HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR SUCCESSFUL LUNCH ‘n LEARN - FEBRUARY 4, 2018

Our annual Lunch ‘n Learn, with almost 200 attendees, featured one of our favorite speakers, Dr. Robert Watson. The tables were elegantly decorated in the Indian Spring Country Club ballroom. After a welcome greeting by myself and President Cindy Potter Taylor, we were moved by the blessing of the challah by our two scholarship recipients, Alexa Rose Burnston and Mira Morgan. (See pages 8 and 9 to read winning essays.) Certificates of Appreciation were given to Ina Getzoff, Tina Korn and Eric Sharenow.

Ina Getzoff, scholarship chairperson, made the presentation of $1800 scholarships to each of our two deserving recipients. A sumptuous luncheon was served to all. Keynote speaker Dr. Robert Watson’s presentation was “The Challenges of Doing Historical Research.” He is quite adept at educating his audiences, while entertaining them. The responses on his presentation elicited many favorable comments.

Kudos and thanks to the Luncheon Committee

Cindy Potter Taylor - Reservations
Gary Stone - Photography
Eric Sharenow - Escort cards

Mona Freedman Morris - Program layout and design
Ina Getzoff - Scholarship Chairperson
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Request for Articles

Article contributions, preferably by email, are invited for inclusion in Scattered Seeds. Quarterly deadlines are December 1, March 1, June 1, and September 1. Editor reserves the right to accept, revise, condense, or reject all submissions. To increase computer compatibility, please send without formatting in one of the following: .doc (e.g. WORD), .rtf (rich text format), or .Pages (Mac). Contact Editor: Tina Gudin Korn, editor@jgspalmbeachcounty.org or send typed articles to: JGSPBCI, Attention Editor, P.O. Box 7796, Delray Beach, FL 33482-7796.

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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
Cindy Potter Taylor

I was “over the moon” when I realized that our JGS was able to give two $1,800.00 scholarships this year! I wish to thank those who “dug deep” to find some extra money for our deserving candidates. We are now already setting aside money raised by the “In Memory Of, In Honor Of and Gift Membership” donations for next year.

Without a doubt, this year’s annual luncheon was another notch in our success story. As member Marilyn Gorodetzer put it, “Robert Watson could read a telephone book and make it sound interesting.” He certainly has a knack for the spoken word. Our two Chai Scholarship winners, Alexa Burnston and Mira Morgan were, for their age, extremely poised, and their essays added to their credibility as “scholars to be reckoned with.”

For our program “THIS IS YOUR LIFE, RABBI ANTHONY FRATELLO,” we had a great crowd. Mona and Dennis did a yeoman’s job within a short time frame and little initial information. Kudos to them both.

Often time things are a bit chaotic but our “techie-in-residence” Jerry Naditch always comes to the rescue. I would be remiss, if I didn’t mention Barbara Naditch, who, with just a nod from me, jumps into action.

I bid JGS welcome to our two new board members, Beryl Kroot Cole and Dick Goldman. I’m looking forward to working with these two talented people.

By the time Scattered Seeds is distributed, we will have had our March program featuring “Mr. DNA,” Adam Brown. I hope he will explain things simply, so that yours truly can begin to understand the results from Family Tree DNA and Ancestry. At the risk of repeating myself.....PLEASE DO YOUR DNA TESTING ASAP!

Happy Passover to one and all

Cindy

EDITOR’S MESSAGE
Tina Korn

“Slow down. You are speaking too fast,” I shouted into the phone. A close friend was sharing the news she had just received from her sister-in-law.

“I never told you that I had given up a daughter for adoption, before I married your brother,” announced the sister-in-law. “And now, my daughter has contacted me to learn about our family.”

Since I have been tutoring my dear friend about how to begin her own family tree, she couldn’t wait to tell me she has a niece to add to it.

How exciting to discover that you have people in your family about whom you have never known! I eagerly await seeing photos and learning of my friend’s newly found family members.

Wishing everyone a “Zissen Pesach!”
I found the arrival manifest for my grandfather’s brother but I know he went back to Europe. How do I find the manifest for him returning home?

Unfortunately, only manifests showing people entering the United States exist. Originally, the United States Customs and later the Immigration and Naturalization Service required shipping lines to keep manifests of passengers entering the United States. These manifests were kept by the United States government to document these entries, and these records survive today.

The arrival manifests for various ports in the United States are maintained by the National Archives and most are indexed and online at various genealogy websites. If immigrants returned to Europe, there were no manifests kept, because the United States government was not interested in who was leaving. Unfortunately, most ports in Europe (with the notable exception of the United Kingdom), did not maintain passenger arrival lists. If your grandfather’s brother sailed from the United States to the UK, there could be an arrival manifest. These manifests exist from 1890 to 1960 and are indexed online.

My grandparents were born in Europe. How can I find the records of their birth and their parents’ marriages?

