



זכרונות ZichronNote

The Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

Volume XXI, Number 2

May 2001

CALENDAR OF GENEALOGICAL EVENTS

Meetings of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

Please note: Unless otherwise indicated, the meeting schedule is as follows:

San Francisco: **Sunday, Doors open 12:30 p.m. Program begins at 1 p.m.**
Fort Mason Center, Marina Boulevard at Buchanan Street, Building C, Room 205

Palo Alto: **Monday, 7:30 p.m.**
Congregation Kol Emeth, 4175 Manuela (near Foothill Blvd. and Arastradero Road)

- Sun. May 20** **San Francisco:** *Spelling Jewish Names.* Speaker Jim Koenig is the SFBAJGS Recording Secretary and a member of the American Names Society.
- Mon. June 18** **Palo Alto:** *Finding Your Shtetl.* Speaker Zachary Baker is the Reinhard Family Curator of Judaica and Hebraica Collections at Stanford University Library and former Senior Librarian of the YIVO Institute. Zach's presentation will concentrate on geographical resources and will include a discussion of historical etymology relating to Yiddish place names.
- Sun. July 22** **San Francisco:** *Highlights of the 21st International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in London.* JGS members who attended the seminar will tell us about the exciting new developments in Jewish genealogy and regale us with their adventures.
- Mon. August 20** **Palo Alto:** *To Be Determined.*

San Francisco

Sunday, September 16

Sunday, November 18

Palo Alto

Monday, October 15

Monday, December 17

Upcoming classes offered by the National Archives Pacific Sierra Region

1000 Commodore Drive, San Bruno. Cost: \$15. To register or obtain information, call: (650) 876-9009.

Fri. May 18 *Military - Part I: Revolutionary War to Civil War, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.*

Fri. Jun. 15 *Military - Part II: Spanish American War to Viet Nam, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.*

More Genealogy Events of Interest on Page 4

ZichronNote
Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area
Jewish Genealogical Society

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People Finder queries are free to Society members. Non-members may place queries for \$5 each, limited to 25 words not including searcher's name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address.

Back Issues are available for \$5 per issue. Requests should be addressed to the SFBAJGS at the Society address below.

Display Advertising is accepted at the discretion of the editor. Rates per issue: business card-sized (3-1/2 x 2 inch) - \$10, quarter-page - \$20, half-page - \$35, full-page - \$60. Ads must be camera-ready and relate to Jewish genealogy.

Membership is open to anyone interested in Jewish genealogy. Dues are \$20 per calendar year. The Society is tax-exempt pursuant to section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code. Make your check payable to "SFBAJGS" and send to: SFBAJGS, Membership, P.O. Box 471616, San Francisco, CA 94147.

Society Address:

SFBAJGS, P.O. Box 471616, San Francisco, CA 94147

President: Rodger Rosenberg, (415) 666-0188,
eandr@ix.netcom.com

Vice President: Rosanne Leeson, Leeson1@attglobal.net

Recording Secretary: Jim Koenig

Corresponding Secretary: Carol Feiner, (415) 349-3819,
carolena@ix.netcom.com

Treasurer: Marc Seidenfeld, seidenfeld@bigfoot.com

Membership Chairs: Sita Likuski, (510) 538-4249,
sitaL@aol.com; Larry Burgheimer, (415) 566-5168,
burgauer@aol.com

Publicity: Jerry Jacobson, drjj@itsa.ucsf.edu

Founder: Martha Wise

ZichronNote:

Editor: Beth Galletto, galleto@pacbell.net

Copy Editor: Gordon Fine, gordonfineantiques@att.net

Meetings: Odd-numbered months-3rd Sunday of each month, 1 p.m. at Fort Mason Center (Marina at Buchanan), San Francisco. **Even-numbered months**-3rd Monday of each month, 7:30 p.m. at Congregation Kol Emeth, 4175 Manuela Avenue (near Arastradero and Foothill), Palo Alto.

SFBAJGS Web Site: www.jewishgen.org/sfbajgs

President's Message

Changes Bring Opportunity: Get Involved
by Rodger Rosenberg

Spring, it is said, is the season of new births and changes. In the case of *ZichronNote* this sentiment is perfect. I would like to welcome our new editor, Beth Galletto, who has graciously volunteered to take on our newsletter. I know we all wish her the best.

The above can also be seen in some of the changes which will be going on within our Society. Most of you are aware of the changes which have gone on with the library and that it is no longer housed with the Masons in San Francisco. With this change a Library Committee was formed to address the issue of where the library will be housed. In reviewing the options and limitations of various locations, the committee decided to donate a portion of our library holdings to three locations, yet to be determined, at Jewish Institutions in the North, South and East Bay. In this way our library will be accessible to as many as possible. Our "traveling library" will continue to be brought to meetings, and our rare holdings will stay with us.

These decisions were not easy ones to make. Finding an appropriate location for all of our books in a place that is open to the public and would not involve huge fees has been a nearly impossible task. Thus it was decided that placing books in various locations to supplement existing collections would be best. These locations as well as their hours of availability will be circulated to the membership once the move has taken place.

It was also decided at a recent Board meeting that the Society would only sponsor one workshop per year, alternating between the South and North Bay. The reason for this is that we saw that much of what we were doing at the yearly events in San Francisco and Palo Alto were repeated efforts.

Finally in looking at change, our Board, as many of you know, has begun to undergo changes, and these changes will continue. In the coming months we will be calling on our membership to elect a new Board, and this would be a perfect time for those of you who have thought about becoming more involved to do so. I hope to see more and more of the members take on these and other roles associated with the activities of this Society, which will make it an even better and stronger group.

Rodger

SOCIETY NEWS

E-mail Address Updates

E-mails to the following members listed in the SFBAJGS Membership Roster have bounced.

Norma Agar-Holzman	Peter Schattner
Bert Berson	Katherine Weiss
Connie Levy	Miriam Weissman

Please note the following update to an e-mail address listed in the SFBAJGS Membership Roster:

Morris S. Ludwig Lud0488@earthlink.net

If you have an e-mail address but have not been receiving occasional SFBAJGS messages, or your e-mail address has changed, send a message to galleto@pacbell.net so we can keep you up to date.

Welcome New Members

Stan Hertzbach	San Francisco
sshertzbach@mindspring.com	

Ruth Kaplan	San Rafael
ruthkaplan@aol.com	

David A. Klein	San Rafael
davidklein@perfectingbalance.com	

Georgina McWherter	San Francisco
gmcwhrtr@pacbell.net	

SFBAJGS Family Finder Update

The surnames and towns being researched by our newet members are listed below. This database is maintained for our membership. If you have a correction or update you would like us to know about, contact: SFBAJGS, P.O. Box 471616, San Francisco CA 94147, or send e-mail to: burgauer@aol.com

<u>Surname</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Member</u>
Cohn	Riga, Latvia	Stan Hertzbach
Dembo	Rheinbollen, Germany	Stan Hertzbach
Eisner	Chop, Ukraine	David Klein
Glassman	Poland	Ruth Kaplan
Greenfeld	Liepaja, Latvia	Stan Hertzbach
Her(t)zbach	London; Wesel, Germany	Stan Hertzbach
Hirtzbach	Alsace	Stan Hertzbach
Kaplan	Sokurentzy, Ukraine	Ruth Kaplan
Klein	France	Ruth Kaplan
Klein	Patskanovo, Ukraine	David Klein
Kory	Poland	Georgina McWherter
Kroon	Poland	Ruth Kaplan
Landsberg	London, England	Georgina McWherter
Markowitz	Wloclawek, Poland; Manhattan, Bronx	Georgina McWherter
Orton(berg)	Russia; Canada	Ruth Kaplan
Puck	Manhattan, Brooklyn, Bronx, Bayside, Freeport, New York;	
	Los Angeles, San Francisco, CA	Georgina McWherter
Singer	Kostrina, Mukachevo, Velikiy Bereznyy, Ukraine	David Klein
Slatow	Anywhere	Stan Hertzbach
Solomon	London, England; Manhattan, Brooklyn, Bronx, Bayside,	
	Freeport, New York	Georgina McWherter
Turshinsky	Anywhere	Stan Hertzbach
Waldman	Mukachevo, Patskanovo, Ukraine	David Klein
Weisberger	Chop, Ukraine; Humenne, Slovak Republic	David Klein
Weiss	Chop, Ukraine	David Klein

CALENDAR, cont'd.

