

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

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



JGSCV

January 2019

Volume 14 Issue 4

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Our annual meeting with guest speaker Crista Cowan, the Barefoot Genealogist, Corporate Genealogist from Ancestry was a great success! We had 80 in attendance and gained 8 new members! The program was *What's New at Ancestry*. There are many new features on the website and their DNA program was also discussed. See page 6 for the highlights of the program.

We were delighted that Temple Adat Elohim reopened in time for our meeting from their extensive smoke damage from the Woolsey fire. The Temple looked beautiful with all new carpeting and painted walls and more. JGSCV made a small donation to the Temple to help defray any unreimbursed expenses from the fire. TAE is our "program home" since day one and we very much appreciate their ongoing support of our programs. We also very much appreciated Rabbi Diamond stopping in during the pre-meeting time to meet with the members, our guest speaker and welcome us back!

Thank you to Hal Bookbinder for conducting the schmoozing corner.

A highlight of the meeting was the annual membership renewal drive and Chanukah gifts/ for members—Crista randomly picked the winning names. We are very fortunate to have had 12 prizes donated by the genealogy and DNA companies. See the winners on page 17. JGSCV thanks the following genealogy companies for contributing the prizes: Ancestry.com, Ancestry DNA, FamilyTree DNA, Findmypast, Fold3.com, MacKiev Software Family Tree Maker, MyHeritage, MyHeritage DNA, Legacy Family Tree, Legacy Webinars, Newspapers.com, and RootsMagic.



Ancestry.com
Corporate
Genealogist,
Crista Cowan
presented
"What's New
at Ancestry"
at JGSCV's
December
meeting

NEXT MEETING

Sunday January 6th 1:30-3:30 PM

What To Do When the Records You Need Don't Exist

Sometimes records are missing or destroyed or never existed. Learn how to identify and explore alternate records to fill in the missing family history pieces. JGSCV member Marion Werle presents.



WWW.JGSCV.ORG

6052 Hackers Lane
Agoura Hills, CA 91301
818-889-6616

2019 JGSCV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Jan Meisels Allen, President
and Program Chairman**
president@jgscv.org

Helene Rosen, VP Membership
membership@jgscv.org

Diane Wainwood, Secretary
secretary@jgscv.org

Karen Lewy Treasurer
treasurer@jgscv.org

**Warren Blatt, Member
Education**
education@jgscv.org

**Judy Karta, Community
Outreach** judy@jgscv.org

Rosalie Bell Publicity
publicity@jgscv.org

**Allan Linderman,
Newsletter Editor**
newslettereditor@jgscv.org

**Andrea Massion,
Member-at-Large**
Andrea@jgscv.org

Israel Perel, Librarian
librarian@jgscv.org

Barbara Algaze, FSL
Barbara@jgscv.org
David Oseas, Webmaster
webmaster@jgscv.org

Mission Statement:

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.

Issie Perel, JGSCV Board member on the Nominations Committee conducted the board election. The newly elected board members are: Jan Meisels Allen, Irv Camhi, Karen Lewy, Helene Rosen, Mike Sander and Diane Wainwood. Per the bylaws, the board will decide the role each board member at the Jan. 6 board meeting with the results announced in February's *Venturing Into Our Past* and reflected in that month's masthead.

Rosalie Bell decided to retire from the board due to some family responsibilities. We will miss her guidance and smiling face. She remains a JGSCV member. See page 9.

Hal Bookbinder's next installment of "Practicing Safe Computing" is: *Ten Tips* starts on page 10.

The IAJGS Conference on Jewish Genealogy will be held on July 28-August 2, 2019 in Cleveland, Ohio (<http://www.iajgs2019.org/>) at the Hilton Cleveland Downtown. Reservations can be made now at: http://www.iajgs2019.org/hotel_reserve.cfm. The submissions deadline for speakers is Sunday is January 20, 2019, 11:59 PM EST. If you are interested in speaking at the conference go to http://www.iajgs2019.org/call_for_papers.cfm and follow the directions. As I am on the conference committee and will be coordinating and obtaining the databases for the resource room, you will hear more from me about the conference throughout the year!

We are still in our 2019 membership drive. If you have not yet renewed your membership, or joined for 2019 there is a form on page 18 for you to complete. Of course the forms are on our website under "about" and membership and available at the meetings. It looks as if we will end the year with the highest membership we have ever experienced: 180 members, but we are about 65% of renewals at the time I am writing this letter. If you have not yet joined or renewed please do so now! Remember we are a 501(c)3 organization so your membership is eligible for tax deductibility - but it is best to check with your tax advisor.

Our January 6 program will be the premiere of senior JGSCV member Marion Werle's new presentation: *You Can't Find the Records—Now What?* We have all experienced the frustration of not finding the records or they don't exist. Marion will explore alternate records to build our family histories in the absence of "traditional records".

Have a very Happy and safe New Year.

Looking forward to seeing you on January 6th!

Jan Meisels Allen



Auction House Websites as Resource

Perusing the websites and catalogues of auction houses is absorbing and often, informative. Finding a site that lends itself to items other than art, books or synagogue and home ritual objects may lead to resources that shed light on genealogy research. Here are a few examples of family history finds. These happen to be from <https://www.kedem-auctions.com/>:

- Noble Families Among the Sephardic Jews – London, 1936
- The Behr Tree, 1683-1949– History of a Jewish Family from Lithuania – England, 1949
- Signatures of R. Yaakov Moshe Levenstam, Rabbi of Amsterdam, with a List of the Genealogy of the Families of the Chacham Zvi and of Rabbi Heshel of Krakow
- Portrait Photographs of Authors, Scholars and Rabbis – Poland and Italy / by Shadal

Newspaper Resources Make It Real

Bob Murowchick *Associate Director*, Boston University Center for the Study of Asia (BUCSA), Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies posted on the Belarus SIG at Jewishgen.org that he had found some great newspaper sources from the early 20th century reporting news of the pogroms in Russia from 1903 to 1905. The articles list specific towns and cities, and in most cases, the nature of the damage and the death toll of each site. Professor Murowchick used **PROQUEST.com**; Historical Newspapers, a server found in many libraries and universities, to access *The American Hebrew & Jewish Messenger*. The Cities of Desolation: The Extent of Russian Jewish Misery; de Haas, J; Dec 8, 1905. "I very happily spend a lot of time going through these full-text newspaper and ephemera databases as I try to find details for my own family links in the Minsk/Pinsk region, Germany, Sweden, and China," he emailed when he gave permission for access to his Google Drive link in order to access some of his useful resources: <https://tinyurl.com/yczq6rrd> (Note: original url works on Chrome browser, not Firefox; using TinyURL works on both browsers.)

