

---

---

The Journal of the Jewish Genealogical Society

# DOROT דורות

---

---

Volume 35, Number 2

Winter 2014

---

---

## How I Became a Publisher of Genealogies

By Moishe Miller

My interest in genealogy started before I even realized I had an interest. I just enjoyed hearing the stories told by my maternal grandfather, a man who lived three lifetimes over the course of over 100 years. The first third of his life was in pre-war Europe, then in the USA and lastly in Israel. Even after his *Aliyah* to Israel following the Six-Day War, he made frequent long visits to his family in Brooklyn.

Complementing my grandfather's stories was a family tree constructed by my father in 1962 after he married. His goal was not really what we would consider genealogical in nature. Rather, he wanted to know what names were available for the naming of his future children. A draftsman by trade, he made an ancestry chart after interviewing his parents, in-laws and his 88 year-old grandfather.

My grandfather's stories were always fascinating, but I could never keep track of all the names and their relationships. Having seen my father's chart at age nine when my parents were trying to decide on a name for a new son, I made myself a copy. Then, whenever my grandfather told me stories, I wrote the names on my own chart. Eventually I mapped out my grandfather's paternal line going back to his great-grandfather. He

usually took me with him when he went to visit cousins of his generation, and I would sometimes ask them questions, just so I could see how they fit into my grandfather's life stories. On occasion, these cousins were from his maternal side, so I jotted down what little they told me about that side of his family, too.

Throughout those early years of my genealogical life, I had not been bitten by the "bug." My true intent was merely to add details and context to the rich tapestry my grandfather had created. Since my father had already made a chart, it did not even occur to me that there might be more information available. I was not close to my other grandparents, either because they passed away during my youth or did not live nearby. The meager amount of information I had came only from my father's chart and an additional generation that my grandfather was not positive about.

### My Answers to "the Question" Then and Now

During my growing-up years in Brooklyn, I was frequently asked "the question" about my paternal line. "Your name is Miller? Are you related to...?" My grandfather and great-grandfather had no siblings, and

continued on page 8

### In this issue

<b>How I Became a Publisher of Genealogies</b> by Moishe Miller.....	1
<b>President's Postings</b> by Roni Seibel Liebowitz.....	3
<b>Three Tributes to Our Colleague, David Kleiman, z'l</b> by James Oppenheim, Miriam Weiner, and Madeline D. Piel.....	3
<b>JGS Welcomes Three New Members of the Executive Council for 2014.....</b>	13
<b>JGS Welcomes 36 New Members from Nov. 25, 2013 to March 12, 2014.....</b>	14

<b>Upcoming and Current Events.....</b>	15
<b>Lost Author Found .....</b>	16
<b>JGS Program Reports</b> by Steve Stein.....	17
<b>On Line News.....</b>	22
<b>In the Repositories.....</b>	23
<b>News &amp; Notes from All Over.....</b>	23
<b>New, Recent &amp; Noteworthy Publications.....</b>	24
<b>Questioning the Experts:</b> Barbara Wright.....	26

**DOROT**  
**The Journal of the**  
**Jewish Genealogical Society**

Editor.....Toby Carliner Sanchez  
Design and Production.....Jim Garrity

.....Contributors.....

Larry Freund, Roni Seibel Liebowitz, Moishe Miller,  
James Oppenheim, Madeline D.Piel, Rivka Schiller,  
Miriam Weiner

Photographs by Joy Kestenbaum

© 2014 Jewish Genealogical Society, Inc.  
JGS, Inc. is a not-for-profit,  
tax-exempt organization.

JGS, Inc.  
15 West 16<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10011  
Telephone: (212) 294-8318  
E-mail: [info@jgsny.org](mailto:info@jgsny.org)  
Website: <http://www.jgsny.org>

Mail to: P.O. Box 631, New York, NY 10113-0631

**DOROT** (ISSN 0886-2796)  
is published quarterly as the  
fall, winter, spring, and summer issues.  
Subscription is by membership only.  
Back issues are for sale at  
<http://www.jgsny.org/dorot.htm>.

To request permission to reprint an item,  
contact the editor at [editor@jgsny.org](mailto:editor@jgsny.org).

**DOROT** is indexed in  
*Index to Jewish Periodicals*.

**RATES FOR DISPLAY ADS**

Full page \$150                      Half page \$80  
Quarter page \$45                      Eighth page \$25

Publication of an advertisement does not imply an  
endorsement or recommendation by JGS, Inc.

**JGS EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Roni Seibel Liebowitz, President  
[president@jgsny.org](mailto:president@jgsny.org)

Jane Rosen Berenbeim, First Vice President/Program  
[program@jgsny.org](mailto:program@jgsny.org)

Michael L. Levine, Second Vice President/Membership  
[membership@jgsny.org](mailto:membership@jgsny.org)

Harriet Glickman Mayer, Vice President/Communications  
Stewart Driller, Treasurer  
Howard Rotblatt, Secretary

Steven W. Siegel, z"l, Past President  
(2011-2012)

Lanie Bergman	Hadassah Lipsius
Linda Cantor	Lauren Shulsky Orenstein
Joy Kestenbaum	Michael Pertain
David Kleiman, z"l	Paul H. Silverstone
Jeffrey Levin	Steve Stein

Printed by The Sheridan Press, Hanover, PA

## WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US!

The Jewish Genealogical Society, Inc., founded in 1977, was the first of over eighty such societies. Our approximately 900 members live in the New York metropolitan area, other states, and other countries. We hold membership in the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies. We have an office in the Center for Jewish History and a library in the Center's Genealogy Institute.

We support organizations, repositories, and archival projects through generous annual donations to insure the preservation of many of the Jewish community's treasured documents and to provide greater public access to them. Some of them are American Jewish Historical Society, American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, American Sephardi Federation, Center for Jewish History, Center Genealogy Institute, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, JewishGen, Jewish Records Indexing-Poland, Leo Baeck Institute, National Yiddish Book Center, Ronald S. Lauder Foundation Genealogy Project at the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland, and YIVO Institute for Jewish Research.

### Membership benefits:

- free admission to our monthly meetings (September through June), featuring guest lecturers from a variety of disciplines, and field trips to libraries and archives;
- discount on admission to JGS events, such as all-day seminars;
- a subscription to our quarterly journal, *Dorot*, containing reports on monthly meetings, descriptions of items held by repositories and organizations, announcements of new books, feature articles on genealogical research, and tips on new Internet sites;
- free access to JewishData.com;
- discount on JGS publications, including *Genealogical Resources in New York*, an invaluable tool for genealogical research in New York City; and
- discounts from the JGS Friends listed on the inside back page of *Dorot*

### Membership dues per calendar year:

- Regular Member \$36
- Local Member 25 years of age and younger \$18
- Family Member (two members) \$45
- Sustaining Member \$60 (two membership cards)
- Supporting Member \$100 (two membership cards)
- Patron Member \$250 or more (two membership cards)
- Out-of-town Member (more than 100 miles from New York City) \$25
- Foreign Membership (air mail) US\$36

You can become a member on-line via the JGS, Inc. website at <http://www.jgsny.org/>. Click on **Membership** in the top bar and then on **Join Now**. The application form will appear on-line. Be patient. Complete it and click submit. On the next screen, select a credit card and make payment.

You can also request a membership application by mailing a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Jewish Genealogical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 631, New York, NY 10113-0631, or you can print out the application on the JGS website at <http://www.jgsny.org>. Click on Membership in the top bar and "Join Now" (be patient). Complete the form and mail it to the above address. Please note that within the limits prescribed by law, your membership fee less \$12 attributable to the *Dorot* subscription is deductible as a charitable contribution.

JGS is a not-for-profit organization open to people of all ethnic and religious backgrounds.



## President's Postings by Roni Seibel Liebowitz

As I look outside my window at the piles of deep snow, I need to remind myself that spring is just around the corner. My New Year's resolution to organize my genealogical data still remains to be fulfilled. The color-coded loose-leaf notebooks and folders (ala Rhoda Miller), are bursting, but much of the contents have yet to be translated.

Also just around the corner is the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in Salt Lake City to take place July 27-August 1. The theme of the conference is the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the start of World War I. Whether you are attending in person or access it LIVE over the internet, you are invited to share your family's World War I era stories and photos. These can relate to military service, forced relocation, disruption caused by the fighting, emigration, or any other topics related to this time. See the conference website to learn how to upload your stories and photos: <http://conference.iajgs.org/2014/>.

Jan Meisels Allen reported that each year the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has a theme for the Days of Remembrance – this year to be commemorated April 27-May 4, 2014. The USHMM prepares a free

CD/DVD Planning Guide and Resources for the annual Holocaust Commemorations. The guide includes a poster set and film related to the theme, memorial readings, musical suggestions, personal histories, and other resources. The 2014 Days of Remembrance theme is, *Confronting the Holocaust: American Responses*. It is also commemorating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Holocaust in Hungary. If you are interested in receiving a copy of the CD/DVD Planning Guide and resources, you need to fill out a form. Go to: <http://act.ushmm.org/page/s/dor-dvd/>. To learn more about the Days of Remembrance, go to: <http://www.ushmm.org/remember/days-of-remembrance>.

We have exciting programs scheduled in the Spring. There will also be more Lunch and Learn sessions from 12:30 – 1:30 when we are at the Center for Jewish History. Check the website and e-mail announcements to find out when they are scheduled. Be aware that the Lillian Goldman Reading Room and Ackman and Ziff Genealogy Institute will be closed for renovations from Wednesday, April 9 through the end of the month. If you plan to go, call or e-mail first to check it is open. For more information, please email [inquiries@cjh.org](mailto:inquiries@cjh.org).

*Roni*

## Three Tributes to Our Colleague David Kleiman, z"l

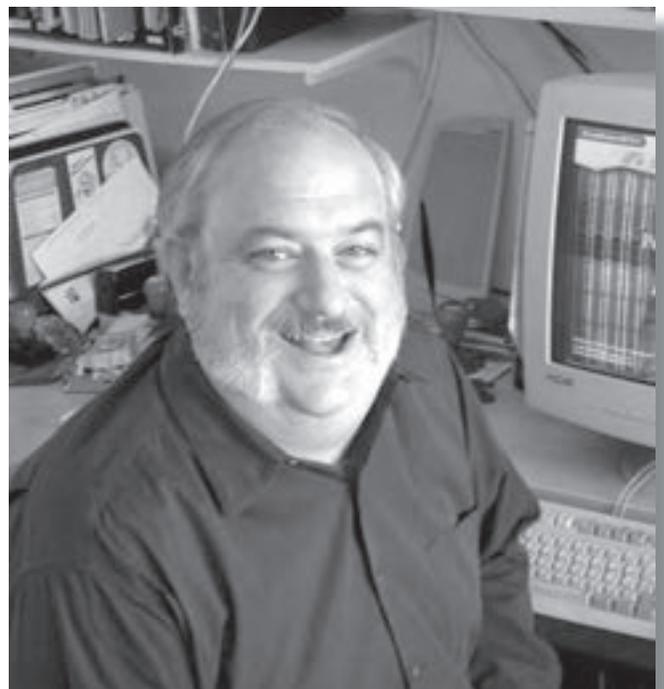
### The Funeral Eulogy for David Kleiman by James Oppenheim

The last time I spoke to David he was helping his nephew, Alex, with his Bar Mitzvah speech. He was doing so many of the things he loved: sharing time with his family, talking philosophy, helping, teaching, nurturing.

It is impossible to talk about David in a few words. He was encyclopedic in his knowledge and pursuits and not readily edited. He did so much, he knew so much, he loved so much.

What do you see when you close your eyes and think of him? His mutton chops? His twinkling eyes? His expressive voice? His bad jokes?

When I saw him last week he shimmered in quantum states:- he was a vibrant, glowing orb of energy, caring and love. He was my closest friend. He was so sick, and



yet overflowing with optimism about how this was all going to work out.

You see, I can't define him away with words like musician, curator, historian, computer professional, fund-raiser, dungeonmaster. Husband, son, grandfather, uncle, brother. All are just words, and none, even taken together in paragraphs or chapters or even volumes can convey what the world has lost: this brilliant, caring, loving example of the best of humanity.

There is a theory that we live in a multi-dimensional universe. It is certainly true of David. While some of us are content to live in a four dimensional world constrained by space and time, David constructed a multi-verse, a Venn Diagram of overlapping circles.

Maybe you knew David from folk-music, as a leader in Jewish Genealogy, or from his work with the Loeb Visitor Center and Touro Synagogue, as president of NYPC (New York PC Users Group), New York's largest computer club. You may have been in David's museum sphere or had the the pleasure of one of his meals based on history, or color, or theme.

Many of us knew him from one or two or three of these circles. He was always a leader, a pioneer, a talent, a thinker, the warmest, most generous heart in the room. He wanted to make things better, to bring out the best in people, to help them to think harder and learn more so that they could make a better world on both a macro and micro level.

But, if you only knew David from one sphere or another, you might have missed how his incredible brain worked. So I want to pull the camera back a bit further so you can see how all of those circles overlapped, and how he crafted a seamless web from what might appear to be such disparate elements.