More Genealogy Events

Local

Thurs., May 17, 7 p.m. **Santa Clara Historical and Genealogical Society, Creating Your Genealogy Web Page**, speakers Debbie Shields and Marilyn Lane. Community Room, Santa Clara City Library, 2635 Homestead Road, Santa Clara; www.katpher.com/scchgs.

Sat., May 26, 1 p.m. **Sonoma County Genealogical Society, Research on the Road**, speaker Susan Simons. Room 2009, Lark Hall, Santa Rosa Junior College; www.scgs.org.

Thurs., June 21, 7 p.m. **Santa Clara Historical and Genealogical Society, Socially Deviant Ancestors**, speaker Charlotte Scoble. Community Room, Santa Clara City Library, 2635 Homestead Road, Santa Clara; www.katpher.com/scchgs.

Sat., June 23, 1 p.m. **Sonoma County Genealogical Society, Annual Awards Luncheon (Pot luck lunch)**, California State Genealogical Society's Annual Meeting hosted by the SCGS. Room 2009, Lark Hall, Santa Rosa Junior College; www.scgs.org.

Thurs., July 19, 7 p.m. **Santa Clara Historical and Genealogical Society, Things at the NARA**, speaker Dan Nealand. Location to be arranged; www.katpher.com/scchgs.

Regional

Sun., May 20, **Jewish Genealogical Society of Sacramento, Joint seminar with the German Genealogical Society**, speaker Gary Mokotoff. Location and time to be announced. Tel: (916) 486-0906, www.jewishgen.org/ajgs/jgs-sacramento.

Mon., June 18, 7 a.m. **Jewish Genealogical Society of Sacramento, How to Locate Living Persons**, speaker to be arranged. Albert Einstein Center, Arts and Crafts Room, 1935 Wright Street, Sacramento, Tel: (916) 486-0906, www.jewishgen.org/ajgs/jgs-sacramento.

21st International Conference on Jewish Genealogy

Sunday - Friday, July 8-13,

Hosted by the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain at the Intercontinental Hotel at Hyde Park Corner, London. e-mail: info.london2001@talk21.com; www.jewishgen.org/london2001

Inside This Issue

by Beth Galletto

Research in England is the theme of this issue, setting the stage for the international conference in London this summer.

Naidia Woolf's story of her successful search through British archives should whet your appetites. Ron Arons' story, based on his talk at the March meeting of SFBAJGS, also discusses research in England — much of it over the Internet. We also include a list of resources at the Family Records Center in London.

For U.S. research we include an outline of Cook County (Chicago) archives and Leslie Corn's detailed discussion of the uses of city directories.

As I take over from Dana Kurtz as editor of *ZichronNote*, let me introduce myself. My background includes ten years of experience as editor of a weekly community newspaper. For the past four years I have been communications manager for the San Rafael Chamber of Commerce, for which I edit an award-winning newspaper.

Although I joined the SFBAJGS only this year, I have been researching my family off and on since 1978. I am confident that editing *ZichronNote* will be a learning experience that will advance my quest.

I welcome your comments and story ideas. Please e-mail me at galletto@pacbell.net.

Laptop Computer Needed

Many of you are aware of a new project the Society has undertaken, that of indexing the Jewish cemeteries in San Francisco. In order to accomplish this, we are seeking a donation of a laptop computer to make entry of the data easier. If you have a laptop that you would like to donate, please contact Rodger at (415) 666-0188 or eandr@ix.netcom.com to review the technical specifications needed for this project. The donor would be able to receive a tax deduction for the donation.

Correction

In the February 2001 issue of *ZichronNote*, there were two editing errors in the article "Uncle Jack's Crossing" by Betsy Brazy. Omitted was the identification of Herman Draikin as Betsy's grandfather. Additionally, the photograph on page 10 is of Jack and Herman Draikin, not Jack and Joe as published. We apologize to the author.

The Quest for My Grandmother

by Naidia Woolf

Originally from Birmingham, England, Naidia Woolf emigrated to the U.S. in 1957. She has lived in the San Francisco Bay Area since 1964. She has a home-based word processing and editorial service. Naidia is researching **DROZDIASZ** and **SAFIRSTEIN** from Karczew, Poland; **KYJAWSKI (KUJAWSKI)** from Lodz, Poland; **ISAACS** from Birmingham, England and Poland; and **HORN** from Poland, town unknown.

One afternoon in late September, 2000, I stood before the grave of my maternal grandmother, Sarah Rachel Rose. Standing there signified the end of a three-year investigation into the circumstances of her death.

On the day of my visit, the Edmonton Cemetery in North London (known to London Jewry as the "Western") was nearly deserted. The only other people there were two maintenance workers. The peak period during which Jews visit the graves of their parents and ancestors, between the Jewish high holy days of Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year) and Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), was still three days away.

I was born in England in the mid-1930's. My parents were both first-generation Anglo-Polish Jews; three of my grandparents were born in Poland; my paternal grandmother was first-generation English, born of Polish Jewish emigrants. My father was born in Birmingham, a city in England's industrial Midlands; my mother was born farther north in Preston, in the former county of Lancashire.

When I first decided to visit the cemetery, I thought of taking flowers. I had never been to a Jewish cemetery before. Growing up in a conservative Jewish family in England meant only the men attended funerals; the woman remained at home to attend to domestic duties. After emigrating to the United States (in the late fifties), I became increasingly divorced from Jewish life, something in recent years I have been trying to remedy.

Lucky for me a Jewish woman friend explained it was customary to say Kaddish and to lay a stone upon the grave, to signify your presence to the departed one.

It was late when I arrived at the cemetery. The

late autumnal sun (always a little weak and fickle) had disappeared behind the clouds and the sky had turned grey. It had sprinkled intermittently all afternoon. Any minute the darkening cloud above my head would burst and rain would fall. I stood shivering in my summer clothes. As I walked up the

central aisle towards the office, I noticed a small bookcase with a stack of prayer books shrouded in plastic. I showed my grandmother's burial notice to one of the maintenance workers. He said he would take me to the grave site: "It's hard to find your way around here," he said. "Hold on a minute. I'll see if I can find a brush. Some of those graves are really dusty."



He disappeared into the back of the office. I looked around. With its paint cans and paraphernalia, and the smell of dust and cement mix, it looked more like a shack than an office. Two tea-stained mugs stood on a table next to an old black telephone. There was no furniture.

I followed the man down several gravel paths, then along the narrow space between the graves. He gestured towards one of the graves. "This is your grandmother's, in'tit?" I stood in front of a headstone of simple limestone. On it were engraved the usual inscriptions in Hebrew and English. The English read "In loving memory of Sarah Rachel Rose who died 10th June 1920, aged 51 years. Deeply mourned by her sorrowing husband, son, daughters, relatives and friends. May her dear Soul rest in peace."

While journeying that day across London, I had felt a sense of exhilaration, knowing I had "found" her at last. There was no real sadness — she had died long before I was born, when my mother was only

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My Grandmother, cont'd. from page 5

fifteen — more regret that I had never known her. There is a studio portrait of the Rose Family in my family album. My grandmother is seated left of photo center and my grandfather, Israel Rose, to the right. My Auntie Minnie is seated far left; Flora — my mother (and the youngest of the five daughters) to the far right. The three oldest daughters are grouped together in the background. My Uncle Haime, the only son, is positioned in the center, his left hand resting on the arm of his father's chair. My grandmother looks to be in her mid-to-late forties. She leans forward slightly in her chair, one hand on lap, the other buried in the pocket of her smock. Her face is thin and her mouth unsmiling. Perhaps she was already consumptive.

I also felt anger knowing she had died miles from home and family. Preston is nearly 200 miles north of London. I now know that my grandmother's death certificate was witnessed by a cousin. I often wonder why my grandfather was not at her side when she died. Was her death that sudden? Was he indisposed (maybe too ill to travel)? I probably will never know. There is no one left to ask.

I remember, from childhood, a photograph of my grandmother that hung inside my mother's wardrobe. On week ends and in the late afternoons after school, I would slip into my mother's room to gaze upon the grandmother I had never known.

