



# זכרון ZichronNote

## The Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

Volume XXIV, Number 4

November 2004

### 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.**  
Jewish Community High School, 1835 Ellis Street. Jewish Community Library open on second floor. **Free parking: enter parking area from Pierce Street.**
- Los Altos Hills:** **Monday, Library opens at 7 p.m. Program begins at 7:30 p.m.** Congregation Beth Am, 26790 Arastradero Road.
- Berkeley:** **Sunday, 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.** Berkeley-Richmond Jewish Community Center, 1414 Walnut Street, North Berkeley.

**Sun. November 21, San Francisco:** *The Jews of Singapore.* Presented by Joan Beider, Senior Lecturer in Journalism at U.C. Berkeley. Don't know of any family who lived in or came through Singapore? Intriguingly, there is a Lithuanian Jewish connection to Singapore as well as a fascinating surprise which Joan uncovered during the course of her research. Join us for this truly fascinating presentation. (*Speaker rescheduled after earlier cancellation*).

**Sun. December 19, San Francisco:** **Sun. December 19, San Francisco.** *Deep Linking and Deeper Linking:: How to get the most out of existing Search Applications.* Stephen Morse, developer of on-line interfaces facilitating searches of the Ellis Island Database, the 1930 U.S. Census database, and other genealogical applications, will explain how deep linking provides a means of optimizing the information extracted from existing third-party websites in general, and from search applications in particular. By exposing the techniques that were used on the One-Step website he will provide a better understanding of how to use it.

**Sun. January 16, San Francisco:** *Jewish holdings in the libraries at the University of California at Berkeley.* Paul Hamburg, Curator of Judaica/Hebraica at UC Berkeley, will discuss Judaica in the Bancroft Library and in other collections on campus. The UCB library holds 10 million titles. The only larger libraries in America are the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library.

**Sunday February Meeting, Berkeley:** *TBD*

**Monday February Meeting, Los Altos Hills:** *TBD*

**Sun. March 20, San Francisco:** *The Holocaust Center of Northern California.*

For the latest program information visit [www.jewishgen.org/sfbajgs](http://www.jewishgen.org/sfbajgs)

**More Genealogy Events of Interest on Page 4**

## ZichronNote

### Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

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**Membership** is open to anyone interested in Jewish genealogy. Dues are \$23 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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## President's Message Look Back in Admiration (With Apologies to Harold Pinter)

by Jeremy Frankel, SFBAJGS President

As this year draws to a close, it is customary for the SFBAJGS president to reminisce about the Society's activities over the past year. One of the pointers that shows the strength of the Society is that even in the current difficult financial climate we still remain numerically strong.

2004 saw another fascinating series of varied presentations. They ranged from Joan Beider's talk on the Jews of Shanghai, to Aaron Korblum, Curator of the Western Jewish History Center at the Judah L. Magnes Museum in Berkeley; and from David Piff talking about the lesser known holdings at the San Bruno repository of the National Archives, to Joan Kelley-Williams, Helen Hausman and Dorian Kittrell talking about the work of the Red Cross and, in particular, the Holocaust research they carry out.

2005 is already shaping up with many of our presentations already scheduled. We also have two big coming attractions: our neighbors, the JGS of Southern Nevada, will host the 2005 International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in Las Vegas. I anticipate it will be a great success and I personally look forward to networking in such convivial surroundings. Conference dates are July 10-15; go to [www.igssn.org](http://www.igssn.org) for more information.

In August, hot on the heels of the Conference, will be the 25th anniversary of our own Society! How will we who spend so much time documenting the stories and vital records of our families record and celebrate this occasion? A formal dinner, a picnic, a publication, a CD? The Board would love to hear your ideas for this auspicious occasion.

In this presidential election year, it's hard not to be constantly reminded of the political phrases we read in the papers. I can honestly say that every person sitting around the table at SFBAJGS Board meetings has only one special interest at heart — that of serving you, the membership, as best we can. Every Board meeting runs the gamut of emotion and ideas, and we all leave at the end the way we entered, with a smile and a handshake. It is a privilege to work with all of them.

While party politics is generally a "no-go" area, I know that we strive to be fiscally conservative so that we may be socially compassionate. We give our time and our energy to maintain a cohesiveness that, quite frankly, is a challenge for a non-profit organization operating in the Bay Area. I believe it

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**SOCIETY NEWS**

**Bounced E-mails**

If your name is on the following list, email sent to your address as listed in the Society roster bounced. Please send your new email address to Beth Galleto at galleto@pacbell.net so you can continue to receive notices from the SFBAJGS.

- Rebekah Sachs.....boccoli@cs.com
- Sheila Sello..... slks@aol.com
- Marjorie Stern..... margesf1@aol.com
- Gerry Waggoner..... gwaggoner@aol.com
- Janet Raznick.....jraznick@msn.com
- Pat Dubrow..... dubrow@hotmail.com

**Welcome, New Members**

- Ernesto Browne..... ernestobrowne@yahoo.es
- Cincinnati Public Library
- Paul Edises, Apache Junction, AZ  
.....edises@hotmail.com
- Barbara/Ron Friedenthal.. bfriedenthal@yahoo.com;  
onfriedenthal@yahoo.com
- Megan George.....megang@inreach.com
- Mildred Goltz.....hmgoltz@juno.com
- Gloria Heller..... gloriaheller@juno.com
- Lori Shapiro..... duckwalk@pacbell.net
- Alan Warshaw.....alan@datacommgroup.com

**Annual Workshop Launches Beginners on Search for Roots**

By Rosanne Leeson, Vice President, Workshop Coordinator

Although the skies were alternately sunny, cloudy and finally very showery, the 19th annual Workshop for Beginners of the SFBAJGS proceeded happily at Cong. Beth Am in Los Altos Hills on Sunday October 17.

While the unsettled weather may have kept some people away, those who came were enthusiastic and eager. They benefited from personal instruction from the wonderful volunteers who came to help. In addition, the excellent library at Beth Am was available, and Dick and Caroline Hoffman went out of their way to place all of the books relevant to Jewish genealogy (many donated by the SFBAJGS over the years), on the tables where they could be easily found. The Hoffmans and Jerry Delson offered assistance in the library to those who came seeking clues to their families' past.

Rabbi Josh Zweiback of Beth Am welcomed everyone and told of his own discovery of family roots and what they had come to mean to him. There were two main sessions for beginners, the first led by Dana Kurtz, with additional help from Jeremy Frankel, Shellie Weiner and Rosanne Leeson; the second led by Judy Baston, Marian Rubin and Shellie Weiner.

A number of door prizes were donated by Shirley and Ellen Bob of Bob & Bob, Palo Alto; Nurit Sabadosh of Aleph Bet in Los Gatos; Gary Mokotoff of *Avotaynu*; Jeremy Frankel; and the SFBAJGS Board, which donated two 2005 memberships.

One-on-one assistance was given by experts from various JewishGen SIGS such as the Litvak SIG and JRI-Poland (Judy Baston), Geshet Galicia (Marian Rubin), Hungarian SIG (Carol Robinson), South

African SIG (Roy Ogus), UK, (Jeremy Frankel), GerSIG (Larry Burgheimer), Romanian SIG (Rosanne Leeson), French SIG (Pierre Hahn, Rosanne Leeson).

Among those who came to help with translations were Tamar Jacobs (German and Hebrew), Jan Engel (Polish and German), Eugene Zauber and his wife (Russian), Agnes Grossinger (Hungarian and Rumanian), and Pierre Hahn and Rosanne Leeson (French).

In addition, Marcia Kaplan and Hillary Farkas presided over the Nosherie. Henry Kaplan was there with his laptop and a Power Point projector to illustrate the Cemetery Project. Jeff Sugarman stood guard over the Media Room. Fred Half and Hy Ramm helped with the Registration. Hy did double duty by his kindness in bringing Tamar and Agnes to the workshop.

And last, but far from least, were the members of the Board who worked hard to make the workshop happen. It was a classic example of what we can do best - one on one networking!

An enormous and most heartfelt thankyou to all!

**Thank you, Door Prize Donors**

- From Generation to Generation* / Jeremy Frankel
- Wine glass identifiers /Aleph Bet Judaica, Los Gatos
- 18 month subscription to *Avotaynu* / Gary Mokotoff, *Avotaynu*
- Porcelain candlestick & tray set / Bob & Bob
- Family Tree Maker Software /Dana Kurtz
- Congratulations to all the lucky winners!

