

# VENTURING INTO OUR PAST



# JGSCV

## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE CONEJO VALLEY AND VENTURA COUNTY

August 2015

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### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

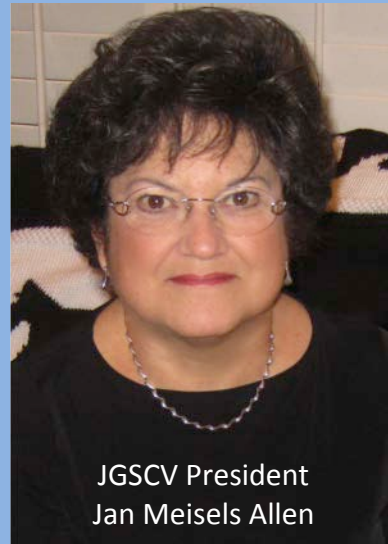
JGSCV did not meet during July due to the IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in Jerusalem. While I was not able to make it this year - first one I missed in 16 years - JGSCV was well represented with seven members including three presenters. See page 6 for a highlights of the Conference. According to Dick Eastman it was an overwhelming success with approximately 1,000 attendees from 22 countries. Truly International!

Start to plan for next year's conference in Seattle August 7-12! It's a relatively short plane ride from our area and the scenery is beautiful. That conference will have four themes: Sephardic, European Immigration, Australasia/South America and Western US. The call for papers opens on September 1.

Since January, we have been running a series of articles by members on their own experiences or research into their ancestor's experiences to commemorate the centennial of World War I and the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II—holocaust stories are part of World War II. We welcome more participants for this project. If you have some information on a relative who served during one of the two World Wars—we need to hear from you

August, 2015

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST



JGSCV President  
Jan Meisels Allen

First recipient of the  
IAJGS Volunteer of the Year Award

### NEXT MEETING

**Sunday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> 1:30-3:30 PM**

### Genealogy in the Round

A chance for JGSCV members to share genealogical successes, brick walls and artifacts. Email Jan for a place on the agenda: [president@jgscv.org](mailto:president@jgscv.org)

[WWW.JGSCV.ORG](http://WWW.JGSCV.ORG)

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JGSCV is a non-profit organization dedicated to collecting, preserving and disseminating genealogical information, techniques and research tools among people interested in Jewish genealogy and family history. Anyone interested in Jewish genealogy, regardless of religion, is welcome to become a member.

with your stories! Thus far, Werner Frank, Sarah Applebaum, Barbara Algaze, Joanne Cadis, Hal Bookbinder and Allan Linderman have shared their stories. Stephen Weinstein's story is on page 11. How about you?

Each summer the Ventura County Fair is held at the Ventura County Fairgrounds located at 10 W. Harbor Blvd. in Ventura. This year it is scheduled for 5-16 August with the theme: "A County Fair with Ocean Air". This is the 140th anniversary of the fair whose original purpose was horse racing in 1875. Genealogical awards and prizes are offered as part of the Hobbies Department. JGSCV members have volunteered in past years in the genealogy booth and enjoyed it. We hope you will volunteer again. See page 13.

Our meeting co-sponsor, Temple Adat Elohim has a new rabbi, Rabbi Andrew Strauss who started July 1. Rabbi Strauss, had been the interim Rabbi at Central Synagogue of New York City. Prior to that, Rabbi Straus was the senior rabbi at Temple Sinai in Oakland, California. We welcome Rabbi Strauss and invite him to attend our meetings.

Last Winter-Spring a JGSCV committee was participating with the IAJGS-JewishGen Memorial Plaques program. While all 20+ synagogues in our area were contacted only Ojai Temple responded. We will try contacting all the synagogues again this fall. It does not make any sense that over 20 synagogues did not reply and some must have Memorial Plaques.

The Board has added more programs for our October 2015 - June 2016 schedule. Look at page 12 and mark your calendars! Due to all the Jewish holidays in September we can't meet on any Sunday. It is always possible the dates may change, so please check the website regularly. There are only a three dates without confirmed programs and they are in the spring-summer of 2016—many months away. We are excited about the excellence in the programs for our society and we hope you are too!