There is no simple answer to that question. The answer depends on where they lived and when these events occurred. The only way to figure that out is to research their lives after immigration. If they lived in the United States, find documents including the United States Census, draft registration cards, naturalization records (that should hopefully lead to immigration passenger manifests), death certificates, and records for their children that might contain information on their parents’ origins. Record all the country and town names you find in these various records. Research the town names to find which country their town was in when they lived there (remember borders changed, especially in the 20th century). Then, you can begin researching if any records survive, where they are held, if they are online or accessible any other way.
LIBRARY NEWS
Barbara Nowak, Librarian, JGSPBCI

Our major news was our successful introduction to the congregants of Temple Shaarei Shalom, where we now house our collection. While I was unable to attend, I heard many wonderful stories of “This is Your Life, Anthony Fratello” presentation by Mona Morris and Dennis Rice. You are a true gems! I would also like to thank Dennis Rice for his leadership on this project and his work, along with Cindy Potter-Taylor, in arranging this event.

The work on digitizing our newsletter collection continues, after a slow period during the holidays. This project is nearly complete, with an estimated completion date sometime this summer. Our summer project is to generate a complete inventory of our holdings and to put them on our web page.

Please remember, if you have any books that are relevant to our work and no room to store them, think about donating them to our library, where they will be well used! This quarter, we were fortunate to receive donations from many of our members.

I would especially like to thank Beryl Cole, who purchased a series of books from Avotaynu and donated them in honor of our fearless President, Cindy Potter-Taylor.

I would also like to thank members, Harriet Baskin, Molly Arost Staub, Roberta Jainchill, Tina Korn and lastly, Phyllis Kramer for their generous donations. We also received many lovely books from Norman Berman, who is not even a member of our group. Thank you all!

SPRING LIBRARY DATES
Hours - 11:30 - 2:30
(Check JGSPBCI website for updates)

Wednesday, April 4
Friday, April 13
Monday, April 23
Monday, May 14

LIBRARY ACCLADES
Deb and Dave Picker, members JGSPBCI

As snowbirds, we look forward each winter to resuming our quest with the knowledgeable and cheerful assistance of Librarian Barbara Nowak, President Cindy Potter-Taylor and other member volunteers. Last winter found us reading back issues of newsletters from special interest groups (SIGS) from the hometowns of our families in Poland and Romania. They held vital records (not yet posted on JRI-Poland or other sources), old photos and glimpses into life in Europe, and contact information of landsmen who might be relatives. This year, many of the newsletters and other resources are digitized.

To be Jewish is to ask questions, especially about exploring your family tree. Many of the answers are waiting for you, as they were for us, at the JGSPBCI Library at Temple Shaarei Shalom. No prior knowledge is necessary to be guided on your genealogical journey.

In 2016-17, we researched meanings of surnames, which led to clues about rabbinical heritage and places ancestors lived prior to the towns and cities we already knew about. This winter finds us guided to information and addresses of burial societies, which led to addresses of synagogues.

A new path of research has emerged toward Deb’s great-grandfather, an orthodox rabbi in Brownsville, Brooklyn and her other ggf, who might be descended from a rabbi of Liady, Ukraine, in the 1300s. Our other research utilized books in the library collection. A volume of translations of records from the Netherlands contained one of our unusual family surnames, and confirmed family lore about roots in Holland.

So make an appointment, and come with a question You’ll find answers, be guided to next steps, and have great fun doing it!
The Jewish Genealogical Society of Palm Beach County presented a special program on Tuesday night, Feb. 13, 2018 at Temple Shaarei Shalom to honor the temple’s Rabbi, Anthony Fratello. This program was designed by JGS President Emerita Mona Freedman Morris, and Program Chair Dennis Rice, and President Cindy Taylor. Highlights of some of Rabbi Fratello’s family history, were presented in a slide show.

Present with Rabbi Fratello was his wife, Rabbi Joanna Tract and their son Eli. Their son Samson was home studying for an exam. The presentation opened with a Ralph Edwards “This Is Your Life” video.

Rabbi Fratello’s paternal family came from Corleone, Italy, arriving in 1903 in New Orleans, Louisiana on the Red Star Line, from Hamburg. His mother’s Horowitz and Puck families came from Bialystok and Lodz, Poland, arriving in New York City in 1915.

His mother went to UCLA and met his father in California. Rabbi Fratello was born there in April 1972. He went to Pomona College and then to Israel where he met his future wife, Joanna. After both graduating from Hebrew Union College in Israel, they married and in 2000 moved to Boynton Beach, Florida. Rabbi Fratello became the spiritual leader at Temple Shaarei Shalom.

This was an educational and interesting evening for our members and the members of the Temple. There was music throughout the presentation indicating the different eras of the Fratello family. The presentation also included the information that can be found using standard genealogical protocols, including census forms, naturalization forms, WWII draft registration and the newspaper media. At the beginning of the presentation, Rabbi Fratello was presented with a beautifully framed Family Tree, designed and created by Mona Freedman Morris, showing his family history back to 1730.
“How will our children know who they are if they do not know where they came from.”
Winning Essay by Alexa Rose Burnston, Dreyfoos School of the Arts, Lake Worth, Florida

My piano is a mahogany upright, gifted to me by my mother’s mother for my fourth birthday. I quickly discovered a knack for the musical arts, eagerly putting on shows for my family with the simple piano pieces I learned. Little did I know that my Grandmother’s mother, my Great-Grandmother Alice, who I am named for, was herself a gifted pianist throughout her life. My grandmother gave me this piano as a way to weave a thread connecting four generations of women, from oldest daughter to oldest daughter. Although I never had the opportunity to meet Great-Grandma Alice myself, I have heard countless stories about her musical endeavors. She earned a living as a piano teacher during a time when employment opportunities for women were limited, and I learned that her musical gift was both her profession and her passion. This love for music was passed down to me, her great-granddaughter. Although I never met my Great-Grandma Alice, I know we would both share a love for the traditional music that has guided both our lives.

