



זכרונות ZichronNote

The Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

Volume XXI, Number 1

February 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)

- Mon. Feb. 26** **Palo Alto:** *Clothing Clues in Family Photographs.* Melissa Leventon, Curator of Textiles, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, will share her presentation on dating photographs based on the clothing worn by the subjects. Members are invited to bring ONE photograph for Ms. Leventon's review.
- Sun. March 18** **San Francisco:** *How to Research Your Anglo-Jewish Ancestors Using the Internet - researching WHY - another purpose of genealogy.* It's not just pushing the tree back in time. Sometimes there is enough detail to sense personalities, identify influences, and find clues to explain why our ancestors acted as they did. Presented by SFBAJGS member Ron Arons.
- Sun. Apr. 29** **Palo Alto:** *Genealogy in Jewish Education Conference.* To be held at Congregation Beth Am, 26790 Arastradero Road, Los Altos. Doors open at 2 p.m. for research, program begins at 3 p.m. Co-sponsored by Beth Am, the Conference will be an opportunity for all of us to promote the role of family history in Jewish education. (See page 3 for more information.)
Note day, date, time, and location change
- 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.

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.

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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 for the SFBAJGS in 2001

by Rodger Rosenberg

Happy 2001! I hope everyone had a good New Year's and can say that they have kept their resolutions. This New Year will bring many changes to our Society, and I am writing this in hopes that some of you will, as a New Year's resolution, resolve to volunteer for the SFBAJGS.

I am sad to announce that our library materials will no longer be housed in the library of the Masonic Institute in San Francisco. Due to problems with scheduling volunteers to help manage it, a very low attendance to utilize it, and the Mason's own need for the shelf space, we have been asked us to remove our library.

The New Year also brings the departures of Judy Baston and Dana Kurtz, respectively, as Society Librarian and ZichronNote Editor. Judy, our librarian for many years, has chosen to spend more time on other genealogical endeavors. I know Judy has helped all of us at one time or another, in my case many times. Her years of commitment and enthusiasm have been a "machia" to all of us. This issue will also be the last for our Editor Dana Kurtz. Her commitment, tireless work and skill have made ZichronNote the quality newsletter that you are reading now. We are lucky that both Judy and Dana will remain active with the Society.

These changes mean that the Society needs *you* more than ever. I don't expect any one person to take on these important roles but I would love to see more member involvement in smaller tasks which are encompassed within these positions. A library committee has formed to consider the future of the Society's library which could include a book-loaning program, as well as the possibility of purchasing books on Jewish genealogy to be placed at local libraries.

We are also forming a committee to work on ZichronNote. Individual tasks can be as simple as reviewing JewishGen for articles of potential value to our membership. Other necessary tasks are gathering and editing submissions, and pitching in to label and mail the newsletter each quarter. These and other jobs can be as simple or as involved as anyone wishes to make them. Giving one or several hours a month to our Society will only make it better and stronger.

Finally, another way to become involved is as a Board Member or officer. At the end of this year we will hold elections for Board positions. I have been honored to serve as President for two terms and, in accordance with our by-laws, I cannot seek a third term. I will continue my work with the Society, but not in my current role.

I hope that many of you will decide that this is the year you resolve to become more involved and make this Society truly your own.

Rodger

SOCIETY NEWS

E-mail Address Updates

Please note the following updates to e-mail addresses listed in the SFBAJGS Membership Roster.

Karen & Jerry Apell	jerry_apell@chiron.com
Betsy Brazy	brazy@mindspring.com
Oliver Bryk	oliverbryk@home.com
Martin Gewing	waltge@earthlink.net
Thomas High	hitzel@worldnet.att.net
Louise Indig	hlandig@home.com
Marty Izenson	marty@izenon.net
Lora Levin	LLevin@concentric.net
Howard Miller	howiemil@pacbell.net
Ivan Schatten	ivanschatten@hotmail.com
Sheila Kendis Sello	sLks@aol.com
Stephen Somerstein	somerstein@hotmail.com

Welcome New Members

Kenneth I. Cohen	Pleasant Hill
kicohen@home.com	
Sheryl Faria	San Francisco
sefaria@jps.net	
Judith Kline	San Mateo
Gordon McDaniel	Oakland
mcdaniel@hoover.stanford.edu	
Claire Rappoport	Brisbane
clairer@itsa.ucsf.edu	

If you have an e-mail address but do not receive occasional SFBAJGS messages, or your e-mail address has changed, send a message to burgauer@aol.com, so we can keep you up-to-date.

SFBAJGS Co-Sponsors the Genealogy in Jewish Education Conference

**Sunday, April 29, 2001: Doors open at 2 p.m., for research, Program begins 3 p.m.
 Congregation Beth Am, 26790 Arastradero Road, Los Altos Hills**

The Genealogy in Jewish Education Conference, co-sponsored by the SFBAJGS and Congregation Beth Am, will be a terrific opportunity for all of us to promote the role of family history in Jewish education. Rabbi Matt Friedman of Congregation Beth Shalom, Carmichael, CA, will be the keynote speaker. At the 2000 International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in Salt Lake City, he gave a talk on “Methods and Purpose of Teaching Genealogy” and showed that Bible stories are a natural medium to explain family relationships to young students.

Our Society’s research materials, the Beth Am Library, and our members will be available to help you with your own family research when the doors open at 2 p.m. The program starts at 3 p.m.

When we were young, we may have had opportunities to hear family stories, but perhaps we didn’t ask, and maybe we didn’t understand what we heard. “Vishtinetz” and “Mishtenetz” may have sounded the same. Perhaps we were confused as to whether someone was on mother’s side or father’s side. It was not easy to know the kind of life and experiences our forebears had. We needed some guidance and so do the younger members of our family.

Focusing on grades 3 through 8, Jewish educators in the San Francisco Bay Area have recognized the value of incorporating family history projects into English, history, Jewish history, geography, art, social studies, and other classes. Parental participation has enhanced the experience. The booklets, recorded stories, photos and charts that are produced, are destined to become family heirlooms.

We see a role for our genealogy society to help make these efforts flourish. To make the Conference effective, we’d like to know about projects that have already taken place. If you participated as a parent, grandparent, or educator, we would appreciate receiving a write-up of the experience in advance.

Each project should be described with title, place, date, grade level, number of students, resources, parent participation, evaluation, and suggestions derived from your experience. We will include these summaries with the material to be distributed at the conference. Please send your material by April 20th to Jerry Delson, 660 Ashton Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94306, e-mail: j.delson@ieee.org (don’t forget the “.”), fax: (650) 493-2259. Any questions, please call Jerry at (650) 493-0404.

We look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

CALENDAR, cont'd.

More Genealogy Events

Local

Fri., February 23, 7:30-9:30 p.m. **Marin County Genealogical Society, Researching at Sutro Library**, speaker Bette Kot. Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, 1100 Las Gallinas Avenue, San Rafael. www.rootsweb.com/~camargs/index.html.

Sun., March 18, 9 a.m-4 p.m. **San Mateo County Genealogical Society, SMC GS Spring Seminar: French Canadian Research**, speaker Marielle A. Bourgeois. First Presbyterian Church, Geneva Hall, West 25th Avenue & Hacienda, San Mateo. Tel: (650) 572-2929, genealogy.org/~smcgs/.

Sat., March 24, **Sonoma County Genealogical Society, Clutching at Straws and Other Last-Ditch Efforts**, all-day seminar, speaker Helen F. M. Leary. Luther Burbank Center for the Arts, Santa Rosa. Contact: Lois Nimmo, Tel: (707) 537-1684, Loisnim@aol.com; www.scs.org/.

Regional

Sun., February 25, 10 a.m. **Jewish Genealogical Society of Sacramento, The Team Approach for Research**, speaker Lester Smith. Albert Einstein Center, Arts and Crafts Room, 1935 Wright Street, Sacramento, Tel: (916) 486-0906, www.jewishgen.org/ajgs/jgs-sacramento.

National/International

Sun. - Fri., July 8-13, **JGS of Great Britain, 21st International Conference on Jewish Genealogy**. Intercontinental Hotel at Hyde Park Corder, London. e-mail: info.london2001@talk21.com; www.jewishgen.org/london2001 (see page 9 for more information).

The Next Step - Latest News

by Marc Seidenfeld, seidenfeld@bigfoot.com

In the last issue of *ZichronNote* our Society was called upon to undertake a project to preserve and disseminate some of the Jewish genealogical information located in the Bay Area which has not yet been brought to the attention of or made available to the world wide Jewish genealogical community.

I am happy to report that in response to that article volunteers have stepped forward, discussions have been held and a project has been tentatively identified. Further details will be forthcoming.

In the meantime, if you are interested in lending a hand with the project, in gathering and processing the material that will then be provided to the wider Jewish genealogical community, please contact any officer of the Society. All assistance will be appreciated.

