

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

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



JGSCV

October 2022

Volume 18 Issue 1

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

We hope this finds you well and safe.

We are seven-plus months into the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. We continue to watch the strength of the Ukrainian people and government as Russia tries to decimate its country. As the situation is fluid, we remain concerned for their well-being. In our previous issues, I have listed several reputable organizations if you wish to donate. Links can be accessed on our website via the May 2022 issue of this Newsletter: https://jgscv.org/pdf/newsletters/Venturing_V17_N8.pdf.

We start our membership renewal in October for 2022 and of course anyone who joins starting in October has their membership through December 2023! A renewal/membership form is on page 11.

You can send in a check made out to JGSCV and send it to Helene, our membership vice president whose address is on the form. If you want to pay by cash, you can contact me and make an appointment to drop it off at my home if you are concerned about sending cash through the mail. We will continue to have genealogical Chanukah gifts for those who renew/join by the December meeting **and** attend the December program. JGSCV has received gifts from Ancestry (1-year all access subscription, 2 six-month all-access subscriptions, subscriptions to newspapers.com, fold3.com), My Heritage- complete annual subscription, Geni 1-year Pro subscription, Legacy Software, Legacy webinar one-year subscription, Roots Magic Subscription and more on the way! Each of these prizes are valued from \$120 to \$450 -- all way above the cost of a JGSCV subscription!

Half of the board is up for election each year-this year it's the officers. Per our bylaws the board decides at its January meeting who has which responsibility. Therefore, when you vote for a person on the board it is not for a specific responsibility. Helene, Debby and I have all agreed to run again. Sadly, Karen has informed us that she does not want to remain on the board. She has been a superb treasurer and will be difficult to replace. Allan Linderman is chairing the 2022 JGSCV Nominations Committee. Serving with him as the board representative is Barbara Finsten and from the general membership Judy Karta. Allan and his committee has sent out letters to those JGSCV members who meet eligibility requirements to serve on the JGSCV board of directors. With Karen leaving the board the end of the year we will need a treasurer. **If any of you meet the board requirements and also have banking or treasurer experience please apply- we need you!**

(Cont'd next page)

NEXT MEETING

**Sunday, October 9th
1:30-3:30 PM**

***"Why did our Jewish
Ancestors leave a Great
Place like the Pale?"***

Presented by



Hal Bookbinder

Members Only ZOOM

More info page 8

NOVEMBER MEETING

**DANIEL HOROWITZ: "DID MY FAMILY LIE OR
ARE THE RECORDS WRONG?"**

WWW.JGSCV.ORG

6052 Hackers Lane
Agoura Hills, CA 91301
[818-889-6616](tel:818-889-6616)

2022 JGSCV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Program Chairman**
president@jgscv.org

**Helene Rosen, VP Membership,
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membership@jgscv.org

Karen Lewy, Treasurer
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Debra Wenkart, Secretary
secretary@jgscv.org

Warren Blatt, Member Education
education@jgscv.org

**Barbara Finsten,
Member at Large**
Barbaraf@jgscv.org

Andrea Massion
Andrea@jgscv.org

Israel Perel, Librarian
librarian@jgscv.org

Barbara Algaze, FSL
barbara@jgscv.org

Pat Fuller, Publicity
publicity@jgscv.org

**Diane Goldin,
Newsletter Editor**
newslettereditor@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.

Our current board is comprised of 8 people and our bylaws permit no less than six and up to 12 members of the board and the person must be a member in good standing for at least one year at time of serving. While the deadline for sending in the application to the Nominating Committee has passed, there is still an opportunity to serve by Nominations from the floor at the November meeting, but you can let Allan (Allan@jgscv.org) and me (president@JGSCV.org) know before then.

Hal Bookbinder continues with his interesting series on Practicing Safe Computing on page 6. This month's article # 83 is *'Your Wallet has been stolen, now what?'*

We have not received any new submissions for our Family Histories column, started after Joan Adler (June 2020 speaker) suggested member stories be featured in our newsletter. We would love to include more of these personal, unique, and fascinating memories. Please send to both Diane Goldin, newsletter editor, at newslettereditor@jgscv.org and me at president@jgscv.org. If you need assistance, Diane is eager to help you.

