

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

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



JGSCV

May 2023

Volume 18 Issue 8

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

We hope this finds you well and safe.

JGSCV really enjoyed returning to Temple Adat Elohim our meeting home for 17 years. We especially appreciate Cantor Shukiar's warm welcome back.

We had an instructive and interesting program on April 2 with Emily Garber on *Become an Expert: Create a Resource Guide*. One of the greatest challenges when starting research is learning and understanding available resources. Maps, gazetteers, archival finding aids, Yizkor books, and local histories are just a few of the resources needed to build a research toolbox. This presentation focused on how to conduct a literature review and find more critical resources for your research. This presentation walked through the steps of building one's own resource guide - a valuable tool that may serve as a foundation for one's research for many years to come. See page 4 for the highlights of this program.

This week was the 80th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. Poland was home to Europe's largest prewar Jewish population on the eve of the Holocaust, some 3.5 million Jews, most of whom were murdered. The Polish state preserves sites like the ghetto and the Auschwitz death camp, while also honoring the massive losses inflicted on the entire nation. Some 6 million Polish citizens were killed during the war, about 3 million of them Jews and the others mostly Christian Poles. "The Warsaw ghetto initially held some 380,000 Jews who were cramped into tight living spaces, and at its peak housed about half a million people. Disease and starvation were rampant, and bodies often appeared on the streets.

The Jewish resistance movement in the ghetto grew after 265,000 men, women and children were rounded up in the summer of 1942 and killed at the Treblinka death camp. As word of the Nazi genocide spread, those who remained behind no longer believed German promises they would be sent to labor camps.

A small group of rebels began to spread calls for resistance, carrying out isolated acts of sabotage and attacks. Some Jews began defying German orders to report for deportation.

The uprising began when the Nazis entered the ghetto on April 19, 1943, the eve of the Passover holiday. Three days later, the Nazis set the ghetto ablaze, turning it into a fiery death trap, but the Jewish fighters kept up their struggle for nearly a month before they were vanquished." See:

<https://tinyurl.com/3ea9kpbv>; and <https://tinyurl.com/2fs952mu>.

(Cont'd next page)

NEXT MEETING

Sunday, May 7th
2:30-4:30 PM

***"Auschwitz:
Not long ago.
Not far away."***



***Presented by
Michael Berenbaum***

More info page 11

JUNE MEETING

E. RANDOLL SCHOENBERG

WWW.JGSCV.ORG

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

2023 JGSCV BOARD 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

May 2023

I hope that those who did not yet renew will do so. Per our bylaws they were dropped from membership at the end of March but can easily be reinstated. We are now meeting again in person at Temple Adat Elohim and I hope more of you attend in person. I ask now for those who have not renewed to do so. I have sent an email to each member who has not renewed. We thank those who have already renewed. A renewal form is available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8pp67r>.

Please note our new meeting time—**2:30 PM** with ask the experts starting at 2:10 PM. Our next meeting is a real treat with Michael Berenbaum, Ph.D. who will be talking about the Auschwitz Exhibit at the Reagan Museum. This is our annual Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) program. Yom Hashoah was on April 18, but this was the closest meeting date to that day. See page 10 for more about that meeting. Please be on time. Due to scheduling issues, Dr Berenbaum will start EXACTLY at 2:30 PM and leave exactly at 3:00 PM. A video will also be shown. JGSCV is requiring you to wear masks and strongly encourage you to have been vaccinated and boosted—we are a group that is predominately over 50 and with ageing comes some affiliated health issues.

JGSCV needs volunteers!