Remember – this is our chance to show that we are truly a Jewish genealogical **society**, worthy of that name. Your help is earnestly requested.

Are Your SFBAJGS Dues Overdue?

Membership dues for 2001 were payable on January 31, 2001. If you have not yet sent in your renewal, please do so as soon as possible.

A yellow stripe across the mailing label of this issue means we have not yet received your payment. The May issue of *ZichronNote* will be sent only to members in good standing.

Please send your check for \$20, made payable to "SFBAJGS," to:

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

SFBAJGS Library No Longer Available Between Meetings

The SFBAJGS Library is undergoing several changes. The Masonic Institute has told the SFBAJGS that it will no longer be able to provide bookshelf space for the Society's Library. Therefore our collection of books, tapes, maps, and other materials will not be available between meetings for the foreseeable future.

At the same time, SFBAJGS Librarian Judy Baston has retired from this position after serving for a number of years. Many of us are indebted to Judy for the invaluable assistance she has provided. Kudos and the grateful thanks of the Society to Judy for her devotion to the cause!

A Library Committee has been formed, consisting of Judy, Vice President Rosanne Leeson, and Hillary Farkas, all of whom work in the library field, and Jim Koenig, Marc Seidenfeld, and Dick Hoffman. The committee will be looking at the options for handling our materials, where they might best be housed, and other library issues.

Our library requires approximately 60-70 shelf feet of space to accommodate the books, newsletters, and maps. We also own two microfiche readers, fiche, cassette tapes, and a sizeable collection of CD-ROMs.

The most frequently used materials will continue to be available at meetings, although a more convenient way of making our library available to members is also under consideration by the committee. If anyone has any suggestions or thoughts on the future of the SFBAJGS library collection, the members of the committee will be glad to hear from you.

Contacts: Rosanne (Leeson1@att.net), Judy (jrbaston@aol.com), Hillary (hillarystan@home.com), Dick (rmhoffman@aol.com).

Is This the Last Issue of ZichronNote?

by Dana L. Kurtz, Editor, *ZichronNote*

If you're reading this article, you've probably read and enjoyed past issues of *ZichronNote*. You may have shared in the joy of a fellow member's success story, found something of interest on one of the Web sites discussed, or checked out one of the national or international resources mentioned. Most of what you have read was provided by a very small group of authors, and prepared by a team of two – a copy editor and me. I've coordinated all content for every issue since November 1997, authored almost everything that is published without attribution, prepared the layout and design, then labeled, bundled, and mailed each issue. And I've enjoyed it!

I extend my appreciation to those who have taken the time to write down their experiences, share their expertise, or review a book. Your words are valued and I have enjoyed getting to know you. Special thanks to Lillian Wurzel, who regularly sends me unsolicited articles and ideas. Finally, I am grateful to Gordon Fine, my partner in editing, who has made many of us sound more eloquent than we are.

Unfortunately the time has come for me to hand over the reins of our newsletter. So now what? That's up to you. It's time to get involved – share your experiences and stories, submit items of interest to Jewish genealogists, help identify and edit material, prepare the layout, or assist in the preparation and mailing of the printed issues. Without volunteers stepping forward, this may be the last issue of *ZichronNote*. Below I have outlined some of the tasks that go into publishing the newsletter. A team of SFBAJGS members, each taking on or sharing a single responsibility, will produce a terrific publication. **You are qualified** to participate!

What Does it Take to Publish an Issue of ZichronNote?

What you don't need to do to contribute to ZichronNote

- You don't need to be a great writer. You don't need to be a writer at all!
- You don't need to have had a great genealogical breakthrough.
- You don't need to have a computer.

What you can do contribute to ZichronNote

- Be a coordinator – collect the contributions from others.
- Read JewishGen, Special Interest Group newsletters, and publications of other JGSs in order to identify topics and articles of possible interest.
- Suggest Web sites you've discovered or heard mentioned by others.
- Share your own experiences – successful or otherwise!
- Solicit contributions from fellow SFBAJGS members.
- Write a book review.
- Write up a meeting summary.

What you can do help prepare ZichronNote

- Edit submissions.
- Key into a word processor handwritten submissions and extracts from other newsletters.
- Use your desktop publishing interest or experience to prepare the layout.

What you can do to put ZichronNote in the mail

- Pick up printed issues from the printer.
- Coordinate with the membership chair to maintain an up-to-date mailing list including other JGSs, libraries, and genealogical societies.
- Print mailing labels.
- Label and bundle the newsletter according to USPS regulations.
- Deliver the bundled newsletters to the USPS Bulk Mail unit.

If you're willing to help keep ZichronNote the valuable benefit of membership that it is, don't hesitate! Contact Rodger Rosenberg, (415) 666-0188, eandr@ix.netcom.com.

It's up to you.

An Unusual Source for Family Information – Dublin, Ireland Alien Registrations

by Marj Green, marjgreen@mindspring.com

Marj Gruzen Green has been researching the **GRUZIN/GRUZEN/GRUSIN/GRUSON** and **KRAINTZ/FRIEDMAN** family lines from Riga and Dankere (Gostini/Glazmanka), Latvia. She has collected a number of family stories about life in Latvia, the U.S., Canada, and Ireland in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The second Gruzin reunion will be held in Toronto, Canada in May 2001. Marj encourages anyone who might be related to this line to get in touch with her at marjgreen@mindspring.com.

I've been research the **GRUZIN/GRUZEN/GRUSIN/GRUSON** family lines from Dankere (also called Glazmanka, Stockmanhof, or Gostini), Latvia. One branch immigrated to Dublin, Ireland. This summer I had the chance to go to Dublin and found a wonderful resource called the Alien Registration taken in Dublin during World War I.

Between 1914-1922, each non-Irish citizen had to report to their local police district to prove their identity, show the passports (if any) they used when they came to Ireland, and provide information on themselves and their families. Some of these records have been destroyed, lost, or damaged. But many records from the Chancery Police Station, which was nearest the large Jewish community in Dublin (Little Jerusalem), have survived and are available to researchers.

Here's what they contain:

- head of the household's name, nationality, occupation, and address;
- birth date and place;
- date of arrival in Ireland;
- previous residence before coming to Ireland;
- name, ages (or birth dates), and birthplaces of spouse, children, and others living with the family; and
- spouse's date of arrival and previous residence before coming to Ireland.

Whenever the information changed, as in the birth of a child or a move to a new address, the head of the household had to go to the police station and update the record.

There is even a column for "Remarks." This is a real treasure trove of information. Examples are: "Served in Russian army in 1899 for 12 months; was discharged for ill health;" "Deserted from Russian army;" and "Passport #9 issued at Dvinsk by President of the Military Tribunal, on 31 July 1902."

Many of the Jews who went to Dublin in the early 1900s came from Lithuania and Latvia. I found quite a few registrations from my family's hometown of Dankere, Latvia, and many from the province of Kovno, Lithuania.

If you have relatives who were in Dublin, Ireland in the period 1914-1918, you might want to look at this resource. The records are housed at the National Archives in Dublin. When you get there, ask for the Dublin Alien Registrations for World War I, Entry #96/11/1 & 2, Shelf 3/123/3. Ask for both the original books and the photocopied pages of the 1914 records of Chancery Lane Police Registration District, Dublin.

You can also get access to the information via e-mail from a genealogist in Dublin, Stuart Rosenblatt, masterc@medianet.ie.

Stuart has been collecting records of Jews from Dublin. In addition to the Alien Registration records, he also has many of the synagogue records of marriages, midwife records of births, cemetery records, etc. He was extremely helpful to me in providing much new information on the Grusons. All he asks is that in exchange, you share with him any information you have on your Dublin relatives.

Learn to Translate Your Russian-Language Documents

Noted translator Gordon McDaniel, Principal and Slavic Cataloger at the Hoover Institution Library, at Stanford, is offering a one-day workshop in learning to translate Russian-language Jewish documents and vital records. The course will include introductions to:

- the Cyrillic alphabet, including the orthographic changes of 1918;
- the Cyrillic alphabet – the printed characters;
- Cyrillic handwriting of the 19th century;
- transliteration – the Library of Congress system and some variants;
- translation – how to use a dictionary;

- specific forms – civil registration records, revision lists, family lists, metrical books;
- non-specific materials, such as letters; and
- hands-on, practical work.

The workshop is expected to run a full day, perhaps six hours plus a lunch break. The second half of the workshop will be dedicated to hands-on practice. You will be invited to bring your own material or use the samples provided by the instructor.

The workshop will take place on a Sunday, in late February, or early March. The location is to be determined. Cost is also to be determined, but is estimated at \$40 per person, materials included.

If you are interested, please contact Dana Kurtz at (415) 921-6761, dLkurtz@ix.netcom.com as soon as possible so we can finalize the workshop.

