

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

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



JGSCV

March 2020

Volume 15 Issue 6

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Note: Our March 1 meeting time is one hour earlier: the program begins at 12:30. We open at 12 noon!

I want to thank the many members and friends who contacted me during my recent illness and hospitalization. Your good thoughts and wishes did a world of good in getting me on the road to recovery. I especially want to thank Allan Linderman, our fantastic newsletter editor for taking the helm with the rest of the board pitching in so everything ran flawlessly! Allan and the rest of the board are still helping out as I continue to get stronger and I am forever thankful.

The JGSCV board meet on Thursday, February 12 for our annual reorganization and budget planning meeting. After discussion the board members decided they all wanted to retain their current roles. See the masthead on page 2 for responsibilities.

Tammy Williams-Anderson elected to the board in December has resigned for personal reasons. She continues to be a member of JGSCV.

We are currently a board of eight and our bylaws permit up to 12 with the president being able to appoint two persons with board concurrence. If you are willing to serve and interested please contact me at president@jgscv.org.

We held our annual Assisted Research Afternoon at the Los Angeles Family History Library on February 9th. While attendance



Elder Pugh explaining the resources available to JGSCV members at the LA Family History Library

Time Change

Sunday March 1st **12:30-2:30 PM**

Comparing Jewish Resources on Ancestry, FamilySearch and more

Ellen Kowitt, IAJGS award winning renown genealogist, will compare Ancestry, FamilySearch, Findmypast, MyHeritage and JewishGen and explain the best way to use for each for searching Jewish roots.

WWW.JGSCV.ORG

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OF DIRECTORS**

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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.

was less than expected those who attended found the program very worthwhile. The energy from the attendees and the volunteer missionaries who helped out was contagious! We had wonderful translators for Polish, Russian and Yiddish. I don't know if it was the rain or the Academy Awards that afternoon that kept people away but we will again hold a similar program next year. This is the one opportunity to get individualized hands-on assistance with your personal genealogy. See page 6 for a recap.

We are entering our third month for the year and renewals were due January 1st. Members in arrears for 90 days or more are not in good standing and after due notice will be dropped from membership. Please send in your dues now or renew at the March meeting. My most unfavorable job at the end of March is to notify those who have not renewed that they will be dropped from membership. We want you to stay members! If we are not doing something you think we should please let us know. Membership forms may be found on our website at: <https://www.jgscv.org/membership.html> and page 11.

Hal Bookbinder's excellent series, *Practicing Safe Computing* continues on page 7. This month's subject is: "You've Got DNA Matches".

We wanted to publish a series of articles on the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II and the centennial of the end of World War I. At this time, we have not received any articles about family members who served in those wars. It's not too late. If you have a story to contribute please contact our newsletter editor, Allan Linderman at newslettereditor@jgscv.org.

The 2020 IAJGS conference has opened registration. It's in our backyard so to speak, being held in San Diego August 9-14, 2020. At least this year we won't need to fly to the conference. The conference hotel is the Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina and is now also accepting reservations. See: <https://www.iajgs2020.org>

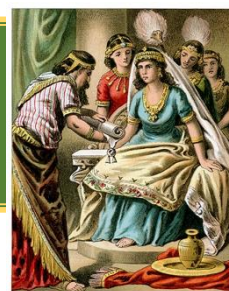
Remember when entering the Temple's campus for our monthly meetings, just tell the security guard at the kiosk you are attending the genealogy meeting. Because the March 1st meeting is at a special, earlier time, parking may be an issue as the school will be getting out at 12 noon. Please, be patient!

The March 1 program is a real treat. To accommodate the Cantor and his rehearsal we are **starting at 12:30 PM opening at 12 noon**. I heard our speaker, Ellen Kowitt present this program and I highly recommend it. The program is: *Comparing Jewish Resources on Ancestry, FamilySearch, Findmypast, MyHeritage and JewishGen*. Ellen is an accomplished speaker as well as past president of two sister JGSs, former IAJGS Board member, recipient of several IAJGS awards and currently Vice President of the Colorado Chapter, Association of Professional Genealogists.