Google Translate Updates Announced

James Kuczumski, Product Manager of Google Translate, posted on Google in November 2018 that it's been twelve years since the launch of **Google Translate**. He writes "Initially translating between English and Arabic only, we now translate 30 trillion sentences per year across 103 languages." Recent updates and a paid service now allow for whole document translation, as well as the ability to save these translations on your Google account. See more at <https://www.blog.google/products/translate/new-look-google-translate-web/>

Jewish Pirates Ahoy!

Historians can name numerous pirates from the 15th to 18th century who were Jewish. It seems logical that piracy was a vocation for Jews during the Spanish Inquisition which pursued Jewish populations who had escaped to remote regions of the Spanish empire: the Caribbean, South America and Mexico in addition to countries surrounding the Mediterranean Ocean. Safe at sea, and able to defend or attack, Jewish pirate captains gained crew loyalty, commissions and protection from the Inquisitors. Read about it on this site:

<http://www.jewishsphere.com/Directory/FamousJewishPirates.html#A>

Note: IAJGS permanent library has *Jewish Pirates of the Caribbean* by Edward Kritzer.

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

The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV) will hold a general meeting, co-sponsored with Temple Adat Elohim on Sunday, January 6, 2019 at Temple Adat Elohim 2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks, 91362 1:30-3:30 p.m.



The Program: You Can't Find The Records - Now What?

What do you do when the records you need don't exist or can't be found? All too often, disasters (man-made and natural) and the passing of time may destroy the records we need to trace our families. Maybe the records we need never existed or are restricted by privacy laws. We will learn how to explore alternate records to build our family histories in the absence of "traditional" records.

Speaker: For 23 years Marion Werle has been researching family from Lithuania, Latvia and Belarus, who settled in the US, Canada, UK and Israel. She has served on the boards of JGSCV and JGSLA, and is a past president of the Latvia SIG. A retired IT professional with master's degrees in both European History and Library Science from UCLA, she wrote *The Skuders from Skud*, about one of her Litvak branches, to share with family members. She recently completed the Boston University Genealogical Research Certificate, and has an ongoing interest in applying general genealogical methodology standards to Jewish research.



The meeting is open to the public. There is no charge to attend the meeting.

Anyone may join JGSCV. Annual dues are \$25 for an individual and \$30 for a family. Dues are used to support the world class speaker series and the extensive permanent library housed at the Agora Hills Library as well as the traveling library available at each meeting.

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.

JGSCV Updates

While the elections are over, JGSCV bylaws permit up to twelve board members and there are currently 11. In addition, the president with the consent of the board, may appoint up to 2 board members. Therefore, there remains an opportunity for any member interested in serving. Of course we have committees and other activities and are always looking for volunteers. These are not board positions, but very essential to making JGSCV operate effectively. If anyone would like to become more involved in **your** society please contact Jan Meisels Allen at president@jgscv.org.

The Schmoozing Corner awaits your questions on the right side at the front of the meeting room beginning at 1PM. Stephen Weinstein is scheduled to be the facilitator.

The JGSCV display at the Agoura Hills Library coinciding with International Jewish Genealogy Month has been designed by JGSCV board members Andrea Massion and Judy Karta and will be on display through the end of December. The display originally coincided with International Jewish Genealogy Month of Chesvan on the Jewish calendar which is Oct. 10-Nov. 8 this year. These JGSCV members have provided family memorabilia for the display: Sara Applebaum, Joanne Cadis, Steve Feldman, Judy Karta, Karen Lewy, Andera Massion, Steve Rothstein, Rose Topliss, Diane Wainwood, Debby Wenkart. Remember to plan to stop by the library before the end of the month. And, bring some friends.

See “Noteworthy” on the www.jgscv.org website (or see page 18) for instructions on how to help JGSCV by participating in Ralphs Community Contribution Program. AND, if you shop at Food 4 Less and use your Ralph’s card, JGSCV will benefit as though you shopped at Ralph’s.

JGSCV’s Traveling Library is available for research or viewing prior to each monthly meeting. These books are a useful and meaningful resource that is easily accessible for many. But, those books are housed (as a courtesy) at the Agoura Hills home of JGSCV’s president and are carried to and from each meeting by Jan and Tom. Over time, this has become more and more challenging. JGSCV continues to seek help in managing this process that is becoming untenable. If you (or someone you know) can help to bring these valuable resources to our meetings 1X per month, we would *all* be very grateful. Contact Jan Meisels Allen at president@jgscv.org.

When shopping at Amazon.com please go to our website first and click the Amazon logo at the bottom of any page **before** you start to shop. It doesn’t cost you anything.



We are delighted to announce that Barbara Algaze has returned to the Los Angeles FamilySearch Library on Wednesday’s. To make an appointment email her at Barbara@jgscv.org

Highlights from What's New at Ancestry

By Jan Meisels Allen

Crista Cowan, Ancestry's Corporate Genealogist, also known as the Barefoot Genealogist, wowed the members and attendees at JGSCV's December meeting. She shared new tools that Ancestry rolled out in recent months which helped us discover more about our family history.



It's been four years since JGSCV had the privilege of having Crista and we loved having her back!

Change can often be disruptive. During the past two years there were no changes as Ancestry was moving its infrastructure to the cloud from the previous server in Intermountain west- which had become unsustainable.