We need volunteers for the 5-minute genealogical hint. This feature begins every meeting. This is a short presentation on a technique that can help in genealogy. Those interested please contact me at [president@jgscv.org](mailto:president@jgscv.org)

JGSCV returns with our annual Genealogy in the Round program on August 2. This is **YOUR** program to discuss your genealogical successes, brick walls and artifacts. We need your participation for the program to be a success! Thus far, **seven** participants have contacted me and there is room for several more. Please contact me with a brief description of your genealogical success, brick wall or artifact! This annual event is always a hit – and with 160 members plus many more attendees, there must be more genealogical successes, brick walls, failures or artifacts to share.

*Jan Meisels Allen*



*WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?* begins again on July 26<sup>th</sup> on TLC. This season look for Tom Bergeron, Bryan Cranston, Ginnifer Goodwin, Alfre Woodard and J.K. Rowling. Check your local cable system for channel and time.

## USCIS Webinar on Immigration and Nationality

Marian Smith of the United States Information and Citizenship Services (UCSIS) will be answering pre-submitted questions on Immigration and Nationality records and research during a live webinar on Friday, July 31<sup>st</sup> at 4 PM Pacific Time. To submit a question email [cishistory.library@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:cishistory.library@uscis.dhs.gov) with the subject line "July Webinar Question". If your question relates to a found document, it is requested that the document be attached to your email. Questions must be received by July 25<sup>th</sup>.

Webinar attendance is limited to 125. To register: <http://www.uscis.gov/HGWebinars#%E2%80%9CRecords> and scroll down to "Records Found Case Studies" and follow directions.

## Global Name Translation From MyHeritage

My Heritage launched their Global Name Translation™ capability during the recent IAJGS conference. This is a new technology to help break through language barriers. The technology generates all plausible translations of names found in historical records and family trees from one language into another. For example, a search for Alessandro (Alexander in Italian) will also find "Саша" (which is the Russian form of Sasha, a popular nickname of Alexander in Russia) with its corresponding transliteration into the language of your search. In addition, a manual search in one language will also provide results in other languages, translated back to the user's language for convenience. This technology is not offered elsewhere.

To read more see: <http://tinyurl.com/q5k4maa>

## The Ancestor Hunt Updates Records

One of the best resources for genealogy research is historical newspapers. *The Ancestor Hunt* recently published an update on their website for a total of 12,564 Online Historical Newspapers with free searching. See:

<http://tinyurl.com/nvahdmd>  
For those researching Chicago roots, you may wish look at the Beta version that the Chicago Tribune has posted covering the period from 1849-1991 with searchable text. It is possible once the beta test is completed the images may be placed behind a pay wall, therefore you may wish to search soon. To search the Chicago Tribune archives go to: <http://archives.chicagotribune.com/>

*New!* Scans of Copenhagen Jewish records from the Danish National Archives:

<http://tinyurl.com/qxb144v>

## ABOUT JGSCV

JGSCV meets once a month, usually on a Sunday. Meetings are oriented to the needs of the novice as well as the more experienced genealogist. Members share materials, research methods and ideas as well as research success or failures. **MISSION STATEMENT:** The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV) is a non-profit organization run by enthusiastic volunteers dedicated to the sharing of genealogical information, techniques and research tools with those interested in Jewish genealogy and family history. Members who include beginners and experienced genealogists share with each other. **JGSCV MEMBERSHIP:** 2015 dues are \$25 for a single membership and \$30 for a household. To join, please printout the membership form on our website [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org) by selecting the membership button. Send it with a check in the appropriate amount payable to "JGSCV" and mail to Helene Rosen at 2891 Fountainwood St., Agoura Hills, CA 91301.



# Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County\* (JGSCV) (\*and surrounding areas)

The JGSCV will hold a general meeting, co-sponsored with Temple Adat Elohim, on Sunday, August 2, 2015 at Temple Adat Elohim 2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

## The Topic:



**Genealogy In The Round** is your opportunity to come and share a genealogical success, failure, brick wall, or genealogical artifact! This is YOUR meeting—we all learn from one another—take this opportunity to share your genealogical story—success or failure, ask questions about your brick walls, and more!