We look forward to seeing you on March 1st!

Jan Meisels Allen





Origins of Queen Esther: Not for the Young

Referring again to the *Jewish Women's Archive*, we find a variety of sources and thoughts as to the familial origins of that famed Queen Esther, our Purim heroine. (Erev Purim is March 9.) If she was the niece of Mordechai, then she was of the tribe of Benjamin. Reading further, there are rabbinic and midrashic tales of her time in the King's harem, becoming the Queen of 127 provinces, and why she is considered a female prophet of the Jewish people. The details abound. Read about her at:

<https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/esther-midrash-and-aggadah>

Queens and the Bronx Naturalization Records

The Bronx and Queens (New York City) County Clerks offices plan to upload their naturalization records online starting in 2022. They will be free. The \$872,000 project was rewarded a \$263,500 grant from the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, as well as state money.

Naturalization records in the Bronx and Queens stretch from the late 1700's through the 1950's when clerks offices ceased processing naturalization documents. The responsibility shifted to the federal government. Thus far, most of the requests in Queens are for records from the mid-1800's through the early 1900's. Thanks to Jan Meisels Allen for sharing this news. Read about it at

<https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/ny-national-archives-naturalization-records-bronx-queens-20200206-jpvrobksyrfjpcudqna5icismq-story.html>

Best Practices: What a Yizkor Book Can Reveal

The Yiddish Book Center's website defines Yizkor books as community memorial books that document Jewish life before World War II, along with vivid firsthand accounts of the Holocaust and its aftermath.

In conjunction with the New York Public Library, the center has digitalized 650 Yizkor books. The books can be in English, Yiddish or Hebrew depending on the group or committee that undertook its creation. *Jewish Gen's Yizkor Book Translation Project* follows with their ongoing quest to translate all Yizkor books.

A Yizkor memorial book might contain any of the following information that would inform a family's genealogic research:

- Articles on everyday life in a town
- Memorial lists: following the Holocaust
- Personal recollections of daily life
- Personalities and famous residents, and characters recalled by the writer.
- Photos, maps or drawings

<https://www.yiddishbookcenter.org/collections/yizkor-books>

<https://www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/>

Page Three is curated by Andrea Massion

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 meeting, co-sponsored with Temple Adat Elohim on Sunday, March 1, 2020 **12:30-2:30 p. m.** at Temple Adat Elohim 2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks, 91362

Note: One hour earlier start time

The Program: Comparing Jewish Resources on Ancestry, FamilySearch, Findmypast, MyHeritage and JewishGen

Enjoy this comparative overview of Jewish record collections available on Ancestry.com, FamilySearch, Findmypast and MyHeritage, as well as research tools on each site that can be especially helpful for Jewish research. Also, learn how the JewishGen collections on Ancestry.com differ from comparable collections on JewishGen.org, both in content and the search experiences. Get tips on when it might be better to search on one site or the other.

Speaker: Ellen Kowitt is past president of JGS Colorado and JGS Greater Washington.



She has served as an IAJGS board member and has served on various IAJGS Committees; been a recipient of IAJGS Program and Stern Awards; led Ukraine trip for JewishGen Shtetlschleppers; created KehilahLinks websites and been Lyubar, Ukraine town leader for 23 years; coordinated Yizkor Book translations for Ukraine towns; and indexed revision lists, memorial plaques, gravestones, and Colorado probate records. Ellen is an Avotaynu contributor. She is currently Vice President of the Colorado Chapter, Association of Professional Genealogists.

There is no charge to attend the meeting. Anyone may join JGSCV. Annual dues are \$30 for an individual and \$35 for a family. The meeting is open to the public.

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

GREAT NEWS! If you access Amazon.com with an app from your mobile device, you can now participate in the same marketing program that you have been using directly from your computer. Just open your browser on your mobile device and go to www.jgscv.org. Like on your laptop or desktop, scroll to the bottom of our home page and tap the Amazon logo (see below). This will open your Amazon app and you can shop/order as if you opened the app directly. Your cost remains the same. Many of our younger friends and family members order directly from the app. Please suggest they take this ONE small step to open the Amazon app from our home page.