Ancestry now has 20 million customers, 22 billion historical records and 100 million family trees. More than two million records are added each day.

Changes over the past six months:

- Three out of four members have trees on Ancestry
- **Public trees** are available to **anyone** with a subscription to Ancestry. All trees privatize living people unless you share your tree and mark otherwise. Living people are defined as less than 100 years old without a death date entered into the tree. Members can share their trees with

anyone, even those without Ancestry subscriptions.

- Access is shared by user name.
- Tree sharing is by person. One can download a GEDCOM tree and show what you are including in the tree.
- A person with a tree on Ancestry can share a tree with anyone, even non-subscribers. You decide if they can see the documents that you have uploaded to your tree, and same for citations. The non-subscriber guest may **not** access records from the Ancestry database.
- **Private trees** are accessible only to those you invite.

If you did not renew an Ancestry membership, any tree you created while a member is still maintained on Ancestry. However, you will no longer have access to documents on the Ancestry website. The analogy that Crista used was comparing Ancestry to Netflix. You cannot view Netflix content after you cancel your subscription. Crista suggested, that when you have the subscription or access to Ancestry records, download them to a desktop program, such as FamilyTree Maker (which used to be, but is no longer owned by Ancestry).

To select which option for tree sharing, go to tree name and check on the sharing option. There are three options to select from.

No one from Ancestry may change your tree. Only the tree owner or persons given editorial rights by the tree owner, may edit a tree.

Ancestry may be synched with both FamilyTree Maker and Roots Magic desk top software.

Product Updates

The most recent product updates include:

Sharing with a link. Go to the family tree by name and the drop-down box offers several options: tree overview, media gallery, all hints (green leaves), sharing and family group sheet. Sharing the link gives the others the right to view, contribute or edit your tree. You can manage your invitation to share on the tree settings page. Select the role you want the person to have from the drop-down menu. From there, you can create the invite link. A new invite link is required for each user with whom you invite to share your tree. One option allows you to choose if living persons are visible.

Searching from other people's trees. This will provide potentially valuable information about people in your family. When you search from the tree, check on the person and do an Ancestry search. By looking at the other person's tree you can also see their sources

Family Group Sheet has returned after a several year hiatus, by popular request. Interestingly it was removed as it was not being used, but when it was removed, people complained they wanted it back. This can be found under the tree name on a drop-down list.

Remember the green leaves are hints, **not** facts, therefore, they may or may not be relevant to your tree.

If there are multiple sources for the same record, it is important to retain all the sources, as different companies may index differently, and this way you get more information by having all possible sources. An example given was for coding marriages. One database may record the certificate number while another may provide both the first and last names of the parents.

Ancestry Wiki has a new home. When Ancestry redid their website three years ago the Wiki was removed, but the subscribers wanted it back.

Ancestry owns rootsweb, which is the largest free website, and the wiki has been moved to rootsweb. The url for rootsweb is: <https://www.rootsweb.com/>

Two meaningful items Crista commented upon contained in the Wiki are: *The Source*- where all genealogy records (including international articles) can be found; and *The Red Book (Ancestry's Red Book: American State, County and Town Resources)* which lists every county in the US where records exist. The two books have been "wikified". Note: both books in hard copy are located in JGSCV's permanent library.

Another Wiki Crista recommended is that by FamilySearch. The two Wiki's are complementary. The url for the FamilySearch Wiki is https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Main_Page

Potential Mother/Father hints. As with the green leaves, these are hints not facts. The potential ancestor hints now have sources, which will be listed for you to determine if they belong to "your" person. You have the option to review the details, add the information, or decline the information. If you have an individual on an Ancestry tree and they have parents, those parents show on Ancestry, but Ancestry does not identify them as either biological or adoptive parents.

If an Ancestry member has information on a tree that you believe to be incorrect, Ancestry will not advise them of this issue. It is best to contact that member directly and advise them in order to ensure the family tree is correct. Crista noted it is always best to establish communication before suggesting something is wrong with another member's tree. A more "diplomatic" approach would be to say you have something different on your tree and you are willing to work together to see what is going on. People can always leave a comment on a tree.

Quick Edit Family Members on Profile Saves time.



Ancestry Member Directory can be found under the card catalog on the search drop down menu. This is where you can edit your own profile! Go to your account on Ancestry, the drop-down menu lists your profile where you can add your photo, your name and location. It has been found that those who have a photo added to their profile get ten times more contacts, and are four times more likely to get responses to inquiries. It does not have to be a photo of you, but a picture of anything at all. Crista shared that her photo is of her feet (Barefoot Genealogist). You can be general or specific as to where you live, for example. California, United States. Other options are gender, age group, education, employment, occupation, languages, lineage and religion. You do not have to answer any or all of the topics. It has been found that the more information included the more people reach out.

Currently, there is only one profile if husband and wife share a subscription (must be in the same household), Crista suggested to say the account is for “Shelly and Dave” and list who works on which trees or side of the tree.

DNA

More than 10 million people have taken Ancestry’s DNA test and with the recent Thanksgiving/Black Friday special they have now sold more than 15 million kits. Since that time, they have promoted a Holiday special which will further increase the number of kits sold.

The new DNA ethnicity estimate uses a reference panel of 16,000 people. They used to assign a SNP (Single-nucleotide polymorphism) to different parts of the genome but now they no longer look at the SNP but larger pieces of DNA. Ancestry is examining DNA from 500-1000 years old which are genealogically relevant. The new program identifies sub-regions and geographic areas such as Lithuania and Ukraine which are genetic communities where clustering is noticeable.

In explaining the DNA match list, Crista said 50 percent of the DNA takes after the trees, but didn’t attach to DNA. Now Ancestry shows

unlinked trees. You will be able to see the tree but not know who took the DNA on the tree. Crista suggested paying attention to gender which will show blue or pink. Some unlinked trees are private and permission will be required for you to view the tree.

Crista recommended going to the DNA homepage and going to settings, then family tree, linking and which tree and which person took the test.