Everything I have heard about my grandfather (as a parent) was negative. My mother described him as a mean-spirited bully who yelled at her and kicked her around. He blamed her, unjustly, for the death of his first-born son, Abraham. For a long time I was given to understand that Abraham was a sickly child, given to seizures and that my mother had dropped him, thus causing his death. I have a copy of Abraham's death certificate which states that he died November 2, 1907, at age seven months, and that the cause of death was "Meningitis exhaustion syncope." This means that my mother was not quite two years old when Abraham died. How could anyone blame her for Abraham's death since he died of natural causes? My poor mother carried that guilt to her grave.

Israel Rose was also a penny-pincher who would turn the lights off at the mains when he went to bed, leaving the rest of the family to make do with oil lamps or candles. He also had the reputation of being a womanizer, which was easy to imagine. He was handsome and was an imposing figure, erect and broad shouldered, with curly black hair and full mustache. According to my mother he had been a bugler in the Russian Army. An early photograph of

him, taken when he was in his early to mid-twenties, shows him sporting a military (possibly band) uniform, a wind instrument (cornet or horn) at his side. He was a dashing figure of a man. I can imagine him turning the heads of quite a few women. And those eyes—I remember my mother saying, "When he was angry, he'd flash those black eyes at me and I'd shrink!" A heavy smoker, Israel died of heart failure complicated by bronchitis and asthma at age 66.

When I first began my search for my grandmother I was not even sure of her first name. (When I was a child, my mother had once mentioned it was Rachel, but that became open to question.) I did not even know what town or village my maternal grandparents came from in Poland. All I knew (from my mother and other family members) was that they came from "somewhere near Warsaw."

Israel and his wife, Sarah Rachel, arrived in England circa 1900. With them were their two young daughters, Annie and Rita, both born in Poland. The couple were to have seven children in all: three more girls, Hetty, Minnie and my mother Flora, and two boys, Abraham and Haime.

The family name was originally Drozdiasz. Shortly after arriving in England, my grandparents went by the name of Drozdash (a simplified spelling of the Polish). For the next few years, they alternated between Drozdash and Raus. By 1905, however (the year my mother was born), they had settled on Rose.

I began my genealogical research like most genealogists by examining the known and most accessible facts. I worked back from there.

The process of genealogical research may be compared to that of piecing together a complicated jigsaw puzzle. One starts with easily identifiable pieces — a doorway, chimney top or lamp post (name, relationship to self, known dates), then works from there, back through the generations, often across oceans or continents, into the increasingly uncertain past — the ill-defined background of the puzzle. Encountering a hitherto unknown piece of information is analogous to finding that missing piece of the puzzle. It may have been misplaced or mislaid but has always been there, waiting to be put in its proper place.

All I had to go on initially was my grandmother's name as it appeared on various official documents. First, my Aunt Hetty (Ettie)'s birth certificate on which she was identified as "Sarah Raus formerly Saperstein." Then my mother's, four years later, on which her name was given as "Sarah Rose formerly Superstian." Finally, Hetty's marriage contract, which identified the bride as "Hettie Rose otherwise

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INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES

About the Services at the Family Records Centre (London)

The centre provides a family history service to visitors, advising them on how to use a wealth of genealogical records. It can also advise on matters relative to the registration of births, adoptions, marriages and deaths, because the Public Record Office shares its facilities at the FRC with the Office for National Statistics. The Family Records Centre provides a new home for the research facilities previously provided at St Catherine's House and the Census Reading Rooms in Chancery Lane. It is within a few minutes' walk of the London Metropolitan Archives (formerly the Greater London Records Office) and the Society of Genealogists.

Records Held at the FRC

- Indexes of births, marriages and deaths in England and Wales since 1837;
- Indexes of legal adoptions in England and Wales since 1927;
- Indexes of births, marriages and deaths of some British citizens abroad since the late 18th century, including deaths in the two World Wars;
(Certificates can be purchased of any entry in the above indexes.)
- Microform copies of Census of Population returns, 1841-1891;
- Microfilms of Estate Duty Office death duty registers from 1796-1858, with indexes from 1796-1903
- Microfilms of registered copies of wills and administrations up to 1858 from the Prerogative Court of Canterbury;
- Non-parochial registers from 1567-1858; and
- Miscellaneous foreign returns of births, death and marriages from 1627-1960.

Certificates of Births, Marriages, Deaths and Adoptions

If you need a certificate but cannot visit the Family Records Centre in person, please telephone 0151 471 4800 or e-mail certificate.services@ons.gov.uk for further information and details of fees.

For genealogical resources, information is located at www.pro.gov.uk/genealogy/default.htm. Inquiries by mail may be directed to the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU, United Kingdom.

My Grandmother, cont'd. from page 6

Drozdash." (This occurred in 1928, when marriage contracts among observing Jews were still common in England.)

In December, 1997, I visited the General Registry Office's Family Record Centre (FRC) in Islington, London. With help from my sister and a male friend, I reviewed years of birth, marriage and death records, hoping to find entries for my parents and grandparents. (For those who have never visited the Family Record Centre, these were entered into quarterly ledgers. Incredibly though it may seem, these are maintained on open shelves. After three hours of lifting the heavy ledgers off and then back on to the shelves and scanning hundreds of entries, line by line, my throat was parched and I had a headache and backache. All I could think of was bursting out into the fresh air and into that

congenial-looking pub down the street for a beer and hot lunch.

The outcome of our three-hour search at the Family Record Centre was rather disappointing. The only listing I found was for a Sarah A. Rose who died in Edmonton at aged 67, too old to have been my grandmother since the latter could not have been much more than 50 when she died.

In July, 1998, before my next visit to the U.K., I wrote to the Certificate Service Section of the Office of National Statistics (ONS) in Southport, England, asking them to do an extended (1918 through 1922) search for a Sarah Rose. Unfortunately, they were unable to find a match. (Note for those interested in U.K. resources: in such cases ONS retains a portion of the fee submitted as their no-trace search fee.)

After all this *tsouris*, I was close to giving up. I then had an unexpected stroke of luck. In September, 1998,

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Putting the Flesh on the Bones and How the Internet Helped the Process

by Ron Arons

Ron Arons' research has taught him that sometimes the black sheep of the family are the most interesting. When not researching his family, he works on high-tech marketing. Ron talked about how research can provide clues to an ancestor's personality at the March meeting of the SFBAJGS in San Francisco. He will present his findings again at the International Conference in London. Ron is researching **SPIER, ARONS/ARONOWITCH, GILLMAN, TARSHIS, STERNBERG, HYMAN, GORDON, LONDON, LEBENSOHN and GREJS.**

When I began my family research six years ago, little did I imagine how much of my time, money and energy would be consumed. In relatively short order, it was easy enough to push my family tree back multiple generations. I hired Miriam Weiner, of *Routes to Roots* fame, to research my father's side of the family, who had lived in Smorgon, Belarus.

I contacted the Lithuanian State Historical Archives in Vilnius to obtain more information about my mother's side of the family.

My mother's paternal grandfather, however, posed a great challenge for me. For many years I was unable to determine where he was born. This is because he provided multiple different birth locations on various documents I could find about him: New York, Pennsylvania, London and Hanley (Staffordshire), England. I also discovered he spent time behind bars at one of the most famous prisons in the United States — not a place where you would find too many Jews! In addition, my great-grandfather made headlines in the *New York Times* in 1925, having been accused of extortion. I was "obsessed" to learn the answer to the seemingly simply question, "Where he was born?" Many years passed without any luck. I searched record after record only to come up empty-handed.

Over a year and a half ago, with the help of the newly available CD-ROM for the 1881 U.K. Census, I was able to crack the code and nail down my great-grandfather's birthplace. Simultaneously, I learned my great-grandfather's father was, of all things, a rabbi. Because my great-great-grandfather was a rabbi, there was plenty of information to be found about him, too.

My curiosity got the better of me. I now wanted to know the answer to the question WHY? What could possibly explain my great-grandfather's behavior? Ever since, I have been on a self-imposed mission to answer this question and to "put flesh on the bones." In a matter of months and with the help of the Internet (once, no, make that many times again), I was able to track my great-grandfather's family through six different cities in England and back to Suwalki, Poland. I was able to find detailed historical

maps of the cities in which my family lived, even showing individual houses. To complement these maps, I was able to obtain photographs of these old neighborhoods.