As a young girl, my mind raced with excitement each time I played Ode to Joy on the baby grand piano in my Great-Grandmother Lenore’s retirement home. My Great-Grandmother sang along, with me as her tiny accompanist. Her singing voice was as unforgettable as those classical pieces I played for her at each visit. I am fortunate to have known Great-Grandma Lenore for the first six years of my life. Her voice is as clear as ever in my memory, whether it is her teaching me Ma’oz ATzur when lighting the Hanukkah candles, or singing nursery rhymes I learned in preschool. She inspired me to become a passionate singer, even posthumously. My father has shared with me stories of her remarkable voice, rising in prayer in shul in Brooklyn, and lifting the Hatikvah to such heights during their trip to Israel that everyone around them stopped singing just to listen to her. The strong, clear vibrato of the voice that sang to me is now reflective of my own voice.

I too, am a singer, with an unwavering passion for classical music and opera. Her musical gift is what I immediately think of when I consider any of my “musical genealogy.” For the past seven years, I have studied voice at my audition-only public middle school of the arts and then high school of the arts, learning the classical art of vocal performance. I can only thank Great-Grandma Lenore for the musical inspiration she bestowed upon me at the end of her life. Her voice could fill a room, and now as I study opera, singing Italian arias and German lied, I think of my own booming voice that can fill any room of its own.

Along with voice and piano, in high school I added guitar to my musical repertoire. With these skills, I was elected to be regional song leader for the National Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY) Southern Tropical Region, leading a new generation of Jewish teens in song. The influence of my Great-Grandmothers, women with such prominence in my early childhood, has had a profound and continuous influence on my musical development for my entire life. As they were my link to my musical past, I hope to instill a love for music in my family’s future, and inspire a new generation of dedicated and passionate artists.
Winning Essay by Mira Morgan, Palm Beach Gardens High School, Palm Beach Gardens, Florida

“How will our children know who they are if they do not know where they came from.”

While researching my family, I found not only names, dates of birth, and spouses, but also places of residence and stories. The question of “where we came from” through a Jewish prospective is rarely just a single country of origin; more often it is a fuller and richer story involving ancestors leaving oppression and beginning a new life in the United States. Many of my relatives left Russia, Poland, and the Ukraine in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to come to New York, escaping anti-Semitism.

The importance of discussing the past is to appreciate the struggle and perseverance that took place to establish a future. After fleeing anti-Jewish riots in Europe, my genealogy records show that my relatives lived in close proximity to each other in Brooklyn and Manhattan. Through research, pieces of the past fit together to create a picture so rich that it is evident why keeping our past alive is vital to the understanding of who we are. Learning how traditions develop and the effort put into mere survival has given me a better sense of who I am and a greater appreciation for my religion. My studies into my past have taught me to be humble and grateful for my life, and given me confidence that I can overcome obstacles, just as my ancestors did. Keeping a family tree and practicing traditions are critical to keeping Judaism alive.

Through the journey of my Jewish education, I have come to appreciate both the consistency of Judaism and the ways my religion has adapted to modern society. I am comforted by the knowledge that I am reciting the same prayers and chanting the same verses from the Torah that my ancestors did before me. But, I am also proud of the changes that have taken place to accommodate our modern lifestyle. I support the stands taken by organizations such as the Reform Jewish Movement, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, and the Jewish Federation.

For example, in the traditional prayers, Jews thanked God for “not being made a woman.” Recognizing the need for reevaluation, the Reform Jewish Movement altered our Reform Miskan T’Filah to read “Praise to you, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe who has made me in the image of God.” As a proud Jew in the twenty-first century, I am grateful for these changes.

I am proud of my religion, and I am committed to the values and ethics that serve as the foundation of Judaism, such as the importance of family, honesty, compassion, and giving. Knowing that my ancestors went to great lengths to protect Judaism has given me the utmost appreciation for my religion, and I don’t have a doubt that I will pass on Judaism to raise my children to share my love for our faith.
Betty Starkman and I shared a taxi from O’Hare into Chicago thirty-three years ago. We were strangers but shared a quest for discovering our roots and planned to do so at the fourth annual seminar in Jewish Genealogy. This was my first such gathering. Betty was a more seasoned researcher. She is known far and wide for founding the Jewish Genealogical Society of Michigan and becoming its first president.

A novice frequently asks others the surnames they are researching. When Betty revealed the name HOFFMAN, I couldn’t believe it, as my mother’s maiden name is HOFFMAN. But, hope quickly faded as she said they came from Mogielnica and went to South Africa. No one in my family had made that trek southward. Mogielnica was not close to Piotrkow Trybunalski, Poland, where my HOFFMANs originated. Any thought of a connection between our families was put out of my mind.