A way to support JGSCV is to shop at Ralphs and list JGSCV as your charity of choice. If you are already registered and have selected JGSCV as your charity of choice you have nothing to do. If you have not registered with Ralphs or selected us as your charity of choice, go to our website www.jgscv.org under "Noteworthy".

JGSCV is considering a panel-type program including people who unexpectedly learned of their Jewish roots. If you or someone you know learned later in life that they have Jewish family background, please have he/she contact Jan Meisels Allen at president@jgscv.org. Sometimes, it is a DNA test that reveals Jewish ethnicity. Sometimes it is a family member that reveals a generational secret. Regardless, if you or someone you know would like to share their experience, please have that person contact Jan at the email above.

**REMEMBER, MARCH 1ST MEETING BEGINS
AT 12:30 PM**

Highlights from:

JGSCV's Assisted Research Day at the Los Angeles Family Search Library

JGSCV's Annual Assisted Research Day at the LA Family Search Library was a roaring success. Held annually, this special research day is available only to JGSCV members. The library was open on Sunday, Feb. 9th just for JGSCV and the staff could not have been nicer. The library's computers were very active all afternoon and the LDS sisters were omnipresent and eager to help anyone who even appeared to need assistance. While the JGSCV turnout was somewhat lower than in the past, the experience and enthusiasm more than made up the difference. Elder Kenneth Lee Pugh began the day in the presentation room with an overview of the library and its resources as they pertain to



Jewish genealogy. The rest of the day was spent using the vast resources of the library - including free access to many paid genealogy sites - as well as the Russian, Polish and Yiddish language translators that were available to help members read and understand documents in those languages.

We thank JGSCV member Susan E. Cohen for taking notes during Elder Pugh's presentation. Here are her takeaways:

- Don't forget to check out the various book collections. In addition to JGSLA there are books in the Polish and Russian shelves on Jewish topics
- Family Search now has a mobile app for the Family Tree portion of its website. It is available for download at both Apple and Google apps
- Family Search gives you access to fam charts, descendent charts and more
- Ancestry.com, newspapers.com and numerous other online genealogy sites are available on all of the library's computers



Practicing Safe Computing: “You’ve Got DNA Matches”

By Hal Bookbinder
(Number 52 in a series)

A few years ago, I submitted my DNA to one site and then uploaded the results to another. Like many of you, I regularly receive notices of “You have new DNA Relatives” from 23AndMe and “You’ve got DNA Matches!” from MyHeritage DNA. With endogamy (marriages within a group) over the centuries among Ashkenazi Jews, the number of 1.0% to 1.5% DNA matches can be huge while the likelihood of being able to determine an actual relationship is low.

Given the low likelihood of actually establishing a match, I certainly do not want to put a lot of effort into reaching out. Yet, I do not want to ignore potential matches either. With minimal effort, I would like to share enough information to see if a connection can be made.

I composed a message as follows and saved it for repeated use:

Hi XXXX,
XXXX indicates that we share x.x% DNA. I am sharing the names and birth locations of my great-grandparents. If you spot a name/place that seems familiar, please let me know.

Bookbinder & Wagner – Dubno, Rivne, Oblast, Ukraine
Barenberg & Margolis – Medzybizzh, Khmelnytsyi Oblast, Ukraine
Sacharow – Poltava, Poltava Oblast, Ukraine & Cooper – Warsaw Poland
Horwitz or Muhlstein & Steinwertzel – Soroka, Moldova

Best,
Hal Bookbinder
hal.bookbinder@ucla.edu



When notified of a potential match on a tree managed by a third party I replace the first sentence with, “xxx indicates that I share x.x% DNA with xxx xxx on a tree that you manage.”

I paste the message into my response, replacing the x’s. I can send meaningful, individualized notes to a dozen potential mishpucha in a few minutes. My response rate has been about 15%. While most of these turn out to be dead ends, they often lead to interesting exchanges.