I now have clues to my great-grandfather's motivations through exploring the secular and Jewish community histories of the cities where my family lived and delving into the lives of my great-grandfather's parents and siblings. Why did he supply so many different birth locations? I now suspect that as a man whose dealings were not always within the law, he deliberately tried to hide his past.

So how does one go about putting the flesh on an ancestor's bones?

Here's what I would recommend:

Look for all records and information about that individual, however obscure. A few examples are illustrative.

- A picture of my great-grandfather's gravestone turned out to be a single piece of evidence that he used two different first names.

- The death certificate for my great-great-grandfather the rabbi, provided important information about how he died.

Explore the lives of close relatives, especially his or her parents. The acorn very often does not fall far from the tree.

Never give up. You just never know when some information will turn up out of nowhere.

Utilize the power of the Internet. It is truly amazing how much information can be located by using the Web.

Get others involved in your search via the Internet:

- Local studies libraries;
- Local genealogical societies;
- Others researching the same town (you don't have to just use the JGFF to simply look for others researching the same surname); and
- Experts on a particular topic or locale.

Keep track of information you have found even if it

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NATIONAL RESOURCES

Chicago, Illinois—the Cook County Archives

Daniel Kazez *JewishGen*

A while ago, I visited the Cook County Archives (Chicago, Illinois) for a second visit — for two eight-hour days. So, of course, now I am an expert! Chicago has always had one of the largest communities in the United States, so perhaps information on this city will be of interest to a few readers.

As an out-of-towner, I was in a great rush to look up my names. A few weeks earlier, I was unprepared for my first visit to the Archives, and thus was terribly inefficient at looking up my names. Before my second visit, I took stock of the organization of materials at the Archives. This made my second visit wonderfully more relaxed and productive.

In case it is of value to anyone, I offer this inventory of searchable materials at the Cook County Archives. I hope that those readers who are more knowledgeable will help to correct my errors and omissions.

Note please: The list below is not absolutely complete. I am not really an expert. I am just sharing information that I have collected. The staff at the Cook County Archives is very helpful. Call them and they will send you (free) a short guide to the Archives.

Cook County Archives

Daley Center, 50 West Washington, Room 1113, Chicago, IL 60602

Tel: 1-312-603-6601, Fax: 1-312-603-4974, www.cookctyclerk.com/

At the Cook County Archives, you can search the following items:

Naturalizations, 1871-1929, for a few states near and including Illinois. Search by soundex code.

Probate, 1871-1963, Cook County. Search by surname, using microfilms that cover these years: 1911-1928; 1928-1935; 1936-1943; 1944-1951; 1952-1953; 1954-1955; 1956-1959; 1960; 1963, 1964-1965.

Law and Chancery, Cook County. Covers cases involving divorce, business, industry; labor; medical, sports; name changes; and other information, too. There are separate films for plaintiff and defendant. Search by surname, using microfilms that cover these years:

Superior Court: 1886-1891; 1886-1891; 1892-1895;

1896-1899; 1900-1903; 1904-1909; 1908-1911; 1912-1915; 1916-1919; 1920-1921; 1922-1923; 1924-1925; 1926-1927; 1928-1929; 1930-1931; 1932-1933; 1934-1935; 1936-1937; 1938-1939; 1940-1941; 1942-1943; 1944-1945; 1946; 1947; 1948-1949; 1950; 1951; 1952; 1953; 1954; 1955; 1956-1957; 1958; 1959; 1960; 1961; 1962; 1963; 1964 (films 1871 to 1885—I don't have the exact film info)

Circuit Court: 1887-1890; 1891-1895; 1899-1901; 1902-1904; 1905-1908; 1909-1913; 1914-1917; 1918-1921; 1922-1924; 1925-1927; 1928-1929; 1930-1932; 1933-1934; 1935-1937; 1938-1940; 1941-1945; 1946-1950; 1951-1954; 1955-1957; 1958; 1959; 1960; 1961; 1962; 1963; 1964; 1965 (films 1871 to 1886—I don't have the exact film info)

Probate/Incompetents. Search by surname, using microfilms that cover these years: 1911-1939; 1940-1957; 1958-1963; 1962-1964

Probate/Minors and Conservators. Search by surname, using microfilms that cover these years: 1871-1915; 1916-1921; 1916-1921

Probate/Minors and Incompetents. Search by surname, using microfilms that cover these years: 1967; 1968; 1969; 1970; 1971; 1972; 1973; 1974; 1975; 1976

Probate/Minors Index. Search by surname, using microfilms that cover these years: 1911-1939 (4/20/1911 to 12/31/1939); 1940-1962; 1962-1963; 1963-1964; 1965-1966

Criminal Felony Cases, Cook County. Search by surname, using microfilms that cover these years: 1927-1934 (other films too, but I don't have the film info on these)

A single computer with records from the 1980s—presents the following types of records:

- Bond
- Chancery
- Child Support
- Civil
- Criminal (felony, misdemeanor)
- Domestic Relations
- Law
- Probate

City Directories: A Forest of Family Trees

by Leslie Corn

A Manhattan native, Leslie Corn is a New York City-based professional genealogist specializing in New York City family research and heir searches. Leslie is a New York Genealogical and Biographical Society genealogist, working in the "G&B" Record Search Service and serving on its Library Committee and Collection Development Subcommittee. Leslie was also the Jewish Genealogical Society's Co-Chair of Repositories for its 1999 International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. In addition, Leslie sits on the Nominating Committee for the 1999 Executive Council of the Jewish Genealogical Society. Leslie volunteers at the New York County Clerk's Office/Hall of Records. She is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists (APG) and is a frequent contributor to the NYC-ROOTS mailing list. You can reach Leslie Corn via e-mail at LeslieCorn@aol.com.

When searched creatively, city directories are magnificent genealogical research tools. If you have ever consulted city directories, you know how indispensable they are as resources for tracing a family's history. If you are new to them, you are about to discover a gold mine. Because city directories were published annually, they can be especially useful in locating ancestors, discovering facts about their lives, and finding leads to other genealogical records.

As a professional genealogist, specializing in New York City family history, I often recommend to my clients that a search for ancestors begin with city directories. New York City directories were first published in 1786 and continued annually, with few interruptions, until 1933.

Not all city directories share such a long history, but most feature a main section of alphabetized listings of the names of heads of households and other residents, similar to our present-day telephone books. Unlike our phone books, however, city directories offer additional information, such as a person's occupation and business address.

A typical city directory might also include the following sections: a street directory, used to locate the exact block for an address; a business directory that lists companies by type, similar to our Yellow Pages; advertisements for local products and services; and a register or appendix that might list religious, educational, and charitable institutions, societies, clubs, banks, government offices, hospitals, cemeteries, asylums, orphanages, transportation schedules and postal rates. These lists often include not only an organization's address, but also the names of its officers or chief employees.

One of my favorite examples of the successful use of city directories involves an Italian family that had immigrated to New York City in the 1890s. Our objective was to find where in Italy my client's immigrant ancestor had originated. The family's name was missing from the soundexes of the 1900 and 1920 U.S. Census of Population. (Soundexes,

created during Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency by the Works Progress Administration, are indexes of surnames compiled by sound rather than by spelling—for example, Buccella, Bucciella and Buchella would be in the same soundex grouping.) But by searching city directories, I discovered that the family had lived for several years on East 109th Street in Manhattan. My client knew his ancestor had been naturalized about 1917. I looked for that record in the naturalization indexes but found nothing. Back I went to my city directory notes. I found someone with an alternative spelling of the family surname and an unrecognizable first name at the 109th Street address in Trow's Directory for 1909—the only year in a twenty-year span in which that person appeared in a New York City directory. It was a slim thread to hang on to, but I rechecked the naturalization indexes to follow this name. And there was his card in the Supreme Court naturalization indexes for 1916, with his address on East 109th Street. The records gave us not only the family's town of origin in Italy, but also the name and date of arrival of the ship he took to New York. That passenger list from 1892, a year unindexed in New York City ship arrivals, included the names of my client's ancestor, who turned out to be the brother of the naturalized man, and several other family members. These were major finds from one line in a city directory.

