



JGSLA DATES AND UPDATES

JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY of LOS ANGELES
P.O. Box 55443, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413
JGSLA.ORG - (818) 771-5554

• November 2008 •

Upcoming Meetings

- November Sunday, November 2nd – 2:00 PM
“The Pages In Between: Unearthing the Holocaust Legacy of Two Families, One Home”, Erin Einhorn
Bernard Milken Jewish Community Campus, 22622 Vanowen Street, West Hills, CA 91307
- Monday, November 10th – 7:30 PM
The Bad Arolsen – ITS Archives Research Experience: Film and Panel Discussion
Skirball Cultural Center, 2701 North Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90049
- December Sunday, December 7th – 1:30PM
JGSLA Hannukah Party and
“The Influence of Yiddish Theater on American Music & Culture” by Hale Porter:
Bernard Milken Jewish Community Center, West Hills
- January 2009 Monday, January 12th – 7:30 PM
“Yippee: A Journey to Jewish Joy” – film screening followed by Q & A with producer/director,
Paul Mazursky.
Skirball Cultural Center, 2701 North Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90049

Non JGSLA events you may find of interest

- November Wednesdays, November 5, 12 and 19 and December 3, 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM
You Shall Teach Your Children: The Art of Writing an Ethical Will
This course will enable students to begin the process of creating an ethical will, a document that leaves more than property to a person's loved ones. Rabbi Carla Howard is founder and executive director of the Jewish Healing Center of LA. Admission: \$100 General, \$80 Skirball Members, \$60 Students.
Skirball Cultural Center 2701 North Sepulveda Blvd., LA, CA 90049. Pre-registration required. See http://www.skirball.org/index.php?option=com_ccevents&scope=prgm&task=detail&ccmenu=v2hhdcdzie9u&oid=410
- Sunday, November 9, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM, followed by sessions Monday-Wednesday evenings,
Celebration of Jewish Books
Live entertainment. Glatt kosher food court. Over 30 authors and 1000s of books at the Oasis of Books Tent. From November 10-12 meet prize-winning authors each evening at 7:30 PM.
American Jewish University (formerly University of Judaism and Brandeis-Bardin Institute)
15600 Mulholland Dr., LA, California 90077
See <http://wcce.ajula.edu/Content/forms/wccebchurerequest.asp?CID=1843&t=0>
- Wednesday, November 12, 4:00 PM – 8:00 PM
A Commemorative Event Marking the Anniversary of Kristallnacht and the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, presented by The UCLA Center for Jewish Studies
Michael Brenner (University of Munich) - “From Hitler's Failed Coup to the Destruction of Synagogues: November 9th in a Historical Perspective” & Samuel Kassow (Trinity College) - “What Made the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising Different?”
UCLA Faculty Center, to RSPV, email cjsrsvp@humnet.ucla.edu or call (310) 267-5327
UCLA Parking is available for \$9 at UCLA lot #2 at Westholme & Hilgard
See <http://www.cjs.ucla.edu/> for a full list of upcoming Jewish events at UCLA

President's Message

Sandy Malek

It is well into Autumn now, even though the weather shows no real sign of cooling off, and the air conditioning in my office remains as obdurate as it was through the spring and summer. I am sure it will be working well by January!

Those of us working on the 2010 conference that JGSLA will host in July 2010 here in Los Angeles (at LA Live, a downtown area being developed near Staples Center) are busy working behind the scenes. Many people have volunteered to work on this outstanding endeavor, from our members to members of nearby JGSs to members from much further away. If you are intrigued by the opportunity provided to be involved in such a project, we would like to hear from you! We are determined that the JGSLA conference will be magnificent and that all of us will have a wonderful experience working together to make it so. So, with apologies to Lucille Ball, as Lucy Ricardo...Join this bunch of "happy, peppy people" and be very glad you did! (And no need to swallow Vita-Meata-Vege-Min!!)