If you wish to participate in the program, please contact Jan Meisels Allen at [president@JGSCV.org](mailto:president@JGSCV.org). Each participant will be given 5-10 minutes to share—depending on the number of presenters. Whether you are a JGSCV member or a potential member—we'd love to hear your genealogical story.

The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County is dedicated to sharing genealogical information, techniques and research tools with anyone interested in Jewish genealogy and family history.

There is no charge to attend the meeting. Anyone may join JGSCV. Annual dues are \$25 for an individual and \$30 for a family.

August, 2015

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

# JGSCV UPDATES

**LIBRARY:** The traveling library includes books available to members before each meeting. Most books are kept at the Agoura Hills Public Library. See [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org) library and permanent for an updated list of our holdings. Remember, neither the permanent nor the traveling library is a lending library—books must be used onsite at the Agoura Hills Public Library (permanent) or at the meetings (traveling).

JGSCV continues to participate with both Amazon.com as an affiliate and with Ralphs Community Program. Simply enter the Amazon site from JGSCV's home page. Start at <http://www.jgscv.org> and scroll to the bottom to

graphic  
This takes  
you



click on the Amazon  
(like the one here).  
you to the same page  
always start at –

except JGSCV will receive a marketing fee at no cost to you. See “notices” on the JGSCV.org website for instructions for Ralphs Community Contribution Program, too.



Remember, the SCHMOOZING CORNER is open 20 minutes before each monthly meeting is scheduled to begin. Just come to the front right corner of the meeting room and look for the “SCHMOOZING CORNER” sign where this month you will find Werner Frank waiting to field your individual questions and provide one-to-one help until the meeting begins. At left is Warren Blatt manning the “SCHMOOZING CORNER” at the last meeting.

If you are planning to participate in JGSCV's annual *Genealogy in the Round* program on August 2, contact Jan ([president@jgscv.org](mailto:president@jgscv.org)) ASAP. This is the very popular, annual program where JGSCV members share their genealogical successes, brickwalls and artifacts. Each participant receives 5-10 minutes to present their story.

For a copy of Jan's “5 Minute Genealogical Hint”: *Yizkor Books as a Genealogical Tool* visit the JGSCV website ([www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org)) under ‘meetings’/‘prior’/‘June 7, 2015’.



Read about Jan Meisels Allen, 2015 IAJGS “Volunteer of the Year” on page 12.

## Welcome Back!

# See you August 2<sup>nd</sup> for *Genealogy in the Round*

August, 2015

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

# Highlights from The 35<sup>th</sup> IAJGS Conference on Jewish Genealogy

By Jan Meisels Allen



This is the first IAJGS conference I missed in 16 years. While I could not attend, JGSCV was well represented: Debra Kay-Blatt, Warren Blatt and Hal Bookbinder were presenters. Other JGSCV members that attended included: Eva Cox, Dalya Dektor, Patricia Fuller, and Andrea Massion that I know of— and there might have been more! I am honored to be the first recipient of the IAJGS Volunteer of the Year Award, as announced at the conference. Hal Bookbinder accepted on my behalf.

This article will serve as a summary of what I learned from others—including Dick Eastman’s newsletter (<http://blog.eogn.com/2015/07/07/a-report-from-the-iajgs2015-conference-in-jerusalem/>) and from attending the Annual Session remotely. With the 10- hour time zone difference between California and Jerusalem I was up before 4:00 AM to participate.

The conference had over 200 programs, workshops, luncheons etc. There were approximately 1,000 attendees from 22 countries: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, England, France, Germany, India, Israel, Jamaica, Latvia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Ukraine, and the USA.

And, many attended ‘virtually’ by subscribing to “On Demand”!

## On Demand

If you are interested in the “On Demand” for the conference you may still subscribe and view 62 of the streamed lectures. The “On Demand” feature will be available for three months after the conference. To learn more go to: <http://iajgs2015.org/> and click on the “On Demand” button on the right. “On Demand” is presented with cooperation of FamilySearch.