I met David thirty years ago...back before it was cool to be a geek. He knew nothing about sports, he knew everything about every else. He had traveled the world, sung Christmas mass in the Vatican. He had created a vibrant Dungeons and Dragon universe with a back story, maps, and songs that filled a bookshelf. He knew every sea shanty and folk song ever written, played guitar and drums, and a bit of everything else. Pete Seeger had taught him how to play banjo. He could speak geek in a thousand dialects with authority.

Back in the eighties there was a new phenomenon called the Personal Computer. It was like a mainframe only smaller. Some of you don't know what a mainframe is. They were like iPhones only bigger and heavier.

Anyway, I can remember when owning a computer didn't make you cool, it made you sort of weird, like singing folk songs, or cooking recipes from the Middle Ages, or playing games with 20 sided dice and bits and pieces of paper.

Anyway, David saw that much of what we had grown up with as science fiction was about to become real life. Unlike many folksters, David was not adverse to technology. His uncle was a rocket scientist, and his father ran great big computers. He saw that people would need help learning about this technology so he became the multi-termed president of New York's largest computer club, the NYPC. This was David the organizer, the educator. But it was also David the Impresario. He shared the stage with the titans of the new computer age, like Bill Gates.

Up until then user groups met in basements and schools. David changed that in a single stroke. When Intel wanted to debut its latest computer chip they didn't do it at CES but with David at an NYPC meeting held at Lincoln Center! David was a builder: he created the Intergalactic User Group Officer's Conference that brought volunteer computer organizations together from around the world. He thought big. He thought creatively. He worked to make things better. Being a showman for David wasn't about grabbing the spotlight – it was most often about educating. David's travels created more circles, more overlaps: I've already mentioned that this nice Jewish Boy managed a choir that sang in the Vatican on Christmas eve. As a fund-raiser for the union of American Hebrew Congregations, he travelled to Poland before the fall of Communism to meet with persecuted Jewish leaders there.

Religion, and music and history and politics overlapped on that occasion in chilling ways. He was profoundly disturbed by the way the Polish Government had turned the event into a media circus particularly at Auschwitz where he only wanted to quietly say Kaddish. The government wanted none of that: they intended to use the trip to show that the Jews didn't have it so bad.

That night David was with some of the most important Jewish leaders of our time in a theater in Poland for the presentation of a program that was to include Jewish music, long suppressed. When the authorities dictated that the Jewish music was not to be performed, pandemonium broke out, the program was delayed. Armed guards in black leather trench coats and Uzis appeared at the exits. Negotiations ensued and the performers said they would not continue unless they could, at the very least sing *Hatikva*. Eventually, under the scrutiny of the *Stazi*, the delegation stood in

solidarity with the company and sang. David told me it wasn't clear at the time there wasn't going to be a massacre.

So we have music, politics, prayer, all circling, overlapping. But there was more to the story. David and I shared many confidences, but this one didn't come out until last year. David, a renaissance man of the first order, was also recruited as a spy for the American Government. Because of his work and travel behind the Iron Curtain, he was brought in for training in what John LeCarre (and David) called the "tradecraft" - how to make an approach, identify surveillance, pass information. You see...no matter how much you think you might have known about David there were always surprises. Worlds colliding.

Many of you know David the folk-singer, some maybe even knew him as a Jewish NFTY (the North American Federation of Temple Youth) song-leader performing with Debbie Freedman who was also a NFTY leader. With Caitlan he performed as a cantorial soloist and also as an Irish Balladeer. With Ellen, Steve, and Joy he created incredible emotional, historical music as Watersign. Many of you have sung with him at parties, at shanty sings, at the folk music retreats, and well....wherever David was there was singing. He was also terribly proud of the work he did as a producer for several of his musical friend and colleagues.

On a personal note, so many of David's talents and passions came together in my two daughters' *b'nei mitvahs*. There we saw David the showman, the educator, the uncle, the chef, the historian, the computer guy, the loving man. My Kate had proposed a rock music themed party, and David and MaryJo and I came up with the idea of a folk-rock themed service. The truth is that David didn't really like Debbie Friedman's folk rock liturgical music, but he saw the service as a way of teaching and inspiring Kate (and me). We sang Jewish music, Southern Gospel, and The Byrds. Ellen sang a blues *Kaddish* I will never forget, Joy, Steve, Mary Jo and I sang back up. And David performed a *Kiddush* by Kurt Weil that was stratospheric.

Four years later David and I designed a Bat Mitzvah for Ali that was our greatest multimedia collaboration. Ali was a big fan of the computer game Age of Empires and we decided that her service and party would all be based on elements of the game – a feat since the ancient Hebrews were the only major historical group not actually in the game. With David, we found a musical service by Solomon Rossi, the 16<sup>th</sup> century Italian composer. Ali learned the cantorial part and David put

together a backing choir. Oh yes, and he also designed a menu of Renaissance food and spent the better part of a week helping to cook it so that we could afford to do it and so that it would be done right.

He negotiated the difficult waters of Rabbinic diplomacy to make sure we didn't offend. He worked with the girls to make sure the events were not just performances, but learning experience and personally meaningful. Which brings me to my last story.

It was the night before the Bat Mitzvah. We had been cooking for a week. We had just performed with Ali at Friday Night services and David asked if there was anything missing. She said...well, yes...maybe a dragon. She laughed and went to bed. At which point David said we had to go to the supermarket. I thought he said something about needing to make something subtle for Ali.

Through the night he worked, a chef, an artist, and when Ali woke the next morning she saw what at a medieval feast would have been called (ironically I might add) a Subtlety: David had crafted a dragon sitting on a hoard of gold with marzipan and food coloring. He wanted to have everything: A music, history, even a dragon and magic, too. As with everything, he gave so much love with so much thought.

Kate, A special word to you. He loved you so. You were strong enough and passionate enough to stand up to him. I remember the moment you had him. Early in your relationship...was it the first week? You rented a space to cook David a themed, historical dinner. You had him then forever!

Kate, Rhoda, Irv, Barry, Susan, Ross, Loren, and Alex - we are all asking the same questions. What? Why? How can it be? This can't be real. These thoughts tormented me through the night.

When I woke up this morning, my mind was full of activity, still half in the talking dream I had had all night. I knew just what to do. I was going to talk to someone, explain that this was all a terrible mistake, and get it fixed. I just needed to talk it through and it would all be made right. I would call David, and talk it out with him. Surely he would know what to do.

I already knew how the conversation would go. First, he would ask about my back, before I could ask him how he was feeling. Then he would tell me about all the new projects he was working on for the Ambassador, then about the incredible dish he had invented based on

a recipe he found in an ancient cook book or maritime novel, then he would ask me about the girls and tell me about his niece and nephew, about Barry. If I was lucky he would play a song he found just for me. And then, and only then, would we get down to solving the problem.

And then it all came down on me in a gut-crunching minute that my best friend, my confidant, my father confessor, my guru, my rabbi, my brother from another mother, wasn't going to be able to help me this time as he had so many times in the past. There is a Jewish teaching that to die on the Sabbath is the mark of a Righteous man. Anyone who knew David knew this without resorting to the Talmud, but I think he would have liked the footnote.

And I knew when David left was that I had to sing. I

knew somewhere somehow he was singing with me,

My life flows on in endless song;  
Above earth's lamentation,  
I hear the sweet, tho' far-off hymn  
That hails a new creation;  
Thro' all the tumult and the strife  
I hear the music ringing;  
It finds an echo in my soul—  
How can I keep from singing?

*James Oppenheim has been a guest speaker at genealogy meetings on several occasions. He is an author, attorney, and computer consultant with an emphasis on Web Design. He is a contributor to the NBC Today Show and SiriusXM where he covers family technology. His website is JamesGames.com.*

## David Kleiman ..... Remembering by Miriam Weiner

The time goes by so quickly! It was 26 years ago when I met David Kleiman – he introduced me to the world of vintage postcards and I became an avid collector because of this. We continued our friendship and soon David became a collaborator and consultant with me in my then fledgling ambition to identify and publish surviving Jewish and civil documents in the archives of Poland and the former Soviet Union. Shortly thereafter, I formed the Routes to Roots Foundation, Inc. in conjunction with this project and David was an integral part of the design and implementation of the archive database and the entire RTRF website.

David's creativity and abilities were the main impetus for the development of the website. He knew so much about so many different things. Often he wanted to explain to me the technical part of what he was doing on the website, and it was so far beyond my comprehension that sometimes I had to (gently) stop him. I was more interested in the end results than how he did it – for me his work was magic. He could take my ideas, expand on them and produce something far better than I ever envisioned.

David loved food – to shop for it, prepare it, serve it to friends and family and to eat it! When we first met, he invited me to an Ethiopian Restaurant somewhere in the City and after we sat down, he said, “by the way, this food should be eaten with your hands – no forks!” I remember being quite shocked because this was a “first” for me. By the way, I don't remember what we

ate, but it was delicious.

At David's memorial service, his very close friend, James Oppenheim, talked at length about David and the wide circle of friends he had because of his many interests. A couple of days after the funeral, James sent me an e-mail which included the words:

“I am pretty sure you know, but just in case and to underline, David was so proud of the work he did with you. It was another place where all those overlapping circles came together: faith, history, family, computers, politics, publishing, and more.”

As time goes by, I treasure my friendships even more when a friend passes away. I miss David terribly.

*Miriam Weiner, well-known lecturer on Jewish and Eastern European genealogy, is the author of Jewish Roots in Poland and Jewish Roots in Ukraine and Moldova. She is the creator of the Eastern European Archival Database which includes Jewish and civil records from archives in Belarus, Lithuania, Poland, Moldova and Ukraine at <http://www.rtrfoundation.org>; the recipient of a “Lifetime Achievement Award” from the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies in 2003, and an advisor for Genealogy Services in the Ackman & Ziff Family Genealogy Institute at the Center for Jewish History. She was a long-time personal friend of David Kleiman, who designed and maintained the Roots To Routes website for her.*

## A Graceful Exit For David Kleiman by Madeline D. Piel

David Kleiman's family and many friends said goodbye to him in a service at the Plaza Jewish Community Chapel, 630 Amsterdam Avenue in New York City on Monday, January 20, 2014. A celestial celebration that lasted for almost two hours and explored his life and his many, many interests...music, travel, religion, languages, history, genealogy, the Touro Synagogue, the Loeb Visitor Center/George Washington Institute for Religious Freedom (both in Newport, Rhode Island), computers, cameras, scanners, genealogical software, techno-games, family and friends, teaching and learning. His open door policy (anybody could call him at any time about anything), parties, Bar Mitzvahs, Bat Mitzvahs, elaborate, custom-made, themed celebrations, careful preparations, medieval recipes and week-long cooking fetés for feasts of all kinds, no detail too small, forgotten or unconsidered.

For David it was the process not the destination in which perfection was achieved, but of course he loved a successful conclusion.

At David's service we were enveloped by many religious prayers, songs and psalms sung in Hebrew by a lady Rabbi; a folk group sang early American sea chanteys, *a cappella*; another folk group foursome sang David and Kate's mid-20th century favorites; exquisite guitar and banjo playing accompanied these merry sing-a-longs. We learned from one of the introductions that David had taken banjo lessons from Pete Seeger...now that's music genealogy!

The Rabbi noted that David was spiritual but not religious, so these instrumental and vocal tributes were perfectly kosher although secular music is not the norm in these memorial services, I've been told. The Rabbi read a most moving poem that reminded us all that David's remarkably special life was "the dash" between all the years 1954 - 2014, not the years.

Another celebrant read an epic poem written by David's mother, Rhoda Kleiman-- a lovely tribute about many important touching aspects of David's life such as the joy and pleasure he took in dancing the *hora*. David loved folk dancing of all kinds...I can see him now - wildly circling, holding hands, swinging them high above his head, a bright gleam in his eye, catching the ethereal spirit of the moment, gathering more and more glee as his feet barely touch the dance floor.

David would have been 60 years old this March 17th, Saint Patrick's Day and in the Chinese Year of The Wood Horse--a very special and honored year because it marks a return to both the sign and element of one's birth. He and Kate were planning a big bang of a family birthday celebration. After all it is a day of grand parades with much musical history, fanfare and jiggling! He crossed-over culturally on everything that fascinated him. (Everyone has a touch of the Irish and wear's a bit of the green on St. Patrick's Day.) David was always connecting his vast circles of interests and friends...co connectivity in multi-dimensions like the Chinese game, Go!

David went to sleep late Friday night, January 17 not to awake Saturday (the day of the Sabbath - said to be a righteous day to die) after a very busy week of being with the favorite interest groups he loved and led, with cherished family members (he and Kate were lovingly preparing his nephew for his Bar Mitzvah in a few weeks) and in deep conversations with close, long-time friends. Then David shut his eyes, dreamed and journeyed to the great beyond.

This is my recollection of the celebration of David Kleiman's life. The Chapel was standing room only. Several of David's close friends and his wife in addition to the Rabbi spoke and told "David" stories, amazingly without notes or sheet music. Kate was eloquent, brave and most inspiring in her gentle, heartfelt tribute to her husband.

A small group of Association of Professional Genealogists (APG) members as well as members of David's Genealogy Technical Group (which he led for 27 years and which Kate continues as his legacy) did not go to the burial. Instead we waited on the sidewalk to wave our final farewells as David left New York City in his caravan for Clifton, New Jersey where others would receive him and send him on his way to dance on!