Success Story: A Search in Ukraine

by Morrie Ludwig

From the Editor: In the February 1999 issue of *ZichronNote*, SFBAJGS member Morrie Ludwig told his story about Bender Hamlet, Winnipeg, Canada. Morrie's parents, immigrated from Ukraine to Canada in 1899. From Winnipeg, they joined a group of immigrants to found the "Canadian Shtetl" of Bender Hamlet where Morrie was born in 1911. The family moved to San Francisco in 1923.

To convince Morrie to share his experiences about returning to Bender Hamlet, I had suggested that since *ZichronNote* is distributed to nearly 300 SFBAJGS members and more than 100 Jewish genealogical societies, libraries, and other repositories, he might just make a connection with a reader. Upon publishing, Morrie sat back at his desk and waited for replies. In December 1999, he e-mailed me about his first "nibble." Subsequent e-mails carried subject lines "It gets curiouser and curiouser," "It keeps goin' and goin'," "Now Hear This!," and "What Hath God Wrought!" In April 2000, Morrie wrote:

Samuel F. B. Morse had nothing on ZichronNote. My e-mail wires or non-wires (vair vaist?) remain hot. Yesterday came one from Mexico City (what's a Nice Jewish Girl ...?), a lady chemist, whose father remembers the Ludwigs in the shtetl of Bender Hamlet, and is alive and well in Los Gatos, CA at 97, has knocked me off my throne as the patriarch of the survivors. I'll call him soon and bestow on him the crown—I can no longer pretend to wear the robes of purple.

Remember I once said I'd wait with a bushel basket beside me at the computer to catch the flood of mail after you printed me in ZichronNote? Bless you all—the basket is overflowing! – Morrie Ludwig.

From this friendly wine valley of Sonoma County, forty miles north of San Francisco, to the gloomy barrens of the Ukraine is no mean leap. For *ZichronNote*, it was a piece of cake. When you published my article on Bender Hamlet last year, I hoped that you could provide a link to the Ukraine, from where my parents emigrated in 1899. Thanks to the painstaking work of my grand-nephew, Eric Segal, who pored over countless passenger lists, he discovered their names, with two infant children, on the S.S. LAKER ONTARIO, an unimposing ship of less than 2,750 tons (I'd hesitate to cross San Francisco Bay on it) that sailed from Liverpool, England, July 22, 1899, arriving nine days later at Quebec City, Canada. They traveled steerage class, of course, hardly a luxury voyage. Later, they homesteaded at Bender Hamlet, near Narcisse, Manitoba, where I was born in 1911.

In my adult years, I returned often to that memory-laden prairie, but could not reach back to Russia. That's when I asked for your help, and the world took a quick turn. Replies came from Brooklyn, Winnipeg, Southern California, Israel, and Mexico, each asking for or giving information on Bender Hamlet. Scarcely a trace is now left of that once-hardy shtetl. A happy diversion was the door you opened to a classroom of eight-year-olds eager to exchange e-mail with a pseudo-pioneer (me). They didn't know my coonskin hat was ersatz fur, that my exploits were hand-me-down tales heard from elders around a kitchen table of a tiny farmhouse shivering under wintry blizzards.

Finally, came the brass ring: an e-mail from Rabbi Eliezer Raphoel Brody-Ludwick in Israel, a young professor in his fifties, a devoted Hasidic scholar of

the Torah, teacher at a yeshiva. Most amazing, he is a genuine, close, blood relative I never knew existed—the grandson of my father's younger half-brother, Isaac. Wonder of wonders, Rabbi Eliezer had just returned from a search in the Ukraine, had found the graves of our ancestors, including a great-grandfather, Chatskel, we had in common. The following is from Rabbi Eliezer's own journal, December 1999, describing his six-day intensive trek across the Ukraine:

Highlights included visits to the grave sites of the renowned great of Ukrainian Jewry, the Ba'al Shem Tov at Medziboz, Rabbi Nachman at Uman, Rabbi Nathan at Brezlev, and Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev One of the trip's major goals was making a positive identification of the village of Yanov, locating the old Jewish site where Ludwick (Ludwig) grandparents lie in eternal rest Miraculously, hidden in a field off the main road was the cemetery, spared from the Nazis. Yanov was once a community of small farmers and artisans, destroyed several times: The pogrom of 1648, the pogrom of 1768, the pogroms of 1905-1909. Nazis invaded Yanov March 30, 1942, killing the town's one thousand Jews, who were buried in a communal grave. Rabbi Eliezer prayed for their blessed memory at this awesome site

Following the emotional high of locating Yanov and the cemetery, the Rabbi moved on to Berditchev, 80 kilometers north, the nearest town with a schul, home of the famed 18th century tzadik, Rabbi Levi Yitschak. He paid the local caretaker to round up a minyan from the

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Success: A Search in Ukraine, *cont'd. from page 7*

twenty-odd Jews left, who for a dollar each, joined in for the afternoon and evening prayers, followed by a L'Chayim with a bottle of Stolichnaya. Among the participants was an 81-year-old World War II veteran of the Russian tank corps, who bore an amazing resemblance to Isaac Ludwick (Rabbi Eliezer's grandfather). He was Baruch Litwak, the son of Shlomo Litwak, which means that Baruch Litwak and current family patriarch, Jack Ludwick of Maryland (the rabbi's father, only recently deceased) were second cousins, as their grandfathers were brothers. The schul broke loose with 'simcha' while the brawny but gentle Baruch smothered his 50-year-old visiting third cousin with a Russian bearhug and kisses on both cheeks as tears fell at this union of the Ludwicks of Canada, U.S., and Israel with the Litwaks of the Ukraine after a 94-year separation.

Last May, Rabbi Eliezer (now just plain "Larry," I was "Moish") made it to my home in Sonoma. He arrived in full regalia: long, braided payes, prayer shawl under a black coat, black hat. He roared with laughter when I warned him my conservative neighbors would have to be restrained from dialing 911 ("there goes the neighborhood"). If I were to name the most impressive men I'd ever met, Rabbi Larry would be at the top of the list: charismatic, bristling with energy, curious about everything, world-wise, generous, and, most delightful, a truly loveable guy. Being crushed in a bearhug by a man with a beard seemed the most natural thing in the world. My wife, Idee, and I had puzzled how to set a table for him. "Easy," he informed us by e-mail (he corresponds that way with scores of distant relatives) "fruits, nuts, vegetables, off paper plates, thank you." His only other request was for a bit of natural, open country where he could quietly pray and meditate at dawn – easily found here in this blissful area of grapevines, cows, sheep, geese – and serenity, a far cry from what he had found in the Ukraine and the remnants of the village of Yanov, situated northeast of Vinnitsa, a small city when my father, Osher, was a youth.

In Rabbi Larry's own words, told from the heart in his gripping, sadly poetic style:

In the middle of winter, the geese walk down the 200-year-old cobblestone streets, and in the spring and summer the cows take over. Surrounded by forests and wheat plains, you can pull 20-pound carp out of Lake Yanov. In the winter, when the peasants are idle, they spend their days with a bottle of vodka, ice-fishing on the lake. There are no more Yidden –

alive, that is – but one feels a strange, almost holy, presence of their souls. The Jews of Yanov were simple, G-d-fearing, good people with an uncomplicated, pure belief in their Creator. I felt a Holiness like the Western Wall there, because everywhere one walks you step on Jewish blood, as if one needs to remove one's shoes because of the sanctity of the place. There's not a potato or an apple in Yanov, or in most of the Ukraine, for that matter, that's not fertilized by the iron of our ancestors' blood and the calcium and phosphorus of their bones. During the first visit, when we discovered the old Yanov cemetery and the mass grave from the Holocaust, my brain knew that I'd never been there before, but my heart kept telling me "welcome home, yingele," as if any minute Alte Zaidie Chatskel would give me a call: "Laizerkie, kim essen, ma gait shoin leren," to come have a piece of herring and kartoffel kugel before we sit and learn a page of Gemmora together. Chaskel came to me in a dream once since, and gave me a fiery warning to devote all of my energies to Torah and to serving Hashem because I'm the only one of his offspring who is keeping the candle of old-time Torah Yiddishkeit burning, that is to say, together with my son and grandsons, G-d willing, 'til the end of time.

Rabbi Larry's determination to honor the memory of our forebears goes on. To quote again from a recent letter: "I haven't even scratched the surface of what has to be done. I'm trying to locate ancestors' (Litwak) property in Yanov and reclaim it from the government. It seems a ninety-seven percent hopeless task, but I must try. The two mass graves of the Holocaust – one of 60 Yanov Jews buried at the end of the cemetery, and another of 1,000 Jews on the eastern outskirts by the railway crossing – must be fenced and maintained." Each time he returns after a months-long absence, he finds new desecrations by nearby villagers (once, an attempt to plow the cemetery and plant potatoes).