## New Logo

IAJGS introduced a new logo at the conference:



## Keynote Speaker

The keynote speaker was Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, former Chief Rabbi of the State of Israel, current Chairman of Yad Vashem, and a holocaust survivor. His presentation was on “Connecting to Jewish Heritage through Jewish Genealogy”. Rabbi Lau is passionate about recording those who perished in the Shoah at Yad Vashem with Pages of Testimony. (<http://db.yadvashem.org/names/search.html?language=en>)

## Awards

The annual banquet speaker on Thursday night was Dick Eastman, the “dean” of bloggers who we know from the *Eastman Online Genealogy*

August, 2015

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

Newsletter. Dick spoke on “the future of genealogy research techniques”. One of the activities at the annual banquet is the presentation of IAJGS awards. This year the awards included some new categories mixed with some of the past ones. The awardees are:

Lifetime Achievement: Judy Baston

In recognition of Judy’s tireless work as: a LitvakSIG board member; moderator of the LitvakSIG Discussion Group; membership of the JRI Poland Board; Lomza Archive Coordinator; and moderator of the Lodz Area Research Group and BialyGen discussion groups. Judy was also involved in editing/proofreading Yizkor Book translations for Ciechanowicz, Eisikes and Ostrow Mazowiecka, and is a sought-after speaker.

Outstanding Project/Resource/Program 2015: JGS of Greater Boston JewishGen Memorial Plaque Database Contribution

In recognition of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston being the leading contributor to the JewishGen Memorial Plaque Database, accounting for 52% of the entries. JGSGB has submitted 37,628 entries from 62 Massachusetts synagogues/Jewish organizations. When gravestone and burial records are not available, memorial plaques are an invaluable source of vital information. It is likely that these plaques and their information would have remained hidden and eventually lost but for the initiative and diligence of the Society’s members.



Outstanding Publication 2015: Jewish Genealogical Society of Long Island YouTube Channel

In recognition of JGS of Long Island work to increase its membership and attract younger members. Using social media creatively with a relevant, informative message, and getting to the point quickly; JGS LI created a series of short, informative videos available to its members and the greater genealogical community through its new YouTube channel. This unique program includes 10 videos with a goal of adding a new one monthly. This innovative project can be replicated by other IAJGS members.

Outstanding Publication 2015: Jewish Genealogical Society of Maryland, Newsletter L'Dor V'Dor

In recognition of the very comprehensive and outstanding Jewish Genealogical Society of Maryland newsletter, L'Dor V'Dor, published by a society that is not yet two years old. This attractive newsletter under the leadership of Publication Chair, Susan Steeble, compares favorably to publications of much more mature organizations. L'Dor V'Dor includes a variety of articles, from research methodologies to success stories to brick walls. Its breadth and depth are unique.

IAJGS Member of the Year 2015: - Israel Genealogy Research Association



In recognition of the work of the Israel Genealogy Research Association, which reorganized 3.5 years ago. IGRA has created the All Israel Database (AID), which currently includes over 420,000

records, searchable by name in Hebrew and English. IGRA is working with more than thirty different archives in Israel, including collaborating with the Israel State Archives to index marriage and divorce records from the British Mandate Period of Palestine. IGRA's innovative programming includes their online databases, journal and video conferencing.

*Volunteer of the Year 2015: - Jan Meisels Allen*

In recognition of the work of Jan Meisels Allen, President of Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County and Chair of the IAJGS Public Records Access Monitoring



JGSCV founding member Hal Bookbinder accepting the *Volunteer of the Year Award* on behalf of Jan Meisels Allen. Presented by IAJGS President Marlis Humphrey (right) and Mark Nichols IAJGS Secretary.

Committee. A former IAJGS Vice-President who strives to keep Jewish genealogists aware of opportunities and records access issues through her messages to the IAJGS leadership and JewishGen. A regular volunteer for IAJGS International Conferences, she has coordinated access to a huge variety of online databases supporting the attendees' research experiences.