Rest in Sweet Heavenly Peace — dear friend, colleague and teacher.

*Madeline D. Piel, Member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, is a former board member and Vice Chair of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society. ☆*

# How I Became a Publisher of Genealogies

continued from page 1.

we were not *Kohanim* (of the tribe of Levi). The famous Rabbi Avigdor Miller of Brooklyn was a *Kohain*, as was the Muller family in the *yekish* Breuer's community of Washington Heights in Manhattan. We were *Yisraelim* (not of the tribe of Levi). My only Miller cousins were the children of my father's brother, but they all lived in Israel. So the answer was always, "No, we have no Miller cousins in the USA."

My views of genealogy changed dramatically in 1992 when I took one of my younger brothers to Israel to celebrate his bar mitzvah. While visiting our uncle in Jerusalem, he surprised us with pages of genealogy from a scholarly work his neighbor was writing, entitled *Meorei Galicia* (Encyclopedia of Galician Sages), by Rabbi Meir Wunder. I discovered that we had Miller cousins. In fact, my paternal grandfather did have a married brother who perished in the Holocaust. My great-grandfather had quite a few siblings, many of whom had perished as well.

It bothered me that less than 50 years after the Holocaust there would be no memory of almost our entire family. I undertook the simple (!) task of just documenting those few extra names into my nice simple chart. Little did I realize where the journey would take me. Today, with over 14,000 documented descendents from my paternal line, starting with Pesach Langsam, I no longer answer "the question" the same way. I know that my family spans six continents and has family members from all walks of life. These include Orthodox (*chasideush*, *litvish*, modern, etc), Conservative, Reform, unaffiliated and non-Jewish members.

## Learning How to Map My Genealogy

To help me in my quest, I leveraged my computer background (a Bachelor of Science in Information Systems) to document the history and to reach out to family members around the world. Even with my training, technology advancements still presented challenges. For example, email attachments were issues for some users in the early 90's - both receiving and knowing how to open them. I was using Microsoft Excel to keep track of everything, as I liked its charting feature. As a novice, I did not know much about the standard numbering systems in regular use, such as the Online Descendant Chart (ODT) or National Genealogical Society (NGS), so I designed my own graphic representation of a four-generation tree. As

there were many marriages of cousins, hyper-linking via the "net" was an easy way to see the connections. I used color, font-size and indentation to represent my genealogy on a family website. And thus began my first publishing effort, a website, [www.langsam.com](http://www.langsam.com), dedicated to the memory of the 700+ known family members who perished during the years of the Holocaust.

I came to rely on the website much like a fisherman; it was bait on a hook in the great sea of the Internet, just waiting for a possible relative to search for our names on "AltaVista," "Yahoo" or "Magellan." Over the next five years I contacted many of my extended family members, joined the New York Jewish Genealogical Society, and subscribed to *Avotaynu* and *Gesher Galicia*. As the family tree mushroomed, I dreamed of publishing a book on my rich Miller family history. However, the project seemed too large an undertaking for me, especially as I had never published a book before. Furthermore, there did not seem to be anyone else interested in collaborating with me on such a project. I focused on enhancing the website, using it as a virtual book, outlining the earlier generations of our family.

## The First Publishing Opportunity – Rabbi Besser & the Koschitski Family

Ten years passed and yet I still dreamed of somehow printing a book on my family. As if in response to my dream, I became aware that a distinguished member of my wife's family was interested in printing a book of the many pictures he accumulated on the Koschitzki family (a name with many spelling variants). This man was the late Rabbi Haskel Besser *ob"m*, whose biography was documented by Warren Kozak in a book called *The Rabbi of 84<sup>th</sup> Street: The Extraordinary Life of Haskel Besser*. We met for the first time in 2002 at his office at the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation for Poland, where he was the Director. He spent over two hours with me, outlining what he wanted out of the book he was preparing. In later meetings I was able to win Rabbi Besser over to the idea of using the pictures as the "meat on the bones" of a family genealogy. I pointed out that few family members, if any, would know who the people in the pictures were nor how to place them within the context of the family history. He agreed, and so began one of the most fulfilling secular experiences of my life.

Rabbi Besser wanted the scope of the book to be limited to all descendents of one common ancestor, Chaim Chiel Koschitzki, born in 1842. I was introduced to a wide array of willing collaborators from all 10 branches of the family. This enabled me to take on the role I wanted, that of consolidator. One cousin took on the role of private investigator; he would track down and find detail on whichever branch I was working on, no matter what the country. Another cousin translated stories from Hebrew to English and also helped to prepare print-ready Hebrew copy for a section of the book. Other family members helped to track down pictures for scanning, and more than several family members produced biographies of the earlier ancestors in the family history. I coordinated delivery of the books with family members on the East Coast, West Coast, London, Antwerp and Israel. Also, the project was fully funded, which afforded me the latitude of preparing the book in a way that met my vision of how it should be presented. As one family member said, "It should be a book that you could make a *bracha* (blessing) on."

### **The Next Publishing Effort**

My second effort at publishing resulted in a book entitled *The Koschitzki Family History*. Over 600 copies of the book were printed in time for Chanukah 2003. It had 371 pages and was hard covered with a Smyth sewn binding. I interviewed several print-houses for the job, and chose Thomson-Shore ([www.thomsonshore.com](http://www.thomsonshore.com)), located in Dexter, Michigan, to do the printing. They offered the best mix of price and service. They also were able to accept my print-ready PDF for the job and even had specifications and recommendations for what options I should use to make it print-ready for their shop. Distribution centers for the book were set up in the USA, Europe and Israel, via truck, ship and courier. The book featured a three page table of contents, a table of figures, a table listing the 147 pictures, an NGS genealogical chart spanning 200 pages, eight generations and naming over 1,650 individuals, a color tip-in chart showing the intersections by marriage of 36 cousins, all direct descendants of the same man, Schlomo Godfryd (1823-1897). There was also Survivor's Tale of 50+ pages, detailing one family branch's history from pre-war Europe to the present day; also an ODT (Outline Descendant Tree) Report of a wider population than appeared in the NGS report, spanning 21 pages of two columns each, with nine generations and about 2,000 people, starting with Shlomo Godfryd, There were maps, statistics on the family's rabbinical roots, topped off by a 26-page comprehensive index, based

on Patricia Law Hatcher's book, *Producing a Quality Family History*.

The overall cost for producing the book (in 2003) is enumerated in the following table, shown on page 10.

### **The Third Genealogy**

As a condition of a large portion of the book's funding, there was a request to document all of the victims of the Holocaust from the family via Yad Vashem's Pages of Testimony ("POT"). There were hundreds of family members who perished and each form allowed for dozens of facts. The task was daunting and transcription accuracy would be questionable if this were to be done manually. Leveraging my contacts and prior work experience, I designed a computer program that could produce a POT from my genealogy software, submission ready. I used it to produce my third published genealogy of all my family research – over 1,700 signed POT's submitted to Yad Vashem. Today, these pages are already online and can be viewed at [www.yadvashem.org](http://www.yadvashem.org). Also, I created a website that encourages others to take advantage of this ability, at [YadPOT.org](http://YadPOT.org)

### **What About A Family History of the Miller Family? (Publication #4)**

Despite the confidence gained from three published works (a website, printed book and hundreds of POT's), I realized there was no way I was ever going to publish another family history book that was "all the descendents of" a given person. This was especially true of the Miller family history that I used to dream of producing. It was too large an effort. Furthermore, in the case of my own family, there were no active collaborators, such as there were on the Koschitzki project. So, in 2007 I set my sites on doing something a little more unconventional. I decided to print an "all my ancestors" project. I had the vision of a large parchment scroll. But I liked the idea Rabbi Besser gave me of mixing media to enhance the overall content. I came up with an hourglass type chart, with pictures, spanning 10 generations. I found a local large-format printing shop on 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Manhattan, called The Big Picture. They offered the level of service my project needed and had the hardware in-house to produce such a chart. The finished genealogy on parchment-like vinyl was 10 ½ feet x 4 ½ feet in size. It was so large I could only display it on the wall of my *succah*. In time for *Succot* of 2008, I created my fourth published genealogy.

651 books	<b>Thomson-Shore - Job # xxxxxx; Cust ID# xxxxx</b>	charge	per copy
<b>Book</b>	Prep/Plate	1,658.00	2.55
	Paper	1,714.00	2.63
	Press	1,253.00	1.92
	Binding	3,045.00	4.68
	4-c ends	725.00	1.11
	Foldout	1,717.00	2.64
	Hand tip	507.00	0.78
	Die	53.19	0.08
	Fix fold-out typo	120.00	0.18
	Over/Unders - \$ 8.45 each. (only one copy was over)	8.45	0.01
<b>Shipping</b>	Drop Charge for 2 extra locations	12.00	0.02
	FedEx/UPS Box Prep Charge (2 boxes free; each box is \$6; 15 boxes used, charged for 13; so 13 x 6 = \$78)	78.00	0.12
	37 copies - London FedEx Intl Economy & customs (6 boxes)	327.19	0.50
	16 copies - Antwerp FedEx Intl Economy & customs (3 boxes)	209.51	0.32
	37 copies - California UPS Ground (6 boxes)	104.93	0.16
	228 copies - Israel (via Yellow Global - DET 0276245728)	958.67	1.47
	\$579.00 without the freight company dealing with customs. It will go to the Port of Ashdod. Yellow Globe will handle customs for an additional \$135.00. Also \$489.35 delivery to Kfar Saba, of which only \$244.67 was charged by agreement with TS.		
	333 copies - Brooklyn (Con-Way Central Express)	281.70	0.43
	315 copies (45 boxes of 7) +18 unbound book blocks; (includes call ahead, residential & inside delivery) of \$461.54, but shortened delivery time by doing picked up from freight yard, so actual was \$281.70		
	(1) check copy, (1) stamped sample case	51.15	0.08

### The Story of Chani Miller, Publication #5

I had thought perhaps I had gotten the writing bug out of my system. But then my life changed with the birth of my youngest child in 2010. Chani has five siblings 11 to 22 years older than her. She is even younger than her oldest nephew. I felt it important that she grow up knowing of her family, especially since her three oldest siblings were living 6,000 miles away in Israel. *The Story of Chani Miller*, published in conjunction with Pint -Size Productions, is my fifth published work. It is a 6" x 6" square book. With 14 pages of full color, this children's board book (printed directly on thick paperboard, then bound and trimmed) contains 16 color photos and depicts the family's most recent generations in a bedtime story format. I chose Pint-Size Productions to print the book as they worked with me so that I could customize the book based on their templates, even beyond what their website allowed. They were professional and were able to make the process quite

simple. The book cost \$20.00 to produce. Shipping was extra, but Pint-Size allowed me to use my own FedEx account to ship, so as to reduce my cost further. My daughter still reads the book almost every day.

### Number 6 –Something New for a Shiva Call

Number six kind of snuck up on me. I figured that I had definitely utilized all forms of media to tell my family story. However, in 2011 at the *shiva* for my wife's grandmother, a Holocaust survivor and great-great-grandmother, I learned a new and important lesson. It is not enough to know your audience. I thought I had that down when I wrote *The Story of Chani*. What I learned now is that when possible, consult with your audience. I had brought some family history to the *shiva* (incidentally, I find that the mourning family members find the reviewing of the family history helpful in more than one way. They can figure out how the cousins coming to pay a *shiva* call are related and it

gives them context in which to think of the departed). While I have researched the family for over 20 years and have many earlier generations that could have been included in some form, the family was not interested. But they saw some old pictures that I had and asked if there were any more. Based on that, I felt that a less formal genealogical presentation was perhaps a better option.

The overall family is very artistic and preferred visual presentation over technical data, so for the *shloshim* (end of the initial 30 day mourning period following the passing of a close relative), I gave them what they wanted – a huge picture book on high quality paper: *Bobby Broncia & Zaidy Motel*. It was self-published with 144 full-color pages, 8 ½” x 11”, printed on 100lb glossy paper with a “case binding,” in which the pages are glued into the cover, rather than sewn in. The book tells the story of the most recent seven generations of the maternal side of my wife’s family; people we all know from Bobby’s stories. Bobby, whose name was Beverly/Broncia Zand nee Braun, was born in Rypin, Poland. She grew up in Lodz, Poland, in the house of her maternal grandparents, Pinchus Volf Biderman of Checiny, Poland and Matel Szajnfarb of Staszow, Poland. Bobby was a Holocaust survivor. She lost everyone: grandfather, parents, siblings, a niece and nephew, aunts, uncles, first cousins, just everyone. Only one brother and her faith in G-d survived. Her life is depicted in a visual chronology, with over 300 B&W and color photos spanning her 93 years, from her grandparents to her great-great-grandson, from the 1920’s until the week of her passing. The cost to print 28 books, one for each of her children and grandchildren, was \$40.00 each.