Shared DNA

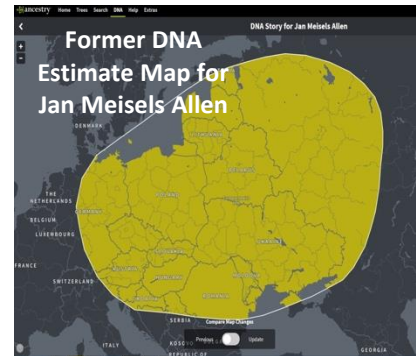
Shared DNA (cM) –centimorgans— on the list, view and match/compare. How much DNA shared is the number of cM across the number of

segments. Ancestry will provide the number of people in their DNA database that has the shared DNA and you can compare. Go to your DNA on your home page, click on DNA matches and see name, range and shared DNA information. It will show if there is a tree, no trees or unlinked tree. The information provides predicted relationship, ethnicity estimates, and shared migrations.

The new ethnicity estimates have changed what had been previously indicated due to the enhanced methodology.

The map has also changed so it is necessary to look at the map before questioning why an ethnicity estimate may have changed.

Crista also provided a map which showed the matches in the US for her ethnicity estimates. (Next Page)



DNA painter.com is showing how much cM is the probability of relationship with the shared cM tool. One can compare the shared migration, how much “Jewish” or other ethnicity, and shared matches.

Crista also said the DNA circles will be going away. Something new will be announced at the 2019 RootsTech conference.

Shoebox

In response to a question, Crista explained that the shoebox feature is designed as a bookmark and not for long-term storage. There is no organizational system, no way to obtain hints for shoebox persons. Ancestry is not doing anything with the shoebox.

Television-Sponsored Shows

Ancestry sponsors *Who Do You Think You Are* in the United States. It airs on the TLC channel, and is currently wrapping up its 2019 season. Another show sponsored by Ancestry is *Long Lost Family* where someone is looking for family which could be an adopted child or parent. One of the persons must be alive for the television reunion. Crista works as an advisor on *Long Lost Family*.

To contact Crista, email her at ask@ancestry.com. Crista also is featured on Ancestry’s YouTube

channel. Her unique, informative and



entertaining videos are listed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL0xuz8BBkD4j1YjKEZo730DruihHzlky0>

Crista Cowan, Corporate Genealogist, has been employed by Ancestry since 2004. Her involvement in family history, however, reaches all the way back to childhood. From being parked under a microfilm reader at the Family History Library in her baby carrier to her current career as a professional genealogist, Crista has spent thousands of hours discovering, documenting and telling family stories. She is known as The Barefoot Genealogist and has a weekly internet show, found on the Ancestry YouTube channel, designed to help people discover their family history.

Rosalie Bell, PhD Leaves the JGSCV Board

Rosalie Bell, JGSCV board member since 2015, has chosen not to run for re-election. After joining JGSCV in 2006 she was elected to the board in 2015 and has chaired the Publicity Committee ever since. She also served as one of the traveling librarians in the rear of the room at most meetings. Rosalie is stepping down for family reasons.

Rosalie is the mother of three sons with two granddaughters. She will also be reducing the workload in her successful psychology practice that has kept her busy for many years.

While Rosalie remains an active member of JGSCV, the board will miss her smiling face, laughter and overall hard working and positive attitude.

Practicing Safe Computing #39: Ten Tips

by Hal Bookbinder



Welcome to 2019. Below are my top ten tips for practicing safe computing, along with references to past articles in this series which provide additional information on each item. Wishing you a year of safe and productive computer and Internet use.

	TIP	FOR MORE INFORMATION
1	Ensure a current antivirus program is installed, running, and set to scan all incoming files.	Best Anti-virus Protection of 2018, Jun 2018 ; Malware Protection, May 2017 ; Is Your Virus Protection Actually Working?, Jan 2016
2	Set your computer to automatically accept security updates.	Precautions while Traveling, Mar 2018 ; Protection from WannaCry Ransomware, Jun 2017 ; Avoiding becoming victim of Ransomware, May 2016
3	Regularly back up your data to a remote location.	Microsoft Word Tips & Tricks”, May 2018 ; Avoiding becoming victim of Ransomware, May 2016 ; Backing up your System, April 2016
4	Do not open suspicious emails or click on risky email links.	Take care when you use Google, Dec 2017 ; Top 10 Tips for Detecting Phishing, Oct 2017 ; Phishing email from your Bank, Aug 2017 ; Social Engineering, Jun 2016 ; Avoiding becoming victim of Ransomware, May 2016 ; A Free Scan of Your Computer, Dec 2015
5	Do not provide personal information unless you trust the requester.	Phishing email from your Bank, Aug 2017 ; Don’t help them steal your identity, Oct 2015
6	Do not respond to offers that sound too good to be true or require immediate response.	Urgent Demand for Payment, Jul 2018 ; Phishing email from your Bank, Aug 2017
7	Set up different complex passwords for all critical files and use a password manager.	Password Managers, again, Jan 2018 ; Password Managers, Oct 2016 ; Passwords, Aug 2016
8	Log off applications. Don’t just close the window.	Facebook Tokens, Nov 2018 ; Sharing Your Family Tree & Identity Theft, Sep 2016
9	Be careful what you write, save, post, send and the sites you visit. You never know who may be watching.	Precautions while Traveling, Mar 2018 ; The Internet is forever, Sep 2017
10	Update default passwords on devices you acquire, including wireless routers.	Modems and Routers, Jul 2017 ; Wireless Access, Feb 2017

This is the thirty-ninth in a series of articles by JGSCV founding member Hal Bookbinder. Hal is also a Past President of JGSLA and IAJGS. He is the 2010 recipient of the IAJGS Lifetime Achievement Award and his online skills are well documented. All the Safe Computing articles by Hal Bookbinder are available on the JGSCV website www.jgscv.org under Noteworthy.