Part I: Locating Ancestors

Searching digitized city directories by name or address can tell you where your ancestors lived, where they moved, and who lived with whom.

One of the greatest uses of city directories is as guides — often the only leads — to finding families in federal and state censuses. As most family researchers are dismayed to discover, not every family is listed in federal census soundexes or indexes. And few state censuses are indexed. In these cases, city directories provide the address necessary to locate the family in the correct ward, district or division in the census.

Continued on next page

City Directories, *cont'd. from previous page*

The opportunity to search by address in digitized directories, which in essence transforms every directory into a “reverse” directory, opens up extraordinary research possibilities that will appeal to even the most experienced researchers. A reverse directory lists residents not alphabetically, but by address, and can help researchers re-create neighborhoods and find relatives with different surnames in the same building or neighborhood.

This type of search enables the genealogist to zero in on the census enumerator’s route to find ancestors who are not listed in census indexes. Let’s say you know a family lived at 138 Greenwich Street in Manhattan from 1845 to 1855, but you can’t find those ancestors in an 1850 census index. Enumerators went from house to house questioning residents, depending on the census year, about their names, ages, family relationships and other data. If only the canvassing of Greenwich Street had been done in numerical order, your task of spotting the enumeration page for those unindexed ancestors would be easy. But it’s not! Enumerators’ paths zigzagged through neighborhoods, turning unexpected corners here, crossing streets there, stymieing the researcher. So you have no choice but to pore patiently over enumeration pages for the entire first ward in the 1850 federal census for New York County. Or do you?

Not if you search a digitized or “reverse” city directory. Look in the street-directory section of the 1850-51 city directory for Greenwich Street. You’ll see that the buildings located at 134 to 142 Greenwich Street were situated on the left side of the block between Cedar and Liberty Streets. Pick an address next door to your ancestors’ home at 138 Greenwich and be sure to stay on the same block and side of the street as your ancestors—for example, 140 Greenwich. Then search the digitized directory for that address to find the names of the residents.

Next, search for one of those neighbors in the census index. If you find the neighbor, search for your ancestor on the same page in the census enumeration where the neighbor appears or, if needed, on adjoining pages. Chances are good that you will find your missing ancestor’s enumeration and have saved yourself hours of painstaking research.

Sometimes, American city directories can lead you to places in other parts of the world. Puzzled that a German-American family was missing from the 1880 New York State soundex, I found my answer in Trow’s New York City Directories for 1879-81. The listings for the head of household, a diamond merchant,

included his business address in New York City, and his home residence — in Europe. He and his young family had relocated to Amsterdam, where he was establishing a branch office for his diamond business. That find also cleared up the mystery of why no 1880 birth record could be found in New York City for the middle child of the family. While her older and younger siblings, born in 1876 and 1883 respectively, each had a birth certificate issued in Manhattan, the middle child did not — because she had been born in Amsterdam.

City directories are also among the best sources for locating female ancestors. Finding female ancestors in census indexes is almost impossible, unless the woman was a head of household. City directories, however, frequently include listings for women who owned their own businesses, as well as women who were widows and heads of households.

One client had no idea of the name of the woman who had married her great-great-great-grandfather Alexander or when Alexander had died. I began by tracing his city directory listings from the 1830s. In 1844, his listing disappeared. But the next year, at the same address where he had lived, was the entry “Mary, widow Alexander.” Further research confirmed that Mary was my client’s great-great-great-grandmother and that Alexander had died in 1842.

Part II: Discovering Facts about Ancestors’ Lives

More than cold compilations of data, city directories can open many doors regarding our ancestors and lead to details about occupations, marriages or other aspects of their day-to-day lives. A client, for example, wanted to know what her Irish-American ancestor did for a living. A city directory listed him as a successor to another man’s metals company. Who was this other man, and what was their relationship? Looking at city directories, as well as censuses and probate materials, I discovered that my client’s ancestor was the executor of the previous owner’s estate and his son-in-law.

Did your ancestors own property? Check city directories. If a family lived at the same address for several years, they may have owned the property. Use the address from city directories to search real-estate records for deeds, mortgages and other documents, which can contain information about family relationships, death dates, addresses, occupations, financial details and more.

Addresses from city directories can also lead you to discoveries about your ancestors’ financial holdings. Knowing where they lived — in which ward

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My Grandmother, cont'd. from page 7

I left for England. After a week in London, I paid a special visit to my cousin Peter Lewis in Birmingham. Sitting there in his comfortable flat over tea and biscuits, I asked if he knew where our grandmother was buried. To my amazement, he replied, "Oh, I think her burial notice is in a wooden box in the back room." He did not jump up to go look for it, however! (As we all know to our chagrin, families can be very uncooperative in these matters.)

Two weeks later I was back in the U.S. A whole year went by during which I gave up hope of ever hearing from Peter. In the meantime I wrote to the Federation of Synagogues Burial Society in London, the Borough Council and Hebrew congregation in Preston, and the Hebrew Congregation in Northampton (where the Rose family had once lived and baby Abraham was buried.) From Preston I learned about my grandfather's date of death and interment, but that was all. There were no burial records on my grandmother. I also contacted the York Probate Registry, which conducted a probate search for the estate of Sarah Rose (or Raus). It was all to no avail. It seemed to be a lost cause.

In December, 1999, I received a note from Peter, in which he apologized for the delay. Enclosed with the note was a small, unassuming piece of paper. Printed at the top was the name and former address of the Federation Burial Society. Written by ink below was the following: Rachel Rose; date of burial, June 11, 1920, age 51. (The burial notice also gave the burial site's block and the lot number, No. 7. The number was blurred, as if the ink had become damp. Looking at it always makes me sad.)

No wonder ONS had been unable to trace her death record—I had asked them to check for a Sarah Rose, not knowing she was known as Rachel! From then on it was relatively smooth sailing. An English friend and fellow amateur genealogist (living in Kent) offered to check the records on her next visit to FRC. A few weeks later, she e-mailed me an entry for a Rachel Rose, died June 10, 1920, Hampstead. My grandmother had at last been "found." I immediately submitted another request to the Southport office of ONS; one month later I received a copy of her death certificate.

During my 1998 trip to England, I had also visited

the Public Record Office (PRO) in Kew, which is on the outskirts of London: after plodding through nearly thirty years of entries, I found Israel Rose's application for naturalization papers, completed in 1928. For people unfamiliar with UK naturalization papers, these often contain useful information about an ancestor's background. In the case of my grandfather, they gave not only his date and place of birth, Karczew, but also the first names of his parents, Solomon and Rachel (Drozdzasz). (A later inspection of a Polish map revealed that Karczew was a few kilometers southwest of Warsaw.)

The Public Record Office — unlike the Family Record Centre in Islington — is much more concerned with security, and for good reason. The PRO is the pre-eminent government repository of important documents in the United Kingdom. These are preserved in archives comprising nine miles of underground storage. Among these priceless, irreplaceable documents is the Magna Carta, signed

by a reluctant King John in the early twelfth century. On your first visit to the Record Office you are required to show your passport or photo I.D. After you have been properly vetted, you are given a reader's I.D. card, which you must carry with you at all times.

In mid-April, 2000, I received the long-awaited death certificate from ONS, which read as follows:

In the Sub-district of Hampstead
... (When and where died) 10
June 1920 25 Ferncroft Avenue;
Rachel Rose; Female; Wife of
Israel Rose, tailor; (Cause of
death) Pulmonary Tuberculosis;
(Signature, description and
residence of informant) M Shorn,

40 Fieldgate Street, E.1 (relationship to deceased),
cousin."

Armed with this precious document, I again wrote to Mr. Bruckheimer at the Burial Society in London, asking him to check his records, this time for a Rachel Rose, who died 10 June 1920 at age 51. This time he was able to confirm the details of my grandmother's death and place of interment. A subsequent letter contained the following intriguing postscript: "... I believe I have solved [the confusion regarding the given name] ... the Hebrew name of Rachel Rose is Sarah Rachel daughter of Zalman ... therefore Rachel and Sarah seem to be one and the same."