### **Project #7 – For the Family of My New Daughter-in-Law**

Having produced these new formats for family history actually prepared me quite well for the research treat I had coming my way. This was going to be my seventh project. My son had just gotten married and I wanted to give my new daughter-in-law and her family something with meaning. Having done the whole Jewish Geography thing with her grandparents during the week of *Sheva Brochus* following the wedding, I learned that the families had been in the USA for generations. As most researchers know, this can be the best possible news, because it means there are records of all types available. I was able to construct a six-generation tree with relatively little effort (a little Ancestry, some JewishGen and a nice touch from the Italian Genealogical Society of New York’s Vital

Records Indexing Project). I then met with both sets of grandparents at their homes. I brought my laptop and my flatbed scanner (USB-powered) and scanned all the old ancestral photographs that they had. It took about 40 minutes each time. I used a new online software tool to create a 27-page 14” x 11” coffee table quality Photo Book of their family ancestry – an “all my ancestors” theme. It included about 55 photos and gave an overview in both chart and photographic style. It also included a two-page abridged family history from the 71 page Neustadter Family History Book that they shared with me. The cost of the book was \$45.84 (I had a 30% discount) plus shipping and handling. I was also able to supply my daughter-in-law’s family with a link to the book online to share with her extended family (see: <http://www.mixbook.com/photo-books/family/the-story-of-princess-adina-7534738?vk=2XdXTjYjjk>).

Once I saw how easy it was to produce a photo book with the software available online, I produced several more for my immediate family, but not of a genealogical nature. All the while I was researching the earlier ancestry of our family. I recalled a JGS meeting I had attended many years ago where several presenters had described how they had produced a printed family history. One person said he included his dog as one of the members on his family tree. I remembered being surprised and even upset. How could a canine be part of a family tree?! It was diluting what genealogy was all about. I don’t include my close friends as family members. I certainly could not validate a dog as being part of a family tree. But I was younger and more narrow minded back then. Now, I realize that for each person, they have the luxury of viewing the world in the way they see fit. Not everyone need be a purist.

### **My Eighth Project: Something Speculative**

A change in how I viewed this came about when I considered a possible eighth publishing project, a tree back to Adam. I thought about two contradictory genealogical points of view. One can believe that “absence of proof is proof of absence” or take the position that “absence of proof is not proof of absence.” There could be many professional genealogists who would say that our family trees based on traditions handed down over the generations are inaccurate or just not knowable. But that does not have to matter to me. As a believer in the Bible, I know that I come from Adam. So any tree that traces me back to Adam has its beginnings and endings founded in my belief of fact. There may be a few problems along the way, but it is not as if it is complete fiction and that I really come from Adam’s brother (as he obviously had none!).

I was able to trace my family back to Adam by leveraging my rabbinical ancestry. When I produced my chart, I added a note that the font of the “*Rashi* Section” of the genealogy is smaller than the rest of the tree for a reason. This section represents traditions from many sources. Some of these sources are contested. I have reviewed many of the printed objections. They are made by very serious researchers and they have cogent arguments. But most of the arguments I have read have a common theme: absence of proof is proof of absence. But that is not true. Just because the documented proof is not valid does not mean that the person mentioned did not have that name, family relationship or date of birth/marriage/death. For instance, my g-g-g-gf, Raphuel Myer Miller, had a son named Shabsi. But on one of Shabsi’s son’s tombstones, it mistakenly stated that he was the son of Shimon, rather than Shabsi. I know it is his tombstone and I assume the reason for the mistake was they called Shabsi by his legal name of Simon. But a tombstone does not re-invent fact. It still was the burial place of Shabsi’s son and Shabsi did not become Shimon.

Similarly, a vital record does not re-invent fact either. The marriage record of Pesach Dovid Miller (my g-gf), lists his parents as Avrohom Aba and Raphuel Myer (!). In other words, it made his grandfather into his mother. That record does not “disprove” who his mother was. Since we all come from Adam, for the exact path I relied on what had been passed down for generations.

I have only been liberal in the “*Rashi* section” for the medieval time period. For the first 100 generations, I have drawn primarily on sources from *TeNaCh* (Torah and Prophets) and *Seder Olam Zuta* (*The Small or Younger Order of the World*, an anonymous chronicle from 804 C.E., described in *Wikipedia*). For the Pesach Langsam section, I drew on the traditions passed down by my great-grandfather, Pesach Dovid Miller. Note that some other family members have alternate traditions.

There are two universal legends across the many Langsam families:

- We descend from Pesach Langsam who was of the tribe of Yissochur (the *Chozeh* of Lublin revealed this to the *Bnei Yissoschur*). As he begins

our known paternal line, that makes us of his tribe. We do not know our paternal ancestry, prior to Pesach Langsam.

- We trace back to *Rashi* and then further back to Dovid *HaMelech* (King David) via some maternal line from Pesach Langsam. My great-grandmother, Sara Miller, was buried with a “*shtar yeechus*” showing her descent from Dovid *HaMelech*, as per her *tzavah* (will), in 1952.

### My Current Project (#9)

My current effort is one that I want to publish for my grandchildren, in order for them to know how the Holocaust impacted their ancestry and heritage. I want to use the genealogy to tell the story. To accomplish this I need to complete and organize the documentation for each branch of my tree. I also need to learn diverse writing techniques, as I want each story to read as if it was written by a different author and have its own distinctive style, including poetry. The book already has a title: *32*. In it, in 32 chapters, I will tell the story of each of my children’s great-great-great-grandparents and what happened to their families during the Holocaust. This is a work in progress. Seems like I will be “in progress” for quite some time to come.

I am now convinced that every genealogist should at least consider using some publishing venue to disseminate all that they have researched. Maybe not today, but it should be on the not-too-distant horizon. How many more thousands of Pages of Testimony would there be at Yad Vashem if everyone submitted what they researched! I now consider that research not shared is not real. If an unpublished tree falls in the genealogy forest, it really does not make a sound.

*Moishe Miller is business development manager at TotalBen LLC, an employee benefits and insurance agency in Brooklyn, New York. He has been actively researching his extended family’s genealogy since 1992. His research interests focuses largely on the former Austro-Hungarian Empire territories (from Croatia to Galicia) and Poland. ☆*



## JGS Welcomes Three New Members of the Executive Council for 2014



**Lanie Bergman** has been researching her family since 1994. Currently, she is a volunteer at the Center for Jewish History's Ackman and Ziff Family Genealogy Institute. Born in Washington Heights, she grew up in the Bronx and on Long Island. Currently she lives in Riverdale.

**Lauren Shulsky Orenstein** began her career in research with a Master's Degree in Classical & Near Eastern Archaeology from Bryn Mawr College. She has been investigating her own family tree for more than 20 years, after watching her grandmother conduct YIVO research long before the computer age. After several years in academic publishing and real estate, Lauren has been working as a genealogist on a professional basis for the last four years, specializing in New York City-area research. Lauren also lectures on family research to children and adults to encourage an understanding of our origins and is currently studying the Torah held by her synagogue for the Czech Memorial Scrolls Project.



**Michael Pertain** was a guidance counselor in the NYC school system for many years. More recently, he has been an adjunct counselor and language arts instructor at Brooklyn College. He has been researching and writing about his family for 15 years and has created a museum exhibit about it. His volunteer work includes mentoring teens in the Samberg Family History program, conducting workshops and presentations about family research, photographing and translating headstones and has been secretary, Vice President for Membership and member at large on the JGS Executive committee.

## JGS Welcomes 36 New Members

Name	City	State
Marlene Katz Bishow	Rockville	MD
Mayer Bleiberg	Lawrence	NY
Dana Brantley	Roseburg	OR
Patricia Cohen	Austin	TX
Bonnie Cornell	Garland	TX
Alec Ferretti	Bellmore	NY
Diane Frankel	Miami	FL
Rhoda Frieman	Brooklyn	NY
Tamar Gold	Elizabeth	NY
Andrew M. Greene	Newtonville	MA
Andrea R Hendrix	Irvine	CA
Max J Kahn	Gressey	France
Anne R Kasner	Bronx	NY
Roger Keizerstein	Water Mill	NY
Lee Kershner	Las Cruces	NM
Patricia Klindienst	Guilford	CT
David Laskin	Shoreline	WA
Sam Laskin	Westport	CT
Michael Lederman	Pomona	NY
Edward Levy	Newton	MA
Jeffrey Levy	Brooklyn	NY
Naomi Miran	Rego Park	NY
Joan Koster-Morales	Windham	NY
Barbara Musikar	Surfside	FL
Elissa J Sampson	New York	NY
Daniel Schley	New York	NY
Debbie Shapiro	Southington	CT
Howard Shidlowky	Evanston	IL
Lisa Sobelsohn	New York	NY
Bruce Solomon	Brooklyn	NY
Dylan Stein	New York	NY
Vicki Stein	White Plains	NY
Bob Strauss	Norwood	PA
Ronni Tinkelman	Yorktown Heights	NY
Anna Wiernicka	Piaseczno	Poland
Avner Yonai	San Francisco	CA



## Upcoming and Current Events

### Jewish Genealogical Society of New York

**Sunday, May 18, 2014, 2 p.m.** Center for Jewish History, 15 West 16<sup>th</sup> Street, NYC

“The Immigration and Naturalization Service INS Citizenship Records: Beyond the Basics”

Speaker: Zack Wilske

Most researchers are familiar with court naturalization papers and perhaps the federal naturalization “C-files” available from USCIS. During the early 20th century, however, INS created a number of lesser-known records related to citizenship. This presentation will use sample files and case studies to introduce researchers to federal citizenship records documenting complex nationality cases, including repatriation and derivative citizenship. In addition to seeing sample cases attendees will receive guidance for exploring the records, including an introduction to two newly accessible indices that have made previously under-utilized records practical for genealogy research. While the presentation focuses on citizenship records it will draw upon a wide array of immigration and naturalization records.

Zack Wilske is Historian for US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). His research interests include the history of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the development of federal immigration and nationality policies, and the uses of INS records for historians and genealogists. He speaks regularly at the National Archives and genealogy conferences and has published several articles on researching with federal immigration and naturalization records.

**Sunday, Jun 22, 2014 2 PM** Center for Jewish History, 15 West 16th Street, NYC

Finding the Only Child’s Niece: Truth and Fiction in Genealogical Sources

Speaker: Debra Braverman

Sometimes when researching family history, it becomes evident what we think we know to be true is, in fact, not true. What resources and research techniques can be used to prove or disprove “facts?” How do we reconcile what we find with what we have been told? Professional genealogist, Debra Braverman, will present a variety of case studies to illustrate the process of evaluating and

reconciling family stories and research findings.

Debra Braverman, a forensic genealogist, specializes in research for probate and intestacy, and in 19th and 20th century New York City research. She is a former Executive Council member and Vice President of JGS, Inc.

### Center for Jewish History, 15 West 16<sup>th</sup> Street, NY 10016

#### Two Exhibits

Through May 30, 2014: “Sephardic Religious Organizations & Social Clubs – 1919 to the Present” and

“Remnants: Selected Manuscripts from the YIVO Archives”

### National Archives & Records Administration, Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House, 1 Bowling Green, NY 10004

#### Spring 2014 Genealogy Series, Third Floor Learning Center

June 10, 2014, Finding Family Using Family Search”  
12 noon to 1 p.m.

Location: National Archives, Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House at Bowling Green

Admission: Free, registration required at [nyork.archives@narc.gov](mailto:nyork.archives@narc.gov), 866-840-1752

### Jewish Genealogy Society of Long Island

**Sunday, May 18, 2014, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.,** Mavens Meeting at 1:30 p.m.

”Finding Living People on the Internet”

Speaker: Ron Arons

Admission: Free

Location: to be announced

**Sunday, June 22, 2014, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.,** Mavens Meeting at 1:30 p.m.

”Naturalization: Where Are the Documents?”

Speaker: Phyllis Kramer

Admission: Free

Location: to be announced

## National & International Events

**July 24 – August 2, 2014**

34<sup>th</sup> IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy

Location: Salt Lake City, Utah

For information, visit <http://conference.iajgs.org/2014>

## Two New Jewish Heritage Tours

Eli Rabinowitz of Perth, Australia, is leading two Jewish Roots tours, one of Poland and one of Lithuania, this August. The trips are patterned after those given by Peggy Mosinger Freedman and Howard Margol for many years. There will be visits to major archives such as the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, Lithuanian State Historical Archives in Vilnius, Kaunas Regional Archives and Latvian State Historical Archives in

Riga where attendees will meet with officials of these archives and will be able to do research. Rabinowitz notes that attendees also will “meet leaders and educators who will add a new dimension to their own history. Local experts will talk on subjects such as the archives, cemetery renewal, the Holocaust and Jewish life. There will be opportunities to interact with young Jewish leaders and experience the contemporary Jewish community.” He notes he is a veteran genealogist who has made these trips many times.

The Polish tour starts in Warsaw on August 12 and ends in Vilnius on August 20. The Lithuania/Latvia tour starts in Vilnius on August 2 and ends in Riga on August 31. Full details of the itineraries and the tours are at <http://tinyurl.com/Polish-Litvak-Tours>. Contact Rabinowitz at [eli@elirab.com](mailto:eli@elirab.com). ☆

## Lost Author Found

In the Fall, 2013 issue of *Dorot*, we printed an interesting note on pages 23-24 about the article “Jews as Honorary Or Hereditary Honorary Citizens in the Russian Empire,” by Ann Rabinowitz, which had appeared in the Spring 2013 issue. By mistake the name of the note’s author was lost. The author is Paul Silverstone, a long time member of the JGS Executive Council. We apologize for the error.