I have discussed with Rabbi Larry the possibility of a permanent maintenance fund, perhaps building a small stone cairn or monument similar to that which the hard-working Joe Lavitt of Winnipeg did at Bender Hamlet, donations coming from descendants of the pioneers. It was a gala celebration that June day of 1986 when several hundred, from many corners of the U.S. and Canada, showed up for the unveiling, sponsored in part, by the Province of Manitoba. But Ukraine is not Manitoba, hostility is still rampant where our ancestors are buried; strangers, especially Jews, are not welcome. By any standards, the journey

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Uncle Jack's Crossing

by Betsy Brazy

Betsy Brazy grew up listening to her great-aunts' and great-uncles' stories of pre-World War I "White Russia," which sometimes included warnings of what a young girl shouldn't do. She is researching **SIPERSTEIN** of Pinsk, Belarus; **DRAIKIN** of Kherson, Ukraine; **BRAZY** of Tukums, Latvia; and **HURWICH** of Kaunas, Lithuania. She cannot read or speak Yiddish, but she knows what "potch en tuchus" means. She and her husband have one "shana maideleh." Visit Betsy's Web site at www.mindspring.com/~bbrazy/history.html.

"Uncle Jack," asked my cousin, "how did you get to the United States?" "I swam."

Well, not exactly. With just a little prodding, Jack described his two-month journey from Kherson, Ukraine to the United States, landing in the port of Seattle. I'm retelling his story so you can understand the trans-Siberian route. Later, I'll describe areas where I need more information and where I might find it. I'm also listing Web addresses (URLs).

My Great-Uncle Jack (Yosef) Draikin and his brothers Herman (Hersch) and Joe escaped from Russia about 1916 to avoid serving in the army of Czar Nicholas II. Many of you know of Jews who left Russia and Eastern Europe for the United States, landing at Ellis Island or Nova Scotia. I think my family likes to do things the hard way, and so, they took the eastern route, eventually reuniting in the port of Seattle.

First, I have to admit that I don't know who went with whom. Joe says he arrived with Herman, and Jack came later. Jack says he's the one who arrived with Herman, with Joe arriving later. Herman was the oldest brother, Joe the youngest brother.

Let us assume that Jack's story is the closest to the truth. Jack was well into his 90s when he described bits of his life in Kherson, Ukraine, to his nieces and great-nieces. His father was a jeweler and taught each son a variant of the trade. Jack learned engraving, Herman learned to set stones and repair jewelry, and Joe learned how to run a business. Their mother ran a store and narrowly avoided rape during a pogrom because a neighbor intervened. Anti-Semitism was a way of life, and Jewish boys who served in the army

would be sent to the front lines of World War I as cannon fodder. Girls were not necessarily exempt from the draft; his sister, Ethel (Anuta), was a doctor and therefore forced to serve in the army. (She later deserted and immigrated to the U.S. to join her family.)

Well, the boys were in their 20s and of an age to be drafted. They knew it was time to leave the country. The shortest route would have been from Europe to New York City, but not the most logical. It was late 1915 or early 1916. The warfront lay between Kherson and any western port. The Draikins had false papers made in Kherson that said they were businessmen buying merchandise to send to Kherson. They headed

east on the Trans-Siberian Railroad to Irkutsk (Siberia) and Harbin, Manchuria (China). Apparently they bought tickets to Irkutsk, and then bought tickets in Irkutsk to travel along the eastern Chinese railway section to Harbin. A travelogue I happened to view on PBS a few months ago showed that passengers had to disembark at Irkutsk because the track eastward was a different gauge (width). Jack said Manchuria was under Russian control; certainly the

railroad was, and to some extent even the town of Harbin.

Jack told me that he and Herman hiked over the mountains from Manchuria to sneak into China. It grew very cold, and Herman was so tired that he wanted to sleep. Jack was afraid that they would die from exposure, so he picked a fight with his brother to keep him awake and moving. Even in his 90s, Jack had strong hands from wielding engraving tools so

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Uncle Jack's Crossing, cont'd. from page 9

you can imagine that Herman realized it would be best to dodge those fists. Now Jack was a very gentle man, so imagine what it took for him to hit his older brother.

Jack told my Cousin Dorothy that they took a boat from Harbin to Korea and then from Korea to Japan. They were arrested once between China and Japan, perhaps in Manchuria, but for some reason were released. Once in Japan, they boarded a 5,000-ton ship from Yokahama to Seattle. My cousin thinks the ship's name was the *Avamora*, and was destroyed during World War II.

In Seattle, Jack worked at a shipyard called Skinner & Eddie for a year or more as a stevedore. Jack was short but Herman was even shorter at 5'1-1/2" and apparently worked elsewhere. And so, Jack told me, one day at the port he saw his brother Joe. It was a happy but brief reunion. Jack told Joe to wait a few hours before arriving at the Draikins' quarters. After work, Jack went home to prepare Herman.

"You know, Herman," he said, "some day, who knows when, our brother Joe will leave Russia. And Joe will arrive in Seattle and we'll be reunited. What a happy day that will be!" Just then, a young man knocked at the door. "Joe, what a surprise!" Jack said.

The Draikin boys reunited. Eventually, they moved to Chicago and set up business. Jack later moved to New York City, where he was a fine engraver. Ethel married and moved to Santa Monica, California.

It's good to keep in mind that oral history is not always accurate. My Grandfather Herman was long dead before I first wondered about our origins. All three brothers, two sisters, and their parents eventually immigrated to the U.S., leaving a married sister, Nina, behind in Russia. My mother heard from her father how he left Russia with Joe and that the trip included a Chinese junk. I grew up knowing my Great-Uncle Joe, who once told of leaving Russia with Herman but not how. Uncle Joe was a genealogist's challenge; he was so bent on assimilating that not only had he eliminated his accent, but he also

eliminated any questioning of his former life.

To determine the truth I need more than Herman's U.S. citizenship papers and Social Security application. A good start would be getting copies of naturalization applications for Herman and Joe from the National Archives branch in Chicago, as they lived in Chicago when they applied for citizenship.

The National Archives in Seattle should have immigration entry records for Seattle/Washington State, possibly including ship records. A microfilm

list of passenger lists shows the S.S. *Aki Maru*, which sounds similar to *Ayamora*. I might also look up ship arrival reports in back issues of the *Seattle Post* or *Seattle Intelligencer*.

I tried to verify the *Ayamora* name by researching Japanese ship names during World War II, but the closest I found was *Ayanami* at the Japanese Warship Names of the Imperial Japanese Navy Web site. Back issues of

Jane's Fighting Ships, if the directory dates back to 1916, also might be worth a look. A thread about the Trans-Siberian Railroad on the Belarus SIG Web site also mentioned that the NYK passenger line from Japan carried passengers from Kobe, Japan, to Seattle. Each discussion group's archived e-mails can be searched at www.jewishgen.org.

As for the Trans-Siberian Railway, I've found some information in English on the Web. There are several routes after Irkutsk, but the eastern terminus of Vladivostok wasn't established until October 1916.

URLs

National Archives' immigrant and passenger lists for Seattle: www.nara.gov/publications/microfilm/immigrant/rg85sea3.html. Japanese Warship Names: www.combinedfleet.com/ijnnames.htm. JewishGen: www.jewishgen.org. Trans-Siberian History: www.transsib.ru/Eng/dates.htm. Circum-Baikal Railway of the Trans-Siberian Railroad: www.icc.ru/baikal/railway.htm. The Face of Russia (PBS): www.pbs.org/weta/faceofrussia/public_html/text-only.html.

Debeikiai to Alabama: Small Shtetl to Small Town Life

by Roger Stein

Roger Stein has been a member of the SFBAGS since 1998. Although originally from Chicago he is becoming an expert in small town Jewish life as one set of ancestors settled in Altoona, Alabama and another in Dubuque, Iowa. His areas of research include the Birmingham, Alabama area, Dubuque, Iowa, Chicago, Debeikiai and Kamajai, Lithuania, Ozery, Belarus, London, and the surnames, **BERLIN**, **SUMMER (SCHEMER)**, **SCHWARTZBERG**, and **KUPERSTEIN (GOPERSTEIN)**.

My grandparents settled in Alabama after they immigrated to the United States. As this was an unusual place for Jewish immigrants to live, I have always wondered what motivated them to move there.

We have all heard that Jewish immigrants migrated to areas where they had relatives and friends from the "old country." In my research I have found several families from my grandfather's shtetl, Debeikiai, Lithuania, who settled in small towns around Birmingham, Alabama. It is one thing to know that families from the same town settled in the same area, but to see it in actual census records from Russia and the United States is very exciting.