**CALENDAR, cont.**

**More Genealogy Events**

**Local and Regional**

Tues., November 16, 7 p.m. **Santa Clara County Genealogical Society. Understanding DNA Research for Genealogists.** Presented by Ann Turner, co-author of *Trace Your Roots with DNA*. Santa Clara Public Library, 2635 Homestead Road, Santa Clara. [www.rootsweb.com/~cascchgs/](http://www.rootsweb.com/~cascchgs/)

Sun., November 21, 10 a.m. **Jewish Genealogical Society of Sacramento. Archives and Archivists: What Every Genealogist Needs to Know.** Presented by Nancy Zimmelman, longtime archivist with the California State Archives. She'll provide insights about archives and archival practice, how to be a more effective researcher and how to obtain maximum assistance from the archivist. Albert Einstein Senior Center, 1935 Wright Street, Sacramento.

Sat., Jan. 22, 2005. 1 p.m. **Sonoma County Genealogical Society. Westward Migration Along the Trails**, presented by Jana Black. Lark Hall, Room 2004, Santa Rosa Junior College. [www.scgs.org](http://www.scgs.org)

Sat., Feb. 26, 2005. 1 p.m. **Sonoma County Genealogical Society. Genealogical Sites on the Internet**, presented by Tony Hoskins. Lark Hall, Room 2004, Santa Rosa Junior College. [www.scgs.org](http://www.scgs.org).

**State and National**

Sun., December 5, 1:30 p.m. **Jewish Genealogical Society of Los Angeles. The Jews of Sing Sing: Might One of Them Belong on Your Family Tree?** presented by Ron Arons (a member of the SFBAJGS). Plus: **Extra! Extra! Read All About It — Historical Newspaper Research**, Presented by Pamela Weisberger. 22622 Vanowen Street, West Hills, CA. [www.jgsla.org](http://www.jgsla.org)

**International**

**25th Annual Conference of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies.** Las Vegas, Nevada, July 10 through 15, 2005, hosted by the JGS of Southern Nevada in Las Vegas at the Flamingo Hotel, which is offering special conference rates of \$61 per night. The program will include presentations on research in Eastern Europe, South America, and Israel, among other topics. The Conference Committee is currently soliciting proposals for presentations. To be considered, submit a 50 word biography and a 150 word synopsis to [jgssn2005@yahoo.com](mailto:jgssn2005@yahoo.com) by December 31, 2004. For information visit [www.jgssn.org](http://www.jgssn.org)

**Report on the 24th Annual IAJGS Conference in Jerusalem**

By Judy Baston

The IAJGS conference in Jerusalem in July exceeded all expectations, the Israel Genealogy Society (IGS) noted afterward. More than 765 people from 21 countries attended more than 170 lectures and workshops.

This conference had the highest concentration of Sephardic subjects ever given at a Jewish genealogy conference. As a result, there were attendees from Portugal, Spain, South America and Israel.

Archivists from the various archives around Israel suddenly sat up and took notice of the advantages of the IGS, and the Society developed a special rapport with them. Members of the Society are now working hand in glove to create databases from information at the various archives, which will in turn bring in more researchers to the archives.

There was discussion at the conference of a number of new and developing databases. Some of these will be searchable on the Internet and some will be available at various organizations and archives as finding aids for research.

For example, Shlomo Akale, originally from Ethiopia, told about the genealogy database the Ethiopian Jews are building in Israel. It is called Bahalchin ("Our Culture"). In Ethiopia, Jews did not marry another Jew if there was a family connection going back seven generations.

Sarina Roffe and Efrat Benbenisti spoke of the Golden Books of Keren Kayemet (The Jewish National Fund) as genealogical resources and demonstrated the database of names from the Golden Books. The database was available in the conference Resource Room and one Israeli researcher at the conference was able to find how her father had registered her birth in Uruguay years ago in the Children's Book.

Yad Vashem databases commanded great interest and Alex Abraham demonstrated further refinements taking place to the Yad Vashem names database. After the conference Yad Vashem announced that the database will be available to the public in November. Abraham told conference participants that when the database goes online, Yad Vashem plans to have several dozen servers to handle the expected traffic — more than the Ellis Island Database had at the outset.

The IGS provided conference participants with a CD ROM that includes some of the recently developed

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## Geismar Family Conference in Breisach, Germany

By Larry Burgheimer

Larry Burgheimer is Membership Chair of the SFBAJGS. He recently returned from a trip researching his roots in the Black Forest region of Germany. Larry is a property manager and retired industrial engineer. He has been researching his family for 40 years. He is searching for **LEVI-BURGHEIMER, GEISMAR, WURMSER, DUKAS-HAAS, RIS, WEIL, GREILSHEIMER/GREILSAMMER/KREIELSHEIMER, BLOCH, LEVI-WACHENHEIMER, MAAS, GUNDELFINGER, DREIFUSS, MEIER, and SEGAL** from numerous towns in Germany and Alsace, France. He is also researching **GOODMAN** from Kiyev Gubernia, Ukraine; **DUKOSOVITCH** from Smolensk, Ukraine; and **GOLDANSKY** from Kaunas/Vilnius Gubernia, Lithuania.

In March of 2003, my daughter and I visited our family towns in Baden, which is in the southwestern corner of Germany near France and Switzerland. At the time I did not know that a Jewish Week celebration had been planned for June 2003 in Breisach, the main town in which my Burgheimer ancestors lived.

When I found out about the Breisach celebration, I contacted the organizer, Christiane Walesch-Schneller, who lives in Breisach. She gave me the list of attendees and I contacted several of them. Over a period of time and several emails, Christiane told me that an additional event would occur in Breisach in 2004. The Geismar family, which has been documented in Alsace back into the 1500s, had a strong presence in Breisach, too. Christiane and the Foederverein Ehemaliges Juedisches Gemeinde (an organization promoting the Jewish presence in Baden) put together a one-week conference for the descendants of the Geismar family. This event was to occur at the end of June and early July 2004, just before the IAJGS conference in Jerusalem.

Christiane and her organization located the descendants and invited them. My great-great grandmother was Sara Geismar, born in 1795. She married my great-great grandfather, Ischei Levi-Burgheimer, whose father had selected the Burgheimer name in 1809. Ischei's aunt, Kloer (Klara) Levi, also married into the Geismar family.

### Getting to the Conference

I started planning for the trip early in 2004 and found that I could fly into Frankfurt, Zurich, or Paris, as they are an equal distance from Breisach. I had gone through Frankfurt in 2003 but thought that Paris would be the best destination. I have a cousin, on my father's maternal side, Evelyne, who lives outside of Paris. I only see Evelyne about every 20 years. We had a wonderful time together the day before I left for Breisach. We walked through Paris and had some elegant meals. The following day, I got a ride to Breisach with Max Kahn, who lives near Paris and was going to the conference. I had corresponded with Max via e-mail for about five years

prior to this event. Max and I are not related but our ancestors went to school together in Breisach in the early 1800s.

My accommodations in Breisach were in a small, modern and pleasant guesthouse about a mile from the conference meetings, so I walked to and from all of the meetings. At the first day's meeting, I met Else Geismar Pripis from Jerusalem. She is related to me on both her father's and her mother's sides. Her father, mother, and only brother were lost in the Holocaust. I also met three other attendees that I had e-mail correspondence with through JewishGen: Werner Frank (Calabasas, CA), Yitzhak Cohen (Haifa), and Ariane Mil (Zurich).

### Conference Activities

Over 50 people attended the conference at various times. This included about a dozen local Germans who were running the conference, speaking, or just supporting the efforts of the Foederverein (the organization promoting remembrance of Jewish culture). The other attendees were from Switzerland, the United States, France, Israel, Belgium, and the United Kingdom, with the largest contingents from Switzerland and the U.S. Pierre Hahn and I constituted the San Francisco contingent.

The activities centered around a building called the "Blaueshaus" (an historic Jewish building painted blue). The Foederverein raised the funds to rehab this building, which is in the Judengasse, the street where rabbis and cantors lived. They saved the building from demolition and did a wonderful job of making it usable for the conference and as a historical site for visitors. My daughter and I had seen the building in 2003 covered with scaffolding, but didn't know what it was.

The presentations at the conference were delivered mostly in German (with some translation), with some in French and English. My German is very poor and my French non-existent, so I had a difficult time with the language. The presentations concentrated on Jewish history and culture and the impact of the Geismar family on the local area. There were presentations about the Geismars from Alsace and

*Continued on next page*

**Breisach**, cont. from page 5

Hesse, the social scene in Breisach in the 17th and 18th centuries, talks by Jews who had lived in Breisach in their youth, and a tour of the area where Jews lived in the 14th century — on top of the hill in Breisach. One evening there was a nighttime projection of photos on one of the Geismar homes in the Judengasse. The photos were of descendants of the Breisach Geismars.