While the 2010 conference is clearly one of the largest projects undertaken by the Society in many years, I was recently provided with a preview of upcoming programs for the year. I must say, our Vice President of Programming, Pamela Weisberger, has really outdone herself. This year's programs promise to be varied and very interesting. Stay tuned, pay your renewal dues promptly, plan to attend the multitude of fascinating meetings, and see for you! And, by the way...are there any among you readers who would like to write a short recap/review of each of our meetings? If so, please contact Hal Bookbinder, editor of Dates & Updates, who is looking for a cub reporter or three. It would be a wonderful service to the rest of the members as well.

We will be having our annual elections shortly. I encourage all to get involved. If you are interested yourself, or if you would like to recommend someone, please contact a member of our nominations committee: Nancy Biederman (nancy@jgsla.org), Robert Louis, Lois Rosen (lois@jgsla.org), Henny Moed Roth, or Sonia Hoffman (sonia@jgsla.org). Any of them would be pleased to discuss the possibilities with you. And, thanks to each of these five people for agreeing to be part of the nominations committee. It is a very important service to the Society.

Please check your program schedule carefully for November. Yes, indeed, that is not a typographical error...we are actually having two meetings in November. The meeting at which Erin Einhorn will speak about her just-published book was added to our schedule after it was set, so as to provide our members and guests an opportunity to hear about her book. I heard Erin speak at a recent conference, and her story is especially interesting, especially to those of us with a genealogical bent. I hope to see you at both meetings.

Finally, there will be some changes at Roots-Key, as editors have advised the Board that they will not be continuing. There is an ongoing group of people who have been working on the journal, who will be continuing. But, if you like to see Roots-Key in your mailbox, it will require some new people to lead and work on it. Interested? Please contact either Sonia Hoffman (sonia@jgsla.org) or me (president@jgsla.org).

Thanks for reading! I look forward to seeing you at upcoming programs!

Member Updates

We welcome the following new members and wish them the best in their genealogical research: Sandy Goodman, Sue Kriloff and Helen Pines.

Our condolences to Harriette Hinderstein whose mother recently passed away at the age of 99. She lived in Florida.

Passing of Paul Armony

We are sad to report the passing of Paul Armony (Z'L), the founder and dynamic leader of the JGS of Argentina. He initiated and led efforts to document every Jewish burial in Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia and Peru. He had documented 305,000 individual Jewish burials in 85 cemeteries at the time of his death, and he was seeking volunteers to continue with this task.

JGSLA Board Elections

Sonia Hoffman, Nominating Committee Chair
The following slate of candidates will be presented at the November 10 meeting: Nancy Biederman, Hal Bookbinder, Ann Harris, Sandy Malek, and Susan Wichter. The floor will then be opened for additional nominations.

If you wish to be nominated from the floor, or wish to nominate someone else, please review the applicable sections of the JGSLA bylaws which can be found at <http://www.jgsla.org>.

The election will then take place at the December 7 meeting and those elected will begin their terms on January 1 2008. The newly elected board will proceed to elect the officers of the society at its first meeting of 2009.

Book Review of “Ghettostadt”

Abraham Hoffman

GHETTOSTADT: Lodz and the Making of a Nazi City, by Gordon J. Horwitz. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008. 395 pp. Photographs, Notes, Acknowledgments, Index. Cloth, \$29.95. Order from Harvard University Press, 79 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA 02138; (800) 405-1619; <http://www.hup.harvard.edu>.

Gordon Horwitz’s Ghettostadt is one of the hardest books I’ve ever read. Don’t get me wrong. His study of Lodz, Poland, during World War II, is compellingly written. It is based on archival sources and so well done I found it difficult to stop reading and call it a day (or evening). Meticulously researched, the book contrasts the isolation and gradual extermination of the Lodz ghetto with the creation of Litzmanstadt, a German city without Jews. Shortly after the start of World War II the Nazis confined the Lodz Jewish community, at its peak some 200,000 people, to a portion of the city from which they were not free to leave. Under the leadership of controversial ghetto administration leader Chaim Rumkowski, the Jews struggled to be as necessary as possible to the German economy. They made uniforms, furniture, toys, and anything else that was profitable for the Germans, perhaps buying a little time. In the end that’s all they got—a little time. Periodic demands for “resettlement” gradually reduced the number of Jews in the Lodz ghetto. Most heartbreaking of all, in September 1942 the Nazis took away almost all of the children.