## New Publications continued from page 25

The authorities continued to associate Jews inns with Jewish smugglers and as a result, in 1834 they banned Jewish tavernkeepers from living in 111 towns situated along the Austrian and Prussian borders. The exact wording of the decree was, “Only Jews who engaged in occupations like farming, domestic servitude, crafts, or factory work were allowed to remain,” for these occupations did not “lend themselves to fraud.” Tavernkeeping was definitely not one of those permissible occupations.

Dynner has produced a work of great depth and thorough research that sheds light on the long-term and historical relationship that Jews, particularly in the Kingdom in Poland, had with the liquor trade. *Yankel’s Tavern* also reflects on the everyday life Jews had in this

region dating back to at least the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the interactions they had with one another, as well as with the majority Gentile society. In addition, it aims to dispel – or, at least to explicate – various stereotypes and myths held both by Gentiles and Jews against one another. The many illustrations, maps, pie charts, pictures and definitions of foreign terms add to the pleasure of reading this fascinating story.

*Rivka Schiller is an archivist, Yiddish and Hebrew translator, genealogical researcher and freelance writer, residing in New York. She is also a member of the JGS, Inc. and a former member of its Executive Council. Her web site is [www.rivkasyiddish.com](http://www.rivkasyiddish.com) and she can be contacted at [rivka@rivkasyiddish.com](mailto:rivka@rivkasyiddish.com) ☆*

# JGS Program Reports

by Steve Stein

**November 17, 2013**

## **“A Box of Photos Tells No Tales: Preserving Family History” by Steve Stein**

Our November program continued the theme of finding ways to tell a family history with creative methods. In the case of our speaker, Peter Savigny, that method is based on constructing audio, visual or a combination of media that bring together photos, videos, oral histories, and other resources.

Peter’s background in television helps to enhance and inform his current activities, conducted by his company, *TimeStories* (<http://timestories.com>), which has helped many a family historian create such pieces. An Emmy-winning art director and editor, member of the Association of Personal Historians (<http://www.personalhistorians.org>) and Association of Personal Photo Organizers (<http://www.appo.org>), Peter described the process of gathering the information and doing the required legwork, with several examples. These family history media can be built either by doing it yourself or by hiring a company such as Peter’s, which may often entail further research as well as the professional techniques perfected by Peter.

For the do-it-yourselfer, the tools can be basic – a digital video recorder (such as an iPhone), a scanner, editing tools. Photoshop or other editing tools can be used to repair, correct, resize or otherwise adjust photographs. iMovie can do the same for video clips. The resources include your photographs, family videos (which can be converted from obsolete media such as 8mm film via a variety of services, such as the Home Movie Depot at <http://www.homemoviedepot.com/>), and some creativity. What you will often find when embarking on such a task is that your relatives can provide a wealth of background information through oral histories or other narrative techniques.

The editing and finishing tools are varied and will need to be chosen to suit the final medium, whether photo album, video, etc. There are many photo album compilers in the market such as Shutterfly, Mixbook, Blurb – for a complete evaluation, see <http://photo-book-review.toptenreviews.com>. Libraries of

accompanying music can be found in various websites such as <http://www.dewolfe.co.uk/>.

Peter then described some of the projects where he was engaged by a client to provide a more professional, polished product. In one case, he was sent to interview and record an elderly family member who it turned out



Peter Savigny showing a book that reproduces an old family photo album.

was in the early stages of memory loss. He managed to turn what promised to be a disaster into a triumph with a combination of patience and persistence to find facts and stories that even the immediate family members did not know. And of course, hiring someone who has great facility with the tools, a repertoire of probing questions, and an eye and ear for a good story will greatly increase the chances of achieving the goal of having a memorable, engaging, informative and lasting record of a family’s most precious stories.

**December 22, 2013**

## **“The Myth and Reality of Jewish Life in Eastern Europe” by Steve Stein**

The many of us with roots in Eastern Europe can visualize the lives our ancestors through the imagery created by both the non-fiction documenters and the purveyors of fiction who have focused their attention on that world. Our December speaker, Dr. Magda Teter, Professor of History at Wesleyan University, spoke about the fact and the fiction in that imagery, where it came from, and what else we need to learn about shtetl life.

Professor Teter mentioned some of the most common sources of our notions of the shtetl – the photographs of

Roman Vishniac in his masterful *Vanished World*, the stories of Yiddish writers such as Sholem Aleichem and I. L. Peretz, and the world of “Fiddler On The Roof” that derived from them. As one might expect, some of the imagery is accurate to an extent, but much is omitted, much is idealized, and some myths are reinforced.

For one, the image that the shtetls were entirely or mostly populated by Jews is largely a myth. Many of



Dr. Magda Teter explaining a photograph of Lutsk, Ukraine

the towns where our ancestors lived had large Jewish communities, but most actually had a majority non-Jewish population. Jews typically interacted with their non-Jewish neighbors on a regular basis, both in commerce and unfortunately in religious conflict as well. In his memoir of his brother Sholem Aleichem, Volf Rabinovitch described incidents and conflicts involving Jewish children and the church in Voronkov,

their home town which became Kasrilevke in his stories. In general, relations between the Jewish and non-Jewish communities were often more complex than depicted.

Another detail of life in the shtetl that is often glossed over is the segmentation of the Jewish community, particularly between the Hasidim and the “Misnagdim,” the more traditional segment of the community that resisted the mystical Hasidic movement in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The divisions between these communities were often fierce.

A third myth concerns the size of the towns in which Jews lived, particularly before the middle of the nineteenth century. Except for perhaps a dozen cities of more than ten thousand residents in the late 1700s, most Jews lived in small towns of only a thousand or two maximum, many smaller. This began to change only with the Industrial Revolution and the move to the cities.

This leads to the last and perhaps the most surprising of the misconceptions described by Professor Teter. Prior to urbanization, Jews engaged in a variety of professions – managing the estates of the Polish nobility, running taverns and stores, engaging in crafts, etc. in relatively favorable economic conditions. With industrialization and urbanization, however, workers began to be displaced, leading to an increase in poverty. Paradoxically, the few Jews who were able to capitalize on this movement prospered exceedingly, such as the Poznanski family, who made a fortune in cotton, or the well-known industrialist Brodsky and Ginsberg families.

Professor Teter concluded her talk with a reference to the book “Awakening Lives,” an anthology of autobiographical stories written by teens and young adults in Poland during the 1930s, compiled after the war. The anthology gives a very personal and accurate view of what life was like in the shtetl during this period, revealing the diversity of the time, and dispelling many of those myths.

**January 14, 2014**

**“Jewish Records Indexing – Poland: A New Era Has Begun “**  
**by Steve Stein**

Our 2014 program year began with an update on JRI-Poland (Jewish Records Indexing-Poland, at [www.jri-poland.org](http://www.jri-poland.org)) from Hadassah Lipsius, who is a member of the board of JRI-Poland, as well as a member of the JGS Executive Council, JewishGen and various research groups. JRI-Poland is the definitive organization and

website for Polish research, and as Hadassah described, it has entered into a new era as a result of new indexing agreements with the Polish State Archives.

Launched in 1995, the JRI-Poland database houses more than 5 million records from 550 towns that are or were at one time in Poland. It covers the regions of Congress Poland, Prussia, Galicia, Bialystok and Suwalki, extending into present-day Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania. The latest agreement, concluded last February, brings many new records into the scope of JRI-Poland, with 100,000 records nearly ready today to be loaded into the database. One million new records are expected by the end of this year. The additions are compiled by volunteers under the auspices of JRI-Poland.

Hadassah strongly recommended that all researchers read the Intro pages, even if you think you know what's



Hadassah Lipsius explaining the improvements in JRI-Poland.

there. Available in French and Spanish in addition to English, the introductory pages provide a research guide with much “how-to” information. And by visiting the JRI-Poland native search pages, the researcher has more search options than are provided through the JewishGen page which fronts the JRI-Poland database.

Hadassah then walked the attendees through some of the features of using the site and the search (such as the “square brackets” feature to inhibit some sound-alike features). Many of the results now have image links to the actual document images, through the Polish State Archives (PSA) website. This feature is rudimentary now, but as more images are put online, should evolve in completeness.

The “Your Town” feature provides a guide to hundreds of towns, detailing key facts as well as information about film and other record inventories and the progress of indexing efforts. And as Hadassah pointed out, sometimes a researcher will find a surprise – records mixed in non-chronologically, records mixed in with Christian records, records filed with those of nearby towns or cities. Efforts to overcome these filing anomalies are being undertaken in Prussia, Wroclaw, and other areas. And projects to extract information from *Raptularz* – clergy notebooks – will help supplement where vital records are not available.

Indexing of PSA records is under the supervision of archive coordinators and town leaders. Shtetl co-ops are also very effective in addressing the indexing of Family History Library microfilms. To date, more than 1,000 films have been fully indexed and another 400 are partially indexed and/or in progress. JRI-Poland also partners with Beit Hatfutsot, The Museum of the Jewish People, and with the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw. The JRI-Poland site links to the latter Museum’s site. This new Museum maintains an inventory of cemeteries in Poland.

Why can’t I find the records I am looking for, you may ask. Hadassah outlined some answers to this question. Misfiling, mislabeling, files that are accidentally hidden or in undocumented collections, or that still reside in civil records offices or private collections, stand in the way of research. These are issues that JRI-Poland is seeking to address. Hadassah concluded her talk by answering many questions from the audience.

*(Steve Stein is a member of the JGS Executive Council. He is a software systems professional in the telecommunications industry and has been researching his own and his wife’s Eastern European genealogies for more than 35 years.)*

February 23, 2014

## From Genealogy to History: Exploring the Jewish 20<sup>th</sup> Century through One Family's Story, by Lanie Bergman

The February 23, 2014 meeting featured a lecture by David Laskin, author of *The Family: Three Journeys into the Heart of the Twentieth Century* (Viking, 2012, 440 pages), *A Long Way Home* (Harper Collins, 2010, 448 pages) and other books.

David led us through the steps he took to document and chronicle the history of three branches of his mother's family, the Cohens, that had divided about 100 years ago. His guiding philosophy was that any family history is on a continuum from the particular details of that family and the large picture of history. For him, the challenge as a writer is to find the right place to place the story in order to write it, and his lecture consisted of how he found the appropriate spot. He read excerpts from his book to show how he wove together fragments of memory and general history.

He began, as most genealogists do, with family stories and interviews with family members and continued by finding new family members with whom to cooperate and uncovering documents related to his relatives.

His initial "hook" was his aunt Ida [Itel] Rosenthal, who had founded the Maidenform Brassiere Company, and some Israeli relatives that he knew. When he contacted the Israelis, they led him to a website they had created, containing photos of all the family members killed in the Holocaust. It was when he looked at those photos, especially one of two little boys playing chess with their dad, and another of the boys on their bicycles, that he became determined to write his family's history, weaving together the three strands of Jewish history in the twentieth century: Aliyah, migration to the US, and death in Europe.

### American Immigrant Branch

David spoke first about the American immigrant branch. His great grandfather, Sam Cohen, was a Torah scribe from Rockove, Lithuania, now Raguva. In 1909, he brought his family to the Lower East Side. He and his three sons founded A. Cohen and Sons, Importers and Jobbers. Itel was already in the US, having fled in 1905 because the government considered her a "rabble-rouser." She was a seamstress who prospered and by 1924 owned a fashionable dress store. Finding that the

clothes she sold did not look right with the bandeau (flattener) women used in those days to support their breasts, she invented the bra. While the first brassiere customers were showgirls, the general public quickly adopted them. David explained the difficulty he had finding Itel on the Ellis Island site. The breakthrough was through Steve Morse's one-step search where he found her listed as Ttel.

### Israeli branch

Sam's brother Chaim went to Israel as a chalutz (pioneer) in 1924, traveling to Romania, then to Haifa and finally to Har Kinneret Kibbutz, near the Sea of Galilee. Chaim moved from the Galilee to Herzliya in 1929 due to a malaria epidemic. In the meantime, Chaim's first cousin Sonya also came to Palestine. Traveling against family wishes, she self-financed her trip. She got as far as Turkey, then took a taxi the rest of the way. Sonya and Chaim married (despite being first cousins) in 1933.

Having started five years earlier with no genealogical research experience, using Ancestry.com looking for Sam Cohen in Brooklyn, David was very pessimistic about finding the Holocaust family records that he thought he would need to tell their story. But the Israeli family, especially his cousin Benny, helped.

### Holocaust – the Fate of the European Family

Doba, Sonya's older sister, married an accountant named Shabtai in Vilna. Their two sons, Shimon and Volf, were the boys playing chess with their dad and on their bicycles in the photos David had seen. In June 1941, when the Germans overran Vilna, Shimon was 14. On the JewishGen site, David found Doba and her sons on the May 1942 census of the Vilna Ghetto, living with Shabtai's brother. There were a total of 437 Jews in that one building! There was no sign of Shabtai. How could David learn his fate? While he was in Israel visiting Sonya and Chaim's descendants, he met Zipporah, a survivor of the Vilna Ghetto. From her, he learned that Shabtai was taken and killed in one of the first mass roundups and murders. Zipporah pointed him to Herman Kruck's *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania: Chronicles from the Vilna Ghetto and the Camps, 1939-1944* (Yale University Press, 2002, 816 pages).