### Breisach Cemeteries

My daughter and I had visited the old Jewish cemetery in 2003 and found one possible relative. This gravestone was one of only about one-third that were still standing and was the only one that had some engraving in German. All the rest were in Hebrew. Although my daughter reads Hebrew, we didn't take the time to read stones. We photographed the most legible ones. The one stone in German belonged to Julius Burgheimer (1865-1869), whom we later identified as my grandfather, Leopold's, younger brother. Julius died as a child and was not listed on our version of the family tree.

For the conferences Christiane and her group provided an alphabetical listing of the names on the graves that were still standing (and their locations) in the old cemetery. One was a David Zwi Burgheimer, who died in 1831 and was the son of Yosef, the *Sofer*. We have not yet been able to connect David to our tree. There was also a listing of the names and locations of the graves in the new Jewish cemetery, which my daughter and I failed to locate in 2003. In this cemetery I was able to photograph the gravestone of Jakob Burgheimer (1821-1898), a previously unknown brother of my great grandfather Raphael. I

also photographed the graves of Raphael's brother, Theodor Burgheimer (1832-1913), his first wife Ziporah Baehr (1836-1888), and his second wife, Mathilde Geismar. Theodor and Ziporah are the great-grandparents of my cousin Frank, who lives in Ramat Hasharon, Israel, and cousins Uri and Ruth in New Jersey.



*Conference activities centered around the Blaueshaus, an historic Jewish building painted blue.*

### Exploring the Judengasse of Breisach

My daughter and I had walked along the Judengasse (now called Rheintorstrasse) in 2003. Using a copy of the 1940 sketch of the Judengasse by David Blum, we thought we had located the Burgheimer home. We walked around to the rear of the property and

found the stables, where we entered the back of the old cemetery. We took numerous photos. I checked out the property again in 2004 and found that it was empty and being renovated. I took several more photos, since it looked like the original stable might be torn down. I could see through the windows that

the walls of the house were the original construction, maybe 200 years old. I was pleased with my timing. I looked for the inn that was owned by my great-great parents, Ischei (Josef) Levi-Burgheimer and Sara Geismar, shown to be on a side street in Blum's 1940 sketch. None of the buildings matched the drawing, and the one in the most likely location had obviously been rebuilt. Ischei's sister married a Grumbach and lived across the street from the synagogue, and I tried to find the Grumbach



*Radbrunnenplatz, Breisach before 1793*

home. I did not find that one either. I did take a photo of Max Kahn's family home, which is going through another renovation (it is 300 years old). I discussed

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**Breisach**, cont. from page 6

the location of the Burgheimer home with Christiane. To my surprise, she said it no longer exists. We went to the site and she showed that the relationship of the rear of the buildings to the cemetery behind them did not match the drawing. The house I thought was a Burgheimer house was actually a Geismar home. This was very disappointing.

### Touring Alsace

Since Breisach is on the Rhine River just east of France, it was easy to take a tour bus with the conference attendees across the bridge into the southern section of Alsace. The first site we visited was Alte Breisach, which was the community that preceded Breisach in Germany. There is nothing left but open fields on the channels of streams where the Rhine River was once over a mile wide. Alte Breisach and Biesheim, less than a mile away, were both family towns on both sides of my father's family in the 1700s.

The next stop was Mackenheim, about 10 miles north and just west of the Rhine. Because it was not burned on Krystallnacht, the Mackenheim synagogue is still intact. The Mackenheim Jewish cemetery is a surprising distance from the town on narrow roads leading toward the Rhine River. This was the cemetery used by Breisach Jews prior to about 1780, when the old Breisach Jewish cemetery was built next to the synagogue in the Judengasse. At the cemetery we were shown the grave of Schlomo Geismar, who died in 1667. This was one of the older graves in the cemetery. The double grave of Schlomo's son Jakob Geismar and his wife was nearby. One of the more elaborate gravestones was that of Josef Guenzburger from Breisach, who was prominent in developing the Jewish communities in that region of Alsace.

We then visited the town of Gruessenheim, southwest of Mackenheim. Gruessenheim was a family town of the French Geismars and its Jewish

cemetery was sizable and still intact. We visited the street of the Jews (rue des Juifs), the Jewish school, the ritual slaughterhouse, and the site of the synagogue. Archway entrances to some of the homes in the town still had Hebrew inscriptions from the past.

The last stop was Neuf Brisach, southwest of Breisach on the French side. Neuf Brisach is a fortress city with 300-year-old walls and a moat that wraps around the town. The town's outer fortress walls are shaped with six pointed corners. The layout of the town of Neuf Brisach was the basis for the design of Theresienstadt.

### After the Conference

Some of the conference attendees went to the German town of Eichstetten in the Kaiserstuhl, just north of Breisach. My great grandmother Rosa Haas, who married into the Burgheimer family in Breisach, was born there. I had gone to Eichstetten in 2003 and had visited the Jewish cemetery, where the older gravestones were very worn and not very readable. The 2004 tour was led by Christina Weiblen (who researches Jewish families in Eichstetten) and Sibylle (the German/English interpreter from the conference). This time we were greeted by the vice mayor in the Rathaus (city hall). Although the city hall houses some cemetery books, there was no time to look through them. A woman from the local Dreifuss family gave us a

tour of the town. She showed us the Dreifuss family homes, the butcher shop, the synagogue remnants, and a stolperstein (commemorative brass stake driven into the pavement in front of the homes of victims of the Holocaust) for one of her family members. We went to the cemetery but I was unable to find any known relatives.

A few members of the group then went to the town of Sulzburg, south of Freiburg (main city of Breisgau, Baden), and fairly near the Swiss border. Sibylle lives

*Continued on page 16*



*Geismar house*



*Guenter Boll guided us on our tour of Alsatian villages.*

**PAST MEETINGS**

**Tour of Oakland Library Leaves Members Wanting More**

By Jeremy Frankel

The October 2004 membership meeting at the Oakland LDS Family History Library was attended by about 25 people, coming from as far as Mill Valley and Los Gatos. Freeway access (literally to the front door) makes it an easy destination.

Many had either never been there or only recalled the library from pre-expansion days (It was expanded to 10,000 sq. ft. a couple of years ago, making it the second largest FHC in the USA after Salt Lake City).

Marge Bell, who serves in various capacities at the library and is responsible for its new computer catalog, explained the new film purchasing policy whereby she checks any film ordered by patrons to see if has greater relevance, such as a vital record or census return. If so, Oakland pays an extra fee and keeps it as part of their permanent collection. In this way the library is being expanded by some 15 to 20 films each week.

Frequent checking is advised to see how the collection is growing.

SFBAJGS member Robinn Magid followed with a thorough overview of JewishGen and JRI-Poland. Robinn also previewed the new LDS binder on Jewish genealogy, which she created. She passed it to me to fill in the chapter on the SFBAJGS, after which it will be presented to the library. The library has about 50 "how to" binders, but so many are out of date. With this new binder, anyone Jewish coming into the library can be directed to the Jewish Genealogy binder and be self-guided in their research.

Both spoke for about an hour and then everyone was let loose on the computers and micro film/fiche readers. All thoroughly enjoyed themselves and left with some new genealogical nuggets and a promise to return.

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**President's Message, cont. from page 2**

is a unique situation in this country. We are the sum of all the parts and much better for it, too.

As we enter our second quarter century, we don't have to go back very far in time to witness the changes that technology has wrought. The past five or ten years have seen dramatic improvements that would have been thought impossible a quarter century ago. Who would have thought that one could go on-line and review the census pages of nearly every US census undertaken! We take for granted digitally scanned books and newspapers complete with word search capability. And of course, email, which we love and curse at the same time.

Just recently I located the *Illinois Medical Journal* for 1899-1900, stored in the Southern Regional Library Facility in Los Angeles. I downloaded the request form, then faxed it back. I was then emailed the online link from which one could download the specific page. I then emailed the person who had requested my help, who in turn was able to download a requested obituary.

But at the other end of the spectrum, many family historians still have to spend weeks — if not months — sifting through ancient foreign-language records, usually in microfilm, in the hope of finding another elusive piece of a never-ending puzzle.

So with all these technological marvels surrounding us — computers, scanners, printers, digital cameras and online services — I hear you

ask, "So why should I join a genealogical society?" Is there still a need for people to belong to one of the more than 70 Jewish Genealogical Societies around the world?

You bet there is, and for two reasons. One is that quite simply, we don't function well in a vacuum. We love to "kvetch and kvell" face to face. Somehow it's just not the same online.