I have a personal interest in reading Ghettostadt. My father came to America in 1920 from Lodz, leaving his parents, brothers, and sisters. Abraham and Glika Hoffman operated a bakery in Lodz, by my guess for up to forty years before the war. On page 6 of Ghettostadt Horwitz writes that in the pre-World War II era, “Some went as far as Palestine, sampling an alternative life before heading back.” Around 1926 the Hoffman family went to Haifa, where they started another bakery. My father, who had become a U.S. citizen, sailed to Europe on the S.S. Bremen, and made his way to Palestine. He took pictures of the family as well as the local scenery and then returned to the United States. Making a living in Haifa was apparently too difficult for the family, for shortly afterward they returned to Lodz.

My father married my mother in 1932. They had three children (I’m the middle one). My parents told my brothers and me very little about their lives in Europe. About all I got from my father over the years, other than the cryptic “the Nazis killed them,” were some photographs and a few documents. My father also bought Martyrs’ Forest certificates in the name of relatives I never knew. He never discussed his family in detail, and I am left to wonder if he had attempted to persuade his family to come to America on that visit to Haifa in 1926. If he carried any guilt about not doing so, or failed in his persuasion, he never showed it.

I almost regret reading Ghettostadt because it was like sitting in a courtroom hearing testimony about the murder of not only an abstraction (200,000 Jews) but the murder of members of my family. Other books about the Lodz ghetto include Isaiah Trunk’s Lodz Ghetto and The Chronicle of the Lodz Ghetto, edited by Lucjan Dobroszycki. Horwitz’s work adds to this important topic, but reading it will cause pain for the loss of so much and so many.

Facts From The Stacks

Barbara Algaze, JGSLA Librarian

We would like to acknowledge recent donations of books, magazines and journals to our permanent library.

From our member, Ena Jacobs: a large collection of journals, including *Roots-Key*, *Avotaynu*, *Shemot*, *the Journal of the JGS of Great Britain*, *Rom-Sig*, *Landsman*, *Dorot*, *Zichron Note*, etc.

From our member, Maida Dacher: a box of *Prologue* journals, the Publication of the National Archives, and three volumes of a five volume series:

- *Jewish Military Casualties in the Polish Armies in WWII: Jewish Soldiers and Officers of the Polish People's Army Killed and Missing in Action 1943 - 1945* Vol. I
- *Jewish Military Casualties in the Polish Armies in WWII: Jewish Prisoners-of-War Murdered by Germans in the Lublin District 1939 - 1943* Vol. III
- *Jewish Military Casualties in the Polish Armies in WWII: Jewish Officers, Prisoners-of-War Murdered in Katyn Crime: Jewish Military Casualties in the Polish Resistance Movement: An Addendum* Vol. IV

Remember, we have a large collection of books, resources and journals at our permanent library, located at the Santa Monica Boulevard Family History Center. They are all available to help you with your research.

JewishGen Being Moved onto New Servers

Hal Bookbinder

Warren Blatt reports that JewishGen plans to be rehosted onto Ancestry.com servers by the first of November. This should result in far greater technical reliability with many fewer downtimes for JewishGen. JewishGen data will continue to be owned by JewishGen (though a portion of this data will be directly accessible from within Ancestry.com).

Research Request

We received an inquiry about the Westwood Temple, which was located on Santa Monica Boulevard. Win Segal asked if anyone knows where the temple records went after it closed about fifty years ago? He also asks if anyone has any information about the temple’s Rabbi Trattner. If you have any information, memories, or suggestions for Win, please write to him directly at winsegal@optonline.net.