See page 9 for more on our upcoming meetings. I am in touch with the Temple Adat Elohim's leadership about meeting there starting in January 2023, and they are discussing our proposal with their board of directors. When we have an agreement, I will let you know. We will continue to meet by Zoom into the fall and through the end of the year.

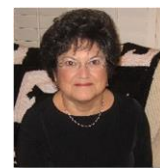
We had an excellent tour of the Tenement Museum on September 11. We had a virtual tour of the Rogarshevsky family, Jewish Americans from Lithuania who moved to the Lower East Side in New York. The parents, Fannie and Abraham, raised six children at 97 Orchard Street, balancing work, family, and their religious faith during the 1910s. To read the highlights see page 3.

We had to cancel the speaker for the October 11 program. When we agreed to the program in June the topic was *"Lithuanian Jews: Migration to South Africa"*. When it came time to write up the press, she changed her talk to artwork of a particular artist from Lithuania in that era that she represents. I felt this would not be of interest to our members. I am delighted to inform you that Hal Bookbinder will be our speaker and the program is *"Why Did our Jewish Ancestors Leave a Great Place Like the Pale"*. The Pale of Settlement was a western region of the Russian Empire with varying borders that existed from 1791 to 1917 in which permanent residency by Jews was allowed and beyond which Jewish residency, permanent or temporary was mostly forbidden. Hal last gave that presentation to us over ten years ago and this is a topic that many of us with and without roots in the Pale will enjoy as well learn from. See the meeting notice on page 8.

While we rely on your dues to operate, we also need additional revenue to keep up with what we do. There are two opportunities further to assist your society. First, by shopping at Ralph's or Food for Less and listing JGSCV as your charity of choice. Even if you only shop at Ralphs/Food for Less occasionally it helps our society. And second, when shopping at Amazon please do so through the Amazon Smile program. Neither of these opportunities cost you any additional money and both result in contributions to JGSCV. See "noteworthy" on our website <https://www.jgscv.org/noteworthy.html> for more information.

Looking forward to "seeing you" at our October 9th meeting.

Jan Meisels Allen



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Highlights from: “Virtual Tour of the New York City Tenement Museum - Focusing on a Jewish Family from the Early 1900s”

By Jan Meisels Allen

Many of us have ancestors who arrived in New York City when they first landed in the United States. While some moved on to other parts of the United States, the vast majority stayed—at least for a while—in New York and that probably meant the lower East Side which was known as the city’s “premier Jewish neighborhood”. Within the lower East Side, there were “enclaves” where residents clustered near others from the same “old countries”. The residents of the tenements sewed, hawked, and haggled. They were synagogue goers and Yiddish theater devotees and Socialist firebrands. The tenements were overcrowded and had unsanitary conditions. While each “apartment” had a kitchen there was a communal bathroom shared by several families.



Rogarshevsky Kitchen (l) and Parlor Table (r)

We were delighted to have a virtual tour of the Rogarshevsky family tenement. They were a Jewish family from Lithuania. The parents, Fannie and Abraham raised six children in 97 Orchard Street in the 1910s-- 1907 to 1910. The teenage daughters worked in a factory, learned about labor unions working conditions, and more. Our tour guide was SJ, an educator at the Museum who led the program, and Ester, also an educator at the



The Rogarshevskys in 1911

Museum. The Museum owns 97 Orchard Street building and one other.

SJ defined a tenement as any building designed to house at least three families with each family having its own kitchen. A tenement is an apartment but over time the terminology has changed. The word tenement has some words attached to its meaning, such as overcrowding or housing that is not in good condition which certainly is true for some of these spaces—but there is a variation of life within them.



The building was built in 1863 by a German immigrant named Lucas Blockner—it has four apartments on each floor. It is five stories high. When built it could house 22 families. By 1910, the ground floor was converted into storefronts. The Rogarshevsky’ arrived when the building got gas lighting. The building was condemned as a residence in 1935.