Secondly, we do it to help us remember our past, to never, never forget — and we do that by reading and by saying our ancestors' names out loud. One of the ways we can all do that is by participating in a local cemetery name-indexing project. As many of you are aware, the Society is currently involved with indexing some 14,000 names for the Hills of Eternity and Home of Peace cemeteries in Colma.

We read about the problems with cemeteries. In London, England, there is a lack of maintenance, as well as vandalism, and cemeteries are now locked up except for specific occasions or upon request. Many cemeteries in Eastern Europe have simply suffered the ravages of time, while yes, there is also the vandalism and desecration we have read about in England, France, Germany and most recently, in New Zealand.

The outlook remains bright, but it still needs all of us pulling together. As Chanukah approaches, what kind of gift could you give the Society? A couple of hours a month would be wonderful.

*Jeremy Frankel*

## How I Found my Husband's Goldstein Family

By Carol Robinson

Carol Robinson lives in Alameda and has been interested in genealogy for about 25 years. She is currently the Research Coordinator for JewishGen's Hungarian Special Interest Group. She is researching both her own and her husband's families, including **GOLDSTEIN, ROSENBERG, JACOBSON, BIALOBLITZKY** and **IDZONIS/IDZON/EDSON**, Marijampole and Suwalki, Lithuania; **WEINBERGER** and **WERTHEIMER**, Korejocz, Hungary (Korejovce, Slovakia); **ASSERSOHN, JACOBSON** and **LEVINS/LEWIS**, Tukums, Piltene and Liepaja, Latvia; **ROBINSON**, Gelivan Lithuania and London England; **ABRAHAMS/ABRAMS**, Raseiniai Lithuania and London England; **WEINER** and **WEINSTEIN**, Mikiliskis, Lithuania and New Haven, CT; **MESIGAL, GLICKEN** and **EMMERMAN**, Pesochnya, Russia and Telsiai Lithuania; and **GOLDMAN** and **ZELIN/ZELIKSON** of Sopotkin, Belarus.

The first time I became interested in genealogy was when I moved back to the Chicago area with my family almost 25 years ago. Both sides of my husband's family had reunions in 1981 — the Goldman bowling party (still going after 52 years) and the Goldstein family reunion.

Flash forward to Passover, 2001. We had moved to the Bay area, and our now adult daughters arrived for the holiday. Our oldest daughter, Michalle, brought something precious with her from my mother-in-law — copies of pictures of my husband's paternal grandparents, Solomon and Rose (Idzon) Goldstein; his great-grandparents, David and Judith Goldstein and Yehuda and Sara Idzon; and his great-great-grandfather, Hirsz Goldstein. We think these may have been taken on my husband's grandparent's wedding day.

By coincidence, I had just found JewishGen shortly before our daughter's visit. The pictures sparked my interest, and I decided to show the site to Michalle. I knew that the Goldsteins were from Marijampole, so I chose to search the JRI — Poland database. I typed in Goldstein and chose Suwalki as the gubernia. My expectations were low — but to my shock what seemed like hundreds of names appeared. My daughter looked over my shoulder, and we saw the name David Goldsztejn, son of Hirsz, born in 1839. I'll never forget laughing as I said "Wouldn't this be funny if these were members of your dad's family?" Little did I know!

I got in touch with Raymond Whitzman of Canada, who was the contact person on JewishGen for Marijampole genealogy. He suggested writing to the Lithuanian archives for copies of records that might be for members of my husband's family. He noticed my husband's name was Gould, and after hearing that it had been changed from Goldstein, Raymond mentioned that he too was related to Goldsteins from Marijampole who had moved to Chicago and changed their name to Gould.

Obtaining the records was easy — I wrote a letter listing the records by their index number and sent a

personal check. (JRI Poland has since instituted a "Shopping Basket" order system.) I received a package a few months later. Raymond helped me translate the records in Polish, though now I can do so myself using one of the online Polish translation guides. Once I received the translations, my doubts disappeared — I had found my husband's family. And I learned something new — my husband's great-great-grandfather's Hirsz's father's name was Chackiel. Because there was a note on the back of the picture of Hirsz stating that he was born in 1810, we now had the name of a family member born in the 1700's.

I contacted a few of my husband's cousins, one of whom mentioned that he had a copy of an old family tree. He didn't know where it was from, but it turned out to be a critical link because it listed the maiden name of my husband's great-great-grandmother, Henia Rozenberg. Of course, I immediately went back to JewishGen and found a wedding record for Henia Rozenberg and Hirsz Chackieson as well as the first birth record listed for Henia and Hirsz — a son named Chackiel — and Chackiel's son, David Leib.

We gained so much information from the new records. First we confirmed that although the family was not using the name Goldstein in 1832 when Henia and Hirsz married, they were using it by the time they had their first son Chackiel in 1834. Also since the wedding certificate listed the full name of Hirsz's father — Chackiel son of Abram — we gained an additional generation.

Throughout my research I kept Raymond informed of my progress. He sent me a family tree of his Chicago Goldstein/Goulds. One name immediately caught my eye — David Leib, son of Charles. It didn't take long to figure out that Charles wasn't really Charles — he was Chackiel, son of my husband's great-great-grandfather Hirsz Goldstein. So we made the connection — both families were descendants of Henia Rosenberg and Hirsz Goldstein.

To close the loop, I decided it was important to learn more about my husband's grandmother's family. All

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we knew was that her married name was Idzon. So I went back to JewishGen, where I found someone listed in the Family Finder interested in Idzon genealogy. I wrote a polite e-mail listing some family information and asked if there was a connection. I received a reply from Sari Shifrin saying, yes, her family was connected, and by the way wasn't I married to her second cousin, Art Gould? From Sari, I learned that my husband's grandmother was named Sara Bioloblotzky before her marriage. Sari also gave me the name of Stan and Karen Gurvis of Melbourne Australia, who were descendents of Sara Bioloblotzky's sister Doba Bioloblotzky Levinson. Because Sara's son Meyer married Doba's daughter Raschel, the whole family is double connected. Sari also gave me a letter Meyer wrote about why and how he came to the United States in 1934 — mainly to give his wife Raschel and children a chance at a better life. We've connected to other Bioloblotzky researchers including those connected to the Blotkeys of Iowa and the Blocks of New York and New Jersey.

The last link so far was made when one of my husband's second cousins, a descendent of Sara's son Meyer and Doba's daughter Raschel, found me on JewishGen's family finder. And from her family we received a most precious picture — the family at the Marijampole train station on the day in 1938 that Raschel and children left on their journey to the U.S. Of those left behind that day, two made it to

Israel after the war, one family was deported to Siberia and the rest we probably will never know.

Family research is addictive, because it's so gratifying. We've built a picture of the lives of my husband's Goldsteins and Bioloblotzkys from the pictures and the records. And since I've done the same with my family, my daughters know all of the branches of their family tree. Because of JewishGen, we've made connection to family all over the world and it's those connections — with Raymond Whitzman in Canada, the Gurvis family of Australia, and so many others — that we value the most. Because that's what Jewish genealogy is about — our families.

### Leverage Donations to SFBAJGS Through Employer Matching

Earlier this year, Dale Friedman, an East Bay member approached SFBAJGS President Jeremy Frankel with some forms to fill out. Dale works for Bank of America, which has a gift-matching program. This is how it works; when you pay your annual dues, your employer will match the amount you pay for dues or donation to the organization.

This is a very easy way for the SFBAJGS to increase its revenue to help us undertake projects in the Bay Area. It's dues-paying time again, so ask your employer if they support a gift-matching program. Donations to the SFBAJGS are tax-deductible.

### SFBAJGS Family Finder Update

The surnames and towns being researched by our newest 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, write to SFBAJGS, P.O. Box 471616, San Francisco, CA 94147, or send e-mail to Larry Burgheimer at [BurgAuer@aol.com](mailto:BurgAuer@aol.com).

<u>Surname</u>	<u>Town, Country</u>	<u>Member</u>
AIZENBERG	Anywhere	Goltz, Mildred
AXEL	Kamien, Poland	Shapiro, Lori
BERLINGER	Poland	Heller, Gloria
BROWER	Gisinin, Kaminetz	Warshaw, Alan
FABIARZ	Poland	Heller, Gloria
LURIMANN	Huntingburg, IN	George, Megan
MEYER	Huntingburg, IN	George, Megan
RABINER	Anywhere	Warshaw, Alan
ROSENBAUM	Anywhere	Goltz, Mildred
SCHENKER	Riga, Latvia	Heller, Gloria
SHAPIRO	Ukraine	Shapiro, Lori
WARSHAW/WARSHAWSKY	Ichnya, Poltava, Ukraine	Warshaw, Alan
WOOLMEIER	Huntingburg, IN	George, Megan

## Not So “Cherman” After All: What I Learned from Testing My DNA

By Howard F. Sachs

The author, a third cousin of SFBAJGS membership chairman Larry Burgheimer (through the HAAS family of Eichstetten, Baden), is a senior federal district judge in Kansas City. His interest in Jewish genealogy dates from the 1970s, when a rabbinical line connection with his great-grandmother LONDON was published in *The Unbroken Chain* by Neil Rosenstein. His email address is HFSachs@yahoo.com.