Background: Birmingham's Jews

I found the following information on Jewish history in Birmingham from *A Century of Jewish Life in Dixie: The Birmingham Experience*, by Mark H. Elovitz. Birmingham, Alabama was incorporated on January 27, 1871. The first Jews arrived that same year. Henry Simon was the first, and he established a general merchandizing store. Before moving to Birmingham, Mr. Simon was in the merchandising business in Selma, Alabama. The second Jewish resident was Samuel Marx from Montgomery, Alabama, and the third, Isaac R. Hochstadter. All three families were of German-Jewish ancestry, and were engaged in the mercantile dry goods business. By 1881, Birmingham had grown to a population of 3,086 citizens. It had nine churches, twenty-five saloons, two daily newspapers, eight weekly papers, and a population of about thirty Jews.

In the summer of 1881, a group of young Jews decided to hold services to observe the coming High Holy Days. That fall, twenty-five to thirty worshippers met in the home of Henry Simon. The enthusiasm generated from these first meetings encouraged the Jewish families to form an organization to hold regular services. Ike Hochstadter led the establishment of Temple Emanu-El, incorporated on June 28, 1882. Emanu-El was a Reform congregation and for the 1882 High Holy Days it obtained the services of Joseph Stoltz, a student at the Reform Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati to serve as Rabbi.

Early travelers on the stage route from Tuscaloosa to Huntsville noticed massive outcroppings of distinctive red rock in the wooded mountains and valleys surrounding what is today Birmingham. This

red rock contained iron. The area is also rich in coal deposits. The abundant supply of coal and iron combined to create an economic boom, which began in the 1880s. The iron industry transformed Birmingham from a small, rough, pioneer town into a bustling city. The coal and iron mines created prosperity and opportunities in the towns surrounding Birmingham.

The first East European Jews arrived in Birmingham in the great wave of Jewish immigration beginning in the 1880s. They came with little money and few skills. Many moved south on advice that they may find greater opportunities in booming Birmingham. Others were going to see family and friends from the old country.

On July 4, 1888 an Orthodox congregation, K'nesseth Israel, was incorporated. The congregation met in homes until 1903 when a synagogue was built. By 1911 K'nesseth Israel had a membership of 175 families. In 1917, the Birmingham Jewish population was estimated at three thousand; most were immigrants or descendants of immigrants from Eastern Europe.

The iron boom created opportunities for peddlers in the mining camps surrounding Birmingham. Peddling became the occupation of many Eastern Europeans. An immigrant could obtain a modest amount of credit from one of the established families and become a peddler. The peddlers would walk through the countryside with a pack on their back or with a mule and wagon, selling and trading goods. The peddler would leave home on Monday and return on the weekend. After backpacking for a few years some peddlers saved enough to start a store. As the peddlers fanned out they began to establish Jewish communities in the mining boomtowns surrounding Birmingham.

Other Alabama Enclaves

I began my research about three years ago. At that point I knew nothing about when my grandparents arrived in this country, or how they came to settle in Alabama. One Friday afternoon I drove up to the National Archives in San Bruno to look at the U.S. Census. After receiving help from other researchers on using the Soundex index and how to find the actual records, I was off.

My grandfather's name was Max Berlin and he lived in Altoona, Alabama. So, I looked at the 1920 Soundex and found an M. Berlin. My initial excitement was

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Debeikiai to Alabama, *cont'd. from page 15*

dampened when I looked in the actual census record and found that it was really Mendle Berlin, and that the family was not my own. I found them living in West Blockton, Alabama. Using www.mapquest.com I found that West Blockton was just south of Birmingham.

That weekend I called my aunt and told her what I had found in the census. Her reply was "Oh that's Uncle Mendel." So I had my first connection. The next Friday I returned to the Archives and found that Mendel and his family were living in West Blockton in 1910. While looking through the census I found that there were several Jewish families living in West Blockton. Jews are listed in the nationality column as Hebrew so they are easy to identify.

Why were there so many Jews in West Blockton? In a moment of inspiration I did a Web search using Alta Vista on "West Blockton" and "Jew." The search turned up a 1997 article in an online magazine called the Southern Cyber Shofar titled *West Blockton Remembers Site Where Synagogue Stood*. The West Blockton Improvement Society was dedicating a series of markers in places of historic importance, including the site where Congregation Agudas Achim once stood.

West Blockton was a coal mining boomtown. An article on the Alabama site of www.rootsweb.com described the sidewalks of West Blockton like "Sears on Christmas Eve." The coal miners would come in on Saturday night from the surrounding mining towns and it was like "you were going into old Dodge City, Kansas. It was wild."

West Blockton had a thriving Jewish community. The first Jews arrived as peddlers in 1882. By 1892 Wolf Israel and Zane Nathews opened the I & N Quality Store, which sold dry goods. For a time the I & N Quality Store had the only elevator in the county. It was operated by hand using ropes and pulleys. Each winter it displayed an electric train in the window making the store popular with children in the town.

Wolf Israel founded Agudas Achim and served as its first president. A synagogue was built in 1905. It was a simple wooden building painted white with a white picket fence on Main Street. The West Blockton Jewish community numbered 20 families with 125 people at its peak.

In the late '20s, Wolf Israel's sons, Frank and Elmo, rigged a radio studio in the back of the store and broadcast a soap opera through a speaker on the sidewalk every Saturday. One of their cousins, Melvin Israel, from the nearby town, Jones, would spend his summers in West Blockton and take part in the broadcasts. Melvin would grow up to become Mel Allen, the voice of the New York Yankees.

The next step in my research was to find my grandparent's naturalization papers. I knew my grandfather had a brother, Morris, who settled in Alabama. I also wanted his naturalization records.

By checking the National Archives Web site (www.nara.gov) I found that all Alabama naturalization records are stored in the National Archives in Atlanta. So I called them up. A helpful archivist found the records and sent them to me for \$10 per record.

I found that my grandfather, Max, immigrated in 1911 and went straight to Alabama. But his brother Morris arrived in 1904. Morris filed his Declaration of Intention in 1906 in Bibb County, Alabama and listed his residence as Blockton, Alabama. His petition for naturalization stated that he had lived in Alabama since 1905. Morris incorrectly listed his arrival date on his Petition as July 4, 1905 on the ship *Ethopia*. When I went to order the microfilm with his ship manifest at the Family History Center in Santa Clara, I checked the Morton Allen Directory. I found that the ship and day were correct but the year was wrong, the ship actually arrived in 1904. So Morris could have been in Alabama as early as 1904.

One day while talking to my uncle he mentioned that there was a relative, Morris Kantor, who lived in Oneonta, Alabama. Oneonta is close to Altoona where my grandparents lived. I made another trip to the Archives in San Bruno and looked for Morris Kantor in the census. I did not find Morris, but I did find three Kantors, William, Abraham, and Albert. All were bachelors and lived in small towns around Birmingham and all were listed as peddlers. William was in the 1900 Census and it noted that he immigrated in 1891. Now if these Kantors were related to Morris, and Morris was related to my grandfather, I would have a connection going back to the 1890s and a reason why my grandparents went to Alabama.

My aunt recognized Albert Kantor as an uncle of Morris. The census said Albert immigrated in 1901. I was making progress.

Debeikiai

Another key piece of information I found from the naturalization records was that both my grandfather and his brother Morris listed Dobiak, Russia as their place of birth. I knew that the Berlin family came from what is today Lithuania. Using the ShtetlSeeker on JewishGen I found that Dobiak was most likely Debeikiai, Lithuania. I had another important piece of the puzzle.

Debeikiai was a small shtetl in the Ukmerge Uzed (district) of the Kovno Gubernia. After finding that my family was probably from this town, I joined the Litvak SIG, subscribed to their discussion group, and joined the Ukmerge research group.

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Jewish History in U.S. Cities and States

by Lillian Wurzel

Over the years, a number of books have been written describing the history and development of Jewish life in many cities around the United States. What follows is probably an incomplete list, but a good start.

Because many of the books list Jewish pioneers, who were often “makers and shakers” in their communities, you may even find a relative’s name and something about his or her accomplishments (many of the yizkor books do the same, memorializing local activists).

From the book about Milwaukee, Wisconsin, I learned that a great-uncle (my grandmother’s brother) was the president for one year of a synagogue he helped found. He also helped establish a Jewish cemetery, and was a founder and officer of a fraternal organization (not the B’nai B’rith, but another one).

I have compiled a bibliography of books about Jewish communities in several cities in the U.S. There are also a few books that attempt to cover Jewish life in a whole state. I hope you will find this useful.