1935 view of interior staircase at 97 Orchard Street

History of the Rogarshevskys

They immigrated from Lithuania in 1901 when it was part of the Russian Empire. They had four of their six children there. They were living in Telsche which today is Lithuania. They immigrated as part of 2.5 million Jewish people coming to New York between 1880 and 1920—predominately due to economic reasons and fleeing state-sanctioned antisemitism. Jews were restricted from holding political office, and how many could go to high school or university. Jews were limited to living in the Pale of Settlement — just four percent of Russia’s landmass but 90 percent of the Jewish population lived there.

Orchard Street had a market- the Hazard Market



This photo of the Hazard Market showing the very crowded conditions. Tenements were 5 stories high -- as high as brick could support. The Lower East Side at this time had 400,000 people living in a square mile and the densest blocks had 2-3,000 people in it.

every Thursday. It was very busy as people purchased supplies for the Sabbath.

Tenements were razed for construction of the Williamsburg Bridge and for parks which progressive reformers believed were necessary. When the Rogarshevsky’s lived at 97 Orchard it was at its most populated with 110 people living there over 20 families in 1910—shown in the 1910 census a few over age of 45, 38 under age 16 and a dozen are infants.

Inside the apartment:

All the apartments are three rooms and about 325 square feet. One would enter into the kitchen and see the stove for cooking, plumbing for washing clothes and dishes, a small bedroom, and the parlor. The parents had the bedroom, the two daughters slept in kitchen the four boys slept in the living room.

Chamber pots were used but there were communal bathrooms with other families on the floor. They had different responses when asked in the current times if there was hot water or were they cold water flats. People would go once a week for shower to a bathhouse. Some bathhouses were free, some cost 5 cents for the water to run for 5 minutes and plus soap and a towel.

The 1910 U.S. Census shows the children working as young as age 15.

Abraham was out of work for 13 weeks. He was a presser. Many worked at home, “running a factory in your own home”. These little factories started in one’s own home with people working as contract workers. That gave them flexibility- to not work on Shabbat but work on Sundays. With the invention of the sewing machine, these “home” factories started to go away. The building does not get electricity until the mid- 1920s, but high-rise buildings being

built in midtown had electricity. Abraham died of tuberculosis in 1918.

Bessie worked as a teenager in a factory- Monday thru Saturday with a 10-hour workday but the contract may say 12 hours a day. Most workers were teenage girls. The structure also engendered unions- no safety protocols and long hours. The idea to better present working conditions took root. Union organizers met the girls and asked them to come to meetings. Many labor leaders didn't think the girls would be of interest but in November 1909, at a meeting of labor leaders at Cooper Union to determine if there should be a general strike, a young woman inspired it.

Clara Lemley, a 23-year-old garment worker and East European Jewish immigrant, interrupted the men at the meeting to say she is "tired of talk in general terms and as one who suffers from the abuses described" moved to go on a general strike. This prompted one of the largest strikes up to that point with 20,000 to 30,000 garment workers. They pressured owners to put a cap on the number of hours they were working every week and to pay them better for their work. This action shut down the country's garment industry for three months from November 1, 1909-February 1, 1910. At this point, 70% of women's fashion and 40% of men's fashion were made in the lower East Side.



Inside Factory

About 7 years before, there was also a Kasher meat boycott which was mostly housewives who were protesting the increase in Kasher beef prices, many of whom were the mothers of the daughters that were striking. One of the factories was the Triangle

Shirt factory that Clara worked in and within a year of that strike, there was a devastating fire-March 25, 1911 resulting in 146 deaths and 78 injuries. It was on the upper floors of a building owned by New York University. No one from this family worked there but like they and their neighbors undoubtedly knew some of the victims. Since the fire happened on Saturday- if they did not have to work on Saturday many of these girls would not have died.

It was up to the unions to bring in safety provisions, as they mobilized immediately after the fire. The unions brought in fire codes and spearheaded a call for reform and improving factory conditions for workers' rights. The Museum does not know how the Rogarshevsky's processed that information.