The Rights of the Living

JGSCV's November meeting included presentations by E. Randol Schoenberg and Jan Meisels Allen supporting opposing views about privacy as related to genealogy. Soon after, "The Legal Genealogist" Judy G. Russell, published the blog below. Ms. Russell, who has presented to JGSCV in the past, has granted JGSCV special permission to re-publish it in its entirety. For more information visit <https://www.legalgenealogist.com>

The Legal Genealogist

Judy G. Russell

Original Publication Date: November 19, 2018

Genealogical privacy issues

Reader Nanci is thinking about starting a blog about her family history and, as she thought about it, she had a question:

"My main question for you is about privacy and the use of names," she wrote. "I'm not sure if I should just put my first name and then refer to relatives/ancestors only by first names, or what is the legal or just smart thing to do?"

Great question — and a real, persistent, major concern in genealogical circles.

Here, as far as *The Legal*

...as genealogists, we need to protect the rights of the living."

Genealogist is concerned, is the bottom line: **as genealogists, we need to protect the rights of the living.**

Generally, under the law in the United States, with the major exception of medical information, the dead have no right of privacy.¹ As stated by the late Robert Ellis Smith, a lawyer and publisher specializing in issues of personal privacy, "According to longstanding principles of common law, privacy is uniquely an individual right that expires at death (unless somehow disclosure invades the privacy of surviving family members)."²

January 2019

But the rights of the **living**... oh, that's a whole 'nother kettle of fish. And it's the one overarching principle underlying just about every code of genealogical ethics out there.

One of the plainest statements of our ethical responsibilities as genealogists appears in the [Guidelines for Sharing Information with Others](#) of the [National Genealogical Society](#), which provide in part that all of us who are genealogists and family historians should consistently

- respect the restrictions on sharing information that arise from the rights of another ... as a living private person; ...

- inform people who provide information

about their families how it may be used, observing any conditions they impose and respecting any reservations they may express regarding the use of particular items;

- require evidence of consent before assuming that living people are agreeable to further sharing or publishing information about themselves;

- convey personal identifying information about living people—such as age, home address, genetic information, occupation, or activities—only in ways that those concerned have expressly agreed to;

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

- recognize that legal rights of privacy may limit the extent to which information from publicly available sources may be further used, disseminated, or published; ... and
- are sensitive to the hurt that information discovered or conclusions reached in the course of genealogical research may bring to other persons and consider that in deciding whether to share or publish such information and conclusions.³

The same sorts of concepts underlie the codes of ethics followed by genealogical professionals. The [Code of Ethics and Professional Practices](#) of the [Association of Professional Genealogists](#), for example, provides that its members must agree to “(t)reat information concerning living people with appropriate discretion” and “(r)efrain from violating or encouraging others to violate laws or regulations concerning ... rights to privacy, ... or other pertinent subjects”.⁴ The [Code of Ethics](#) of the [International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists](#) requires its accredited genealogists to promise: “I will keep confidential any personal or genealogical information given to me, unless I receive written consent to the contrary.”⁵ Similarly, the [Board for Certification of Genealogists](#) requires its certified genealogists to “keep confidential any personal or genealogical information disclosed” with a particular concern for the living.⁶

So... what does this mean to the blogger? It means that we can freely identify and write about the dead — **as long as what we write does not directly and negatively impact the living**. For example, I wouldn't write that Uncle John and Aunt Mary, both deceased, married six months after the birth of their daughter Sarah if cousin Sarah is still living and doesn't want her birth out of wedlock disclosed to the world. I wouldn't hesitate to write that Gerhard and Beta, my third great grandparents, married eight months after the birth of their first child, Anna,⁷ when Gerhard, Beta and Anna have all been dead for many years.

I don't think a genealogical blog has to be completely anonymous — I certainly am fully identified on mine — and I don't think we can never write about the living. But in every case we need to consider those guidelines and those ethical rules and ask ourselves the bottom line question: have I considered and am I respecting the rights of others as living private people?

Great question, Nanci. Good luck with your blog!

SOURCES

1. See generally Kirsten Rabe Smolensky, “[Rights of the Dead](#),” *Hofstra Law Review* 37: 763-802 (2009). [↗](#)
2. Robert Ellis Smith, “[Privacy After Death](#),” Letter to the Editor, *The New York Times*, 126 Nov 2001 (<https://www.nytimes.com/> : accessed 19 Nov 2018). [↗](#)
3. National Genealogical Society, [Guidelines for Sharing Information with Others](#), PDF online (<https://www.ngsgenealogy.org/> : accessed 19 Nov 2018). [↗](#)
4. [Code of Ethics and Professional Practices](#), Association of Professional Genealogists (<https://www.apgen.org/> : accessed 19 Nov 2018). [↗](#)
5. [Code of Ethics](#), International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists (<https://www.icapgen.org/> : accessed 19 Nov 2018). [↗](#)
6. [Genealogist's Code of Ethics](#), Board for Certification of Genealogists (<https://bcgcertification.org/> : accessed 19 Nov 2018). [↗](#)
7. A real example, by the way. [↗](#) (click square to see this article)

Stumbling on a Huge Discovery

Genealogy is far from a dusty pastime of collecting useless names and dates. It is the search for us.

By Joshua Grayson, PhD

In modern genealogy research, we can often find surprisingly much from the comfort of our own home. If we are lucky and persistent, we can build up a detailed history of our families stretching back centuries. Yet however much you research, there will always be holes. Tantalizing loose ends will gnaw at you, making you wonder what more might be hidden out of reach.

My Own Loose Ends

My grandfather, Rolf Grayson, knew virtually nothing about his paternal grandparents, Hirsch and Fraida Grajewski. They died before he was born, and his father had not been particularly close with them—so there had been no one to pass on knowledge of that side of the family to him. In my research, I was able to locate Hirsch and Fraida's marriage record from 1894. After teaching myself to read nineteenth-century Russian cursive, (a months-long process involving lots of trial and error and an inordinate amount of patience) I was able to work out many details of that side of the family.