Every living HOFFMAN descendant in my family said that Piotrkow Trybunalski was the place from which they came. After viewing every Mormon microfilm from Piotrkow Trybunalski, I’ve only come across three siblings of my great grandfather. But, he wasn’t born there, wasn’t married there and his parents weren’t married there. Using my Polish road atlas, I picked out all the surrounding towns and viewed the appropriate microfilms. Not only didn’t I find them, the name HOFFMAN, which I thought to be a common name, was rarely found at all. The Piotrkow Yizkor book, A Tale of One City, edited by Ben Giladi and written in English, did not reveal my HOFFMANs, either. Not a trace.

I decided to try a tactic that had worked in the past for my EPSZTEIN family. Using my trusty Translation Guide to 19th Century Polish-Language Civil-Registration Documents, by Judith Frazin, I wrote letters in Polish to several archives near Piotrkow Trybunalski. Some rejection letters came. I can always tell when I see the Polish word “nie,” that I won’t get anything. When I see a dollar sign, I know they’ve found something. The Piotrkow Trybunalski Archives wanted $70. This was good news, as far as I was concerned. The cost would cover some research and a few Xerox copies. A simple money order from the local drugstore was sent.

What I received was a treasure trove. First, there was a lengthy Polish letter. Even though I can’t translate word for word, I’ve learned enough to get the gist. My great great grandfather had another wife and children before he married my great-great grandmother. What a shock!

My great-great grandmother had a first husband and a daughter, before she became a HOFFMAN. Secondly, two sheets, written in Cyrillic, contained residence information, which covered a time span from 1756-1878. This unbelievable document had GGGgrandparents’ names, GG grandparents’ names, my great-grandfather’s name, spouses, years of birth, places of birth and occupations.

But the biggest part of my learning curve was that GG grandfather Jakob Lejzor HOFFMAN was born in Mogielnica. I dusted off the far-reaching corners of my brain and remembered that Betty Starkman had researched Mogielnica. After an email and a telephone conversation, I was told that the Mormon microfilms for this town were on permanent loan at our Family History Center in Bloomfield Hills (thanks to Betty). I did not walk there. I ran.

As the first roll of film turned in the reader, I could not believe my eyes. The never-before seen name HOFFMAN was on every index for every year. I found my HOFFMANs at last. The town was filled with them! With the information on the residence sheets as a guide, I discovered 3rd, 4th and 5th great grandparents—all within two weeks of receiving the initial letter. In Mogielnica, the town clerks didn’t list survivors but the parents of the deceased. My 4th great grandfather Pinkus died in 1832 at the age of 94 and they listed his parents!
Notes were taken on all HOFFMANs and another phone call was made to Betty. “Who was your HOFFMAN?” I asked. “Wolek,” was her reply. I had found Wolek in the films with many children but didn’t know who his father was. “Did he have any brothers?” I persisted. “Just one, Icyk.” What Betty didn’t know was that there were more siblings of Icyk, and Jakob Lejzor HOFFMAN was one of them.

Apparantly, the information my relatives gave me was wrong. The HOFFMANs didn’t come from Piotrkow Trybunalski. They ended up there. It is an understandable mistake coming from the 20th Century. I learned something from this exercise that I have read over and over again on JewishGen and in all the journals. Persistence pays off. Never give up your dream of finding your ancestors.

(Author’s note: Betty Starkman passed away in June of 2016.)
FAMILY RESEARCH BREAKTHROUGH
*Marilyn Robinson, member JGSPBCI*

I have been researching my paternal family, YUDIN (IUDIN) for nine years, but have been unable to find any information about my father's line beyond my paternal great-grandfather. The other day I went back to Ancestry.com and to Jewishgen.org, reviewing the 1834, 1850, 1888 Lithuania Revision lists, as well as the Lithuania 1875 Tax & Voters lists.

I checked for my paternal name, YUDIN (IUDIN) from the Sharkovshchina, Disna, Vilnius area of what had been Lithuania (presently Belarus). I hadn't looked at the listings for a couple of years but something has always made me feel that some of the names were my relatives. I just was not recognizing the connections----yet!

My grandfather, Sam, was listed as Simon (I knew his Hebrew name was Shimon); his brother Israel was identified as Srol, his sister, Jenny, was Zlata, etc. By checking other fathers' names, I was able to trace back to my fourth great-grandfather, Yudel/Yuda (Iudel/Iuda), born earlier than 1797!"

I was also able to identify many approximate birth years and the names of some of the wives and children of each of the men, back through the generations.

*Marilyn Robinson writes JEWISH GEM'S GENEALOGY: MINING FOR YOUR ELUSIVE ANCESTORS' BLOG.*

http://yourjewishgem.blogspot.com/
NEW YORK CITY ENACTS NEW RULES FOR PUBLIC ACCESS TO BIRTH AND DEATH RECORDS

* Nu? What’s New? Gary Mokotoff, Editor, Vol. 19, Number 10, March 11, 2018*

Despite a huge turnout by genealogists and historians at a public hearing to discuss public access to vital records, the New York City Department of Health (DoH) declared that general public access to birth records will not be available for 125 years after birth, and death records will not be available for 75 years after death. Justification for the decision was that birth and death records are protected from access by the general public because they contain individually identifiable information, which is considered private.