In 1918, with the death of Abraham, Bessie becomes the caretaker at 97 Orchard Street. She was also the last resident to live at that address. The children moved out and got married. There are descendants of the Rogarshevsky's who are alive today- one as young as 8 years old.

The members thanked SJ for an excellent and informative presentation.

There were questions about synagogues in the area and how many are still functioning. Few were in storefronts or basements. Alderman Street -- Synagogue is a museum now and is preserved and it does have a very small congregation. It is not affiliated with the Museum. It is located one block from the Museum. Eldridge Street Synagogue and the Romaniote Synagogue are two of the few that are active now. The Romaniote Synagogue is the only such synagogue in the Western Hemisphere.

Technically, the tenement buildings are still standing-or at least the facades are the only original thing left that is there. Today, the buildings' apartments are rented for \$3,000 a month on average.

The Museum does tenement talks and has digital exhibits. See <https://www.tenement.org/>.



SJ, Museum Educator and our tour guide

Practicing Safe Computing Article #83: “Your wallet has been stolen, now what?”

By Hal Bookbinder



Recently, a thief broke into my gym locker and stole my wallet and iPhone. I had to cancel and replace credit, debit, medical, professional and membership cards, my driver’s license, my iPhone and more. I was also concerned about identity theft

Do you need to carry all the cards that you have in your wallet? Better to have fewer to replace if your wallet is lost or stolen. A social security card and the street address on a driver’s license can provide a thief



with valuable information to steal your identity. I do not carry my social security card and my driver’s license shows my post office box rather than my street address.

Do you keep one or two credit cards in reserve and not in your wallet? By doing so, you will continue to have active credit cards to use while awaiting the reissuance of the cards that were in your wallet. Consider limiting the cards in your wallet to those that you routinely use.

Do you know specifically what cards are currently in your wallet and the numbers to call to report them stolen? I periodically copy the front and back of all the cards in my wallet. This ensures that I handle them all and provides necessary card and contact information.

Are you taking appropriate physical precautions? Use a sturdy padlock on your gym locker. I did not, but now do. Carry a wallet in a briefcase, in an inside coat pocket, or front pants’ pocket. Purses are especially at risk. Here is an article from AARP to consider, [How to Keep Your Purse Safe, Secure \(and Germ-Free\)](#)

Do you have a password or other secure method to open your cell phone? Most of us have personal information, contacts, and pictures on our cell phones. The slight inconvenience of locking the screen when not in use may keep a thief from obtaining this treasure trove of information.

Do you keep a list of PINs, IDs and passwords in your wallet or purse? Consider keeping them in a password manager. See <https://www.pcmag.com/picks/the-best-free-password-managers> for an article assessing the best free ones. As I have shared, I continue to use LastPass even though it did not make the 2022 list.

Do you have a backup cell phone? I survived most of my life without a cell phone. But now it is a key part of my existence. Along with staying connected, web site authentication often includes validation via a code sent to your cell phone. Consider having an inexpensive back-up cell phone.

If you think that you may be at risk of identity theft, consider placing an alert or freeze with the three credit agencies. This will reduce the ability of a thief to obtain new credit in your name. My 2015 article, [Credit reporting agencies](#), remains current and accurate.

This is the eighty-third 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 <https://www.jgscv.org/noteworthy.html>.

JGSCV Updates

American Jewish University Sells Bel Air Campus to International Education Company



<https://tinyurl.com/3azy5p8b>

One of the ways JGSCV obtains revenues in addition to membership dues is voluntary participation by members and friends in Ralphs Community Programs and through the Amazon Smile program.

We recently received \$105.74 from 22 members who participate in the Ralphs Community Contribution!

Whether you are a friend or member we appreciate your support and hope you will sign up for when you shop-even occasionally-at Ralphs or Food For Less, or Amazon Smile.

For more information and signing-up go to JGSCV's website under Noteworthy



<https://jgscv.org/noteworthy.html>.



JGSCV Family Histories

This your space to share your family stories.

Joan Adler, our June 2020 speaker, suggested our members write up memories and genealogical discoveries to publish in our newsletter.