- | | | |
|------------|----------------|---|
| CA | Los Angeles | Cogan, Sara. <i>The Jews of Los Angeles, 1849-1945: an annotated bibliography</i> . Western Jewish History Center, Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum, 1980. 237 pp. |
| CA | Los Angeles | Sandberg, Neil C. <i>Jewish Life in Los Angeles: a window to tomorrow</i> . University Press of America, 1986. 211 pp. |
| CA | Los Angeles | Vorspan, Max and Gartner, Lloyd. <i>History of the Jews of Los Angeles</i> . Huntington Library, 1970. |
| CA | Petaluma | Kann, Kenneth L. <i>Comrades and Chicken Ranchers - the Story of a California Jewish Community</i> . Cornell University Press, 1993. |
| CA | San Francisco | Cogan, Sara G. <i>The Jews of San Francisco and the Greater Bay Area, 1859-1919</i> . Western Jewish History Center, Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum, 1973. 127 pp. |
| CA | San Francisco | Narell, Irene. <i>Our City: The Jews of San Francisco</i> . Howell North Books, 1981. 424 pp. |
| CA | San Joaquin | Newman, Shirley Ann. <i>We Brought Sinai to San Joaquin: The Story of the Jews of Kern County</i> . Temple Beth El and BitterSweet Publishing Co., Bakersfield, CA, 1998 |
| CA | San Jose | Kinsey, Stephen. <i>They Called it Home: the development of the Jewish Community of San Jose, CA, 1850-1900</i> . Masters Thesis, San Jose State University, 1973. |
| CA, AZ, NM | | Rischin, Moses, Ed. <i>Jews of the West: The Metropolitan Years</i> . Western Jewish History Center, Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum, 1979. 157 pp. |
| DA | Washington | Altshuler, David, Ed. <i>The Jews of Washington D.C.: a communal history anthology</i> . Rossell Books, 1985. 300 pp. |
| GA | Atlanta | Hertzberg, Steven. <i>Strangers. Within the Gate City: the Jews of Atlanta, GA, 1845-1915</i> . Jewish Publication Society of America, 1978. 325 pp. |
| GA | Savannah | Levy, B.H. <i>Savannah’s Old Jewish Community Cemeteries</i> . Mercer University Press, 1983. 118 pp. |
| IL | Chicago | Cutler, Irving. <i>The Jews of Chicago: from shtetl to suburb</i> . University of Illinois Press, 1996. 315 pp. |
| LA | New Orleans | Korn, Beatrice W. <i>The Early Jews of New Orleans</i> . American Jewish Historical Society, 1969. 382 pp. |
| LA | Rapides Parish | Hinchin, Martin G. <i>Fourscore and Eleven: A history of the Jews of Rapides Parish, Louisiana, 1829-1919</i> . M.I. Hinchin, 1984. 171 pp. |
| MA | Boston | Sarna, Jonathon D. and Smith, Ellen, Eds. <i>Jews of Boston: essays on the occasion of the centenary (1895-1995) of the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston</i> . Northeastern University Press, 1995. 353 pp. |
| MD | Baltimore | Fein, Isaac. <i>The Making of an American Jewish Community: The History of Baltimore Jewry from 1773 to 1920</i> . The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1971. |
| MS | | Turitz, Leo and Evelyn. <i>Jews in Early Mississippi</i> . University Press of Mississippi, 1995. 136 pp. |

Continued on page 18

Jewish History in U.S. Cities and States, cont'd. from page 17

NC/SC	Golden, Harry. <i>Jewish Roots in the Carolinas: A Pattern of American Philo-Semitism</i> . Deal Print Co., 1955. 72 pp.
NJ	Eisenberg, Ellen. <i>Jewish Agricultural Colonies in New Jersey, 1882-1920</i> . Syracuse University Press, 1995. 376 pp.
NY Westchester	Shargel, Baila R. and Drimmer, Harold L. <i>Jews of Westchester: a society history</i> . Purple Mountain Press, 1994. 266 pp.
OH Cincinnati	Sarna, Jonathan P., and Klein, Nancy H. <i>Jews of Cincinnati</i> . Hebrew Union College, 1989. 190 pp.
OH Columbus	Raphael, Marc L. <i>Jews and Judaism in a Midwestern Community: Columbus, OH, 1840-1875</i> . Ohio Historical Society, 1979. 483 pp.
OR	Lowenstein, Steven. <i>Jews of Oregon</i> . Jewish Historical Society of Oregon, 1987. 236 pp.
PA Philadelphia	Wolf, Edwin G., and Whiteman, Maxwell. <i>The History of the Jews of Philadelphia from Colonial Times to the Age of Jackson</i> . The Jack R. Schiff Library of Jewish Contributions to American Civilization, 1957.
PA Philadelphia	Morais, Henry S. <i>The Jews of Philadelphia: their history from the earliest settlements to the present time; a record of events and institutions, and of leading members of the Jewish community in every sphere of activity</i> . The Levytype Co., 1894. 576 pp.
RI	Foster, Geraldine S. (Conley, Patrick T., Ed.). <i>Jews of Rhode Island 1658-1958</i> . Arcadia Publishing. 48 pp.
SC	Elzas, Barnett A. <i>The Jews of South Carolina from Earliest Times to the Present Day</i> . J.B. Lippincott, 1905.
SC Sumter	Moises, Harold. <i>The Moise Family of Sumter, SC and Their Descendants</i> . R.L. Bryan, 1961.
TN Nashville	Frank, Feodora. <i>Five Families and Eight Young Men (Nashville and her Jewry 1850-1861)</i> , Tennessee Book Co., 1962. 184 pp.
TN Nashville	Frank, Feodora. <i>Beginnings on Market Street – Nashville and Her Jewry, 1861-1901</i> . Jewish Federation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee, 1976.
TX	Ornish, Natalie. <i>Pioneer Jewish Texans: their impact on Texas and American history for four hundred years, 1590-1990</i> . Texas Heritage Press, 1989. 323 pp.
TX Houston	Maas, Elaine H. <i>The Jews of Houston: An Ethnographic Study</i> . AMS Press, 1989. 280 pp.
VA Petersburg	Ginsburg, Louis. <i>History of the Jews of Petersburg, 1789-1950</i> . Petersburg, VA, 1954. 118 pp.
VA Richmond	Ezekiel, Herbert T. and Lichtenstein, Gaston. <i>The History of the Jews of Richmond, from 1769 to 1917</i> . Sergeant Kirkland's, 1998.
WI Milwaukee	Swichkow, Rabbi Louis J. and Gartner, Lloyd P. <i>The History of the Jews of Milwaukee</i> . Jewish Publication Society of America, Inc., 1963.
WV	Schinedling, Abraham. <i>West Virginia Jewry: origins and history, 1850-1958</i> . Press of M. Jacobs, 1965. 1753 pp.
The South	Dinnerstein, Leonard, and Palsson, Mary, Eds. <i>Jews in the South</i> . Louisiana State University Press, 1973. 392 pp.
The South	Proctor, Samuel and Schnier, Louis, Eds. <i>Jews of the South, selected essays from the Southern Jewish Historical Society</i> . Mercer University Press, 1984. 130 pp.
The South	Faber, Eli. <i>Jews, Slaves, and the Slave Trade: setting the record straight</i> . New York University Press, 1998. 366 pp.
Canada	Leonoff, Cyril. <i>Pioneers, Peddlers, and Prayer Shawls: The Jewish Community in British Columbia and the Yukon</i> . Victoria, 1978.

Speedy and Special Information from Lithuanian Archives

by Les Shipnuck, shipnuck@mcclier.com

On October 20, 2000, within a month of my inquiry, I received a response from the Civil Registry Archives in Vilnius. Recently, I received four translations of birth, marriage, and death records for a number of relatives that were loaded with data. Included were the names of the rabbi and midwife (where applicable), and witnesses who were also related.

The registry houses vital records for the Suwalki Gubernia from 1918 onward. They sent me the abstracts of six records pertaining to the families of my great-aunts from the Kovno (today Kaunas), Lithuania area in the 1920s and 30s. The abstracts are written in Lithuanian.

These records refer to the "Prieny rabinatė," Prieny being the name of my grandmother's village. This suggests to me that the Jewish records from this shtetl have survived, at least in some fragmentary form. This is especially significant in that Prieny has been noted in Holocaust records as one of two towns in Lithuania where total liquidation of the Jewish

population had allegedly occurred. (The village had 2,000-3,000 residents before World War II, roughly half of whom were Jewish, from what I have learned.) Prieny – modern Prienai – is 20 miles due south of Kaunas.

The archive can be reached as follows:

Lithuanian Archives Department
(Lietuvos Archyvu Departamentas)
Lithuanian Central Civil Registry
(Lietovos Centrinis Metriku Archyvas)
K. Kalinausko 21
2600 Vilnius, Lithuania
Jovita Vaineikiene, Director

The Registry processed my request in a month, without charging a fee for the abstracts, and responded through the offices of the Consulate General of Lithuania, 211 East Ontario Street, Suite 1500, Chicago, IL 60611.