The DoH reported that at the hearing, 31 people testified, 18 of whom also submitted written comments. In all, 5,028 written comments were received, 3,884 of which were signatures to a petition and many of these signatories also submitted their own written comments. The DoH stated that no changes were made to the proposed amendment based on the comments received. The Board will consider an amendment to the Health Code to allow direct descendants and other close relatives to access birth and death records before they become public.


*Thanks to member Nili Krassner for contributing this article.*

POSSIBLE NEW GENEALOGY RESOURCE

*Genealogy’s Star, Mar 2018*

The Digital Public Library of America, or the DP.LA is a rapidly growing nationwide website. It connects people to the riches held within America’s libraries, archives, museums, and other cultural heritage institutions. All of the materials found through DPLA—photographs, books, maps, news footage, oral histories, personal letters, museum objects, artwork, government documents, and so much more—are free and immediately available in digital format.

The cultural institutions participating in DPLA represent the richness and diversity of America itself, from the smallest local history museum to our nation’s largest cultural institutions. As the DPLA accumulates a vast collection of resources it necessarily includes many genealogical important resources. There are over 20 million images, texts, videos, and sounds from across the United States. Take some time to explore the new website.

* * * *

MYHERITAGE ADDS VITAL RECORDS

*March 2018*

MyHeritage has just added New York Newspapers, 1806–2007, and the New York Marriage License Index, 1908–1929 to “SuperSearch™”, the company’s database containing more than 8.3 billion names.

The collections are valuable to everyone looking to discover new information about their ancestors, especially those with connections to New York State. Newspapers and marriage license records provide key insights into what our ancestors’ lives were like throughout history.


*Thanks to member Jackie Fineblit for contributing these two articles.*
WHAT'S NEW IN GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH

NEWS FROM JEWISHGEN DIGEST:
Videos from JewishGen Education
Phyllis Kramer, VP, Feb 2018

Hello fellow researchers... We have created a few short videos to help newcomers to JewishGen. You can find them on the first timer page and the education page, http://www.JewishGen.org/education, or directly from YouTube. They are:
Prepare for Your Search: https://youtu.be/mUufbJ5rZlA;
How to Navigate JewishGen: https://youtu.be/LLyn3VMBrYQc
Communicate with Other JewishGenners using JGFF: https://youtu.be/LLyn3VMBrYQc
Communicate with JewishGenners on our Discussion Lists: https://youtu.be/yazJ3Ziw5l4
JewishGen Courseware: https://youtu.be/Rx8_lV95508

NEW HISTORICAL MAPS OF GALICIA IN THE GESHER GALICIA MAP ROOM, Jay Osborn, UKRAINE
Digest, Nov., 2017

Thanks to recent onsite research at the National Library of Russia, in St. Petersburg, by the chair of Gesher Galicia’s board of directors, Tony Kahane, we are now able to present six new digitized historical maps of Galicia and the surrounding territories on the free online Gesher Galicia Map Room.

These new maps provide important geographic references to the territorial politics pressing the region during two tumultuous periods near the beginning and the end of Galicia’s official lifetime. Our thanks to the National Library of Russia in St. Petersburg for providing the digitized copies of these maps at Tony's request: http://www.nlr.ru/eng/
The GG Map Room home page: https://maps.geshergalicia.org/

NEWS FROM LITVAKSIG VILNIUS RESEARCH GROUP
Jill Anderson, Feb., 2018

Did your family come from the Vilnius region, or might they have lived in Vilnius for a time? LitvakSig’s Vilnius District Research Group translates records from this area and contributors to the Group have access to them as soon as the translations are made.

These Excel spread sheets can be downloaded to your computer and you can sort the information any way you like - by surname, by date, by first name, by town etc. Shtetls in the Vilnius District are: Antakalnis, Bagaslaviskis, Bezdonys, Ciobiskis, Gelvonai, Giedraiciai, Inturke, Jasiunai, Joniskes, Laibiskis, Maisiagala, Mikhailishki, Moletai, Musninkai, Naujoji Vilna, Nemencine, Novygorod, Paberze, Rudamina, Salcininkai, Sesuoliai, Sirventos, Snipiskes, Stundishki, Turgeliai, Vilnius City and Yakubantse.

Over the last year we made 66,000 lines of information available. These include the 1784 Poll Tax for Vilnius City; 1834 Revision Lists; Draft Lists from 1880 to 1916; the 1878 Merchants’ Draft List and the Snipiskes Cemetery List. Please be aware that the information in these records is not just about the individual but can contain details about his or her family members, their names, ages, where they were born and occupations. Street address are sometimes available too.
SAFE COMPUTING WHILE TRAVELING
Hal Bookbinder, JGSCV, February 20, 2018

The 30th article in the Safe Computing series, "Precautions while Traveling" has been published in the February issue of "Venturing into Our Past", the Newsletter of the Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV).