From there on I found myself traveling down the

Continued on next page



My Grandmother, cont'd. from previous page

dark, often tortuous road of negotiating with Polish civil authorities, an even greater cause of frustration! Two years ago I first wrote to the Warsaw State Archive to request copies of my maternal ancestors' vital records. Two years later, and \$60 the poorer and no wiser, I still have not received anything from them and doubt if I ever will. I am now thinking of hiring a professional researcher to do some on-the-spot research in Poland for me. It would be much cheaper than going there myself.

At this juncture I should mention that I am shtetl coop coordinator for Karczew for JRI-Poland, the online resource for Jews researching their Polish ancestry. As such I am preparing a complete inventory of vital records available on LDS microfilm. So far I have reviewed nearly all of the birth, marriage and death records for the period 1826 through 1882 and have found a dozen or more entries under the names of Drozdiasz and Saperstein. Among the latter was a birth record for a Royza Safirstein, born in 1871 and another for a sibling named Surah, born in 1875; first names of parents, Leizer and Shayna (nee Ginsberg) Safirstein.

If Leizer and Shayna Sapirstein were my great-grandparents, which of their two daughters became my grandmother and why was she known as both Sarah and Rachel? Were Royza Sapirstein and my grandmother one and the same person? Did Royza's sister Surah die, and if so, why would her parents have given Royza the name of her deceased sister? (Assuming that Royza was my grandmother, this seemed the only possible explanation for the double name.) That would be tantamount to tempting the Evil Eye, which, according to ancient Jewish lore, can take away the spirit from a living relative! You can drive yourself crazy trying to determine the motivation that lay behind your ancestors' actions. I also wonder what happened to the family in Poland, whether any of them emigrated before the second world war or were still there when Germany invaded Poland.

I wonder whether my grandparents' marriage was a love match or an arranged marriage, as was common in those days. Why did they leave Poland? Were they lucky enough to be granted an exit permit by the Russian authorities? Being a romantic, I like to imagine my grandfather going absent without leave, arriving in Karczew under cover of night, gathering up his wife and children, slipping across the border into Germany, and then going by boat via the so-called Herring Route to the coast (and thence to England). I also wonder how my grandmother felt, knowing she

might never see her parents and home again.

All I know for certain is that the grandmother was born in or near Karczew and her maiden name was Safirstein (or a variant thereof). Her date of birth is still in doubt. Her death certificate shows her age at death as 51, which indicates she was born in 1868 or '69. However, if she and Royza Saperstein were indeed one and the same person, that means she was born *two years later*. I have known women who have knocked a few years off their age, but none who declare they are *older* than they actually are! I have been told, however, that Jewish parents in the "old country" sometimes added a few years to (underage) daughters' age while attempting to find a suitable match! A simple explanation is that the age discrepancy was due to a clerical error at the time of my grandmother's death.

For those interested in Jewish names, I should mention that Royza (Rose in English) is Yiddish, not Hebrew. In Israel, women named Royza often become known as Shoshana.

The other issue concerns the identity of Sarah Rachel's father. The names inscribed in Hebrew on her headstone were Zalman Elijahah. As mentioned earlier, the name of Royza and Surah's father as shown in their birth records was Leizer. It is conceivable that Leizer might be a Yiddish nickname for Elijahah (Elijahah - Elijah - Leizer), but I have been informed otherwise. (Apparently in Poland, the Yiddish for Elijahah more likely would have been Luzer.) "Zalman" could be attributed to the memory of a revered 16th or 17th century ancestor, a common practice in the old country.

In August, 2000, I received a letter from the Camden Borough Council Local Studies and Archives in London regarding 25 and 27 Ferncroft Avenue in Hampstead, my grandmother's last place of residence as shown on her death certificate. According to the 1929-1930 electoral register, the occupier of No. 25 was a Miss [Esther] Hogg, occupation, nurse. Camden had also unearthed a (circa 1935) advertisement for the nursing home next door at No. 27. By modern, high-tech standards, the ad was quaintly old-fashioned. Among the various amenities and advantages offered were Medical Electricity (whatever that was), Diathermy, Sunlight and Massage. I could now conclude that my grandmother had contracted TB and been sent to a London nursing home.

During that same (2000) visit to England, I telephoned the Borough of Tower Hamlets (in London's East End). I wanted to find out about M. Shorn of 40 Fieldgate Street, the cousin who had witnessed my grandmother's death certificate. (Fieldgate Street is in Stepney, which is now under the jurisdiction of

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My Grandmother, cont'd. from page 13

Tower Hamlets.) The staff person I spoke to was very accommodating. He told me to “ring back” in half an hour, which would give him time to check the 1929-1930 electoral register. Precisely one half hour later, I learned that the occupant of 40 Fieldgate Street was a Morris Shorn, tailor. Soon after my return to the U.S., my kind friend from Kent sent me a detailed extract which gave not only the names and ages of Shorn’s wife and children, but also each family member’s place of birth, providing another avenue for future research!

Before visiting my grandmother’s grave in North London, I took a special detour to Ferncroft Avenue in Hampstead (on the fringe of beautiful Hampstead Heath). I rang the door bell of No. 25. Someone picked up the phone. I could hear music and laughter and a dog barking in the background. I identified myself as someone who had come all the way from California to visit the house that may have been my grandmother’s nursing home, eighty years earlier. After an initial hesitation, a man opened the front door. “I wasn’t going to let you in, but hearing you had come all this way, I began to feel guilty,” he said. “Come in. I’ll show you around but I’m sure it’s completely changed over the years.”

Number 25 had been redeveloped as exclusive private flats. I tried imagining how the interior had been eighty years earlier, but failed. It was all so modern, with its large, plate-glass picture windows, open spaces and contemporary furnishings. Only the hallway conceivably was relatively unchanged. My host took me onto the roof-top terrace from which I was afforded a magnificent, eye-popping view of greater London. Only the front of the house seemed barely unaltered (since 1935, at least). It still had the charming cornices and other distinguishing features that graced late Victorian homes.

A few days later, I visited the graves of my parents in Birmingham at the Witton Jewish Cemetery. This was a far different experience from what I had experienced at Edmonton. These were people I had known intimately, seen age and grow infirm. That was not the case with my maternal grandmother. The little I had known about her, when beginning my quest, was based on the few confidences my mother breathed into my inattentive, childish ear. If only I had cared enough to listen and ask questions.

The memory of Sarah Rose is like a will o’ the wisp — always beyond my grasp, glimpsed as if for a moment — ephemeral — glittering in the dimming light, then vanishing into the night.

How I wish I had known you.

Flesh on the Bones, cont'd. from page 9

does not fit into the picture at the time. I saved an email from someone I found in the JGFF who told me he was not related to me, because the family’s surname in the “old country” had been something else. As it turns out, I am, indeed, related to this person.

I have to admit, I have been incredibly fortunate to find so much information about my great-grandfather and his father. Not everyone will be so lucky. I do encourage fellow researchers to stop and “smell the roses.” Take one ancestor about whom you are particularly interested and research his or her life in more detail. It most certainly is a different kind of genealogical journey and can be, as it was in my case, a powerful experience as well.

City Directories, cont'd. from page 10

— will allow you to search tax lists indicating their holdings in real estate and personal property. One of my clients wanted to know whether his ancestor owned property in New York City around 1816. A search of the tax lists showed that the man did not own property but lived as a boarder in another man’s home.

City directories are invaluable resources in the search for vital records. I have already mentioned how the appearance of the word “widow” in a city directory listing can lead to the approximate death date of the husband. City directories can also offer clues about ancestors’ marriage and birth dates.

A client’s ancestor first appeared in an 1867 city directory. We knew the names of his parents and that he was approximately twenty-two years old at the time, but little else. Why would he have moved out of his family’s residence? A search of marriage records revealed that he had married and set up a separate household with his bride. The marriage certificate included the names of his bride and her parents. A search through the next couple of years of birth indexes led to the first birth certificate of the following generation. Again, one listing in a city directory gave us several results.

The register section (sometimes called appendix) of a city directory can tell you, among other details, if your ancestors were officers of clubs, societies or businesses, or were officials in specific religious institutions. A client knew her great-great-grandfather was a Freemason, probably an officer. But we didn’t know his position or affiliation. I searched the register under the heading “Secret and

Continued on next page

City Directories, cont'd. from page 10

Benefit Societies" and then "Masonic" and spotted his name listed as secretary of the Scottish Rite.