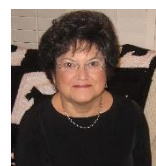
1. **I have not heard from anyone** about volunteering for our July meeting “Genealogy in the Round” and we need **YOU** to participate. This event always turns out to be one of the best programs because of your participation! See flyer on page 3 for sign up information.
2. We need someone to volunteer with Issie Perel to record (audio and video) our meetings. This can be done this using a smart phone. Files can be transferred to my computer by USB or other means. (I have a PC not a MAC so it has to be compatible.)
3. We have had several resignations from the Publicity Committee. We have several members who help us send out by email our meeting notice to local libraries, senior centers, synagogues, etc. It takes less than 2 hours a month. We will provide you with the meeting announcement and the list of places to email it to. If you are willing to help, please contact me at president@jgscv.org

There is a new Vera Miller World War II database of 20,000 partisans who fought the Nazis called Partisans of Belarus. It is in English and Russian. Users are not required to register to use the database (<https://partizany.by/>) and scans of records documenting the partisans are free to download. There are instructions on how to search on the website. The link for the English version is available at: <https://tinyurl.com/ev6dt6wf>. The database is in Russian. Free translation guides are google translate <https://translate.google.com/>; and DeepL.com <https://www.deepl.com/translator>.

Hal Bookbinder continues with the 90th installment of his “*Practicing Safe Computing*” series with *Artificial Intelligence*. See page 8.

Looking forward to seeing you on May 7th!

Jan Meisels Allen



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Genealogy in the Round

- Have you ever thought you'd like to present at a genealogy seminar or meeting but lack the experience?
- Have you ever bored a friend or relative with your genealogy details until their eyes glazed over?
- Did your therapist suggest you try public speaking?
- Do you have a research story or topic that you want to share?

If you answered YES to ANY of the above, then you'll want to participate in the **JGSCV Annual Genealogy in the Round on July 9th!**

Members are invited to prepare 10 minutes of Genealogy (slides or props are optional) for our July meeting. Your audience are folks who love genealogy as much as you and have your success at heart.

Topics include but not limited to:

What I learned doing Genealogy

Resources that I love

My biggest breakthrough

Meeting newly found family

What I accomplished during quarantine

To speak at the meeting, contact our president at president@jgscv.org and let her know you are coming aboard! She can answer your questions.

Highlights from: “Become an Expert: Create a Resource Guide”

By Jan Meisels Allen

One of the greatest challenges when starting research in a new area is learning and understanding the resources that are available. Maps, gazetteers, archival finding aids, Yizkor books, and local histories are just a few of the resources needed to build a research toolbox. Emily Garber talked about how to conduct a literature review and find more critical resources for your research. This presentation walked through the steps of building one’s own resource guide - a valuable tool that may serve as a foundation for one’s research for many years to come. Emily’s handout is posted to the JGSCV website at:

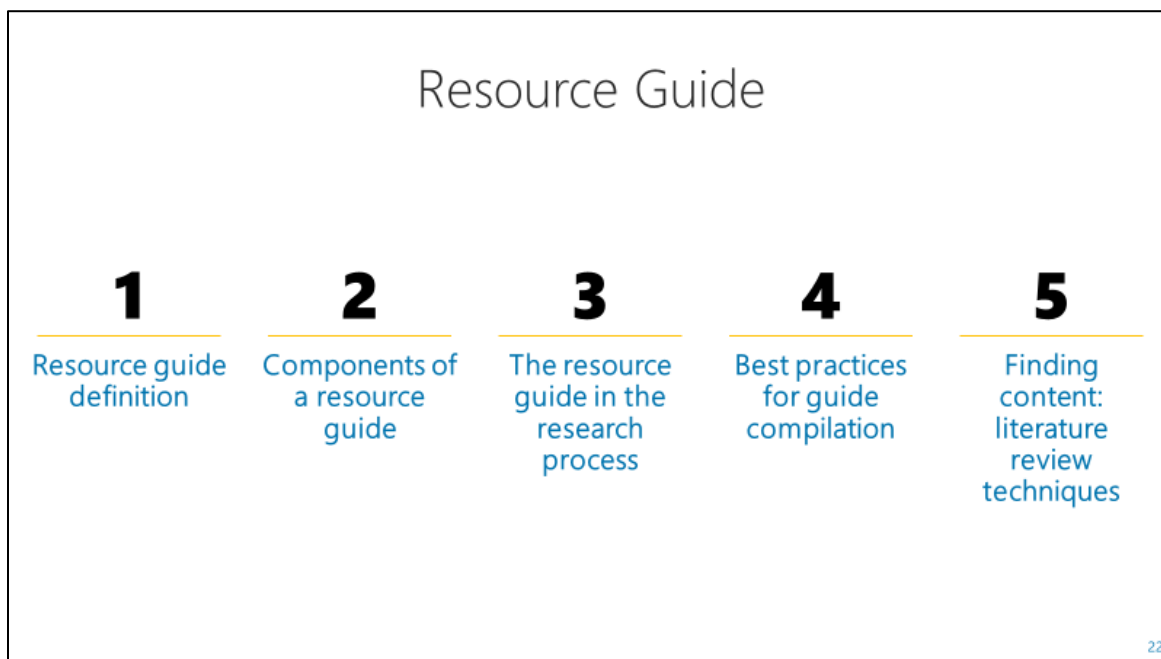
<https://www.jgscv.org/pdf/handouts/Become%20An%20Expert.pdf>