From Kruck's book, David learned that Shabtai's brother Yitzchak had established a school in the ghetto. In fact, Zipporah went to school with Shimon, in the same class. Records from Yad Vashem and the US



David Laskin discussing his book, *The Family: Three Journeys into the Heart of the Twentieth Century*

Holocaust Museum led him to the knowledge that when the Vilna Ghetto was liquidated, Shimon, now age 15, was sent to the Klooga concentration camp in Estonia, a forced labor sub-camp of the Vaivara concentration camp complex. David found that the USC Shoah Project videos can be searched by camp, and viewed all the interviews from Klooga, and he followed up by meeting with the survivors still alive to ask for memories of the camp and Shimon. They told him that as the Red Army approached, the Germans shot the remaining Jews and burned the bodies using logs from the forest.

The next breakthrough was a collection of letters from the murdered family to their Israeli cousins held by Benny. The letters, written before the war, helped establish a context for these people.

On JewishGen, David learned that one of the European relatives, Sholom Tzvi, came from Lithuania to New York to visit the American family in 1939. David's mother remembered living in the same building with him. The manifest of the ship on which he arrived indicated that he had been held for further processing. In response to a FOIA inquiry, David received from Homeland Security the file that the FBI had maintained on him that resulted in him only being granted a tourist visa that had to be renewed every few months, not an immigration visa. Finally, in 1943, Sholom Tzvi was permitted to travel to Canada to reenter with an immigration visa. David surmised from the application that Sholom Tzvi knew nothing at that point about the fate of his family, since he listed his next of kin as Beila, his wife, who was already dead by then, killed in a synagogue fire in 1942 along with his children.

## Weaving the Threads

To further their research, David and Benny went to Vilnius and Minsk with Israeli cousins. There were not that many additional records to be found, but seeing the area gave them more of a feel for the family history. They visited Rockove and the site of the synagogue fire memorial, and said kaddish for their dead family.

Asked how writing this book has changed his Jewish identity, David replied that he sees himself as a scribe, following in the tradition of his Torah scribe ancestors. Having been raised as a committed but not observant Jew, David found that his two research trips to Israel and a visit to the Western Wall strengthened his Jewish connection.

David was left with the conviction that the pulse of history beats in every person and each individual story.

## Q & A

Asked which software he uses to maintain his records, David, considering himself still a computer novice, just keeps a file of names and dates, and prints out search results to make sure that he can find them again.

David's cousins Sam, age 12, and his father Andrew Laskin attended the lecture and introduced themselves. Sam explained how he used the Ancestry.com subscription he received as a gift from his parents to find the connection between David's family and his. When a member of the audience asked if David intends to work next on the Laskin side of his family, he said that he is leaving it to Sam!

## Final recommendations

David pointed out that our relatives who lived through the Russian Revolution and the Holocaust don't usually volunteer information, so the researcher must prod them.

He also strongly recommended the USC Shoah Project (<http://sfi.usc.edu/>) and said that the videos are available at some major libraries. (New York locations include Columbia University, New York University and Rutgers University.)

*Lanie Bergman has been researching her family since 1994. Currently, she is a volunteer at the Center for Jewish History's Ackman and Ziff Family Genealogy Institute and a new member of the JGS Executive Council. Born in Washington Heights, she grew up in the Bronx and on Long Island. Currently she lives in Riverdale. ☆*

## Online News

### Ancestry Has Decades of Associated Press Archives

Three collections of Associated Press archives can be accessed from Ancestry at <http://ancestry.com/AP>. These are the “Associated Press, Name Card Index to AP Stories, 1905-1990”; “Associated Press, Stories and Newsfeatures, 1937-1985 (limited to stories of national or international significance selected by news libraries)” and “Associated Press, Subject Card Index to AP Stores, 1937-1985.”

### Additional Newspaper Sources to Try

Have you searched Google Newspapers at <http://news.google.com/newspapers> or [NewspaperArchive.com](http://NewspaperArchive.com), which allows for 10 free searches per day, or [www.Legacy.com/](http://www.Legacy.com/)?

### New Lists Have Been Added to the JDC Online Archives

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (aka JDC or the Joint) now has its World War I remittance lists online. These are collections of names of people in Eastern Europe and Palestine who received funds (remittances) from relatives in the West. The site lists the sender and the name, address and number of children in the household of the receiver. The address is <http://archives.jdc.org/researchers/searchable-lists.html>. Scroll down to the 1914-1921 period.

Also newly available is the JDC Stockholm Collection, 1947-1967. This collection, which documents JDC’s extensive activity in Sweden, contains eyewitness accounts of the arrival in Sweden of the first survivors rescued by Sweden’s Red Cross; description of the employment, housing and medical assistance provided to DPs settling in Sweden; the names of refugees

traveling to other countries; and JDC Location Service forms, cards and correspondence with Jewish communities in South America seeking to send aid to European refugees. At the JDC site, scroll down to the Stockholm Collection 1941-1967.

### Many New & Expanded Sources of Online Polish Genealogical Information are now on JewishGen.

1. Forty-eight towns from the Lublin area have been added to the Lublin Branch of the Polish State Archives. These range from Annopol to Zolkiewka. Go to JRI-Poland at [jri-poland.org/psa/psalublin.html/](http://jri-poland.org/psa/psalublin.html/)

2. Warsaw address and business for 1896 and the telephone directories for 1930/31, 1935/36, 1937/38, 1940 and 1941 are available at <http://genealogindexer.org>. There are more Warsaw specific directories available from <http://genealogyindexer.org/directories#Warsaw>.

3. From Virtual Shtetl, <http://www.sztetl.org.pl/en/>, one can find more than 34,000 text pages and 80,000 photographs of 2,333 places within contemporary and pre-war Poland. The site claims more than 120,000 hits per month.

4. *A Tale of One City: Piotrkow Trybunalski (Poland)*, edited by Ben Giladi and previously published in New York in 1991, has been added to JewishGen’s Yizkor Book Project. This new addition was coordinated by Roni Seibel Liebowitz and scanned by Jerome Liebowitz. The 494-page history contains a chronology of the history of the town and the events in the history of the Jews who lived there; portraits of famous sages, teachers and personalities, descriptions of synagogues, the schools, testimonies of life before, during and after the Holocaust, a list of pictures and much more. (<http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/Piotrkow/Piotrkow.html>) ☆

### JGS on Facebook



Facebook©

JGS, Inc. has created a group page on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com>), an online social networking facility. After you join Facebook, you can reach JGS’s page in any of these three ways:

- (1) Go to the JGS website (<http://www.jgsny.org>) to link to the page.
- (2) Go directly to the page at: <http://www.facebook.com/#!/group.php?gid=62112838856>.
- (3) Log in to Facebook and search for “Jewish Genealogical Society–New York.”

We hope you will join the more than 1270 members of the JGS Facebook group. The page includes details about our upcoming meetings and follow-up reports about the presentations. We welcome comments and reactions to the meetings as well as suggestions of topics for monthly meetings.

## In the Repositories

**Center for Jewish History, 15 West 16<sup>th</sup> Street, NYC, [www.cjh.org](http://www.cjh.org), 212-294-8301**

It is now much easier to explore the contents of the digital collections of CJH's partner organizations. At the CJH site, click on "Search the Digital Collections," then a list of possibilities will appear: photographs, archival materials, slides, manuscripts, prints, memoirs and biographies, finding aids, portraits, oral histories, genealogical tables, dissertations and more. Select the one you want and then specify the partner organization (American Jewish Historical Society, American Sephardic Federation, Leo Baeck Institute, or YIVO). Truly, the history of the Jewish world is at your fingertips.

**YIVO Public Program Video & Audio Archive, 15 West 16<sup>th</sup> Street, NYC, [www.yivo.org/video](http://www.yivo.org/video), 212-246-6080**

It is possible to use your computer to view or listen to many of YIVO's public programs from 2005 to the present. Among the recent additions are: "Rethinking Kishinev: How a Riot Changed 20<sup>th</sup> Century Jewish History;" "Unresolved History: Jews and Lithuanians

After the Holocaust;" and "The Impact of World War I and the Russian Revolution on the World of Russian and East European Jewry;"

**YIVO's Online Blog: "Yedies Fun Yivo – News from YIVO", [www.yivo.org/blog](http://www.yivo.org/blog)**

*Yedies Fun Yivo or News from YIVO* has been published since 1925. The contents from 1999 to date are available online. New blog posts are added weekly.

**Jewish Theological Seminary, 3080 Broadway, NYC, [www.jts.org](http://www.jts.org), 212-678-8000.**

A new site on the JTS Library site is "JTS OnLine Exhibits." Currently available are "Sanctuaries and Synagogues: The Experience of the Portuguese and Ashkenazic Jews in Amsterdam," which includes pictures and histories of various synagogues in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, "Radical Visions: Graphic Satire in the Yiddish Press, 1894-1939;" "People of Faith: Land of Promise, in Celebration of 350 Years of Jewish Life in America;" and "Passover Haggadot of the Kibbutz Movement, 1930s-1950s." ☆

## News & Notes from All Over

### The USCIS Genealogy Program

A little known but now available source of genealogy information is the US Citizenship and Immigration Service's (USCIS) Genealogy Program, which since 2008 has been able to provide information about visa applications, citizenship, citizenship tests, hometowns, brothers, sisters, aunts and uncles, FBI reports, if applicable, and much else. The person being searched must be deceased, and there are fees for microfilm and printed copies of the files. For information about this program visit [www.uscis.gov/genealogy](http://www.uscis.gov/genealogy).

### The 100 Most Popular Genealogy Websites

An article listing the 100 genealogical websites that receive the most traffic may be found in "Genealogy In Time" magazine, [www.genealogyintime.com/](http://www.genealogyintime.com/). Click on the article and review the sites. Among the popular sites for Jewish genealogy are:

FindAGrave, Geni, Ancestry.com, Eastman's Genealogy Newsletter, Family Tree DNA, JewishGen, Steve Morse, Cyndi's List, Ellis Island.org, World Vital Records, and Find My Past.

### Soldiers' Diaries in the UK's World War I Centenary program

Diaries written by British soldiers on the frontlines during the first year of World War I have been placed online by the UK National Archives, as part of their commemoration of that war's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. When completed, the site will include 1.5 million pages. Each military unit during the war was required to keep a diary of the day to day activities. The address for the site is <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/first-world-war/>. Select "British War Diaries, 1914-1922."

## Romanian Archives Relating to German-Speaking Jewish Communities in Bukovina and Transylvania

This new addition to the Leo Baeck Institute's website includes birth, death and marriage registers, records from local police registers, school organization and the papers of various organizations and businesses from 10 cities in southern Bukovina and southern Transylvania. The address for this part of the Leo Baeck Archives is <http://jbat.lbi.org>.

## New Addition to Ancestry

Users of Ancestry.com will now be able to access information from the New York City Birth Index, 1878-1909, the Marriage Index, 1866-1937 and the Death Index, 1862-1948. This vast amount of information was compiled by John Martino and his many volunteers from the Italian Genealogical Group.

## Greenwood Cemetery Launches "Green-ealogy"

The Greenwood Cemetery has a genealogy research program, operated by the Green-Wood Historic Fund. To find out if the cemetery has information on a family member or friend, go to [www.green-wood.com](http://www.green-wood.com), click on genealogy, then Green-ealogy and answer a few questions. An expert will do a preliminary search at no charge and estimate the time and cost involved for obtaining a full

report. The fee is \$28 per half hour, plus the cost of photocopies, digital scans, and other documents.

## A Genealogical Tool Kit for Traveling Researchers

The Connecticut State Library has a down to earth, non-technological list of things to take along when visiting any kind of historic repository. The list ranges from obvious, but easily forgotten things like pencils, pencil sharpeners and erasers, to easily overlooked tools like dimes and quarters to pay for photocopying on site, family group sheets and a list of all the names to be researched. There is also a practical list of tools for visiting cemeteries (insect repellent, garden gloves and something to kneel on while clearing grass and weeds from an overgrown gravestone). The tool kit is available from <http://www.cslib.org/toolkit.htm>.

## Memorial Plaques On Line

Thanks to the efforts of Nolan Altman ([nta@pipeline.com](mailto:nta@pipeline.com)) and others, the database of memorial plaques is now up to 30,000 names of deceased persons with their patronymic information from 46 different synagogues. The names added to date are from the New York City area and some from Boston. The address is [www.jewishgen.org/databases/Memorial/](http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Memorial/) ☆

## New, Recent, and Noteworthy Publications

Glenn Dynner, *Yankel's Tavern: Jews, Liquor, and Life in the Kingdom of Poland* (New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2013). 272 pages, maps, illus.

### Reviewed by Rivka Schiller

Glenn Dynner, Associate Professor of Judaic Studies at Sarah Lawrence College, set out to convey in *Yankel's Tavern: Jews, Liquor, and Life in the Kingdom of Poland*, the complex role played by Jews in the liquor trade in the Kingdom of Poland for several generations. The title of the book is an allusion to the lead character, a Jewish tavernkeeper named Jankiel, in Adam Mickiewicz's national epic poem, *Tadeusz*. Dynner's book was written to dispel the myth, enunciated in post-World War II histories of Eastern European Jewish life, that Jews had left the liquor trade by the late nineteenth century.