Having one’s DNA tested can lead to surprises. Anyone who has been watching DNA study findings, which have been tumbling forth during the past eight years or so, may be aware that “Jewish descent from Aaron” (or something close to that) now seems to be provable. Cohens, Katzes and others with a priestly Cohanim tradition can be tested without exorbitant cost. The findings in many instances confirm a rare collective descent from a man who lived about 3,000 years ago. This seems remarkably consistent with family traditions of people who believe they have descent from Biblical priests.

A stunner last year, however, was the discovery that a Levite genetic cluster also seems to show up, but for Ashkenazi Jews with a Levite tradition genetic testing has a 50 percent chance of showing their all-male line is not really “Jewish,” in historic ethnic terms. Descent may be from a Khazar convert. But how can this be reconciled with inherited Levite status? No one has a very persuasive explanation.

DNA can help find you more cousins, if you want that. This is deeply appealing to some people, particularly Holocaust survivors. Where people have “old” surnames, predating the Napoleonic era, testing can prove or disprove connections that go back hundreds of years. Old Jewish surnames, often with known rabbinical ties, are good candidates for tracing. The Weil name in my family is an example. But all-male tracing only proves connection with a male ancestor, so my cheek-brushing for a DNA test would not prove anything about my brand of Weils.

Having tested both my all-male and all-female lines, perhaps the most interesting result is the unheralded consequence that confirms I’m strictly Eastern European in the all-male line. This might have been unexpected news to my father, whose father was German consular agent in Kansas City until the First World War, and one of the founders of the old German Hospital.

My grandfather Sachs was born in Frankenstein in Silesia — Prussian after the 1740s. An elderly distant cousin alerted me, however, to a theory that the paternal ancestry went back to Lissa (Leszno) in Posen province, part of Poland. That would have been in the late 1700s, before the Sachs name was

adopted. But this theory was based on family tradition, not documentary proof, and apparently was unknown to my immediate family.

DNA testing solidly supports the theory of Polish origin. It shows a single complete 12-point match, and that is with a fellow who reported his ancestry to be Russian. Out of about twenty persons in the collection of Family Tree DNA who nearly match my results (one or two mutations away) all but one identified various Eastern European ethnic origins. Only one person in that group reported German ancestry. Considering four mutations, the pattern holds. This is quite a stretch, perhaps indicating a shared paternal ancestor thousands of years ago. No non-Jewish European “cousins” in the direct male line were found, even with four mutations. But the fourth mutation coincides with that of an Arab from Syria and a man from Senegal.

The African reading is said to be accurate but accidental. It probably results from what is called “convergence,” which I think I understand but will not try to explain here. African ancestry from women who likely lived on that continent in Biblical days does, however, show up in about 2 percent of the Ashkenazi tests and probably in about 4 percent of the DNA tests of the female line of Sephardic Jews.

My paternal line reading seems to take my family back to the Bible. It relates me closely to a group (clan or haplogroup) that has been given the letter “G” for identification. That generally signifies the prehistoric Middle East, and shows descent from one man who lived perhaps 30,000 years ago, as far East as Pakistan or India. The line of Mr. G originates in Africa, thousands of years earlier, as we all do, but seems to have migrated East and then West again — but not to Northern Asia, as many migrant tribes did as they followed the herds of large animals they hunted. If you doubt my expertise and are wondering about my sources, I recommend a book *The Journey of Man*, by Spencer Wells.

The great majority of Western European males have DNA showing ancestry that migrated north of the Black Sea and then into Europe in prehistoric times. A closely related group is found largely in Eastern

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*DNA, cont. from page 11*

Europe; that reading (known as R1a) shows up for about 13 percent of Ashkenazi Jewish men, including the distinctive Levite cluster mentioned above. It is my understanding that a Jew who tests his paternal line has an 80 percent chance, at most, of a reading consistent with Jewish ancestry in the all-male line back to the Middle East in Biblical days. Most versions of history would lead you to suppose the Middle Eastern ancestry was almost universal, but that concept apparently needs some revision.

There is thus much to be learned from a test of the Y-chromosome, found only in males. This is what connected male descendants of Sally Hemings to the Jeffersons. Tracing the all-male line, you may obtain an indicator of recent ethnic origin of genetically related men, and whether you are probably descended from Biblical Jews. Apart from a Levite or Cohan match, you can't expect anything like a personal identification with an originating male ancestor or even certainty about Biblical Jewry, but the latter can apparently be ruled out as a possibility if you are in the 20 percent whose prehistoric lines originated farther North. On the ethnic origin issue, based on the most recent collection of test results, I seem to be in a "cluster" of five men (one from Israel and another from Britain) with four having their earliest known origins in the general area of Lithuania. It seems reasonable to speculate that my paternal line lived that far to the East, perhaps 300 years ago.

You should keep in mind, however, that your entire paternal genetic inheritance is not being tested — only the all-male line. That may seem almost meaningless when you consider the number of ancestors you had several thousand years ago. By reason of marriage within the community, however, that one fellow is likely to be your ancestor many times over. In addition, you may be pretty sure to have many Biblical Jewish genetic connections, through untested male lines.

The cluster of persons with Levite traditions whose DNA shows a disconnect with the Middle East have an extraordinary provable history of descent from one individual man who lived as recently as 1000 years ago. The ability to roughly date the common ancestor's lifetime is gained through calculations based on the mutation rate of change in the DNA. The study on this subject was described in a *New York Times* article by Nicholas Wade on September 27, 2003.

Jews are not the only group whose significant early history can be established with some certainty through testing the Y-chromosome. An Oxford

scientist and author, Bryan Sykes, calculated that some 16 million men in Central Asia are direct male descendants of the prolific Genghis Khan, who lived somewhat later than the founder of the Levite cluster. While this figure seems almost beyond belief, it may seem more credible if consideration is given to another species, the three million golden hamsters now in existence. DNA testing confirms they are all descendants of one female, captured in Syria in 1930.

Professor Sykes has been involved in tracing the paternal ancestry of Scottish clans. He traces the first of the Macdonalds to a known person who died in 1164. This famous fighter was also the progenitor of the McAlister and MacDougall clans. While the result of this testing was doubtless something to celebrate, the more startling information was that the man in question had DNA that identifies his own ancestry with the Viking raiders of the British Isles, not the Celts. The Levite surprise is not unique.

Bryan Sykes has been able to trace his own surname back to a man in the thirteenth century who seems to have been the forebear of half the men with his surname. Men with that surname who do not test out apparently descend from men adopted sometime during the ensuing 800 years or who otherwise changed their surnames, or were the offspring of rape or seduction of women married to a man with the Sykes name, or were the illegitimate children of unmarried women with the Sykes surname. These narratives about male ancestor tracing, which have lessons for Jewish genealogy, are dealt with by Bryan Sykes in his latest book, *Adam's Curse*, published this year.

Turning now to the genetic inheritance on the maternal side, the earliest person in my all-female line that I can identify is a woman whose birth name was probably Weil, in Haigerloch, Wurttemberg, in Southwest Germany. Unlike the male line, which I tested at Family Tree DNA (based in Houston with connections at the University of Arizona), my female line was tested by Oxford Ancestors in England. I inquired first if they identified ancient ancestry that was not European. The question arose because the idea for testing came from *Seven Daughters of Eve*, the first book by Bryan Sykes, which concentrates on seven prehistoric female lines that have produced perhaps 95 percent of the women of Europe. After confirmation that non-European results could be obtained I took a chance on what I would receive. It turned out my haplogroup (clan) was that of "Helena," as Sykes named the H haplogroup of female DNA — called MtDNA. The originating female, as described in the book, would have been a caveman's daughter who lived about 19,000 years ago in what became

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## A Family Meeting Across the Centuries

By Laurent Kassel, translated from French by Rosanne Leeson

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The articles that I write for the *Revue of the Cercle Genealogique* often brings me letters from readers in search of supplementary details. An article dating from some time ago led to some unexpected results. It was a question of determining the identity of the grandfather of Jacob Cohen Popers, Grand Rabbi of Frankfort am Main (Frankfort/M) in the first half of the 18th century.