Using a combination of resources including JRI-Poland and JewishGen, I was able to trace Fraida's mother's and father's families back to the 1750s and Hirsch's mother's family to right around 1800. Through online research and by examining microfilms at my local Mormon Family History Center, I also was able to locate where in Poland these families had been living during the early 1800s.

Yet Hirsch's *father's* side was complete silence. I knew from his marriage document that Hirsch's father's name was Josek Grajewski, but I was unable to find anything else about him. I did locate a wedding document for Josek and his wife in Radziejow, about 100 miles west of Warsaw. That document gave Josek's parents' names (Gerszon and Rifke), but it said nothing about them or their family origins. There was no record of any Grajewski there. The family did not seem to be from Radziejow, yet I

January 2019

could not find them anywhere else. So things stood for about six months.

Marriage Alegata: An Underappreciated Treasure

Marriage records form one of the bedrocks of genealogy research, and can be valuable primary documents due to the detailed information they often provide on both sets of parents. Moreover, the ages given in marriage documents tend to be more accurate than those on death records.

However, basic marriage records do not necessarily tell the whole story. When people got married in the nineteenth century, sometimes the authorities kept

an extra file on the newly-married couple. Known as *marriage alegata*, this file often contains copies of birth records—

which may be invaluable in cases where the originals have been lost.

Moreover, if a person was not

born in the same town as the marriage, the *alegata* files often provide the only clue for locating a birthplace. They can also contain other information that might not be easily located elsewhere. These documents were not microfilmed by the Mormons or anyone else. They are generally not available online, and can only be viewed in the actual archives.

Hirsch's parents' marriage in Radziejow took place in 1865. When researching the archival holdings for this town, I had determined that *marriage alegata*



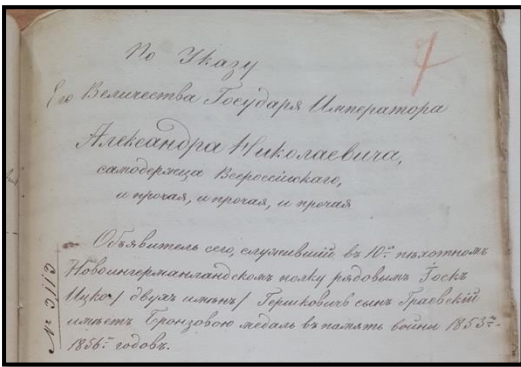
Paternal great-great grandfather Hirsch Rubin Grajewski (1866-1915)

existed for the town of Radziejow for several years, including 1865. Moreover, by using the Routes to Roots Foundation website (<https://tinyurl.com/yck8rwege>), I was able to work out that they were held in the Polish State Archives in the town of Wloclawek. I knew exactly what building the record was in—but it was a continent, an ocean, and half of another continent away.

The Hunt Begins

In November, 2017, I was invited to participate in a symposium in Warsaw for *Gesher Galicia*, one of the most important regional Jewish genealogy societies. I presented at the symposium in August 2018 and also attended most of the IAJGS (International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies) annual conference, also in Warsaw during the same week. The six-day conference was jam-packed with fascinating information, deep insights, amazing speakers, and new friends.

After the conference, a road trip was in order. I hired an Uber, conversed in Russian with my Ukrainian driver on the way to the airport, rented a car, and drove my manual transmission car (thanks, Dad!) into the Polish countryside. Naturally, my first stop



was

Wloclawek, about fifty miles northwest of Warsaw, to pay a visit to the archives holding the document I wanted to see. Ignoring the protestations of my GPS, I deliberately chose a winding route on narrow country lanes. Passing through the lush Mazovian countryside, I paralleled the Vistula River for most of the way, often coming within yards of the river bank. Not finding a suitable radio station, I listened in my mind's ear to dozens of Chopin mazurkas—which

were inspired by this very same Mazovian countryside and Vistula River.

When I arrived at the archives, my heart was racing with excitement. I was just so curious and excited about what I might discover about this Grajewski ancestor, who was—after all—the source of my last name (through its Americanized variant “Grayson,” courtesy of my grandfather). I went into the building, gave the archivist the reference number, and eagerly awaited his return with the document. My excitement was palpable.

After what seemed an eternity, he returned with a bound volume. Leafing gingerly through hundred-fifty-year-old paper, I found Josek's document. At first, I was quite disappointed. It was the same Polish-language marriage document I had seen in the Mormon family center in Los Angeles. My heart sank—but then I turned the page.

An Astonishing Discovery

The next page of the document was definitely *not* something I had seen before, and was certainly not available anywhere outside the archive. The first thing I noticed was the phrase “Aleksandr Nikolaievich, emperor of all Russians, et cetera et cetera,” written in large Cyrillic letters. I immediately saw Josek Grajewski's name further down the page, so I knew that this was a BIG deal! In fact, I was so excited that I stood up and began clapping right in the middle of the archives! Only one other researcher was in the room, and she did not seem terribly interested in me nor my five-thousand-mile journey.

It turns out that my great-great-great grandfather had received a bronze medal for military services during the Crimean War. The document I found describes his military service and lists physical ailments (including asthma and rheumatoid arthritis). It gave a physical description: twenty-eight years old, blond hair, blond beard, grey eyes, and a medium nose (whatever that means!).

The document goes on to state that as a reward for his period of service to the crown, Josek was granted the right to settle anywhere in the entire Russian

"You know, I'd really love to have a copy of that," my grandfather

Empire—even Moscow or St. Petersburg. To live in these imperial cities, he was required to have an occupation, maintain good character, be honest, obey any orders given to him by law enforcement and to shave his beard. No restrictions were placed on his living in other parts of Russia. To understand the significance of this, it is important to realize that prior to 1917, Jews were explicitly forbidden from living anywhere in Russia except the Pale of Settlement. Being granted an exception to this was highly unusual, *especially* for the imperial cities—although it was often granted to veterans. At the bottom of the second page, the military record also provided Josek's home town, shedding light on another mystery. It turns out that he had come from a town called Stawiski, located about a hundred miles northeast of Warsaw.