Ireland Research

Jan Meisels Allen

For those interested in the 1901 and 1911 Ireland Censuses-part of 1911 census is already digitized and available on-line at no charge. The National Archives of Ireland has established a research partnership with Library and Archives Canada to facilitate digitization, indexing and contextualization of their 1901 and 1911 census records.

The returns for 1901 and 1911 are arranged by townland (the smallest division of land) or, in urban areas, by street. The 1901 census lists, for every member of each household; name, age, sex, relationship to head of the household, religion, occupation, marital status and county or country of birth. The census also records an individual's ability to read or write and ability to speak the Irish language.

All of this information is given on Form A of the census, which was filled in and signed by the head of each household. Where the head of the household could not write, his or her mark, usually an X, was recorded and witnessed by the enumerator.

The same information was recorded in the 1911 census, with one significant addition: married women were required to state the number of years they had been married, the number of their children born alive and the number still living.

The first phase of the website, consisting of Dublin City and County 1911, images, databases and contextual material was launched in December 2007. 1911 has been prepared first because the film is better quality than 1901, and they will initially focus on urban areas because of the present difficulty of finding one's ancestors in cities without a precise address.

To search the website or find out more about the census go to: <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/about/index.html>

1894 UK Directory on line

Hal Bookbinder

A searchable version of "The Commercial Directory of the Jews of the United Kingdom (1894)" can be found at <http://www.archive.org/details/commercialdirect00harfiala>. You will notice buttons on the upper right, allowing you to view it in PDF, text and other formats. You can then search for any particular surname or full name.

Philadelphia Archive Center

Nancy Biederman

Due to a budget crunch, the Jewish Daily Forward reports that the Philadelphia Archive Center will close in 2009 and its collections will be absorbed by Temple University. See "Facing Tough Times, Archive Prepares to Close" by Anthony Weiss. <http://www.forward.com/articles/14434/>

The Hook

Judy Wolkovitch

For the past ten years I have been putting together my son-in-law's family tree. I started soon after he married my daughter in 1998. I had been compiling my own family trees for years but could not interest my daughters who are too busy leading productive lives. However I am hoping that one day my grandsons will show an interest and I am trying to figure out how to accomplish this.

I became fascinated with my son-in-law's tree when his father told me that his genealogy went back to a woman named Sarah Lyon who was born in 1703 and died in Ipswich, England in 1807. He told me that Sarah Lyon had been painted by Constable when she was 101 years old but knew nothing about the painting. I called a girl-friend in England who in turn called the National Portrait Gallery in London. She was very excited the next day when she called me back to let me know that the "lost" Sarah Lyon portrait was in fact hung at the Skirball Museum. This was surely going to be the 'hook' to interest my family.

As usual I was wrong but I have another 'hook' up my sleeve. When they are old enough to understand I will tell my grandsons that another member of the family tree is the notorious Malcolm McLaren who founded the rock group "The Sex Pistols." This surely will be irresistible.

NY & OH Naturalization Records at Footnote.com

Sandy Malek

I was excited to see recently that www.footnote.com, in partnership with NARA (National Archives and Records Administration) has begun putting the naturalization records for the New York Southern and Eastern Districts online! At this writing, they have 4% and 8% of the records available online, with more being added on an almost daily basis.

They are also adding the Ohio North District records, and have completed, or nearly completed Maryland and Massachusetts naturalization records. You can search the records without charge, but to see them in full size, or to print them, requires a subscription.

One of our members, Steve Chase, recently found and reported that the cost of obtaining a record from NARA in New York, for the Northeast region, has dropped from \$10 to \$7.50. The reason for this deflation in the price remains a mystery!

I look forward to browsing the naturalization records coming online with the opportunity to see which one(s) I want, before printing them out for myself. After just a handful of finds like this, my subscription will pay for itself!