### In the 20th Century: Genealogists from the Old and the New World

Arline Sachs, an amateur American genealogist very active in JewishGen, sent me a letter dated Oct. 19, 1999. She had read the summary of my article, "How does one say 'great-grandson' in Hebrew?" in the periodical *Avotaynu*, and posed the following question: "It is possible that I am related to Jacob Kahn Popers of Frankfort /M. The obituary of my four times great grandfather affirms that he was descended from Rabbi Jacob Kahn, author of *Chev Yaakov*. I have not found the link and I wonder if you have any information on his descendants up to the present time." She attached a part of the ascendancy tree of her ancestor, Bernhard Kahn.

There are Kahns present on both sides of the ascendance, but my attention was caught by the name of the maternal grandmother of Bernhard Kahn, Guenendel Hemmerdinger. The Hemmerdinger family is known to me. Rosanne Leeson, co-founder of the FrenchSIG, an excellent genealogist, is devoted to researching the Hemmerdinger family, from which she descends via Joseph, one of the sons of Rabbi Aron Hemmerdinger. Joseph Hemmerdinger married Guittelet Cahen, daughter of David Cahen Popers, brother of Jacob Cahen Popers. I, myself, descend from another daughter of David Cahen Popers and his wife, Guenendel. Strongly assuming that Guenendel Hemmerdinger had to be the granddaughter of David Cahen Popers, I questioned Rosanne Leeson.

### In the 18th Century: Cousins in Alsace

Rosanne indicated that Guenendel Hemmerdinger was indeed the daughter of Joseph Hemmerdinger and Guittelet Cahen. She appeared in 1784 in Weiterswiller, with her second husband. In 1808 the family was living in Haguenau. Her deceased first husband, Baer Kahn, had previously been married

twice and had two daughters from different marriages. One, Myriam (daughter of the learned distinguished rabbi, Baer (Bernard) Kahn and Bayle of Mutzig) married in 1760; the other, Yttelé or Judel (daughter of the Gaon, learned distinguished rabbi, Baer Kaan, son of David, and Fromet of Mutzig) was married in 1751.

Thus Rosanne confirmed the existence of a connection between Bernhard Kahn and the Cahen Popers family. Guided by her intuition, she also suggested that Rabbi Baer Kahn of Mutzig was none other than the uncle of Guenendel Hemmerdinger, her mother's brother, known by his contract of marriage in Metz on November 18, 1735, where he appears as Bernard Cahen. The name of his bride was Beille Levy, daughter of Benel Levy and Miryam Francfort. That Beille seems to indeed correspond to the mother of the Miryam mentioned at the time of her marriage in 1760.

Rosanne Leeson and I sought out the marriage contracts of the two daughters of Baer Kahn. The Hebrew signature of Bernard Cahen appears on his marriage contract in Metz and reads, "Issachar Baer son of Rabbi David Katz." A signature of Baer Kahn of Mutzig would confirm that identification. The minutes of the Notariat of Haguenau contains six items concerning the two marriages. Two items concern the marriage of Miryam, the Hebrew text of the *Tnaim Acharonim*, the marriage contract, and the act deposited with the Royal Notary in Haguenau.

Four items pertain to the marriage of Judel: the *tnaim richonim*, the betrothal contract, and the corresponding act of deposit, as well as the *tnaim acharonim* and the corresponding act of deposit. The signature of the father appears on only one of the documents, on the *tnaim richonim* of Judel. He signed "the humble Issachar Baer Cohen Popers." In the body of the text he is described as "son of David." It is therefore certain that this refers to the son of David Cahen Popers of Metz.

A daughter, Ela, was born from the third of marriage of Baer Kahn, to Guenendel Hemmerdinger. Ela was the mother of Bernhard Kahn. Baer Kahn died before his third wife, who remarried. From Ela's act of marriage it appears that she did not live with her remarried mother. Ela Kahn was married on December 19, 1792 to Abraham Kahn.

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Ela is described as “daughter of the late Grand Rabbi (Oberrabbiner) Baehr Kahn of Mutzig and his widow Guenendel née Hemmerdinger, presently living in Haguenau.” Ela was living in Niedernai. The signatures of the bride and groom appear on the first line of the act of marriage. On the second line, below the signature of the groom, is that of his father, Henoah Kahn, and below the signature of the bride is the signature of Benjamin Hemmerdinger. This last, the maternal uncle of the bride, was rabbi of the Directoire de la Noblesse Immédiate of Alsace, whose seat was in Niedernai. It is likely that Ela was living with her uncle, and not with her remarried mother.

Where was Ela in the Census of the Jews of Alsace of 1784? She was not with her mother Guenendel in Weiterswiller, nor does she appear in the residence of her uncle, Benjamin Hemmerdinger, in Niedernai. The most probable explanation is that she was listed as Ela, a servant, in the supplement to Niedernai in the census.

### **In the 19th Century: Two Alsations in Germany**

The results of this research were communicated to Arline Sachs. The question of who was the correct father of Bernhard Kahn, however, continued to intrigue me. I asked Arline for a copy of her ancestor’s obituary. Bernhard Kahn was not a descendant of Jacob Cohen Poppers, but of his brother David. The obituary notice of March 14, 1877, which appeared in *Der Israelit*, clearly stated: “One of his ancestors was the Rabbi Jacob Cohen, rabbi in Coblenz, then in Frankfort/Main, author of *Chev Yaakov*.” As genealogists we know that obituaries can be inexact and that every bit of information must be verified.

A surprise awaited me in the rest of the notice, however: “Another of his ancestors was Rabbi Hirsch Frankel, the celebrated rabbi of Schwabach, who stagnated for 24 years, feet and hands chained, in a tower in Schwabach. He had been accused of having written a book of magic. He was, in fact, a victim of revenge directed against his brother, Elkan Fraenkel, First Minister of the Margrave of Ansbach-Bayreuth. The late Dr. Carmoly has told in detail the story of this noble martyr, in his tale, ‘The Prisoner,’ which appeared in *Der Israelit*, 9th year. He has pulled a large part of this tale from the papers of the late B. Cahn.”

Elyakim Carmoly is my great-grandfather and the great great grandson of David Cahen Poppers. Arline Sachs had indicated to me that Bernhard Kahn kept a diary in Yiddish from 1817-1871. That diary was

filled with information. Bernhard Kahn mentioned Jacob Cohen, rabbi of Frankfort/M, as a close relative on his mother’s side, and not as an ancestor. It was the final confirmation of the results of our research.

Bernhard Kahn also tells of the surprise visit to his home on May 9, 1867 by Rabbi Lehmann and Elyakim Carmoly.

“This afternoon I was surprised by Dr. Lehmann of the Jewish community of Mayence and by Dr. Carmoly, a man of letters from Frankfort/M. The reason for the visit was the following: M. Carmoly is working on a story about Rabbi Hirsch Levy Fraenckel, son of rabbi Henoah Halevy Fraenckel, rabbi in Hanau (paternal great-great grandfather). Dr. Lehmann had for a long time drawn the attention of Carmoly to the fact that I possess documents of the aforesaid Rabbi Hirsch Levy. Therefore, the visit. (In fact, I received these documents from my father, the Rabbi Abraham Kahn Schiff, who had received them from his father, Rabbi Henoah Kahn Schiff, my grandfather, rabbi in Balbronn near to Strasbourg in Alsace, as he indicates in his will.)”

Bernhard Kahn describes the six documents that he lent to Carmoly for the preparation of his historical novel. He concludes the story of the visit with the pertinent remark addressed to his wife by the visitors: “Dear Madame, you and your children must be proud to belong to such a celebrated family, from which your esteemed spouse descends.”

This meeting had attained its objective. Carmoly published his historical novel, *Der Gefangene*, as a serial from January 1 to April 22, 1868. In the prologue he indicated among the sources the documents coming from Henoah Cohen Schiff, rabbi of Balbronn. The report of the meeting between Bernhard Kahn and Carmoly was so centered on Hirsch Fraenckel that they had not noticed the family connection that united them to their common ancestor, David Cahen Poppers!

### **Conclusion**

This research shows first of all how a family from the 18th century reconfigured itself as a result of successive widowings and remarriages. We have also seen how two Alsatian Jews, living in Germany, met one another in the 19th century and had no awareness of belonging to the same family. It was the common heritage of descentance from David Cahen Poppers that initiated the exchange between their descendants, Arline Sachs and me. Now, in the 21st century, Arline, Rosanne and I are once again connected, from California, to Washington D.C., to Israel!