My ability to read 19th century Russian cursive helped me find this record. Had I requested a scan of the document from the archives instead of going in person, it is conceivable that my request might have gone to an archivist without this ability. Because Josek's name is written only in Cyrillic on this document, an archivist who could not read Russian might not have realized that it belonged to the same person as the marriage document on the previous page.

After its placement in his marriage file in 1865, Josek's document stayed there year in and year out. It remained unseen by human eyes until it would be opened, read, and examined by his great-great-great grandson more than 150 years later. It and other documents like it stand in silent testimony to the lives and achievements of our ancestors.

A New Family Heirloom

"You know, I'd really love to have a copy of that," my grandfather said to me when I e-mailed him the

digital photos I had taken. But I was already planning a surprise. Enlisting the help of my father, who lives on the same side of the country as my grandparents, I printed the first two pages of the record on fine parchment paper and found a



Rolf Grayson (Joshua's grandfather),
Long Island, New York

frame. A few days before Thanksgiving 2018, my parents went to Long Island and presented it to my grandfather. Remember, my grandfather never knew anything about his father's family. As a direct result of my research, I had the honor of providing him the details, and of being able to present him with a now-precious family heirloom.

Genealogy is far from a dusty pastime of collecting useless names and dates. It is the search for *us*. The documents and information we uncover can tell us more about ourselves, and maybe inspire us to hold our heads just a bit higher.

Josh Grayson holds a PhD in Historical Musicology and is a frequent visitor of Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV). This article is extracted from his forthcoming blog (See links) and was adapted for this format.

Related Links:

- Geshher Galicia <https://www.geshhergalicia.org/>
- Information on marriage alegata, see <http://www.ipgs.us/iwonad/artdirectory/alegata.html>
- Stawiski, Poland on jewishgen.org: <https://tinyurl.com/ydcu2lro>
- Dr. Grayson's website: <http://www.lostrootsfamilyhistory.com/index.html>

Genealogy Odds and Ends

The Board for Certification of Genealogists (BCG) and Legacy Family Tree Webinars announced their 2019 webinar series. Legacy Family Tree Webinars is a member of the MyHeritage family of companies. Topics include, visualizing information for genealogists, applying evidence to genealogical research questions, transcribing documents, valid and unsound assumptions, tools for genealogical writing, notarial records and more. To see the schedule, topics and speakers go to:



https://familytreewebinars.com/intermediate_page.php?dipl_y_nm=BCG. For the entire Legacy Family Tree Webinars schedule for 2019 see their press release at: <https://tinyurl.com/y9s76dke>

In addition to the BCG series, Legacy Family Tree Webinars has a MyHeritage webinar series, Down Under series designed for those in Australia and New Zealand and Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) series to help prepare for those attending the FGS conference in Washington DC in August. Legacy Family Tree Webinars will host live webinars in Swedish, French, Spanish, Norwegian, Danish and Finnish and all webinars will be close captioned for the hearing impaired.

All live webinars and their recordings are free to watch for the first 7 days. Following that time period there is a charge unless covered under a Legacy Family Tree Webinar membership. You may sign up for single webinars at: <https://familytreewebinars.com/upcoming-webinars.php>.

From Barbara Alqaze, JGSCV FamilySearch Liaison:

The new directors at the Family History Library are in the process of indexing everything they have in miscellaneous spots at the library. In the process they came across two microfilms that might be of interest.

They are Microfilm # 2318510 and #2318390. The numbers on the boxes match the microfilms that are within the boxes, but they do not match those numbers in the Family Search catalog. We are in the process of changing the numbers and description of the boxes.

The labels says, "Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania – starting with surname FIN" and "Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania – starting with surname Rabinowitz." But they are REALLY for the town of Boston, Massachusetts, NOT Pennsylvania.

In the meantime, if you want to check them out, they are located in the Microfilm area, in the end cabinet (labeled "short term microfilms) 9 drawers down. If you have any questions, ask the new director's wife, Sister Hanks. Or send me an e-mail at Barbara@jgscv.org.

JGSCV WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

NANCY GOLDBERG

BARRY and BARBARA LAMPKE

CAROL ROSEMAN

DIANE and STEVE GOLDIN

PHYLLIS RAUTENBERG

JENNIFER THOMPSON

JGSCV Chanukah Gift Winners

Randomly chosen by JGSCV's extraordinary guest speaker, Crista Cowan (right), many very lucky society members received valuable gifts as shown below. If you would like to participate in this 'giftfest' next December, be sure to be a paid member and attend the meeting.

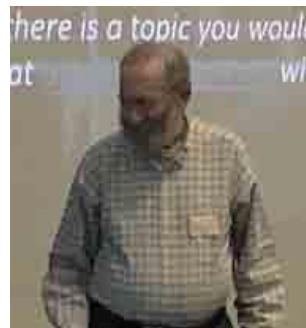
- Everyday Jewish Life in Imperial Russia*-**Barbara Algaze**
- Ancestry DNA*-**Sandra Hall**
- Fold3.com One-year Subscription*-**Jerry Escover**
- Family Tree DNA*-**Judith Wolkovitch**
- Findmy past One-year subscription*-**Issie Perel**
- Newspapers.com Basic One Year Subscription*-**Adrian Harris**
- My Heritage DNA*-**Dianna Rice**
- Legacy Family Tree Software*-**Marion Werle**
- Ancestry Worldwide One Year Subscription*-**Michael Pershing**
- My Heritage Complete Plan Subscription*-**Allan Linderman**
- Family Tree Maker 2017 Software*-**Pat Dowdey**
- Legacy Family Tree Webinars One Year Subscription*-**Eva Cox**
- Roots Magic 7 Software and Book*-**Jennifer Thompson**



Some of the lucky winners!



2019





Membership/Renewal Form

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

Member of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS)

www.JGSCV.org

Dues paid now are good through December 2019

Date _____

Check one:

This is a New Membership _____ Renewal _____

Single \$ 25.00 _____ + \$1.00** Family* \$30.00 _____ + \$2.00**

*family defined as two people living in the same household

** \$1 per person is a voluntary donation to the IAJGS Stern Award, granted annually when it recognizes institutions for outstanding work in the creation and availability of resources for Jewish Genealogy.