*Stern and Stedman Grants*

Each year the IAJGS awards grants that advance the work of Jewish genealogy. There were five applicants this year and Committee awarded two grants-the maximum permitted. One grant in the amount of \$3,000 is to honor the late Rabbi Malcolm Stern, widely considered to be the dean of American Jewish genealogy. Funding is by voluntary donations from the IAJGS members. (The voluntary \$1.00 contribution requested per member listed on the JGSCV membership form is how JGSCV contributes to this fund.) This year's recipient is the Foundation for Documentation of Jewish Cemeteries in Poland.

The second award is The John Stedman Memorial Grant also for \$3,000. IAJGS was a recipient of a gift from the estate of Jon Stedman to honor his late father, John Stedman. This year's awardee is a partnership of Galicia and Bukovina Association, comprised of Geshet Galicia, USHMM and the Herzl Institute of the University of Haifa to index Stanislawow records.

**IAJGS Annual Meeting**

During the IAJGS Annual Meeting, IAJGS President, Marlis Humphrey presented the annual report. She discussed the mission which is education, what IAJGS does: advocacy (via the Public Records Access Monitoring Committee-PRAMC), network of and for societies, crowdsourcing and recognition and promotion of Jewish genealogy.

IAJGS developed a "society in a box" which helps new societies get established with tools and materials and some "know how". Not only may new societies find tools for assistance but there are insights for established societies as well (i.e. model bylaws). Other items of use for society management include a "how to guide",

best practices and individual member best practices. In phase two, the IAJGS will have a customizable brochure, customizable website, newsletter inclusions for societies that need stories and a “lecture library” of presenters who agree to be videoed so that member societies may view the lecture. Thus far, there are 45 lectures in the “library” predominately from previous IAJGS conference lectures. Many societies may find some of all of the above of assistance, JGSCV has many accomplishments so we may use fewer than some others but this is an excellent member benefit for the IAJGS member organizations.

IAJGS has developed a “society management channel” on its website for those who are

IAJGS lost three members: Asociación de Genealogía Judía de Argentina (JGS of Argentina); Amoetat Akevoth (Dutch Jewish Genealogical Data Base)—in Israel; and Wisconsin Jewish Genealogical Society. They anticipate announcing a new member which will bring the membership to 71.

I presented an update on what has happened since the May 11 written report sent to the presidents on records access issues. The May 11 report is posted to the IAJGS website at: <http://www.iajgs.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/2015.Annual.PRAMC.Report.pdf>

In order to do our genealogy research we need

*“Another (crowdsourcing) project will be to work with Ancestry and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) on indexing for the World Memory Project.”*

leaders of IAJGS member organizations. This is possible due to a grant to the IAJGS from MyHeritage which is funding to record 10 seminars during 2015-2016..

The crowdsourcing was a joint project with JewishGen to record synagogue memorial plaques. Another project will be to work with Ancestry and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) on indexing for the World Memory Project. When more information is available, JGSCV members will be informed. (We learned about the World Memory Project when JGSCV speakers Megan Lewis of the USHMM and Crista Cowan, Ancestry.com each mentioned the project in their presentations.)

August, 2015

access to records of genealogical value. There are increasing impediments to access such records by various governments worldwide. If you are interested in learning more about this subject you should subscribe to the IAJGS Records Access Alert which can be done by registering at: <http://lists.iajgs.org/mailman/listinfo/record-s-access-alerts> and follow the instructions to enter your email address, full name and which JGS/JHS/SIG/JewishGen is your affiliation You will receive an email response that you have to reply to or the subscription will not be finalized.

During the IAJGS Annual Session they adopted bylaws amendments proposed by the IAJGS Bylaws Committee. JGSCV founding member,

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

Hal Bookbinder served on the bylaws committee.

JGSCV had submitted several suggestions to the IAJGS for bylaws amendments but the Bylaws Committee did not to accept them. Although declined by the Bylaws Committee, we decided to follow the option under the IAJGS bylaws for submitting amendments—requiring six member organizations to sign on to the proposed bylaws. The issue was to require all members serving on IAJGS **standing** committees to be a **member** of one of the IAJGS member organizations. As IAJGS is a membership organization we believe committee members should be those who represent member societies. IAJGS could appoint any *ad hoc* committee with non-members.