Dynner outlines how and why Jews became associated with liquor. The roots of this institution date back to the feudal system of the Middle Ages, which consisted of lords, serfs, peasants, and the Jews, who were essentially outliers, not fitting into any given category. At that time,

Jews lacked most other opportunities, including the right to acquire land and to join artisan guilds or professions, and they were excluded from secular schools of higher education. However, the nobility needed people to operate their liquor distilleries, and Jews were perceived as the best choice for this occupation, since they were thought to remain sober, while the peasants succumbed to drunkenness. Hence, Jews became part of the *arendar* or lease holding system and so were eligible to lease taverns.

At various times and places Jews were banned from the liquor trade, but these bans were often ignored and circumvented, and the record shows that keeping inns and selling/distilling liquor was a lucrative business for Jews. It was not the nobility, but the Gentile majority who insisted that Jewish tavernkeepers were at the core of peasant drunkenness and ruin, and that the Jews took advantage of this compromised state to cheat Poles. Indeed, this very notion is reflected in a Polish proverb, which warns, "The peasant drinks at the inn, and the Jew does him in."

The tavern itself in the days of the Polish Kingdom both before and after the partitions of Poland in 1772, 1792 and 1795 was a multipurpose site that served diverse functions: It was a bar, distillery, country store, hotel, stable, post office and bank all in one. It was a source of live entertainment, and it was frequently the only place where accidents, such as a broken axle or an ill horse, could be properly dealt with. It was a way station during bad weather, and it sold various types of goods not limited only to vodka or food items. It served as a place where prostitutes could ply their trade, and it functioned as a site for smuggling contraband, particularly across different political borders. It was frequently the scene of crimes (e.g., rape, theft and even murder) and other transgressions, and also the site of religious conflicts and debates (i.e., often between Jews and Christian missionaries).

Dynner describes how the taverns and their Jewish keepers were viewed, both from the Jewish, as well as from the Gentile perspective. Initially, from the Jewish perspective, tavernkeepers were perceived as holding positions of prestige, since they were in frequent contact with wealthy individuals, noblemen and government ministers. Their regular interactions with authorities could possibly enable them to intercede on behalf of others during times of crisis. However, by the time of the Yiddish writer, Sholem Aleichem (1859-1916), we learn that the Jewish perception of this institution had changed radically. For example, Sholem Aleichem and his siblings were “astonished and embarrassed that their parents were now [impoverished] innkeepers ... They couldn’t imagine a greater comedown or humiliation.”

The opinions of Gentile travelers who encountered Jewish tavern keepers in this part of Europe ranged from “colorful” to outright disparaging and anti-Semitic. The following are but a few of the more memorable and scathing remarks. William Wraxall, a British traveler, described a tavern he had visited as “a wretched hovel inhabited by Jews,” and described Jews in general as “a race of people to whom, not withstanding their distortions, the traveler is under the greatest obligation, when passing through this inhospitable portion of Europe.” British philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) espoused a similar view when he even opted to spend the chilly winter night in his carriage, while he left his attendant to “bask in the straw inhaling the fumes of Judaism.”

Returning to the subject of so-called Jewish culpability in the inebriation of the peasants while all the while remaining immune to this and retaining their sobriety,

Dynner devotes an entire, very fascinating subsection to “The Myth of Jewish Sobriety.” According to Dynner, noblemen continued to use Jewish lessees to operate their taverns, even after bans against Jews in this trade had been enacted, because of the pervasive stereotype of Jewish sobriety. Jews were viewed as the ideal go-between figures for extorting money from the peasants, while not drinking up the actual profits and becoming inebriated in the process. In the words of nobleman Antoni Ostrowski, “Jews were always sober, and this virtue should be conceded: drunks are rare among Jews.” Even members of the clergy singled out Jews good for their self-restraint and virtuous behavior in this regard.

Yet, as Dynner demonstrates, there is much evidence to contradict this notion. For example, Rabbi Tzevi Hirsch Kaidanover (d. 1712), in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century complained, “I have noticed that many people in this region are so enslaved to their appetites that immediately upon awakening, hours before dawn, they believe they will die if they do not drink hard liquor.” To substantiate this view, Dynner quotes from the copious *kvitlekh* (Yiddish for petitions beseeching a rabbi for a blessing or advice, written on cards or small scraps of paper). Several thousands of them can be found in the Eliyahu Guttmacher Collection at the YIVO Institute in Record Group 27. Rabbi Guttmacher was a non-Hasidic rabbi, well known as the Tzaddik of Gratz, a miracle worker, Talmudic scholar, mystic, communal leader and early Zionist. Thousands sought him out for help. Dynner devotes an entire subsection of his book to him, called “Turning to Rabbi Guttmacher.” Here are two representative pleas from the YIVO archives:

“Liba *bat* [daughter of] Zela asked that Rabbi Guttmacher turn her husband’s heart to good, so that he will no longer be a drunkard, for it has been several years since he became a drunkard and that he regain his way, so that she will no longer be deprived of bread.”

“Isaac Eizik *ben* [son of] Rachel, a widower, admitted that he drinks more liquor than he needs, and then he beats his children, so he asks to give him a cure for this.”

The fear of overindulgence in alcohol and its negative byproducts was so great among certain rabbis that they, too, enacted bans against its consumption or purveyance. Part of this fear stemmed from the simple observation – not unfounded – that the degree of assimilation among rural tavernkeepers and their children was far greater than among other members of Jewish society.

continued on page 16

# QUESTIONING THE EXPERTS

**DOROT questions both JGS members and outside experts about their genealogical skills and elicits their advice for those embarking on their own genealogical path.**

## **Interview with Barbara Wright, Educator and Genealogist**

DOROT: Let's begin with a little bit about yourself and genealogy. How long have you been at it and what brought you to it?

WRIGHT: It started in the summer of 1983. My mother died in 1977 and the Alex Haley book *Roots* was big at that time. At the time my mother died, her father was still alive as was my grandmother on my dad's side. So I had one grandparent alive on each side. A few years after my mother died, my brother gave a tape recorder to my grandparents and said, "Tell us the story of your life." So my grandfather – my mother's father – was a very precise, exact lawyer and we have us this wonderful book of over 70 pages in which he talks about himself, his parents and grandparents, my grandmother, her parents and grandparents, my mother and my aunt. And then on the other side, my other grandmother – my dad's mother – was kind of bemused: "I don't know what to say, it's too hard, etc." So I decided to start trying to find information about her family.

DOROT: Kudos to your brother for presenting those tape recorders. How helpful was that recording once you started reading it closely?

### **Her Great Grandfather's Wine Business**

WRIGHT: What I tried to do was transcribe it. My grandmother on my mother's side was entirely of German ancestry and my grandfather was half German and half Hungarian. And I murdered the names of the towns, because I wrote it as I heard it and I typed it up. And my grandfather said, "No, no they are not like that." So he decided to send it to a professional typist and then had it printed. In addition to genealogy on that particular side of my family, we made copies of letters that were written to my great grandfather, thanking him for his imported Tokaj wine. In the height of the 1880s he advertised his wine in medical journals to the tune

of \$25,000 a year, because it had medicinal qualities according to the current thought at the time. This money is pretty impressive if you think of how many millions of dollars that would be in today's market. So there were people from all over the U.S., presidents from Grant to Teddy Roosevelt, judges, literary folk, and they all wrote to my great grandfather.



DOROT: Where was your great grandfather at that time?

WRIGHT: He was in New York but he had come from Hungary in 1870. He was born 21 years prior on Halloween.

DOROT: He came as a young man. What was his connection to the wine business?

WRIGHT: According to family lore, and I haven't been able to substantiate this, he picked grapes when he was a kid, but certainly he had connections in Hungary. That's the one branch of my family where I'm not exactly sure where he came from. That's one of my brick walls. I've made some educated guesses, because one of his cousins was an artist, Jacques Reich. I have found a reference to where Jacques Reich came from. My great grandfather was Lorenz Reich.

DOROT: Did your great grandfather found the company?

WRIGHT: Yes, it was his company. The wine came in barrels and they bottled it in the United States. He even had his name blown into each bottle.

DOROT: Your great grandfather came from Hungary. What other parts of the world have you had to research to try to piece together the rest your family story?

### **Research Experiences in Various Countries**

WRIGHT: Actually, I think where my great grandfather came from is currently in Slovakia, but at that time it was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. My grandfather's mother came from Germany and both of my grandmother's parents came from Germany on my

mother's side. Everybody was Jewish on all four sides of my family. On my dad's side, my father's father's families were Alsatian. On my father's mother's side, that's the "mutt," if you will, because we had Dutch, Belgian (Antwerp, which was part of the Low Country), Spain, Portugal and southwest France – Bordeaux, Bayonne, Biarritz, Peyrehorade.

DOROT: In terms of your research, in what area of the world has it been easiest for you to gather the information and in what area has presented the toughest challenge?

WRIGHT: The easiest has probably been the French records, both in the eastern and the western parts of France, so the Alsatian records and the records from Bordeaux. I have done extensive work in those two locales. Those are probably easiest because I read French. So I can read a document, although if it's hand written, it depends how bad the writing is. I would say the Dutch records are next easiest because, although I don't speak Dutch, I have what I call a "cheat sheet" that includes numbers from one to 31 and then 40, 50, 60, all the way up to 100, common professions for the Jews, family relationships – mother, father, aunt, uncle – for witnesses, months of the year, things like that. So I take my cheat sheet and I can read most of the Dutch certificates.

DOROT: Those are the easiest for you. What about the most challenging?

WRIGHT: German is tough because German is often written in High German. I can read the Dutch because it's written in the Latin alphabet but because the German is written in a different script, I can't read the German documents and I have to get someone else to read it and translate it for me. By the way, the Alsatian records from 1792 to either 1892 or 1902, depending on the town, are available on line.

DOROT: How do you access them?

WRIGHT: There is an Alsatian web site, and you have to agree that you will not sell the information that is contained in the records. The URL for the site is: [etat-civil.bas-rhin.fr/adeloch/index.php](http://etat-civil.bas-rhin.fr/adeloch/index.php)

DOROT: Have you gone overseas to any of these countries for research?

WRIGHT: I started in 1983, much before the Internet became a significant genealogical research tool. My

first trip actually was in '83 and that was the first time I met a Parisian cousin, who died recently at the age of 97. I was traveling with a friend and wanted to get more info on Recht and Levy (my paternal great-grandparents). We went to Strasbourg and stayed at the house of a cousin on my Levy side, who took us to the town that our Levy ancestors had come from in Alsace. And then, of course, I wanted to see the town that the Recht family had come from, and my friend and I went on our own to the other town. We met the mayor, who was very solicitous, very nice, and took us around the little village and showed us the last house that people from my family had lived in. The family that bought it still owned that particular house. They showed us what had been the synagogue. The mayor spoke French and German, so my friend and I alternated speaking to him—me in French and my friend in German. By the way, the Recht family name was changed to Wright when they came to the United States.

DOROT: Have you gone elsewhere?

WRIGHT: That was my first trip. I have been to Amsterdam numerous times. I have also been to Alsace numerous times and to Paris.

DOROT: So you seem to think this research travel is worthwhile.

WRIGHT: I've also been to Brussels, I've looked at the Belgian National Archives and I've been to Bordeaux and looked at the archives and looked at the Sephardic records there. They have been invaluable. I have found in the places that I have been – Alsace, Bordeaux, Brussels and Amsterdam – that the archivists are extremely helpful. They want to give you a hand and they'll also help with some translation. Of course, you can't ask them to translate every document. For example, one time when I was in Brussels, I was reading a document in Dutch about a couple that had been married and then about seven years later there was another wedding certificate for the same couple. This was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. And I didn't understand; they were married seven years previously. Well, there was a big written part in Dutch that I couldn't read. It turned out it was a divorce document, not a marriage document. The archivist translated that for me, and of course I understood why there were two documents. They were both in the wedding section because they didn't have a separate section for divorce documents in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Preserving Her Genealogical Information**

DOROT: What are your plans for all the data, stories and other information that you've gathered over the years?

WRIGHT: One of the things that has happened with the Recht/Wright family is that we have had two family reunions in France. The first one took place in Strasbourg and we went and visited the family homestead; it was a three-day event. On one of the days, we visited the village our family had come from. That was the year, 1997, when the IAJGS conference was in Paris for the first time. Fifteen years later, in 2012, when the conference was back in Paris, I organized a dinner in Paris of the Recht family for a second reunion. Another thing is, I've put together a booklet especially for the second reunion that I've distributed to family members who came to the reunion. It is basically a Word document with data – birth, death, marriage records – and also family stories. I've also sent the Word doc to cousins via an email attachment. I haven't put photos in it, but I'd like to; I'm in the process of working on a book on my Alsatian background, because that's the one for which I probably have the best in-depth knowledge.

DOROT: Are you planning this as an e-book, on paper, or both?

WRIGHT: On paper.

DOROT: Do you see yourself reaching an end point with your research?

WRIGHT: It can't ever end because people die, people are born, people get married, people get divorced.