City directories can also indicate when an ancestor first immigrated to the United States or moved to a particular city. A tailor I was researching first appeared in Brooklyn directories in 1853. My client knew that her ancestor had been in Austria until 1850 or later, but she had no idea of the date of his immigration. The city directory listing helped limit the immigration date to sometime between 1850 and 1853 and thus eliminated an extensive search of many years of unindexed passenger arrivals. We found him listed in the manifest of a ship that docked on New York shores in 1852.

Part III: Finding Leads to Other Genealogical Records

City directories can guide you out of brick walls in your genealogical research. The data from a directory can help direct you to other genealogical sources, some of which I've mentioned, such as vital records, immigration/emigration and naturalization records, passenger lists, census enumerations, property and financial records, and more. Among the other records city directories can open for the researcher are court and religious records, some of the most reliable sources of genealogical information.

A client's great-great-great-great-grandfather disappeared from Brooklyn city directories after 1845 and had perhaps died. We didn't know his parents' names or his place of birth in France. As death certificates weren't required at that time, I knew that I wouldn't be able to find one in order to obtain more data. So I looked for a will and found it at Kings County Surrogate's Court. Although the probate didn't include his parents' names, it did list addresses and relationships of family members in Strasbourg, where, I later confirmed, he had been born.

If you discover from city directory listings the likelihood that your ancestor owned his or her own business (Samuel Eichberg's listing, for instance, included a reference to Eichberg & Company), you can then search for incorporation records and annual reports containing the names, addresses and signatures of your ancestor and associates. And be sure as well to search directories for any advertisements for your ancestors' companies. I once found a two-page ad for a client's great-great-great-grandfather's business that included details about the company and portraits of the five brothers who ran it.

Religious records also can be wonderful sources of family information, especially when civil vital records can't be located. If you know your ancestor's religion, you can check the register section of city directories for religious institutions in the neighborhood, then contact that institution or its successor for records about your family.

A client's great-grandparents were married in a hotel by a rabbi in 1911, according to their marriage certificate. The certificate listed the rabbi's place of residence, but not his synagogue, information that we wanted for further research. A search for the rabbi in the city directory of that year gave us his home address, which matched the address on the marriage certificate. The listing also included his work address, which we hoped would be the address of his temple. I checked the synagogue listings in the city directory, and there was the name of the temple at the rabbi's work address. The synagogue was still in existence and had extensive records about the family.

In my job as a genealogist, I greatly enjoy the detective work of searching in archives and libraries for information about the lives of my clients' ancestors. Much of the time, the trail to those repositories begins with city directories.

1929 Polish Business Directory - Nowogrodek Province

As described on JewishGen

A new database on JewishGen contains entries from the 1929 Polish business directory *Ksiega Adresowa Polski (Wraz z w.m. Gdanskim) dla Handlu, Przemyslu, Rzemiosl i Rolnictwa* [Directory of Poland (including Gdansk) for Trade, Industry, Handicraft and Agriculture] for Nowogrodek Province. Nowogrodek was a province of inter-war Poland, but today is in western Belarus and southeastern Lithuania. Prior to World War I, the area was in the Vilna, Grodno and Minsk guberniyas of the Russian Empire.

The database contains 15,122 entries. Citations

include town name, powiat (district), surname, first name initial, street address and occupation or business, plus occasional notes.

The occupations were written in both Polish and French and a translation guide is provided. The entire 1929 directory is available on microfilm in the New York Public Library's Slavic and Baltic Division at call number [Slav. Reserve 96-7788].

It is anticipated that these data will be incorporated into the JRI-Poland Business Directory Project on JewishGen.

About "One Thousand Children, Inc." (OTC)

by Iris Posner, *JewishGen*

Background

The film documentary, "Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport," and other similar films and related books, have successfully raised the public's awareness regarding the plight and rescue by Great Britain of almost ten thousand unaccompanied children during the Holocaust. By comparison, there is no such public familiarity with the experiences of the approximately one thousand unaccompanied children brought to the U.S. by a variety of organizations and individuals before and during World War II, to stay with foster families. Most of their parents perished in the Holocaust. America's response to children of the Holocaust, as well as the experiences of these one thousand children and the people and organizations who made their escape from persecution possible, remains unknown to most Americans and many scholars.

OTC Mission

OTC is a non-profit corporation whose primary mission is to document the experiences of people who came to the U.S. as children between 1934 and 1945 to escape Nazi persecution and stayed with foster families and in other facilities across America.

Selected OTC Activities

- Locate and communicate with as many surviving OTC children as possible;
- Conduct and support research related to OTC child rescue and resettlement;
- Produce documentaries and other educational media;
- Publish scholarly works, memoirs and other informative materials;
- Support an interactive Web site;
- Organize and support OTC Reunions; and
- Organize and support a traveling exhibition to be shown at museums and other relevant organizations.

OTC Progress

To date, using original organizational documents, OTC has amassed the names of virtually all 1,000 children. OTC is actively working with Holocaust-related museums and organizations to locate and communicate with OTC children. A major U.S. museum has expressed interest in co-sponsoring a

reunion of all OTC children. Dr. Judith Baumel, author of the only comprehensive scholarly work on OTC children, "Unfulfilled Promise," has become an advisor to OTC and a member of its Board of Directors.

Founders of OTC

Iris Posner is a registered nurse and holds a B.S. in Education from Columbia University, Masters Degree in Public Administration from Baruch College and Certificate in Film Production from New York University. Ms. Posner was a Social Science Researcher at the National Institute of Mental Health and the Social Security Administration and a communications consultant with several large corporations. Ms. Posner is also a professional photographer.

Lenore Moskowitz holds a B.S. in Economics from the University of Maryland, was an industry analyst at the Federal Trade Commission. She has extensive experience as a researcher and interviewer.

OTC can be contacted at the following address:

ONE THOUSAND CHILDREN, INC.

P.O. Box 4710 Silver Spring, Md. 20914-4710.

Telephone: (301) 622-0321,

e-mail: iposner@ix.netcom.com

www.onethousandchildren.org.

Shalshelet (Newsletter of the JGS of Oregon) Available Online

Hal Bookbinder, *JewishGen*

Harry Glauber, editor of *Shalshelet*, the newsletter of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Oregon, has announced that *Shalshelet* is available online at the Web site of the JGS of Oregon.

Each of the first seven issues (the seventh is for Winter 2001) has been posted on its Web site in pdf format, which can be opened with the Adobe Acrobat Reader. This reader is free and can be easily downloaded. The web site of the JGS of Oregon includes instructions for using the reader, and contains a link to the Adobe Web site (www.adobe.com) from which you can download a copy without charge.

To view their newsletters or to learn about Adobe Acrobat, go to www.rootsweb.com/~orjgs/newsletters.htm.

BOOKSHELF

La Communauté Juive dans le Jura (The Jewish Community in the Jura)

Review by Rosanne Leeson

Last year the Musée de l'Hôtel-Dieu of Porrentruy, Switzerland exhibited religious objects donated to the museum by the local Jewish community. This small, hard-bound book is a catalog for that exhibit. But, more importantly, the catalog was expanded to include a history of the Jewish communities of Porrentruy, Delémont, Bienne and St. Imier.

This region, formerly part of the Bishopric of Basle (Switzerland), has historically been a place to which Jews of Alsace have fled from persecution. The difficulties in Alsace, including pogroms, following the revolutions of 1848, were a catalyst for an important wave of immigration from Alsace, most notably into Switzerland. The defeat of France, and the period of German occupation following the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, followed by the Swiss laws that gave full citizenship to Jews in 1876, only increased the number of Jews who fled to Switzerland, and created a strong presence of Jews in the region of the Jura.

Included in the book are historical surveys of the several Jewish communities, a history of their economic activities, and a personal memoir by M. Henry Spira of his childhood and youth in the region. Part of this last memoir was derived from a filmed interview, one of many made as testimony to events of the years 1939-1945. There then follows a brief explanation of the various Jewish holidays. And finally, there is the catalog itself, which contains many lovely color photos, in particular of several of the mappoth owned by the community.