This month we did not receive any submissions. We would love to continue the series.

If you have something to share, please send to Diane at newslettereditor@JGSCV.org and Jan at president@jgscv.org

Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV)
will hold our October meeting on **Zoom**.

Zoom link will be emailed to members before the meeting.

Sunday, October 9, 2022, from 1:30-3:30 p.m.
Ask the Experts/Schmoozing Corner begins at 1:10 PM.



OCTOBER PROGRAM

“Why did our Jewish Ancestors leave a Great Place like the Pale?”



The Program

Jews had lived in Western Russia (the Pale) for centuries. At the turn of the last, two million left. This talk discusses how the Pale came to be, life in it and why the mass migration occurred. It breaks its 120-year history into periods of creation, confinement, repression, enlightenment, pogroms and chaos. There is more to the story than the horrific violence at the turn of the 20th century.

Speaker: Hal Bookbinder

Hal is a retired information systems professional who continues to instruct at the university level. He has been actively researching his genealogy for more than three decades, identifying over 4,000 relatives and tracing two lines to the mid-1700s in modern Ukraine. Hal has written and spoken on border changes, migration, citizenship, safe computing, and unique research techniques. He is a past president of the JGS of Los Angeles and of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies. Hal publishes a series of monthly articles on safe computing in the JGSCV newsletter and which are freely available at <http://www.tinyurl.com/SafeComputingArticles>. He and his wife, Marci, were raised in the Catskills of New York State and now live in the Los Angeles area

There is no charge to attend the meeting. Anyone may join JGSCV. Annual dues are \$30 for an individual and \$35 for a family. Anyone may join JGSCV
<https://www.jgscv.org/pdf/membership%20application.pdf>



2022 JGSCV Meeting Dates

ALL MEETINGS WILL BE RESERVED FOR MEMBERS ONLY VIA ZOOM UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

NEXT MEETING: SUNDAY, October 9th 1:30-3:30PM via Zoom		
DATE	PRESENTER	PROGRAM
Oct 9	Hal Bookbinder	<i>Why did our Jewish Ancestors leave a Great Place like the Pale?</i>
Nov 6	Daniel Horowitz	<i>Did My Family Lie or Are the Records Wrong?</i>
Dec 11	Brooke Shreier Ganz	<i>Reclaim the Records</i> + Annual Meeting, Elections and Chanukah Party

Genealogy Odds and Ends

JewishGen Aids Urgent Ukrainian Effort to Digitize Historical Records Endangered by Russian War

JewishGen, the world's leading website for Jewish genealogy, announces a new partnership with the Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Lviv and its director Olesya Stefanyk to aid in the effort to preserve historical records at risk of loss and destruction amid Russia's violent invasion of the country.



THE JERUSALEM POST

Sephardic Jewish ancestry certificate now open for millions of applicants

Recent research has demonstrated that as many as 200 million people in the Americas and Europe have Jewish ancestry who were forcibly converted.

Work to digitize Inquisition records that provide an unprecedented amount of genealogical information for those who seek to discover their possible Jewish roots.

<https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/article-717479>



Volunteer Opportunity:

OPERATION BENJAMIN is devoted to locating American Jewish personnel at military cemeteries all over the world who, for various reasons, were buried under markers incorrectly representing their religion and heritage. Our mission is to correct these mistakes and provide comfort to the families of the fallen. There is no cost to the families involved.

Contact: Mel Fishman (Mel@iaigs.org) by October 12th.

Genealogist vs Family Historian: Which are You?

<https://www.eogn.com.wildapricot.org/page-18080/12900221>



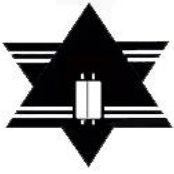
MyHeritage publishes 74 new collections

with 130 million historical records

myheritage.com/research

MyHeritage has announced their largest historical record collection update yet: **74 collections with 130 million records!**

You can find a full list of the newly published collections [on their blog](#).



2023 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 2023

Date _____

Check one:

This is a 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 _____

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