DOROT: Are you still making some interesting discoveries?

### **New Discoveries**

WRIGHT: Yes, I've found "new" branches—that I hadn't known about previously. When I started doing the research, I wasn't as careful with my sourcing as I am today so I have tried to go back and reaffirm that the information that I have is accurate and source it. That's actually my latest project. It's a very longstanding project because I have tens of thousands of names.

DOROT: There has been considerable discussion of crowd-sourcing genealogy, making available family data on line to which, in some cases, anybody can

contribute. Do you have any feelings about it?

WRIGHT: I have very mixed feelings about it. In one of my branches that I discovered, I talked with the wife of the guy related to me, and she has a big family tree on Ancestry.com. I noticed that she had many mistakes. One of the problems when information is too easily accessible, people think, well, this is census data and this person has that name, so I'm going to put them in my tree. And there are a lot of inaccuracies. I'm not so happy about such open-source trees.

DOROT: Returning to the Alsace records, if somebody discovers they have an ancestor with roots in that part of the world, do you have any suggestions on how to go about the research?

WRIGHT: Actually, I'll tell you about a Dutch branch. I'll give my grandmother as an example, because when I started the research on her family, she said, "All I know about my father's parents are their names, and they came from Amsterdam and they died within three months of each other when my father was 21."

The first thing you want to do in researching a new branch of your family is get as much source information as you can. That was the starting point and I think it's a good example to use, even though it's not Alsatian. What I did then, when I went to look at these Dutch records, I went to the archives in Amsterdam and I decided to see if I could find the wedding certificate of this couple. Now, I knew that my great grandfather was born in Philadelphia in about 1865 and he had some older siblings, and the parents came to the U.S. in about 1859, and I think they were married in around 1854 in Amsterdam.

In the Dutch records as well as in the French records, they have what they call decennial books – 10-year books – and you can look up the name in a 10-year book and it will give you the date of a marriage, the date of a birth or the date of a death, together with a reference number. Then you can look at the actual certificate in a yearly book. So for the 1854 marriage, I found them in the 10-year book that goes from about 1852 to 1861, and it listed that they were married in 1854, so then I went to the yearly book and there is an index in either the front or the back, and it gives the names of all the people who were married. So I found them.

His name was Eliazer Marcus Lam and her name was Judic Salomon Lissauer. So with that date, I was able to look at the actual certificate. Marriage records are great

because in a marriage record you have both parties, their dates of birth, their parents and usually their profession. They are treasure chests of information. I love wedding certificates for that reason. You can also look at the names of the witnesses because generally – it depends on where you are – there are four witnesses, two of them associated with the groom, two of them associated with the bride. It depends on the date, but some of the documents will even state the relationship between the witness and the bride or groom, such as “brother.”

DOROT: What area of the world would you focus on now in terms of holes in your research that you’d like to fill?

WRIGHT: I would love to find the exact town and more information about my great grandfather, Lorenz Reich. I know his parents’ names but I’d like to find the siblings who did not come to the United States. There were two siblings who did come to the United States and there were two cousins of his that I found in the U.S. I’m not sure of the town that he came from. One of his cousins is supposed to have sketched the portrait of Lincoln that appeared on the \$5 bill. Because the cousin was well known as an artist I did find a death notice for him where it did mention the town that he came from in current-day Slovakia. I use that as, if not the town that my ancestors came from, then a nearby town, because, since he was a cousin, I figure he has to have come from somewhere in that area. But I don’t have any documentation for that fact, so that’s my biggest brick wall.

DOROT: Have you developed a plan to break through?

WRIGHT: There was another cousin of my great grandfather who came to West Virginia and I’m trying to see if I can find information on where he came from as well. Unfortunately, when someone comes too early, the immigration and naturalization records do not list the towns that people came from. I’ve looked at the naturalization records. There is no town. It just says “Hungary.” My great grandfather, in addition to being a wine merchant, also owned a hotel on Fifth Avenue. He rented the land from John Jacob Astor, who lived across the street, and he had this residence hotel. So he was a well-known man in New York. When he died in 1939, there was a about a third-of-a-page obituary about him and even in that, it still only mentioned that he came from Hungary.

### **Researching the Sephardic Roots**

DOROT: You have also researched your Sephardic

roots, right?

WRIGHT: My family came to the U.S. between 1792 and 1880. My last direct ancestor came in 1880, and the early ones were the Sephardic ones who came in 1792 to Philadelphia. My Sephardic ancestor who came in 1792 was born in Spain. I’m only able to trace some information about him. He was born in Spain and he had an uncle who decided to leave Spain, and left Spain with his mother and sister and perhaps a younger brother around 1740. His father decided to stay in Spain. This uncle who left became very well known, the first teacher of the deaf in France and he was the representative to the king of France for the Jews. He was in Bordeaux. His name was Jacob Rodrigues Pereyra (or Jacob Rodrigues Pereire—French spelling). He had a couple of grandsons, very well known, who started a railroad, owned a newspaper, etc. So books have been written about his grandsons, who were Jacob-Emile and Isaac Pereire. The surname was changed from Pereyra to Pereire when they went to France. In the back of one of the books written about these two brothers (*Les Frères Pereire* by Jean Autin) were genealogical charts that were authenticated in 1892. It goes back to the furthest Pereira/Pereyra that you can find in Portugal, which is somewhere between 1550 and 1600.

I found my family in that book, but the problem was that when you were born in Spain, you did not have biblical names, such as Jacob and David, Judith and Rebecca. Those names were not used in Spain because it was too dangerous. It would identify you as a Jew. When they left Spain and came to a friendly country, such as the south of France or Amsterdam or the New World, the Caribbean, they adopted names that you would find in the bible. The uncle of my ancestor was born in Spain with the name of Francisco Antonio Rodrigues Pereyra. When he came to France, he became Jacob Rodrigues Pereyra. My own direct ancestor was born Joseph Rodrigues Pereyra. When he came to France, he also became Jacob Rodrigues Pereyra. In this chart from 1892, my own particular branch does not have the biblical names. My ancestor was listed as Joseph in that book. He had 11 brothers and sisters. One of his sisters was Gabriela who became Rachel, another was Mariana who became Judith. One of his brothers listed was George who became Abraham. I had found most of, but not all these names and found whom they were married to through things like last wills and testaments and other documentation, so I was able to match names and translate them into the names that were adopted when they were in France or the U.S. That has been the most interesting aspect of my search.

There were a few names that I could not find translations for, because these are people who never married. For example, there were three sisters born Beatriz, Francisca or Raphaela but I don't know which one became Sara. One of the following two brothers born Juan and Rafael became David. For example, when Gabriela/Rachel died, she left things in her will to her nieces and nephews from my branch who were in Philadelphia. Her death certificate in the civil records in Bordeaux lists her parents as Manuel and Josepha Fernandes Rome. Thus I was able to determine that my family was truly this family. It took a lot of time and work to do that. But it was fascinating.

### Sephardic Naming Patterns

DOROT: I understand that you've also focused on your family's naming pattern.

WRIGHT: The Sephardic families have a particular naming pattern. The first male child is named for the father's father – it doesn't matter whether the paternal grandfather is alive or deceased, unlike the Ashkenazi tradition. The second male child is named for the mother's father. The first female child is named for the mother's mother, and the second female child is named for the father's mother. So my grandmother, whose name was Julia – she was the second female child – was named for her father's mother, whose name was Judic or Julia. My grandmother used to talk about the fact that she had two cousins who were named

Julia and to differentiate between the three of them, my grandmother, who was very small and petite, was called Little Julia Lam; there was another one who was quite tall and was called Big Julia Lam; then there was another whose last name was Borgenski, so she was J.B. My grandmother's older sister was named Isabelle Lam, named for her grandmother Isabelle. I have a photograph of two Isabelles. It's a four-generation photograph: two Isabelles and two Melinas, including: my great grandmother's sister Isabelle Lam Carmosin, her mother Melina Frechie Lam, her grandmother Isabelle Pereyra Frechie and her great grandmother Melina Cerf Pereyra. It's a perfect example of that naming pattern.

DOROT: Thank you.

*Barbara Wright has been an Early Childhood and Special Education professional for more than 35 years and serves on the boards of several nonprofits dealing with children. She has been doing genealogy as an avocation since 1983 and has traveled extensively throughout Western Europe looking at civil records of her family. She has collaborated with cousins throughout the world as well as organizing reunions. She has been a member of JGS since the late 1980's. The Sephardic side of her family first came to the U.S. in 1792. They are buried in a cemetery in downtown Philadelphia—the first Jewish cemetery there (associated with Mikva Israel synagogue). Her direct ancestors were all here by 1880. ☆*

## The Jewish Genealogical Society website opens the door to

- Jewishdata.com (accessible by members of JGS)
- NY Naturalizations: Database of the Index to Brooklyn Naturalizations (1907–1924); Other New York Area Naturalizations: links to searchable online New York State naturalization indexes by county
- Cemeteries: Map of New York Area Jewish Cemeteries; Directory of Jewish Cemeteries in the Metropolitan New York Area; Burial Societies in the New York Metro Area; New York Area Cemetery Directions
- NY Area Resources: a comprehensive list of repositories in the metropolitan New York area
- *Dorot*: downloadable issues: spring 2000-winter 2005–2006; list of highlights of back issues: 1979-2008
- Events: Announcements of upcoming JGS monthly programs and events
- New York Landsmanshaftn and Other Jewish Organizations: links to indexes, databases, and directories, such as *American Jewish Year Book*; Landsmanshaftn and other town and country-related organization organizations incorporated in New York County, 1848-1920; WPA Survey of New York City Synagogue Records, 1939
- Memorial Database of Jewish Soldiers, Partisans and Workers killed in action during the Nazi era
- Inventory of LDS Microfilms and Microfiche on Indefinite Loan at the Center for Jewish History
- Other: links to other sites that may be of interest to the JGS community



<http://www.jgsny.org>

# JGS Friends

JGS members are encouraged to patronize our Friends listed below. Make use of your current JGS membership card to take advantage of the special offers we have arranged for you.

If you have a suggestion for a new Friend, please e-mail it to the Editor at [editor@jgsny.org](mailto:editor@jgsny.org).

---

---

## **THE MUSEUM AT ELDRIDGE STREET**

12 Eldridge Street, between Canal & Division St (just south of Canal St)  
New York, NY  
212-219-0888  
[www.eldridgestreet.org](http://www.eldridgestreet.org)

JGS members receive **free admission** for a companion (2 for the price of 1). \$10 adults; \$8 students/seniors; \$6 children 5–18. Free Mondays (up to 6 people), Sunday–Thursday 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Friday 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

### **Tours of the restored Eldridge Street Synagogue**

Tour: From Ellis to Eldridge: Immigrant History

Tour: Beyond the Façade: Architecture and Preservation

Special programs and other tours by appointment—see website [www.eldridgestreet.org](http://www.eldridgestreet.org)

---

---

## **THE JEWISH MUSEUM**

1109 Fifth Avenue (at 92nd Street)  
New York, NY 10128  
(212) 423-3200  
[www.TheJewishMuseum.org](http://www.TheJewishMuseum.org)

JGS members will receive **free admission** for a companion (**2 for the price of 1**). \$12 adults; \$10 senior citizens; \$7.50 students. Children under 12 free. Saturdays free.

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Saturday,  
11:00 a.m.–5:45 p.m.;  
Thursday, 11:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.;  
Friday (EST: Nov–Mar) 11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.;  
(DST: Apr–Oct) 11:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.

Closed on Wednesdays and major legal and Jewish holidays.

---

---

## **MUSEUM OF JEWISH HERITAGE: A LIVING MEMORIAL TO THE HOLOCAUST**

36 Battery Place, Battery Park City  
New York, NY 10280  
(646) 437-4200  
[www.mjhnyc.org](http://www.mjhnyc.org)

JGS members will receive a **\$2 discount** on the general admission price (\$12 **\$10** adults, \$10 **\$8** seniors, and \$7 **\$5** students). Children 12 and under free. Wednesdays, 4:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m., free. JGS members receive **15% off** all purchases in the Museum Shop.

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 10:00 a.m.–5:45 p.m.;  
Wednesday, 10:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m. (free after 4:00 p.m.);  
Friday and the eve of Jewish holidays, 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. (EST);  
Friday, 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (DST).

Closed Saturdays, Jewish holidays, and Thanksgiving Day.

---

---

## **YESHIVA UNIVERSITY MUSEUM AT THE CENTER FOR JEWISH HISTORY**

15 West 16th Street  
New York, NY 10011  
(212) 294-8330  
[www.yumuseum.org](http://www.yumuseum.org)

JGS members will receive **free admission** for a companion (**2 for the price of 1**). \$8 adults; \$6 seniors and students.

Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, 11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.;  
Monday, 5:00–8:00 p.m (Free)  
Wednesday, 11:00–8:00 p.m. (5:00–8:00 p.m. Free)  
Friday, 11:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m. (Free)



## **Jewish Genealogical Society**

P.O Box 631  
New York, NY 10113-0631  
[www.jgsny.org](http://www.jgsny.org)

Address Service Requested

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Hanover, PA  
Permit No. 4

That you might recount it to a  
future generation, Psalms 48:14

למען תספרו לדור אחרון, תהלים מ"ח:14