If you have submitted your DNA to one site, be sure to upload the results to the other sites to expand your potential matches. You can upload at no cost to Family Tree DNA, MyHeritage DNA, Living DNA and GEDmatch. AncestryDNA does not permit uploading of DNA results from another service.

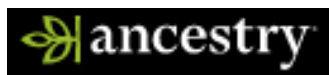
While we must be careful when sharing personal information, I will continue to share ancestors’ surnames and locations as widely as I can. On rare occasions, I have been asked follow-up questions that made me uncomfortable and ended the exchange. However, being a genealogist means never giving up. I will continue to respond and keep hoping for additional connections! 😊

This is the fifty second 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

Genealogy Odds and Ends

MyHeritage announced a free 24-Hour Genealogy Webinar Marathon on Legacy Family Tree Webinars. The marathon starts at 5 PM Eastern on Thursday, March 12 and will end on Friday, March 13 at 5 PM Eastern.

This is a global offering including a wide range of topics including 'DNA 101', 'A Vast and Virtual Genealogical Library is Waiting for Your Exploration', 'The Coded Census: Deciphering U.S. Census' and more. Each lecture will last 35 minutes with 10 minutes for questions. <https://familytreewebinars.com/24> Registration Required. Free.



Ancestry's president and CEO, Margo Georgiadis, announced a 6 percent reduction in the company's workforce blaming a slowdown in consumer demand for the company's DNA service over the past 18 months. Over sixteen million people have taken a DNA test with Ancestry and the statement says 30 million people worldwide have taken a DNA test with some company, not only Ancestry.

Ancestry is not the only DNA company that has noticed a slowdown in consumer demand for DNA testing. Georgiadis said, "Future growth will require a continued focus on building consumer trust and innovative new offerings that deliver even greater value to people." . . . "Future growth will require a continued focus on building consumer trust and innovative new offerings that deliver even greater value to people."

To read Amazon's original statement see:

<https://blogs.ancestry.com/ancestry/2020/02/05/our-path-forward/>

In a related story, YIVO, the world's largest Yiddish research center, laid off all 4 of its librarians. The four librarians represent more than 10% of the total staff. Jonathan Brent, executive director, noted that YIVO had a \$550,00 shortfall in 2019. The board and professional leadership made the decision to "seek efficiencies in the organization to enable us to live within our means and regroup for sustained growth in the future."



The Local, a German website whose goal is to "explain Germany to our readers, has published a story about the "Re-Finding the Sub Camps of Auschwitz", a project begun in the 1980's. There were 45 sub-camps with factories, mines, steel works and more where prisoners labored. An overview by *The Local*: <https://www.thelocal.de/20200117/new-website-shows-how-business-exploited-auschwitz-prisoners>. The full story: <https://subcamps-auschwitz.org/>

Arolsen Archives' New Tool

In her role as Chairperson, IAJGS Public Records Access Monitoring Committee, Jan Meisels Allen reported that the Arolsen Archives has added an online tool to better understand documents confiscated after the war. The Arolsen Archives identifies itself as “an international documentation center on Nazi persecution and the liberated survivors”. The newly released e-Guide provides the background knowledge necessary to better understand the more than 30 million documents that exist with information about over 17.5 million people.

Following the war, the International Tracing Service (ITS) collected documents about victims and survivors that were confiscated from the concentration camps, released by German companies and authorities or created by the Allies to register displaced persons (DP). Over time, the ITS continued to collect additional data from multiple sources. Much of that additional data is not easily understood without background insights. The e-Guide is designed to provide those insights.

The newest part of the e-Guide deciphers numerical codes and other abbreviations for items the DP's needed and recorded on their registration cards. The documents explained in the e-Guide make it possible to trace the paths taken by DPs, starting from the place where they first received support and continuing on through to their emigration.

The post-war file is now available on the e-Guide. All the personal data within this card file will be available online in early 2020 and provides additional explanatory information on the contents of the card file. There are about 3.5 million documents of this type.