*DNA, cont. from page 12*

southwestern France. She was the direct line ancestor of nearly half the women of Europe. So I have many "cousins," including unfortunately, I suppose, either Hitler or Mussolini, based on these high odds.

A report this year has shown that Ashkenazi Jewish women very generally share clan ancestry with European women. More than 50 percent of the Jewish test results are in haplogroups H, J and K (three of the European daughters). This can be examined in Figure 1 in "MtDNA evidence for a genetic bottleneck in the early history of the Ashkenazi Jewish population," *European Journal of Human Genetics* (January 2004) now on the Internet. J, or "Jasmine," is identified by Sykes as a native of what is now Syria, near the Euphrates River. The geographic location can be determined by the area where there is greatest diversity of mutations, which signifies the longest period of residence. The Oxford people recently explained to me that haplogroup H also originated in the Middle East, but that a subgroup was later formed by a female descendant in Southwestern France. She is classified, at least by the Sykes group, as the ancestor of European women with that read-out.

It thus seems debatable whether my H ancestor would have been of prehistoric French descent or may have joined the Jewish people in the Middle East. This creates more uncertainty, but the basic lesson seems to be that women from many genetic "clans" have joined what was, or turned out to be, the Jewish people. I call this phenomenon a "Ruth and Naomi" story. There probably are independent

indicators lending historic support for the test results, suggesting a significant level of female conversions to Judaism, perhaps no later than the Roman Empire days; and there must also have been significant mixing of lineages in Biblical days. The African ancestries mentioned earlier are examples.

The widespread scattering of genetic relationships on the female side is reflected much less on the male side, according to recent studies. This does not mean, however, that some rather typical Jewish male readings, like my G relationship, are not currently showing up for non-Jews. Haplogroup G appears at a high level (30 percent) among men in the country of Georgia. It is also found in small numbers among American men whose surnames suggest typically British or West European ancestry.

There is now a fairly strong scientific consensus that the world's human population is descended from an African Adam and an African Eve. Essential similarity of DNA readings appears from testing the original Australians, the native people of Southern Africa, and the native people of remote areas of South America. Our entire species thus has close genetic relationships. But comparatively minor differences in mutation patterns offer lessons about prehistoric migrations and have a potential to show specific relationships in fairly recent times (the last several hundred years). Genealogy without documentary evidence can thus be pursued with great precision in some instances and can produce very plausible theories of early family history in others. For enthusiasts like myself, I recommend brushing the inner cheek and getting on with the tests.

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*Conference, cont. from page 4*

lists and databases. A copy of this CD ROM is at the Jewish Community Library, (1835 Ellis Street, San Francisco, 415/567-3327, ext. 704) for use by genealogical researchers.

Searchable databases on this CD ROM include:

- Helkat Mehokek: Translated Index of 8000 Hebrew Inscriptions on Gravestones Found in Mount of Olives Cemetery for The Years 1740-1906
- 1875 Census of the Jewish Population of Eretz Israel: The Last Census Ordered by Sir Moses Montefiore

- Index of Names Researched by the Late Dr. Paul Jacobi: as noted within the many typed monographs printed out by Dr. Jacobi
- Change of Names - Palestine Gazette. This database spans the British Mandate period and helps one identify Hebraized names taken by family members during that period
- Memorials of Vanished Communities
- List of Americans in Palestine in 1929 from the US State Department

**Breisach**, cont. from page 7

in Sulzburg and is knowledgeable about its Jewish history. Sulzburg has a Judengasse with a building that was once the Jewish community center. The synagogue was damaged but not burned and has been renovated into a very interesting museum. The ark and bimah in the synagogue have been restored to their original forms. The cemetery was in a steep, forested valley and the gravestones were on a terraced hillside. This whole valley with the cemetery was remarkably beautiful. My only relatives from Sulzburg are very distant and primarily through marriage.

The following day, Sibylle took me to Emmendingen, in the north part of Breisgau near Ortenau, Baden. Emmendingen was home to some of my Haas, Weil, and Guenzburger families. I had passed through the town the year before but didn't know where the cemetery was located and missed the heart of the town, as the central streets are pedestrian only. I

found a few distant relatives in the cemetery. We then visited the Gemeindhaus, which is being renovated. There we met the co-directors of the Jewish community, who are husband and wife, and their teenage daughter, who is organizing teen activities. We saw the site of the synagogue and *mikvah*, as well as the homes of several wealthy Jewish families.

After this tour, I took the train from Freiburg, Germany to Strasbourg, France on the way back to Paris. This was the same train route I took in 1962 when I went to the Freiburg record center for Breisgau, Baden seeking information on my family background. At that time I knew nothing about my family towns and found no information in Freiburg. This trip, I took photos of three family towns from the train — Friesenheim, Kippenheim, and Emmendingen — towns I passed through in 1962 without knowing my family roots were there. It took more than 40 years, but this time the scenery meant much more to me.

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## JRI-Poland Introduces Express Service for Ordering Records

Mark Halpern, JRI-Poland Order Processing Coordinator

Some researchers using the Shopping Basket Order System to order records at [www.jri-poland.org/psa/neworder.htm](http://www.jri-poland.org/psa/neworder.htm) may be willing to pay a premium for fast service. For these researchers, Jewish Records Indexing - Poland and the Polish State Archives (PSA) have launched an Express Service. This Service is currently available from three Archive branches participating in a Pilot Project: Bialystok, Lomza, and Lublin.

Express Service enables researchers who need records within a week to acquire them at a premium. Only records that are currently available through the JRI-Poland Shopping Basket order system can be ordered using Express Service.

Express Service orders must be placed by fax, with payment only by Credit Card (VISA and MasterCard). The Archives will scan the records and the images will be sent to researchers via email.

For more information about this Service and the ordering procedure, access the JRI-Poland webpage at [www.jri-poland.org/psa/express.htm](http://www.jri-poland.org/psa/express.htm).

All questions about Express Service should be directed to the JRI-Poland Order Processing Center at [orderqueries@jri-poland.org](mailto:orderqueries@jri-poland.org).

## One-on-One Help with Your Family Tree

The Jewish Community Library is offering one-on-one help from experienced Jewish genealogists on Sunday, December 5 from 12 to 2 p.m.

Whether you're trying to find your great-grandmother's elusive town or your grandfather's passenger manifest, you can take advantage of the Jewish Community Library's extensive reference collection and Internet connection to countless searchable databases — all with one-on-one guidance from experienced genealogists.

Longtime library volunteer staffer Judy Baston and other veteran researchers from the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogy Society will help with group brainstorming and individual problem-solving.

The Library is located at 1835 Ellis Street (between Pierce and Steiner) in San Francisco. Parking is free. Enter the garage on Pierce Street between Ellis and Eddy, and press the buzzer.

Bring your materials and your questions to the library, the first Sunday of the month. Registration requested but not required. Call (415) 567-3327, ext. 704.

## Foundation Preserves and Restores Jewish Cemeteries

*Toby Mendlowitz, Assistant Director, HFPJC  
Brooklyn, NY*

The Heritage Foundation for Preservation of Jewish Cemeteries throughout Eastern Europe (HFPJC) is restoring a number of cemeteries. Restoration currently being prepared or completed at cemeteries in the following places includes:

### **Budszentmihaly, Hungary**

The building of a cement barrier (retainer wall) to keep the eroding grounds "in check" in a dam-like fashion. Subsequently, a new fence will be erected.

### **Halmeu, Romania**

The erection of a fence, followed by the reconstruction of the Ohel and toppled/broken tombstones.

### **Hernadnemeti, Hungary**

Cemetery restored — enclosure built, tombstones re-erected, grounds cleared, etc.

### **Kisvarda, Hungary**

One wall erected. 900 tombstones up-righted. Second and last wall currently being completed.

### **Lusca, Romania(Interdam)**

Sturdy new enclosure completed. Ohel and 350 headstones currently being restored.

### **Nagyhalasz, Hungary**

The erection of a concrete, durable fence was completed in June. Restoration of cemetery proper (re-cement/up-right tombstones, clear grounds, darken/rewrite illegible headstone texts) in process.

### **Pezinok, Slovakia**

Hundreds of fragmented tombstones painstakingly gathered, re-cemented, and up-righted. As soon as the restoration of the interior of the cemetery is completed, a fence will be built to enclose the unprotected areas of the cemetery.

### **Szarvas, Hungary**

An effective maintenance plan was negotiated between the HFPJC and some neighbors to ensure the long-time preservation of the restored cemetery. The use of a patch of cemetery grounds for planting will be halted.

### **Valcau, Romania**

The erection of a concrete enclosure is on the

agenda for the coming days/weeks.