When traveling, there are extra steps to keep your computing private. This includes using your own adapters and special precautions regarding WiFi. As many of us will be traveling this summer to Eastern Europe, this is especially timely.

The thirty articles published to date are available in a single PDF which includes an index. This resource is freely accessible using the following link:

http://tinyurl.com/ComputingArticles

We will continue to update this resource with monthly articles. Consider placing a link to it on your society’s web site or otherwise sharing it with your members as an ongoing free resource, reminding them when new articles are available.

If you have any questions or suggestions for future articles, please contact me.

Look forward to seeing you in Warsaw in August at the Conference!

USING JOWBR JewishGen's Online Worldwide Burial Registry
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To use JOWBR, go to www.jewishgen.org. Mouse over the “DATABASES” tab and click on the item “Burial Registry (JOWBR).” Four types of data can be used for searching: “Surname”, “GivenName”, “Town”, or “Any Field” (i.e., appearing anywhere in a record). The top search specification line defaults to “Surname” but can be changed; the other lines, if needed, are selected by clicking on the down-arrow next to “Data Type”.

The information for a burial may include the secular name of the deceased; the Hebrew name; other associated surnames; the place and date of birth; the place and date of death; age at death; the burial date; a photograph of the gravestone; the names of the spouse, father, and mother; the cemetery name; and the location of the cemetery.

Other websites with useful burial information include Find A Grave (www.findagrave.com) and BillionGraves (billiongraves.com). These also rely on volunteers to provide photographs and information about cemeteries.

In addition to JOWBR, there is an ongoing Memorial Plaques Project, which works in the same way as JOWBR. It also has a searchable database and preserves information from synagogue memorial plaques, including those from synagogues that have merged or closed.

JOWBR’s goal is to put you in the same position as if you were standing in front of your ancestor’s burial site.
THREE BIGGEST MISTAKES IN GENEALOGY RESEARCH

Amy John Crow, Blog posted January 11, 2018

Let's be honest. We all make mistakes in our genealogy, whether it's misreading a document or drawing an incorrect conclusion. But the mistakes in how we actually do our research can lead to bigger brick walls, fewer discoveries, and more frustration. Here are the three biggest mistakes in genealogy research.

1. Trying to Take Research Too Far, Too Fast

Let's say that you were going to drive from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. You plug your start and your destination into Google Maps and all the directions say are: "Turn left onto W. Temple Street. Your destination will be on the left."

Not exactly the most helpful of directions.

Without any context other than the destination, the directions are useless. We need to know the road that we're turning off of, how long we're going to be on W. Temple before we get to the destination. And, by the way, how do we even get to Salt Lake City? Our mapping program skipped some crucial steps, some signs that would point us in the right direction, signs that we need to get to where we want to go.

We do the same thing in our research. Take these examples:

- Finding an ancestor in Illinois in the 1920 census and it says he was born in Ireland — so you go looking in Irish records
- Identifying an ancestor as a married adult in the 1940 census and then looking for him as a child in the 1880 census
- Finding a new ancestor and immediately starting to look for that person's parents, without knowing anything about that new ancestor besides his or her name

Just like we need more points on our map to make sure we're in the right place, we need more information before we can really get from "here" to "there."

2. Stopping Too Soon

It's exciting when you find a record that identifies a new ancestor. However, we shouldn't let that excitement cloud our judgment. Sure, we found a record that names a new ancestor... but is that record right?

Do we understand that record? What problems are there with it in terms of accuracy? How does it fit in with what we already have?

Need tips on evaluating your notes? Click here for my free guide "How to Evaluate What You Already Have."

3. Skimming for Facts

There's a Law of Research (kind of like Murphy's Law) that says the longer and more difficult a document is to read, the less likely it is that a researcher will read the whole thing.

Wills, land records, pension records, and court records are great resources for our genealogy research, but we only get the full benefit of them if we actually read them. When we just skim through the document looking for specific facts, we lose not only the context of those facts, but we miss out on a lot of detail that could be helpful to our research.

When you're looking at a deed, did you notice how much the land was being sold for? Token amounts of consideration are a clue that there's a relationship between the grantor (seller) and the grantee (buyer). Did you notice who was the executor of a will or who were the witnesses? They could be related to the deceased.

Family History Is a Journey, Not a Race

These three mistakes have something in common: Speed. We get excited about a new discovery that we want to zoom ahead to the next one. Ironically, we can make more discoveries when we slow down.
SHARING GREAT NEWS
Membership Chair, Eric Sharenow, reports that our membership is now at an all time high of 348 members!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Annette Cohen  Norman Metzger
Stu Cooper       Bernice Rubin
Marilyn Cramer   Reba Solomon
Jody Gorran      Irene Volchik
Ruth Leeser      Harry Zysman
George Liss      

Have you renewed your membership?

The fiscal year of the JGSPBCI began September 1, 2017. We thank you for your part in making the past year most successful. Prompt return of your check, made payable to JGSPBCI will insure that your research information is included in the 2017–2018 Membership Directory.

