 1970s. Uncertain about the actual spelling, the message I posted contained several spelling variations of the name. A UK-based attendee answered my note with her phone number and the comment that she knew the family! And they are Vroobels. Calling her got me two male cousins' phone numbers, leading to an exciting family lunch/meeting and a later Friday night dinner and a wonderful set of connections. What can I say? It was possible because of the conference!

Estelle Reingold—

Along with several other delegates who arrived a day or two early, there was disappointment that no representative of the host country was present to greet us and make us feel comfortable. A second criticism had to do with the preponderance of presentations on Jews of various British communities—it was felt it had been more useful to have more time devoted to more atypical settlements. Indeed, the word most often used to describe this criticism was "laziness" on the part of the planners. In general, the presentations I attended were good, sometimes very good.

Some outstanding, because well prepared, were Michael Alpert's on "The Crypto-Jews of Early 18th

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Century Cuenca and Their Links with Madrid.” Dr. Alpert is clearly well versed, scholarly, in this area of history and his presentation was lively. Ron Arons was excellent. There can never be too many presentations that instruct in “Using the Internet and Expanding the Concept of Genealogy.”

Galina Baranova, a delightful presenter, was clear and to the point in her guidelines to access of “Records Stored in the Lithuanian State Historical Archives.” Warren Blatt’s “Jewish Given Names” was interesting, and his “Polish-Jewish Genealogical Research” even more so.

Gerald Esterson’s presentation, “Jewish Given Names Databases: Rabbinic Sources,” was too dry for verbal discussion, perhaps best done in written form only. Lucille Gudis, as ever, was well prepared and imbued her presentation, “The Jews of Harbin, China,” with her wealth of genealogical experience.

Excellent and very exhaustive was David Hoffman’s “The Grand Duchy of Lithuania 18th Century Census and Tax Lists.” I had almost forgotten how interesting history per se is until I came upon Susan Miller’s “Court Jews: Cutting Edge or Knife Edge?” Of the UK-based research presented, Miriam Rodrigues-Pereira’s presentation on “Bevis Marks Synagogue Records” was a standout.

Screening of *Back to Gombin* documentary—reported by Minna Packer—

The screening of the *Back To Gombin* documentary at the Conference was a well-attended and well-received event. A number of people seeking their Jewish roots who have ancestors from Gombin approached me following the screening—descendants named Walfovitch, Frenkel, Pytel and others—in addition to such individuals as David Mazower, grandson of Jewish writer Shalom Asch. I referred them to Ada Holtzman, our Gombiner genealogist in Tel Aviv, Israel, ada01@netvision.net.il. She is the expert on the genealogy of Gombiners. I am the film maker.

We, the descendants of Gombin, are an international *landsleit* who remain closely tied to our Polish Jewish roots. The film tells our story, in particular the project in which over 50 descendants, children of survivors and two survivors from Israel returned to Gombin in the summer of 1999. Together we reclaimed the Jewish cemetery there, bringing the *matzevot* (tombstones) back from their position as road paving, building a lapidarium to contain them, fencing this vast land, and rededicating it in a ceremony attended by hundreds of Jews and Poles. Within the film is footage from 1937 by Sam Rafel, an American

born in Gombin, taken 18 months before the Nazi occupation. This innocent life is juxtaposed with our journey and projects. Included are the dedication of a monument to the Jewish victims of Gombin, placed at Chelmno, the first extermination camp in occupied Poland; a commemoration at the mass grave of the slave laborers at Konin (where my grandfather is buried and where Rabbi Aaronson buried their names in bottles), and interviews of the remaining survivors of this *shtetl*, including the brilliant Yiddish poet Rajzel Zychlinsky as she recites her poem, “God Hid His Face.” (Zychlinsky died in June at the age of 91.)

We are treated to the words of an erudite group of other survivors including my father, Michael Zielonka, Holocaust lecturer Mel Wruble, Ben Guyer, Jacob Spievak, Bela Boll and several more who have indeed passed away during the production of this work.

Many thanks to Saul Issroff for his expertise in organizing the London Conference and assisting me in a successful screening. Also thanks to John Berman, the computer expert at the conference, who so gracefully introduced me to all aspects of the event.

For further information on upcoming national and international screenings of the film, and for information on purchasing a video copy of the one-hour film, please contact me: Packer Productions, 308 Eighth Street, Hoboken NJ 07030; 201-656-3722; packerproduction@prodigy.net; <http://pages.prodigy.net/madisonpark>.

Conference Publications—

Limited quantities of the *Syllabus*, *Resource Book* and *Family Finder* are for sale as a package at £25 (UK) and £35/US\$52 (overseas delivery), including shipping. Conference tote bags, in navy nylon with the Conference logo, are £2 (UK) and £3/US\$5 (overseas), including shipping. JGSGB has issued three publications in its *Jewish Ancestors* series: *A Beginner’s Guide to Jewish Genealogy in Great Britain* (2001, second revised edition), *A Guide to Jewish Genealogy in Germany & Austria*, and *A Guide to Jewish Genealogy in Latvia & Estonia* (2001). Each is priced at £4.50 (UK) and £6/US\$10 (overseas), including shipping. (Details about the guides may be found at www.jgs.gb.org/bookb1.htm.) To order these materials, send a check or credit card number/expiration date and shipping address to: Membership Secretary, JGSGB, PO Box 27061, London N2 0GT, England. Cassette recordings of many of the Conference talks will be for sale in the future; contact JGSGB for an order form.