The mappoth were an important form of folk art in Central Europe, and were taken from strips of the swaddling clothes worn at the time of a boy's circumcision. They were decorated with the name of the child, the date of his birth and the names of the parents, and were embroidered or painted with all kinds of floral, animal and religious symbols. Among the names found on the 35 mappoth displayed are: **Spira, Diedesheim, Bigard, Levy, Weill and Schrameck.**

Copies of this book can be obtained from: Musée de l'Hôtel-Dieu CH-2900 Porrentruy Switzerland. The fax number is 4132 46 67 202 and the price is 20 Swiss Francs plus postage.

Family Tree of the Jewish People on CD

Howard Margol, *JewishGen*

The new Family Tree of the Jewish People (FTJP) CD-ROM is available for immediate shipment. This new version contains almost two million names, an increase from the 600,000 names in the previously published CD.

What do the almost two million names mean and where did they come from? In October, 1999, I was privileged to sign a Tripartite Agreement between IAJGS, JewishGen and Beth Hatefutsoth in Israel in which all three organizations agreed to share the family trees that had been submitted to their organizations. The FTJP CD was produced by the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS), in accordance with the agreement. It contains the family trees submitted to each of the three organizations, provided permission was received from the original submitter to include their family tree on the CD.

A large number of the family trees can also be viewed on JewishGen, or at Beth Hatefutsoth in

Israel. The original submitters were given the choice of having their family trees appear on one, two or all three places. The only way to access all of the family trees submitted is to purchase the CD, check out JewishGen and visit Beth Hatefutsoth.

Thanks go to Bruce Kahn, President of the Rochester JGS, who worked tirelessly and long to produce this new, advanced CD.

LDS Microfilm Requests Made "Public"

Jeremy Frankel, *SFBAJGS*

Now that the LDS Family History Center appears to be transmitting researchers' microfilm requests to Salt Lake by computer, one of the unintended results is that the requests are more accessible to others. The center now compiles orders in a spreadsheet style and maintains a folder with the requests in different "sorts." That is, sorted by film number and, more importantly, A-Z by record.

This way one can skim the list and "piggyback" on other peoples' orders.

COMPUTER/ONLINE NEWS

Major Update to the Consolidated Jewish Surname Index

by Gary Mokotoff, *JewishGen*

Avotaynu has just made a major update to its Consolidated Jewish Surname Index (CSJI) located at www.avotaynu.com/csi/csi-home.html. The surnames contained in the following databases have been added: Jewish Records Indexing – Poland, All-Lithuania Database, All-Belarus Database, All-Latvia Database, and the JewishGen Family Finder.

CJSI is a database of databases. It is an index to 31 different sources of information about (mostly) Jewish surnames. Rather than searching the indexes for each source separately to see if there is information relevant to your research, CJSI indicates which databases contain surnames of interest to you. Links are provided to other Web sites that have the databases or information about how to access the data. Most of the sources that are not online are published in books or on microfiche. In combination, all 31 sources represent more than two million records for approximately 370,000 unique surnames.

CJSI has some special features to enhance its usefulness. The index is presented in Daitch-Mokotoff soundex order rather than alphabetically. This means that many spelling variants of a surname appear on consecutive lines.

CJSI is browseable like a telephone book. It does not merely provide you with a list of surnames that match the soundex code. Keying in a given surname places you at a certain point in the database. You can then search up and down the database beyond the limits of the soundex code. This allows you also to review surnames that are small variations of the one being searched.

Finally, an advanced search feature allows you to mix exact matching and soundexing of the letters of the surname, lowering the incidence of false positives (the procedure is described at the Internet site).

Because these newly added sources are ever growing, Avotaynu plans to update CJSI at least semi-annually to include the additions that have been made to these databases.

New Information Source: the PDA

by Rodger Rosenberg/ *SFBAJGS*

A recent discovery of mine is the perfect addition for those of us on the go who want to have even more genealogical information to consume. This addition is for anyone who uses a PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) Palm or Windows CE, and is offered free through a service called Aventgo.

Aventgo.com is a free service in which you can download everything from the *New York Times* to restaurant listings in your area. It does require the user to sign up, again at no fee, then allows you to download hundreds of various services included something called Cemetery Records On-line. This daily download contains all types of genealogical information including genealogical software reviews, Internet site news, cemetery tips, how-to articles, etc.

Once the information, which is updated regularly, is downloaded to your PDA, you can review it at your leisure. I highly recommend this as something constructive to do while waiting in line, or if you need something to read over lunch.

An added note for those researching Latvia: there is another service offered called "Latvians Online" which includes news, opinions, features and events.

For those of you who do not have a PDA but wish to see what this site has to offer, go to www.internment.net.

More Map Sites

For those who are researching various locations, including Belarus, the following can be added to the online maps listed on page 19 at right:

You may want to put out a note about this web site and its maps: www.HistoricalAtlas.net.

Pierre Hahn, *Jewish Gen*

I just found a really great map site on the Internet at www.multimap.com. If you click on the world map picture, and continue to click away, you can find almost any little village. I found dozens of small shtetls I have never been able to find on any other Internet mapping system.

David Baron, *JewishGen*

Online Maps Plus!

Susan Pearlman, *Belarus SIG Digest*

I've done some exploring and come up with a dizzying array of sites for your perusal. You could spend days just looking at maps and descriptions alone! Here are some of my "discoveries," which are probably not new to many of you mavens, but might prove helpful to some of our newer members:

- First and foremost, of course, is www.jewishgen.org/Belarus/grodno1.htm. From here — my own starting point — you can choose from any guberniya or shtetl.
- CIA Maps and Publications – Internet Provides a catalog of world maps and publications available to the public from the Central Intelligence Agency. Pick a country from the index. www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/indexgeo.html.
- Quick Maps of the World – flags, maps, economy, geography, climate, natural resources, current issues, international agreements, population, social statistics, political system. www.theodora.com/wfb/abc_world_fact_book.html.
- E-Conflict World Encyclopedia – country information. Anthems, flags, and maps to the nations of the world. Each nation is described by economy, government, defense, geography, and people. Pick a country. www.emulateme.com/belarus.htm.
- Belarus Maps – The Perry-Castaneda Library Map Collection at the University of Texas at Austin at sunsite.informatik.rwth-aachen.de/Maps/belarus.html.
- Belarus: Geography, Maps and Information – geography.about.com/library/cia/blcbelarus.htm.
- The Virtual Guide to Belarus – The online encyclopedia about Belarus, its culture, history, politics, nature, industry, geography, Chernobyl effects and genealogy. The site is maintained by volunteers, Belorussian scientists and professionals abroad from Belarus www.belarusguide.com.
- Belarus Maps – Offers location descriptions, entry procedures and phone codes. Find detailed regional maps, geographic information and national symbols. [Opening page and intro are in English; oblast maps in Russian or Belorussian. I found this very funny — it's sort of a dating service, inter alia — meet some lovely Belorussian ladies while you travel.] www.savva-la-belle.com/belarus/.
- Poland, Belarus and Ukraine Report: Maps – This is Radio Free Europe; fascinating! www.rferl.org.
- Street Maps and City Maps – Easy to use street maps, city maps, state maps, highway maps, country maps and satellite photographs. Some of their features are: telephone: reverse directory; yellow pages, white pages, area codes; person finder search: search engines, meta search, category search; news groups reference: translation, dictionary, encyclopedia, acronym; geographic: zip codes, maps, travel and routes and many more — just point and click! maps.langenberg.com.
- Belarus Information Servers Local Navigator: a Belarus Miscellany, by Alexander Artsyukhov reenic.utexas.edu/reenic/countries/belarus.html.
- Belorussian Nature and Maps: Belarus' geographical location in Europe and on the world map and more maps of Belarus. You can choose a spot other than Gomel for similar results. gomel.lk.net/belpics.html.
- Everything you ever wanted to know about Belarus, including lists of nobility. maxpages.com/poland/Belarus_Research.
- Slavik Research Center in Japan: a long shopping list of links in English. src-home.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/eng/fsu/blr-e.html.
- A very complete resource: search.megaspider.com/search1.html?maps+Belarus [with this one, change "Belarus" to any other country for maps].

That should keep you busy for a few days, at least!

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P.O. Box 471616

San Francisco, CA 94147-1616

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