Bring your check to the next meeting or mail to:
Treasurer, Jewish Genealogical Society of Palm Beach County, Inc.
P.O. Box 7796, Delray Beach, FL 33482-7796.

Individual - $25  Individual Life Member - $200  Family - $36
Donor - $50       Patron - $100                   Family Life Members - $300

For further information, contact Eric Sharenow, our membership chair–person, at membership@jgspalmbeachcounty.org or 561-254-9861.
POLISH GOVERNMENT DONATES MILLIONS TO RESTORE POLISH CEMETERY, December 25, 2017

The Polish government donated 100 million zlotys equivalent to $28 million USD to restore and protect the Jewish Cemetery on Okopowa Street in Warsaw. This is one of the largest government donations toward preserving the Jewish culture which was virtually wiped-out during the Shoah.

The Okopowa Street Jewish Cemetery has 250,000 graves of Polish Jews. It was established in 1806 and has many notables buried there. Many sections of the cemetery have broken tombstones, and unreadable inscriptions.

The Cultural Heritage Foundation, which preserves Polish heritage sites, will oversee the preservation work at the cemetery. The donation established an endowment which is to cover cleaning the cemetery, preserving its tombstones and monuments and reinforcing an outer wall.

To read more see: https://tinyurl.com/y6wyzgdh
Original url: https://apnews.com/58cf43ce0ccf433982f6419ade6fc1de/Poland-donates-large-sum-to-preserve-Warsaw-Jewish-cemetery

Thank you to Randy Hershaft, Associated Press, for sharing the article with us.

NEWSPAPER COLLECTION UPDATE, January 15, 2018

Ancestor Hunt has many newspaper collections which I have posted about previously, including Jewish Newspapers.

They recently updated their Jewish-American newspaper collection which may be found at: http://www.theancestorhunt.com/blog/historic-jewish-american-newspapers-online#.Wl0nI3lG2Uk. Most are free but a few do require a paid subscription or a login from a university library. Some are indexed, and some are not. The newspapers that are listed are all available online. There are many Jewish newspapers that have not been digitized.

I would also recommend looking at their digitized collection of newspapers by state at: http://www.theancestorhunt.com/newspaper-research-links.html

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WORLD MEMORY PROJECT ADDS NEW DATABASES January 26, 2018

The World Memory Project is a joint project between the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and Ancestry.com to allow the public to help make Museum documents searchable by name online for free.

Anyone can contribute to this project. There are over four million historical documents about the survivors and victims of the Holocaust and Nazi persecution during World War II.
**MORE NEWS FROM JAN MEISELS ALLEN**
Chairperson, IAJGS Public Records Access Monitoring Committee

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**January 24, 2018**

This site is an excellent resource for research in Yiddish studies and had over 5,700 hours of audio tape in field interviews with Yiddish speakers collected between 1959 and 1972.

It also contains 100,000 pages of accompanying linguistic field notes. The interviews are not transcribed. Information came from Central and Eastern Europe in 603 locations and reflect Yiddish speaking population on the eve of World War II.

This is a resource for language, ethnography, literature, folklore, linguistics, Germanic and Slavic studies and more.

A guide to use the digitized materials may be found at: [http://guides.library.columbia.edu/lcaaj](http://guides.library.columbia.edu/lcaaj).

A finding aide for the entire archive may be found at: [http://findingaids.cul.columbia.edu/ead/nnc-rb/lpd_4079907/](http://findingaids.cul.columbia.edu/ead/nnc-rb/lpd_4079907/)

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**February 17, 2018**

The Kupferberg Holocaust Center located at Queensborough Community College-CUNY, in Queens, New York, has a new online exhibit, *Conspiracy of Goodness: How French Protestants Saved Thousands of Jews During World War II*. [http://khc.qcc.cuny.edu/goodness/](http://khc.qcc.cuny.edu/goodness/). This is the story of a little known rescue in Le Chambon and surrounding villages where the townspeople in south-central France provided refuge to those who fled there, including almost 5,000 Jews.

The exhibit is online and shows the timeline ([http://khc.qcc.cuny.edu/goodness/timeline/](http://khc.qcc.cuny.edu/goodness/timeline/)) of the history of Le Chambon and the Plateau from early 17th century Huguenots through the Nazi occupation, resistance and liberation in 1944. It also shows the journey ([http://khc.qcc.cuny.edu/goodness/journey/](http://khc.qcc.cuny.edu/goodness/journey/)) of Hanne and Max Liebmann with maps and arrest, deportation to Gurs Internment Camp as part to Operation Burckel (border regions of Germany) and rescue.

Hanne and Max met at Gurs and just celebrated their 72nd anniversary and are lecturers at the Holocaust Center. There are also videos of survivors ([http://khc.qcc.cuny.edu/goodness/videos/](http://khc.qcc.cuny.edu/goodness/videos/)) and about life in Le Chambon from residents. One of the videos recounts the experiences as children in Le Chambon. Another video includes Hanne and Max Liebmann telling the story of deportation from Western Germany to Southern France by the Nazis.