A second, related proposed bylaws amendment would have required any IAJGS conference voluntary co-chair and voluntary conference committee chairpersons to also be members of one of the IAJGS member organizations.

JGSCV was able to have a total of 15 IAJGS members sign on to the two proposed bylaws amendments which were reviewed by two practicing attorneys each of whom are officers of two societies. Both proposed bylaws amendments were spoken against by the chairman of the bylaws committee and were defeated by the presidents at the annual session by 17(for)-25 (against) 6 (abstained).

JGSCV also made a motion to make the IAJGS Policy and Procedure Manual up to date and

placed on the IAJGS website. The current (incomplete) Policy and Procedure Manual was recently added to the website. After discussion this motion also was defeated 14-20-12.

### **Future Conferences**

The next IAJGS conference will be held in Seattle, WA August 7-16, 2016 at the Seattle Sheraton <http://www.iajgs2016.org/>. The time of year is Seattle's high season and therefore the daily hotel room charge is more than usual: \$219 plus tax. This amount was renegotiated down from the original contract and does include free Wi-Fi in the sleeping rooms. There will be four themes for the conference, Sephardic, European Immigration, Australasia/South America and Western US. The call for papers will open on September 1 and registration is expected to begin January 4 with early registration ending in late April. Janette Silverman who spoke to JGSCV earlier this year is the lead co-chair for the conference and Emily Garber who is our April 2016 speaker is on the programming committee. For the first time, the Seattle IAJGS conference will have a special program for educators (JCC, religious schools, and Jewish Day Schools) held the first day –Sunday August 7.

The 2017 IAJGS conference will be in Orlando, FL July 23-28, 2017—the conference website is not yet available. IAJGS is still actively seeking to hold the 2018 conference in Warsaw, Poland and when plans are finalized they will notify us. Start saving for the next three conferences

# My Other Great Uncle

By Stephen Weinstein

My paternal grandmother Ada Ambutter, lived in New York City and died three weeks before her 57<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1976. Her father Nathan was an artist in New York City who had a brother named David ("Dave"). Records are a bit sketchy for my great

Ambuter was not my great uncle David Ambutter (one "t").

The first record I found with the March 9, 1886 date of birth is a World War One draft registration card, on which his name was misspelled David Aaron Ambutter, which happens to be

David A. Ambuter 1904 Army Enlistment record (left half)

REGISTER OF ENLISTMENTS.												UNITED STATES ARMY.																			
NO.	NAME	BIRTH			PLACE		REG.	CLASS.	REMARKS	REMARKS	REMARKS	REMARKS	REMARKS	REMARKS	REMARKS	REMARKS	REMARKS	REMARKS													
		Year	Month	Day	State	City													Country												
206	Amutter, David	1886	Mar	9	Boston	MA	1904	Private	1st Reg. Cav.	1st	1907	Discharged	March 8, 1907	1908	Enlisted	July 22, 1908	1911	Discharged	July 20, 1911	1911	Enlisted	Sept. 20, 1911	1911	Discharged	July 20, 1911	1911	Enlisted	Sept. 20, 1911	1911	Discharged	July 20, 1911

uncle David but it appears as though he died in 1968 at age 73.

David A. Ambuter was born March 9, 1886 in Boston, MA to Abraham and Mary Ambutter (misspellings notwithstanding). He enlisted in the Army on March 9, 1904, which would have been his 18th birthday, but he is listed as being at least 21. He was discharged on what I think says March 8, 1907, but the handwriting is unclear. He enlisted again on July 22, 1908, when he would have been 22, but he is listed as being at least 24. He was stationed in the Philippines, which were then a U.S. territory, at Fort William McKinley, where his name was misspelled Ambutar on the 1910 census. He was discharged July 20, 1911. He returned to Boston and lived with his parents. *Unfortunately, this David A.*

the real first and last name of my great uncle. The first record I found to be consistent with both the 1886 date of birth and the spelling Ambuter is the 1920 census. This census record also shows his parents, Abraham and Mary. He married Bertha. As of 1930, their only children were Ruth Ambuter and Joseph Ambuter (interestingly, I have a great-great grandfather Joseph Ambutter) and he (David Ambuter) was a moving picture photographer. Abraham and Mary died in the late 1930's. David Ambuter died in 1967. They are buried at the Pride of Boston cemetery. The "real" David Ambutter (my relative) died in 1968 in the Bronx, New York City.