To access the e-Guide to the Arolsen Archives see: <https://eguide.arolsen-archives.org/en/> Samples of documents are available below as well. Note, while the guide can be accessed on mobile devices, not all the features are available.

The third part of the e-Guide which will focus on Eastern and Western European forced laborers will be available at the end of 2020.

AJDC HQ, Paris Departure List 29th Jan. 1946.
**AMERICAN JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE
LOCATION SERVICE BELSEN - CAMP**
Date 17.2.46

Surname: Koben	First Name: Isank & Stel & Borich & Jackel
Previous Name:	Birthdate:
Birthplace:	Nationality:
Present Address: France	Address before Depart:
Name of Father:	Name of Mother:

Information Learned about above person: **left Turkey for France, by rail on 10th Dec. 1947.**

A.E.F. D.P. REGISTRATION RECORD 1765

Original Duplicate

Franko Liba vs. Naich

Palestine

Germany

Member

Signature: Jhy

Date: 12.1.45

**He was an Regional of 1st class
guard of the camp**

**brother - husband
sister - daughter**

MyHeritage Offers Free Colorization of Black & White Photos

By Allan Linderman

If you have black and white photos you wish were in color, MyHeritage can make your wish come true. Software licensed by MyHeritage from DeOldify was first created by Jason Antic and Dana Kelley and released publicly in November 2018. This latest update with improved technology by Antic and Kelley is exclusive to MyHeritage – and, it is free!

It is also very simple to use. To learn more, go here:

<https://blog.myheritage.com/2020/02/colorize-your-black-and-white-photos-automatically-with-myheritage-in-color/>

Below is an example of an original black and white family picture from 1956. That’s me scrunched down on the left with my top hat. (I was the ring-bearer.) I noticed how much my brother (same row far right) and my dad (standing in the center) had the same lower face. It was easier for me to recognize in the colorized version. By the way, the happy couple will be married 64 years in April. And, aside from them, sadly there are only 4 others remaining who will appreciate that picture.



According to Daniel Horowitz, Genealogy Expert at MyHeritage and recent JGSCV speaker, the response to MyHeritage in Color™ in the first week since its release has been “tremendous! More than one million photos have been colorized so far, and the numbers continue to grow by the minute. We’re just loving seeing people of all ages, especially youngsters, connecting with their past on a whole new level.”

If you colorize photos, please send the ‘before and after’ to newslettereditor@jgscv.org and share your thoughts on how it worked and any revelations or family stories that were confirmed or debunked by the MyHeritage in Color™ process. Enjoy!



2020 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

**Join/Renew Dues Increased Effective January 1, 2020 by \$5.00.
Dues paid now are good through December 2020**

Date _____

Check one: New Membership _____ Renewal _____

Single \$ 30.00 _____ + \$1.00** Family* \$35.00 _____ + \$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 \$ _____

Security Fee Fund \$ _____

(suggested minimum voluntary contribution for any 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 _____

Home telephone _____ Mobile telephone _____

E-mail address _____

Your talents to share (i.e. accounting skills, language skills, computer skills, etc.)

Future JGSCV Meeting Dates through August 2020

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



SPECIAL TIME ON March 1st

Programs co-sponsored by Temple Adat Elohim

Sunday March 1st, 12:30-2:30 PM

Professional Genealogist Ellen Kowitt - Comparing Jewish Resources on Ancestry, FamilySearch, Findmypast, JewishGen

MONDAY	APRIL 6	7:00-9:00 PM	Annual Sephardic Program: "Movie" Sefarad"	This is known as the Portuguese Dreyfus Affair. Sefarad tells the sweeping story of Jews in Portugal across 500 years
Sunday	MAY 3	1:30-3:30 PM	Annual Yom Hashoah Program	Holocaust survivor, Michael Mark - , "A Survivor's Story: Surviving 5 Concentration Camps and the Death March"
Sunday	JUNE 7	1:30-3:30 PM	TBA	
	JULY			
AUGUST NO JGSCV MEETING IAJGS CONFERENCE AUGUST 9-14, 2020 SAN DIEGO, CA				