The people of Le Chambon as a whole were recognized in 1988 by Yad Vashem's Department of the Righteous with a special Diplôme d’Honneur. There is a special plaque at Yad Vashem—“It was a community that saw it was ‘a duty’ to help people who need to be helped.” About 45-50 individuals also received individual certificates of honor.
USCIS CHANGES MISSION STATEMENT  
*February 24, 2018*

The following site was recently shared with me and for those tracing immigrant migration to the United States over the past two centuries, the map may provide assistance: [http://metrocosm.com/us-immigration-history-map.html](http://metrocosm.com/us-immigration-history-map.html)

This week, without any public notice or request for input, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) changed its mission statement: [https://www.uscis.gov/aboutus](https://www.uscis.gov/aboutus)

It removed the previous phrase “nation of immigrants.”

Many news media outlets reported on this, the following from the National Public Radio (NPR) is but one: [https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2018/02/22/588097749/america-no-longer-a-nation-of-immigrants-uscis-says](https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2018/02/22/588097749/america-no-longer-a-nation-of-immigrants-uscis-says)

I am posting this solely for information about a change in government policy and not a political discussion on immigration.

HISTORIC EUROPEAN SYNAGOGUES CATALOGING  
*February 8, 2018*

The above photograph of the Slonim Synagogue, Belarus, is one on the list to be restored. The inventory was undertaken by the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, assisted by heritage experts in individual countries.

The project was commissioned by the Foundation for Jewish Heritage, which has identified synagogues from pre-World War II, ranging from Cork, Ireland, to Vladivostok, Russia.

The cataloguing includes construction dates and materials, information about the Jewish community it served, its current condition and a "significance rating". To read about the Historic Synagogues of Europe see: [http://historicsynagogueseurope.org/synagogue-home](http://historicsynagogueseurope.org/synagogue-home).

The excellent website includes a map with all the synagogues in Europe, a search field by town, architect, construction date, community and more.

To read more: [https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/03/save-synagogues-europe-jewish-heritage-simon-schama](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/03/save-synagogues-europe-jewish-heritage-simon-schama)

Thank you to Jeanette Rosenberg, JGS Great Britain for sharing The Guardian article with us. Also thank you to Rose Feldman, IGRA, for sharing the article from the Foundation for Jewish Heritage synagogues and Center for Jewish Art accessing the cataloging where one can search the synagogues.
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA LAUNCHES VOILA, NEW NATIONAL UNION CATALOG, February 1, 2018

On February 1, 2018, Library and Archives Canada (LAC), launched Voilà, their new national union catalogue hosted by the OCLC website.

OCLC may be better known as worldcat.org, the world’s largest library catalog. The new catalog offers an interface with modern features, is intuitive and will aid in searching published materials located in hundreds of libraries across Canada. The LAC will add its own holdings to Voilà later this year. To read more see: http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/news/Pages/2018/voila-nuc.aspx

To use Voilà go to: http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/services/national-union-catalogue/Pages/national-union-catalogue.aspx

LAC said the launch of Voilà marks the completion of the migration of the national union catalogue holdings from AMICUS to OCLC.

This is an excellent aid for genealogists. Put in your keywords, such as family names, or ancestral towns to determine if the system has any books or other printed items that might be of interest.

The return will let you know which libraries hold those findings. For example, I put the term “Jewish Genealogy” into advanced search (https://canada.on.worldcat.org/advancedsearch?databaseList=638) and over 2,000 results returned.

The term “genealogy” returned over 128,000 items. Even one of my ancestral towns in Poland resulted in 20 items.

SYNAGOGUES IN GREECE: A STUDY OF SYNAGOGUES IN MACEDONIA AND THRACE, NOW AVAILABLE ON LINE, February 1, 2018

Jewish Heritage Europe posted that the book, Synagogues in Greece: A Study of Synagogues in Macedonia and Thrace, by Elias Messinas, is available on line at: https://issuu.com/eliasblue/docs/messinas_synagogues_of_greece_do_no

There is no charge to view or download the book.

To read the Jewish Heritage Europe announcement see: http://jewish-heritage-europe.eu/2018/02/01/reminder-synagogues-of-greece-book-is-online

The book has architectural sources, photos, maps and traces the history of the synagogues, Jewish quarters and Jewish Greek communities from antiquity through Byzantine and Ottoman times, contemporary history and the holocaust. The holocaust murdered 87 percent of Greek Jewry. Prior to World War II there were 100 synagogues, today only about 12 still stand.

I have no relationship with the publisher or author of the book and am posting it solely for the information of the reader.
In an intimate classroom setting, I welcomed nine members of JGSPBCI to learn more about genealogy. Topics covered included organizing their information, genealogy charts, how to start by researching census, vital records and manifests, surnames, DNA, family trees online and more.

Most students wanted to understand how best to maintain the information, and to avoid clusters of papers and sticky notes; they were advised to use the computer to store photos and documents, label them consistently, and to put them into surname folders.

I answered about 100 questions (or so it seemed) in the two-hour workshop. One strong recommendation is for students to think about goals and how to achieve them, and then go to the JGSPBCI library and work with volunteers.
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Don’t Forget:

Wednesday, April 11

South County Civic Center

12:30 pm: Brick Wall Session

1:00 pm: Share our Successes