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Genealogical Resources in the UK

In addition to the library and archival repository descriptions included in *A Beginner's Guide to Jewish Genealogy in Great Britain* and in the Conference *Resource Book*, The Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain provides summaries of research holdings through the issues of its quarterly publication *Shemot*.

The June 2001 (9:2) issue includes:

- “Jewish genealogical sources at the London Metropolitan Archives” – LMA, the largest local authority record office in the United Kingdom. Records of London government, courts, hospitals, charities and businesses dating from the 12th century to the present day are complemented by a photograph collection of two million images and extensive map and print holdings. Many Anglo-Jewish organizations have deposited their records at LMA. These include the Jews' Free School (admission and discharge registers, 1869-1939, among other records); Westminster Jews' Free School (admission and discharge registers, 1869-1939); Jews' Temporary Shelter (registers of inmates, 1896-1934; the database of entries up to 1914 is at <http://chrysalis.its.uct.ac.za/shelter/shelter.htm>); London School of Jewish Studies (formerly Jews' College, pupil and attendance lists). A downloadable leaflet on LMA's Jewish holdings is available at www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/leisure_heritage/libraries_archives_museums_galleries/lma/about_lma.htm. Address: 40 Northampton Road, London EC1R 0HB; e-mail: ask.lma@corpoflondon.gov.uk.

- “The Wiener Library and its collection” – Europe's foremost Holocaust repository of books, periodicals, documents, eyewitness accounts, unpublished memoirs and press cuttings dating back to the 1930s. Address: 4 Devonshire Street, London W1N 2BH; e-mail: lib@wl.u-net.com.
- “The Guildhall Library” – the reference library of the City of London, holding manuscripts, books and maps, and famous for its collection of trade directories and fire insurance records. Address: Aldermanbury, London EC2 2EJ; www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/leisure_heritage/libraries_archives_museums_galleries/city_london_libraries/guildhall_lib.htm.
- “Jewish holdings at Manchester Central Library” – records of many local and regional Jewish organizations and synagogues. Address: Manchester Archives and Local Studies, Central Library, St. Peter's Square, Manchester M2 5PD; e-mail: lsu@libraries.manchester.gov.uk.

The September 2001 (9:3) issue reports on:

- “The Isobel Mordy Collection” – One of three major collections of Jewish genealogy deposited at the Society of Genealogists in London. (The others are the Hyamson Collection and the Colyer-Fergusson Collection.) Mordy (1906-1993), the editor and translator of Alexander Dietz's *The Jewish Community of Frankfurt*, compiled records for hundreds of Jewish families in the UK and Ireland from the 17th to the 20th centuries. Address: 14 Charterhouse Buildings, Goswell Road, London EC1M 7BA; e-mail: info@sog.org.uk.

Genealogical Databases in England, Wales and Ireland

Stuart Rosenblatt of the Irish Jewish Genealogical Society has developed an Access database that includes such sources about **Jews in Ireland** as marriage records, burial records, tombstone inscriptions, yahrzeit plaques and alien files. The 24,500 records are added to as new and updated information is found. The project is discussed in detail in the September 2001 (9:3) issue of *Shemot*. Stuart welcomes inquiries and may be reached at Jasonia Business Centre, 76 Dame Street, Dublin 2, Ireland; e-mail: masterc@medianet.ie.

Petra Laidlaw is collecting data for the **Jews in Great Britain in 1851** project. She reports in the September 2001 issue of *Shemot* that “the eventual output will be a directory-style database containing essential biographical data on each of the thousands of individuals it covers. The database is founded on the snapshot principle: it aims to include data on any

individuals, young or old, who were living in Great Britain in 1851.” That was a census year, and the Jewish population was relatively small (25,000 to 35,000). The Access database has tables of vital data, family, places of residence, occupations, and places of worship. “Anyone with good data on anyone living in Great Britain in 1851 is welcome to contribute.” Petra may be contacted c/o JGSGB, PO Box 27061, London N2 0GT; e-mail: thompsonlaidlaw@aol.com.

The FreeBMD [births, marriages, deaths] Project aims to provide free Internet access to the **Civil Registration Index for England and Wales** for the years 1837 to 1900. FreeBMD is hosted by Rootsweb and uses volunteers worldwide to enter data from the quarterly indexes. More than 25 million records have been entered already. Information about this project may be found at <http://freebmd.rootsweb.com>.

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www.TheJewishMuseum.org

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122 East 58th Street
(between Park and Lexington Avenues)
212-755-8532 • www.nygbs.org

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למען תספרו לדור אחרון, תהילים מ"ה:14 14:14 Psalms 48:14
That you might recount it to a future generation, Psalms 48:14