Additional voluntary contributions:

Library Acquisition Fund \$ _____ Programs Fund \$ _____

(suggested minimum voluntary contribution for either fund \$5.00)

Make check out to: JGSCV Mail application to: Helene Rosen,
28912 Fountainwood St.
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

Name (Print) _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zipcode + 4 _____

Day telephone _____ Evening telephone _____

E-mail address _____

Talents that you have to share (accounting skills, language skills, computer skills, translation, etc.)



Future JGSCV Meeting Dates through August 2019

Sunday at 1:30 p.m. OR **Monday at 7:00 p.m.**

Programs co-sponsored by Temple Adat Elohim

Sunday, January 6th 1:30-3:30 PM "You Can't Find the Records-Now What?" by Marion Werle

2019

SUNDAY	FEBRUARY 10	1:00-5:00 PM	<i>Members Only: Annual Assisted Research Afternoon</i>	LA Family History Library (Anyone may join at the door)
SUNDAY	MARCH 3	1:30-3:30 PM	"Success In-And In Spite of Endogamy"	Speaker, Lara Diamond, President, JGS Maryland and Coordinator, JewishGen Sub-Carpathia SIG
MONDAY	APRIL 8	7:00-9:00 PM	"Branching Out from Sephardic-Solving a Converso Mystery"	Speaker, Sarina Roffe, founder Sephardic Heritage Project
SUNDAY	MAY 5	1:30-3:30 PM	Annual Yom Hashoah Program - Program, Documentary, "The Forgotten Ones: The Story of Yugoslav Jewry"	(Yom Hashoah actual date: May 2)
SUNDAY	JUNE 2	1:30-3:30 PM	TBD	
SUNDAY*	JULY 14*	1:30-3:30 PM	Genealogy In The Round	Members and Friends share successes, brickwalls and artifacts

2019 IAJGS CONFERENCE JULY 28-AUGUST 2 CLEVELAND, OH

Check www.jgscv.org for updates

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS



WEBSITE REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

No Need To Reregister for 2018-2019 If Already Registered

Note: Ralphs Changed our NPO Number Please use the one listed below when searching for JGSCV: RG981

Help support JGSCV by enrolling in **Ralphs Community Contribution Program!** This year only! Those registered do **not** have to reregister as Ralphs rolled everyone over. They are updating their system and felt it easier for this year not to require. For those who have not yet enrolled in the Ralphs Community Contribution Program please follow these directions:

Join Ralphs' Club and they will contribute a percentage of what you purchase to JGSCV! Registration is easy and helps your local Jewish genealogy society! Having a Ralphs card also helps you with discounts on purchases and their website **saves you money** too by downloading coupons. See the step-by-step directions below.

You can register for the new term at www.Ralphs.com starting **September 1, 2018**.

Remember: You can renew or register for the first time at the JGSCV's meetings—but you must first have a Ralph's Card. You can easily obtain a card by going to a Ralphs near you at their customer service desk. For information contact Karen Lewy at Karen@jgscv.org.

IF YOU HAVE NOT REGISTERED YOUR REWARDS CARD ONLINE

(This means that you have already entered your email address and assigned yourself a password)

1. Log in to www.ralphs.com
2. Click Sign In
3. Enter your email address and password that you registered with.
4. Click on person icon (in top right hand corner)
5. Click on My Account
6. View all your information and edit as necessary
7. Link your card to JGSCV by clicking on:
 - a. Community Rewards – Re-Enroll
 - b. **Type JGSCV's NPO number: RG981 or Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley &** **OR:** Type in the first words of our organization i.e. "Jewish Gen" (if you only type in "Jewish" a number of organizations appear including ours, so by typing in the first few letters of our second name only we appear) and click on "search" and our name will pop up:

Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley & " **Make certain it's our Society as there are other Jewish Genealogy Societies registered!**

c. Remember to click on the circle/bubble to the left of JGSCV's name

d. Click in save changes

Our name Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley &..) will appear on the right side of this page

e. Click on Enroll to finish your enrollment process

Remember even if you are only an occasional Ralphs shopper, your purchases help JGSCV!

JGSCV has been receiving from Ralphs over \$100 per quarter, or equal to 4+ JGSCV memberships per quarter!

Thank you on behalf of the Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County.

Warsaw Ghetto Museum

In March, the Polish government announced their plans to create a new museum dedicated to the Jews who were imprisoned in the Warsaw ghetto, tortured and murdered by the German forces during the World War II occupation of Poland. The Museum is scheduled to open in 2023 on the 80th anniversary of the uprising by Jews in the Warsaw ghetto. Daniel Blatman, a Holocaust historian at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem has been appointed chief historian. The museum will be housed in a former children's hospital established by Jewish philanthropists in the late 19th century and was within the ghetto walls during World War II.

Professor Blatman wants to achieve a wide perspective on Jewish life and death during the Nazi occupation through the "perspective of the Warsaw ghetto". He also plans to address Jewish experiences in other parts of Poland, including other ghettos created by the Nazis. Blatman stated despite many museums in Poland, none are dedicated solely to the Holocaust.



Daniel Blatman, the newly appointed chief historian of the 'Warsaw Ghetto Museum' at a press conference in Warsaw, Poland, Dec. 14, 2018. (AP Photo/Alik Keplicz)

Poland's Jews made up 10 percent of Poland's population before the War, and were mostly murdered in death camps. A guiding principle of the new museum will be to portray the fate of Poland's Jews as part of both Jewish history and Polish history.

He believes the way to present the history is for "Polish Jews who perished during the Holocaust as Polish citizens of Jewish origin". In a recent press conference he said, he believes "that the right way to present the history of that in Warsaw is to find ways to integrate it into the overall picture of this city under Nazi occupation." Blatman says he has been granted full academic freedom and has not encountered any political involvement. To read more see: <https://tinyurl.com/y79se7n9>