# Jan Meisels Allen Honored By IAJGS

JGSCV President, Jan Meisels Allen was presented the inaugural 'Volunteer of the Year' Award by the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies at its 35<sup>th</sup> annual conference in Jerusalem. Nominated by the JGS of Montreal for this prestigious award, the JGSCV board offered the Letter of Recommendation below. Unable to attend the conference, Jan's award was accepted on her behalf by JGSCV founding board member, Hal Bookbinder.

Congratulations, Jan! We appreciate all you do!



Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County  
(JGSCV)

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president@JGSCV.org www.JGSCV.org

May 12, 2015

Attention: IAJGS Award Committee:

**Award Category: Volunteer of the Year Award**

It is with great pleasure that the Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County joins in the nomination of and supports the award to Jan Meisels Allen for the 2015 IAJGS award for Volunteer of the Year.

Jan has been invaluable in leading the efforts to monitor, advocate for, and educate on the issue of records access worldwide since 2004. In that regard, she has chaired the IAJGS Public Records Access Monitoring Committee, represented IAJGS on the Records Preservation and Access Committee (and is the IAJGS sponsoring member for that Committee), and lectured on behalf of the IAJGS at FGS and NGS conferences. She has been responsible for the IAJGS Records Access Alert, posting about access issues, since 2013, as well as providing updating posts on the IAJGS Leadership Forum.

Jan's other area of focus is the management, growth, and programming of JGS societies around the world. She has fostered the growth of societies across the globe, and was the founder of and only President of the JGSCV. She has singlehandedly grown our Society into a healthy, thriving organization that is constantly growing, and providing a significant part of Southern California with programming that is comparable to that of an international conference.

She has served on the Board of the IAJGS for ten years, and created and chaired the Membership Development Committee. She has held many roles in a number of IAJGS Conferences, including Registration Chairperson and Resource Room coordination.

She has also lectured on records access, society management, programming and membership growth issues at IAJGS conferences, and is an active volunteer for JewishGen.

In short, her energy and enthusiasm are limitless, and she has been an invaluable resource to the genealogical world. Therefore, the Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County, wholeheartedly and enthusiastically, strongly endorses the nomination of Jan Meisels Allen for the IAJGS 2015 Volunteer of the Year Award.

  
Debra Kay-Blatt

Secretary on Behalf of the Board of the JGSCV

## The Award Inscription

Volunteer of the Year: Jan  
Meisels Allen

In recognition of the work of Jan Meisels Allen, President of Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County and Chair of the IAJGS Public Records Access Monitoring Committee. A former IAJGS Vice-President who strives to keep Jewish genealogists aware of opportunities and records access issues through her messages to the IAJGS leadership and JewishGen. A regular volunteer for IAJGS International Conferences, she has coordinated access to a huge variety of online databases supporting the attendees' research experiences.

# Future JGSCV Meeting Dates through June 2016

Sunday afternoons starting at 1:30 Monday evenings starting at 7:00  
Programs co-sponsored by Temple Adat Elohim.

Check the website and this newsletter for future updates  
2015

August 2 Sunday *Genealogy in the Round* 1:30-3:30 PM Come and share a genealogical success, failure, brick wall, or genealogical artifact! This is YOUR meeting—We all learn from one another—take this opportunity to share your genealogical story—success or failure, ask questions about your brick walls, and more!

September No Meeting Due to all the Jewish Holidays

October 11 Sunday 1:30-3:30 PM JGSCV's 11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Jay Sage: *DNA Testing for Genealogy*. With the incredible drop in the cost of DNA sequencing, DNA testing is now affordable for individuals. Mr. Sage will discuss the role that it can play in genealogical research.