Success: A Search in Ukraine, cont'd. from page 8

is laborious, unsafe, and expensive, far beyond the limited means of a struggling teacher in Israel. Always, he must be accompanied by some of his compassionate fellow religionists, whose muscles are as strong as their faith

Still, young cousin Rabbi Larry holds to his dream. He will have my help, of course, in the spirit and financially, and that of the relatives who will join our cherished venture into learning about the good, and bad, of our past. The purpose is to maintain, in perpetuity, a caretaker fund to memorialize the heritage. We are searching the internet for any charitable associations already in existence. Since so much has been destroyed by the Nazi invasion and by local, non-Jewish inhabitants, records and archives are almost non-existent.

So almost ends my vicarious journey to trace roots in Ukraine. My next birthday will be ninety, G-d willing, and it's nigh time to circle the wagons. My paternal line seems quite clear – an indomitable grandfather Chaskel, a sturdy believer and student of the Torah, who survived to 104 years, married twice, sired 27 children (my father, Osher, was the eldest by his first wife). The maternal line is still

unclear. My mother's maiden name in Yanov was Sonya **SCHATZ**. The belief is that, somehow, she was related to the first wife of my remarkable grandfather Chaskel. Some Schatzes emigrated to the United States, possibly to California and, of all places, the Bay Area. Is it possible? Will my wife, Idee, and I perhaps one day share lunch and a cool Chardonnay with a newly found third cousin? Come on. *ZichronNote!* Now that I have provided you with a sequel to "Success Story, Bender Hamlet" can you find me another brass ring? A new hunt is on!

P.S. As I write this (December 15, 2000) I've just received a startling e-mail from a "Schatzi" to a "Jake Schatz" that begins: "Jake, I've received a letter from Bea about someone who sounds as if he is a distant and interesting relative living in Sonoma. He is ninety years old and is a half-brother of Isaac Ludwig, who was my father's first cousin" (actually, he is referring to my father, Osher). But, no matter – my lines are open to "Jake," wherever he is. Let's get it on!

Our heartfelt condolences to Morrie, who lost his beloved wife Idee only one day after submitting this article. May her memory be a blessing.

Debeikiai to Alabama, cont'd. from page 16

I wrote to the Lithuanian Archives requesting a search for Berlin in the Ukmerge Uzed. One January morning I received a response with an entry from the 1895 census with my grandfather's family in Debeikiai. They also sent me an entry from the 1874 revision list containing my great-grandfather along with his wife and mother in a shtetl called Uzpaliai.

Through the Ukmerge research group I ordered the 1895 box tax list for Debeikiai. I knew I would find my grandfather's family but I wanted to see who else was in Debeikiai at that time. When I received it I found several Kantor families. But the box tax list only lists heads-of-families, so I could not link them to the Kantors I found in Alabama.

Every day I skim the Litvak SIG discussion group digest. Last summer I found a posting announcing that the complete 1895 revision list for the Ukmerge Uzed was being translated. I ordered the list for Debeikiai. This was a breakthrough because the revision list shows all family members. Now I could crosscheck the census from Debeikiai with my research in the U.S. Census. I have found Morris Kantor and his family in the Debeikiai census along with Albert Kantor. I have shared the Debeikiai census with other relatives and have found three other families in Debeikiai who had members living in towns around Birmingham. Some still have descendants living in the Birmingham area.

There is much more I could tell in this story. I have found other Berlins in Alabama through the JewishGen Family Finder. These Berlins may have come from Pasvalys, Lithuania in the Panevezys Uzed, not far from Debeikiai. I have not been able to connect them to my family but I could be coming close. Using the Family History Center in Santa Clara I found their naturalization papers from 1892 in Shelby County, Alabama. William Kantor was living in Shelby County at that time.

Recently in the JewishGen Discussion Group I read a posting from the Southern Jewish Historical Society (SJHS) announcing the publication of the next edition of their Journal. Listed is an article called *A Shtetl Grew in Bessemer: Temple Beth-El and Jewish Life in Small-Town Alabama*. I should receive this journal shortly. The SJHS also published the book "A Century of Jewish Life in Dixie," which I found through an Internet search.

Conclusion

Alabama was an unusual place for a Jewish immigrant to settle. From my research I now have a better idea of what drew my grandparents to Alabama and what their life was like. One gets a feeling for the correspondence between the families in Alabama and Debeikiai, and what it was like when someone from the shtetl in Russia arrived in Alabama.

Most Jewish immigrants settled in large cities, New York, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia. Their life in these cities is well documented. I had the opportunity to do research into a much smaller area. I have searched through census records for complete counties in a few hours. This is not possible in New York and Chicago. Given this unique situation I have been able to connect a small shtetl in Lithuania to small town life in Alabama.

I still have a lot to learn. Most people think of genealogy as building family trees. Enlarging my research to include the history of the Birmingham area has enriched my genealogical experience. As I have hit brick walls in family tree building, I began to look for insights into what my grandparents' experiences were like. This could provide clues to find ancestors in Russia before 1874. But if not, I still have learned about a slice of Jewish life that is unique to my family and which makes the family tree more of a personal experience.

Can't Confirm the Date of Arrival for Your Ancestor? Consider This!

Eleanor Gordon, JewishGen

There are many reasons why information on naturalization documents as to when our ancestors entered this country is often erroneous. These four give an indication of the problems we may encounter in reconciling arrival dates from various sources.

- Some immigrants just plain forgot the date and offered an approximate date or "best guess."
- There may have been a problem reconciling dates on the Gregorian and Julian calendars. Russia did not adopt the Gregorian calendar until after the Bolshevik revolution in 1917. Prior to that date, there was a 13-day discrepancy between the two calendars.
- When the U.S. government started requiring "proof" of immigration date for naturalization, a new business sprang up searching records to find someone with the same name as the applicant, who entered the U.S. in the same general time frame. This date was supplied (for a fee) to the aspiring citizen and was entered on the naturalization documents. Since many people had the same name or an approximation thereof, the naturalization papers for your ancestor may show the date of entry for someone of the same name who is not related to you.
- Some of our ancestors were held at the port of immigration for a day or more, if there was some uncertainty about allowing them to enter the country. In this case, the ancestor may have recorded his release date from Ellis Island rather than the ship's docking date.

Storytelling is Genealogy Too

by Jerrie Wacholder

Jerrie has been researching her father's family, **CHARAK** from Iran and Russia, for 12 years. her Great-Grandmother, Esther **SARITSKY**, was the wife of Joseph Charak from Brest, Belarus or Odessa, Ukraine. Of her mother's family, little is known about the **GENSLERS** and **FEDERS** from Posen, before the late 1700s. She has also researched the family of her late husband David **RUBENSTEIN**, and his mother's family, **SCHWARTZ**, both from Riga, Latvia.

Old medical records discovered last year shed new information on her mother's life. She knew her mother was one of the first women to graduate from the University of California with a degree in medicine, in 1895, and the first woman to enter the Berlin School of Medicine. Jerrie did not know that her mother wrote a book promoting her medical abilities, published in San Francisco, possibly around 1912. This was truly a great find.

I have incorporated the stories of five families into a book, comprised of stories told to me by my parents, and my own experiences. The book became a loving history for the next generation, and was a special Chanukah gift to all the family last December.

Many years ago a relative of my father's had gone to great trouble and expense to compile his family history and had it professionally researched. The family name of **CHARAK** was traced back to the doctors that traveled with Genghis Khan and Tamerlane. I was able to weave my stories around this fascinating beginning. I was so intrigued with this information as my mother had been one of the first women doctors in California, and neither she nor my father had any knowledge of his family history. It was an exciting story and inspired me to write my book.

Apparently the name of Charak is not a common one, as I was able to find the name only in L'vov, Ukraine, and it belonged to a Persian family who owned a restaurant. As the families must have traveled through India and Persia this was perhaps a connection, but it was as far as I could follow it.

Through the years I was able to gather quite a bit of family history, some from an old prayer book of my grandmother's and much from stories that my mother and father had told me. However, my research did not go further back than the late 1700s. I had tried to trace several family names, but it seemed impossible.

Perhaps they had changed their names or the cities that I thought they came from were no longer in existence. I found that I preferred storytelling to research, so my book developed into a series of family stories, which has proved to be fascinating to all the children and grandchildren.

In 1998 my son and I went to Salt Lake City with Gary Mokotoff to use the Mormon (LDS) Family History Library. We were successful in our research and gathered enough information to fill in many of the voids. My son was far more successful than I in his ability to follow through with the research, and we were able to combine all our materials. It proved to be a very worthwhile trip. I would recommend joining Gary's tour as the LDS provides a wealth of knowledge, and he and Eileen Polakoff were extremely helpful.

As the research was so difficult for me, I concentrated my efforts on relating all the stories that my parents had told me. I was truly more interested in telling these stories.