### **Vasarosnameny, Hungary**

100 headstones repaired and up-righted. (Note: We have individual photos of most of the tombstones post-restoration. We intend to donate the information to the JOWBR Template as soon as I get a chance to transcribe them.

### **Vonyhove, Ukraine**

The fence is presently being erected, to be followed by the restoration of the interior of the cemetery.

Anyone who recognizes any of the towns as their ancestral hometown and has any information that might benefit the project can call 800-945-1552 or email [gen@jewishcemeterypreservation.org](mailto:gen@jewishcemeterypreservation.org).

Please call the office to see if there are available photos of your cemetery of interest.

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## Interactive English Map of Israel

*Merav Schejtman, JewishGen*

A new rendition of an old site, formerly only in Hebrew, is now accessible in an English version.

Go to [www.emap.co.il](http://www.emap.co.il) and click on the bar at the top that says "English."

You can search every city and every street in it.

When you print a letter you will see all the cities, towns, villages and kibbutzim starting with this letter.

It looks very user friendly and it is free.

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## Wanted: Your Stories About Family History Travel

Have you traveled in search of your family history? Whether you have visited your ancestral shtetl or gone to a courthouse or an archive in the U.S., SFBAJGS members want to know about it.

Stories of your personal successful family history search are also always of interest.

Please contact *ZichronNote* editor Beth Galleto at [galleto@pacbell.net](mailto:galleto@pacbell.net) and let her know you have a story to tell.

**COMPUTER/ONLINE NEWS**

**A Translation Guide to the Warsaw Ghetto website**

*Alexander Sharon, JewishGen*

Let me try to provide a translated guide through the Warsaw Ghetto website, which can be found at [warszawa.getto.pl/pl/site/](http://warszawa.getto.pl/pl/site/)

The website, in Polish, has a searchable database of people and locations.

On the left side of the home page there are four pictures with links to:

1. Miejsca - Locations
2. Ludzie - People (picture of the historian Dr. Emmanuel Ringelblum)
3. Zrodla - Sources
4. Plan Getta- Ghetto Map

**Locations**

Streets within the Ghetto are listed alphabetically. Clicking on the street name opens additional data.

Please note that only a few streets are shown on this page. However, clicking on the word "wiecej" (more) makes additional hidden street names appear.

Clicking on Mila Street, for example, brings up a column that shows the street name (Mila) and the houses numbers on this street. Again, there is more hidden data. Open one address such as Mila 18 (Leon Uris' book title), for example. Next to No. 18 click on the box labeled "Pokaz" (show).

The upper box says "Pokaz miejsce na mapie" (show place on the map). Clicking on this box causes two maps to appear. A small map of the ghetto on the right shows the location of the street in relation to the ghetto. The larger map on the left shows a detailed ghetto map of the street and house No. 18. The next box on this page, "Przejdz do wydarzen" provides descriptive text on what happened on Mila Street.

**People**

An alphabetical list of many people appears. Again many names are hidden. Clicking on the word 'wiecej' opens additional lists.

Clicking on the name "Fajfer Sara," for example, causes the following information to appear:

id 21101998082554000001

First Name Sara

Surname Fajfer

Sex F

Status wealthy

Biography Friend of Pola Rotszyld

Source: Pola Rotszyld: "Relation 033/438; Archives of Yad Vashem"

**Easy, Inexpensive NYC Vital Records by Credit Card**

*Renee Steinig, JewishGen*

A form for ordering marriage certificates (and other vital records) from the New York [Municipal] Archives can be found at [www.nyc.gov/html/records/html/vitalrecords/home.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/records/html/vitalrecords/home.shtml).

Make sure you give them the certificate number, so they don't need to do a search, and the certified copy will cost only \$6.00.

Records can also be ordered online from the Municipal Archive with a credit card for \$8. Given the 74 cents postage you save (for mailing the form and enclosing a self-addressed stamped envelope), this convenience costs a little over a dollar.

I would also like to mention [www.lineages.com](http://www.lineages.com). This private research firm uses the microfilms at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City to fill requests for NYC vital records. When you provide a certificate number, they — like the Municipal Archives — waive their search fee. The cost for one record is \$5 plus \$2 handling. When four or more records are ordered at once, the cost per item goes down to \$4 plus \$2 handling. Turn-around time is much quicker than the Archives' — just a few days — and Lineages will email the documents as PDF files on request. There may be other companies in Salt Lake that provide a similar service. I'm mentioning Lineages because I have used them and found them to be fast, professional, and reliable.

**Libraries with Judaica Research or Jewish Music Collections**

*Bernard Kouchel, JewishGen*

For interested researchers, this page has a list of links to libraries with Judaica Research Collections [www.jewishlibraries.org/ajlweb/resources/links.htm](http://www.jewishlibraries.org/ajlweb/resources/links.htm)

For researchers with interest in the study of Jewish music and culture, see [www.jmwc.org/jmwc\\_libraries.html](http://www.jmwc.org/jmwc_libraries.html)

## Update on Yizkor Book Project

*Joyce Field, JewishGen*

In the month of October 2004 the Yizkor Book Project added three new books and six new entries, and updated 12 books. There are now 624 entries at [www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/translations.html](http://www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/translations.html). To make it easier to identify new additions, the work completed during October has been flagged in the alphabetical index.

New books include:

- Budanov, Ukraine
- Jewish Music in Poland Between the World Wars, Muzika Yehudit
- B'Polin Bein Shtei Milchamot Haolam, [www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/musicians/musicians.html](http://www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/musicians/musicians.html). This is listed under the Miscellaneous category in the Index.

■ Terebovlya, Ukraine

New entries include:

- Czeladz, Poland: Pinkas HaKehillot, Poland, vol. 5
- Dabrowa Gornicza, Poland: Pinkas HaKehillot, Poland, vol. 7
- Dolina, Ukraine: Pinkas HaKehillot, Poland, vol. 2
- Hirtau, Romania: Pinkas HaKehillot, Romania, vol. 1
- Husi, Romania: Pinkas HaKehillot, Romania, vol. 1
- Mazeikiiai, Lithuania: Yahadut Lita

Updates:

- Bedzin, Poland
- Bolekhov, Ukraine
- Bukowina: History of the Jews in the Bukowina, chapter "Jewish Sport in the Bukowina, " volume 1, pp. 167-172
- Holocaust in Belarus
- Marghita, Romania
- Molchadz, Belarus
- Novogradok, Belarus
- Oradea, Romania
- Podgaytsy, Ukraine
- Ropczyce, Poland
- Stepan, Ukraine
- Volozhin, Belarus

We want to remind you that many yizkor books are being translated by a professional translator, and donations are needed to pay for this important work. To make a donation please click on [www.jewishgen.org/JewishGen-erosity/YizkorTrans.html](http://www.jewishgen.org/JewishGen-erosity/YizkorTrans.html)

## Yad Vashem Website Scheduled to Go On-Line in November

*Beth Galleto, Editor, ZichronNote*

Israel's Yad Vashem memorial has sought to collect a "Page of Testimony" for as many as possible of the six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust. These pages, submitted over the years by surviving friends and relatives, have now been scanned. A searchable database of the Pages is scheduled to be launched on the Yad Vashem website on November 22, 2004.

Every data field in the pages will be searchable, including name, town, and name of submitter of the Page. Basic information from the pages will be available in English. Yad Vashem made a trial run of this database available at the 2003 International Conference in Washington, D.C., and those who used it found it to be tremendously informative. The website is located at [www.yadvashem.org](http://www.yadvashem.org)

## Spielberg Film Archives Offer Films for On-Line Viewing

*Eden Joachim, JewishGen*

I was recently advised by a fellow genealogist in Israel of the Steven Spielberg Jewish Film Archives at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

There are films available for on-line viewing representing the various geographic homelands of our ancestors.

Of particular interest to me were two films of Vilnius (Wilno) and Lithuania, and one film which included footage of Kolbuszowa, Ranizow, Sokolow Malopolski and Rzeszow.

Go to [www.spielbergfilmarchive.org.il/](http://www.spielbergfilmarchive.org.il/) to access these films and learn more about the archive.

## View Historical Directories from Great Britain

*Martha Lev-Zion, JewishGen*

The site [www.historicaldirectories.org](http://www.historicaldirectories.org) contains historical directories from Great Britain and should be helpful for those with deep roots in England and Wales. It contains directories from 1750 to 1919 that have been scanned digitally. You can search by name, or location, or trade, or any other keyword you might wish to use.

One caveat: if your search is successful, the number of hits is recorded at the top. You need to click on "next hit" to get your first hit, since the database always opens on the first page of the directory that contains the hit.

## The Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

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