November 2, Monday 7:00-9:00 PM Warren Blatt *Jewish Surnames* Learn when Jewish surnames were first used in various countries, how they developed, and their transformation upon immigration. This presentation will dispel several common myths about Jewish surnames. Classifications of surnames will include: patronymic/matronymic, toponymic, occupational, artificial, religious, and acronyms. Discover which Jewish surnames are the most common in the U.S., Eastern Europe and Israel, as well as sources for learning more about your surnames and how they may be accessed.

December 13, Sunday 1:30-3:30 PM Glenn Dynner, Ph.D. *Jews, Liquor, and Life in Eastern Europe*. In Pre-modern Poland the Jewish-run tavern was often the center of leisure, hospitality, business, and even religious festivities. As liquor became the region's boom industry, Jewish tavern keepers became integral to both local economic and local social life. Also, Annual Chanukah Party with Membership prizes

## 2016

January 3, Sunday 1:30-3:30 PM Program Pamela Weisberger, *Holly Golightly Was a Nice Jewish Girl*. Ever wonder if there was more to your family history than meets the eye? Poor immigrant Jews arriving in Der Goldene Medina (the promised land) not only shed their old world clothing and shtetl names, but often completely reinvented their personalities, creating new identities and obscuring old ones. Using creative methodology and genealogical travel we'll explore the twisted roads our ancestors traveled to establish a new life — or

run out on an old one. Learn investigative techniques for uncovering the truth about your own amazing (but often hidden) family history.

February 14 Sunday 1:00-5:00 PM Annual Assisted Research Day at LA Family History Library. JGSCV Members only.

March 6 Sunday 1:30-3:30 PM Program TBA Speaker Invited Awaiting Final Approvals

April 4 Monday 7:00-9:00 PM Program Emily Garber. *When It Takes A Village*. This presentation will outline a program for solving genealogical research problems via cluster research techniques including FAN (family, associates, and neighbors). Topics will include: appropriate application, research planning, commonly used resources and documents, and case studies successfully tracking individuals from Europe to the United States, overcoming name and residential changes.

May 1 Sunday 1:30-3:30 PM Annual Yom Hashoah Program TBA

June 5 Sunday 1:30-3:30 PM Program TBD

Programs are subject to change -check JGSCV website [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org)

## Ventura County Fair

Once again the Ventura County Fair (August 5-16) will take place at the Ventura County Fairgrounds located at 10 W. Harbor Blvd. in Ventura. This year's theme is "A Country Fair With Ocean Air". Genealogical awards and prizes are included as part of the Hobbies Department. For entry details go to: <http://www.venturacountyfair.org/hobbies/> and scroll down below the moving pictures page. You can enter online until July 20, 2015 or bring your items to the Gem & Mineral building at the fairgrounds on July 31 or August 1, 2 between 10 am-5 pm. You do not have to enter online to enter.



The complete entry guide is available at: <http://www.venturacountyfair.org/fair/entryguides/>. Information specific to the Hobbies Department may be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/opaf12t>

Genealogy is division 462 (page 3 of the entry guide). There are 8 genealogy entry classes.

JGSCV members have volunteered in past years in the genealogy booth and enjoyed it! Genealogy volunteers are needed for each day. Volunteers participate in 4 hour shifts 10:00 a.m. (or 11:00 a.m. depending on the day) to 2:30 p.m.; 2:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. It is best if volunteers are familiar with Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org as well as other popular programs to show the fair attendees how genealogy is researched. Training sessions will be held for those needing an update on the latest programs. Volunteers are admitted to the Fair free but there are no parking privileges. To sign up as a volunteer for one or more shifts go to: <https://sites.google.com/site/vfhlbrary/just-in/2015-ventura-county-faire-genealogy-booth>.

If you have questions about volunteering for the booth contact Bettye Berg at [bettyeberg@yahoo.com](mailto:bettyeberg@yahoo.com) or 805-797-7084.