Canadian Genealogy

Arnie Schwartz

Pier 21 in Halifax NS was the doorway into Canada from 1928-1971. Today it is open as a tourist attraction. Visitors may search through databases that contain immigrant arrivals from 1925-1935. Copies of records found and photos of passenger ships that arrived at Canadian ports can be purchased. See <http://www.pier21.ca>. Records of permanent residents (immigrants) arriving at Canadian land and seaport points of entry before 1936 are held by the Library and Archives Canada. A copy of the Record of Landing, from 1936 onwards, may be obtained from the Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Public Rights Administration, 360 Laurier Avenue West, 10th Floor, Narono Building, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1L1. Submit your request on Form IMM 5563. A \$5.00 fee is charged to non Canadian citizens. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/atip/factsheet.asp>

To locate ship arrival records for family members who entered North America through Canada prior to 1922, a visit to Archives Canada in Ottawa is no longer necessary, as there is now a searchable database for passenger ship arrivals from 1865-1922 at: <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/passenger/001045-100.01-e.php>, and another for 1925-1935 arrivals at: <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/immigration-1925/001012-100.01-e.php>. Ancestry.com has added a better searchable database for Canadian passenger lists, from 1865-1935. You must enter the way you think your ancestor spelled their name and then select soundex. This is easier and faster than using the Canadian database, which has you search through each page of the passenger lists, page by page. Ancestry.com has also released the Canadian Border Crossing Records, from 1895 to 1956, that contain lists of individuals traveling across the border to the United States. Contained within these lists are the ship names of those who entered North America through Canada.

The Nanaimo Family History Society has a Canadian passenger ship index database that currently contains records for the 1908-1910 at <http://members.shaw.ca/nanaimo.fhs/>. They plan on expanding their index to include all Canadian ports for the years 1900 to 1924. Some very early Canadian passenger ship records can be obtained on line through the Immigrant Ship Transcribers Guild at www.immigrantships.net. The Canadian Genealogy Center has added combined genealogical databases that will search Births, Marriages, Deaths, Census, Immigration & Citizenship, Military and Land Records all at one time. <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/genealogy/index-e.html>. Canadian vital records can also be searched using the Bibliotheque et Archives nationales du Quebec (BANQ) at: <http://recherche-c.voicimafamille.info/ecis.jsp?locale=en>

(The above is extracted from Arnie's "Beginning Genealogy Online Workbook." JGSLA members who desire to purchase a copy of Arnie's newly revised 188 page workbook may contact him at usarnie1@sbcglobal.net)

New databases for Ukrainian Archives

Miriam Weiner, President, www.rtrfoundation.org

The Routes to Roots Foundation, Inc. is pleased to announce that it has signed a cooperative agreement with the Odessa Oblast Archives whereby it will index names from a collection of 4,505 heads of Jewish families in Odessa for the period 1894-1918. The searchable database will be added to the existing database at <http://www.rtrfoundation.org>. There will be ordering instructions (from the archives) for anyone interested in requesting a digital copy of specific documents referred to in the database. For more information about this collection, see: <http://www.rtrfoundation.org/Odessa.html>

and scroll down the page to this section to learn more about this exciting collection of documents.

Next, RTR will be adding a search function by name to the Archive Database at the Foundation website for the 1858 Revisky Skasky (list of inhabitants) for the City of Cherkassy in Ukraine. This is also a joint venture with the Cherkassy Oblast Archives and there will be instructions on the website as to how one can request digital copies of specific documents from the archives. There are numerous other projects "in the works" and announcements will be made as they become completed and online.

Free online Jewish Genealogy Beginners' Guides

Jan Meisels Allen

For a brief Jewish genealogy beginners' guide, see http://genealogy.about.com/od/jewish/a/family_tree.htm?nl=1, authored by Kimberly Powell of About.com. A comprehensive guide is offered by Familysearch.org at <http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/RG/guide/JewishGenealogy.asp>. The PDF button in the upper right hand corner allows you to download a printed version of the guide. Of course, don't overlook the JewishGen FAQ by Warren Blatt at <http://www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/faq.html>, an outstanding free resource which is constantly being updated.

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