Additionally, I was fortunate to find a talented historian through her advertisement in *ZichronNote*. Sue Austin is an outstanding, knowledgeable person, and was immensely helpful in putting my book together. Without Sue's ability, I doubt that my family history could have been so professionally published. She managed to produce my book for Chanukah of 2000 and I am hopeful that it will inspire many generations to continue where I left off.

Seeking Members with Families Buried in Baron Hirsch Cemetery, Staten Island, NY

by Babette Bloch

News of the appalling physical condition at the Baron Hirsch Cemetery, on Staten Island, N.Y., has spurred descendants of some of these families into launching an appeal to others who may have family buried there, in the hope of combining funds to clean up this important cemetery properly. The cemetery management has advised that the graves are horribly overgrown with weeds, including poison ivy, making it virtually impossible to locate or approach a grave.

The cost for such a cleanup would run to many thousands of dollars if done by the cemetery management. It is hoped that a combined fund would assist in the effort to rouse local congressional representatives, as well as other volunteer groups/congregations in the area, to become involved in such a project. Some families around the country have already volunteered contributions. If you know of anyone who has, or if you have, family buried in the Baron Hirsch Cemetery on Staten Island, and are interested, please contact me at bvcb@juno.com.

COMPUTER/ONLINE NEWS

The Shtetls of Lithuania, Belarus, and Romania

If you're researching towns in Lithuania, Belarus, or Romania, you shouldn't miss the the "Shtetls of ..." Web sites, one each for Lithuania, www.jewishgen.org/Litvak/Shtetls/Lithuania.htm, Belarus, www.jewishgen.org/belarus/shtetls, and Romania, www.jewishgen.org/romsig/Shtetls/Romania.htm. Here you can locate many of the references to your town of research to be found on JewishGen. The uezd (district) and gubernia (province) for each town are given, along with the latitude and longitude.

Searches can be made of the many JewishGen databases including the Family Finder, the Discussion Group Archives, the Shtetl Seeker, Yizkor book information (if known), the appropriate Special Interest Group, and a shtetl home page if hosted on JewishGen. (If there is no home page for your shtetl, you are encouraged to create one.) When you've expanded the scope of your research to include the towns near yours, you can search by uezd or gubernia.

Searching the Web beyond JewishGen is also made easy through the AllTheWeb search engine linked to the page. Some spelling variations are conveniently accounted for. For example, although listed as "Wiejsieje," both "Veisiejai" and "Vishai" were offered.

An FAQ is provided which addresses how the site is organized and what you can do with the information you find. For those of us overwhelmed by the myriad JewishGen databases to search, these terrific sites make it easy.

Hungarian Map Resource at the New York Public Library

Pamela Weisberger, JewishGen

The New York Public Library (NYPL) Map Division Room contains a treasure trove of map resources for the genealogist. While a personal visit is ideal, their Web site www.nypl.org/research/chss/map/map.html, provides a search engine for their maps of cities, countries, etc. The library's online card catalogue catnyp.nypl.org, may also provide useful information. Once you discover which maps are of interest to you, they can be ordered and sent to you for the costs of copying and mailing.

Many years ago I discovered an incredible set of Hungarian military maps there entitled K.u.k. militargeographisches Institut Nach Aufnahme 1884/Nachtr 5 II 1908 Nach Zerchenschlassel, 1894. The map scale is 1:75:0000, and they show the smallest villages

detailed, including every road and every house lining the streets (as little black dots). You can truly get a sense of the size of the village in which your ancestors might have lived, as well as the proximity to other small villages. Additionally, these maps carry the "original" town names (before prefixes were added to many in Hungary) and show many towns which are now part of Ukraine.

There is one, huge "guide" map divided into many sections. Thus you must first find the general location of your town of interest so you can request the specific map (and microfilm) from the library staff. Each map is identified by the two largest towns represented, for example, "Kis-Varda and Vasaros-Nemeny" or "Csap."

So, although a bit of work may be required, these maps are amazing research tools for those of us with Hungarian ancestors. And, for those researching other countries, my guess is there are many more treasures to discover at the NYPL.

Contact the Map Division at (212) 930-0587. I have found the librarians on staff to be incredibly helpful when it comes to research questions.

Galicia Surname Index on Geshher Galicia Web Site

Shelley K. Pollero, JewishGen

The Galicia Surname Index is now online at the Geshher Galicia web site: www.jewishgen.org/galicia/surdex/static_index.htm. This page contains an index to the unique surnames found on various Galicia web sites.

The following Web pages are included in the Galicia Surname Index as of December 19, 2000:

- 1929 Polish Business Directory for Gorodenka;
- Brody cemetery database;
- Ulanow-born People Who Perished in Buchenwald in 1939;
- Jews From Germany who were Registered in the Krakow Ghetto in 1940, but Born in Ulanow, Poland;
- Kagen Subscription lists for Ulanow circa 1920s;
- Przemysl Jews murdered 1939;
- Przemysl Memorial Book, Index Of Names (in Hebrew);
- Przemysl Memorial Book, Photo Surname Index;
- Przemysl Memorial Book, Yiddish Surname Index;
- Transliterated Names from Necrology in Lezajsk Yiskor Book;

Continued on page 23

Galicia Surname Index, *cont'd. from page 22*

- Students of Jewish Ancestry at the Supplemental Industrial School of Tarnobrzeg in the Years 1899 - 1910;
- Teachers and Students of Jewish Ancestry in the Tarnobrzeg (Gimnazjum) High School;
- Ulanow Ancestors and Researcher List;
- Ulanow School Logs;
- Ulanow Section of Washington Cemetery in South Brooklyn, NY; and
- List of Zolynia burials in the Chevre Zoliner landsmanshaft cemetery plots.

Each day we receive additional surname lists are received and are prepared for posting.

If you know of any existing Web pages that have lists of Galicia surnames, please contact me and be sure to send me the URL for the Web page. We can also use Galicia surname lists in Excel or in other formats, if the last names are separated by commas. If in doubt, send the data and we will use it if we can. Contact: Shelley Kellerman Pollero, Coordinator Geshet Galicia, rkpollero@starpower.net.

Early American SIG

by Carol Skydell, JewishGen

The Early American SIG, will be of interest to researchers who may be 150 years or more removed from European roots. A mailing list and Web site at www.jewishgen.org/earlyamerican have been established. Participants share knowledge and methods by answering queries on the SIG mailing list as well as through links on their Web page. The Web pages are organized geographically (by state) in order to give advice and information that is as specific as possible.

Most immigrants before 1880 were spread out among small towns and rural areas in the South and Midwest, and blended in with their non-Jewish neighbors rather than collecting in urban areas and keeping their culture. For these reasons, the required research methods and resources often have more in common with standard American genealogy, but with a few twists.

The Early American SIG is specifically designed to serve those researchers who have no living family to even ask about the "old country." These genealogists, researching immigrants to the U.S. before 1880, have a different set of challenges and issues than the majority of Jewish researchers. They do not have complete immigration records, nor living relatives who might remember the family's town of origin.

Subscribe to the mailing list online or by e-mail. From www.jewishgen.org/listserv/sigs.htm, click the word "Subscribe" and complete the automated

webform. Or send an e-mail to listserv@lyris.jewishgen.org with "subscribe earlyamerican" in the body of the message. You will receive an e-mail request to confirm your subscription.

JewishGen's ViewMate – Seeing is Believing

Do you have a photograph of someone you can't identify? A foreign-language document you would like translated or a family heirloom or artifact about which you would like more information? JewishGen has made it easy with ViewMate, www.jewishgen.org/ViewMate/. Users are encouraged to use ViewMate for the posting of Jewish genealogy-related graphics which might include photographs for identification of people, clothing, buildings, scenes, objects, artifacts, letters, documents, book pages, or maps for identification, analysis, or translation.

How does it work? Details and explanations of technical terms are available from the site's "To Post" and FAQ pages.

1. Make sure there is no copyright infringement in posting your image.
2. Create a scanned image of the item you wish to upload, saving the file in either .jpeg/.jpg, .gif, or .pdf format. There is a 500K limit on file size. If you don't own a scanner, the site suggests asking friends or using retail copy centers that offer scanning facilities.
3. Upload your file directly from the ViewMate site. The form on the Post page will prompt you for information about the image that may help others help you, and your name and e-mail address. Files can also be uploaded using File Transfer Protocol (FTP). See the ViewMate Web site for more instructions.
4. The ViewMate Administrator is automatically notified of your upload and will place your document within the ViewMate site, usually within 72 hours. You will receive an e-mail when your image has been posted.
5. Announce the availability of your ViewMate document. You may wish to send a post to the JewishGen discussion group and other forums, as well as letting your friends and relatives know the image has been posted.
6. Your image will remain on ViewMate for a maximum of seven days. You can request to have the materials removed sooner.

Don't forget to take a look at the images posted by other genealogists on the site. Perhaps you can help someone else unravel a mystery!

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