Speaker Emily Garber began her presentation by discussing several research challenges that each taught her that she needed further knowledge to understand what she was seeing in records—to put the information she was gathering in context. Her examples included learning how to research in an area she had not researched before (Argentina), understanding how information was gathered for Russian Empire Revision lists (similar to census records), and even what the 1940 census takers meant when they recorded when a person earned \$5,000 in the prior year. Emily encouraged us to read the information about specific records that each genealogy website provides. For example, Ancestry, MyHeritage, FamilySearch, and JewishGen all provide information about the records they post.

Creating a Resource Guide

As there is much information we don’t know, Emily encouraged us to create a resource guide.

A resource guide is a personal compilation of information and sources relevant to genealogical research questions.



1. Emily said to keep the information in one document. That may be a spreadsheet, on Pinterest, in a binder or Onenote/Evernote. It should emphasize links and recognize it is a work in progress and is scalable.
2. Select components relevant to research interests: Facts, Maps, Timeline, Records, etc. This is where you may find the records, not the records themselves.

Locality guides and topical guides. If one doesn't know much about the locality, then Emily encouraged adding information about the area-listing where one knows the records are located- for example, JRI-Poland, Gesher Galicia, JewishGen etc. For example, as Emily did not know much about Russian revision lists, she listed them under topical guides.

3. How will you address the genealogical problem? Create a work list for further research.



Emily suggested creating the research guide in a word document so one can return and update, edit and remove research items.

Best Practices

Create a timeline: who,

what, when and where. If you know approximately when your family lived in a given location, begin in that time period rather than the current era.

Emily suggested Marlis Humphrey's DoJR Record Type Taxonomy for Jewish Genealogy. (Note: Marlis gave a presentation on this to JGSCV on this. Please see: https://www.igscv.org/pdf/newsletters/Venturing_V16_N3.pdf page 5)

How do you find the content? Do a systematic search—a literature review- of others who also researched the same area.

Literature review

1. Start with a clear research question—address problems of identity, relationship and events/situations

Be broad enough to be doable and specific enough to guide research. Look for resources in the towns/villages/cities/countries where research is available - for example an archive or vital records office.

2. Outline sections/topics to include:
 - Summary of facts
 - Existing guides-Kehilla links, books and articles
 - Historical maps, gazetteers
 - Major events—for example was there a large pandemic or flood
 - Libraries and archives

- Record loss
 - Record collections
 - Records checklists
3. Search using key words and phrases try to use those with endnotes/footnotes and references.

Remember to write down every source you check. An example used by Emily is *Where Once We Walked* and *Avotaynu Guide Jewish Genealogy* both by Mokotoff and Sack,. (Note: These are in JGSCV's traveling library. JGSCV has all issues of *Avotaynu* in our permanent library.)

Emily also suggested using Google Search operators and advised when to use quotation marks. For example, "revision list" versus revision list – the latter of which yields results for the words revision and list, as well as the phrase "revision list". Using the phrase with quotation marks, provides fewer, but more relevant results (518 versus over 21,000).

Emily provided several sources to learn about Google search operators and wildcards. Genealogy websites (such as FamilySearch, Ancestry and MyHeritage) may also be searched for their specific search operators. To locate on their webpages, search using Google (or your favorite search engine) by entering [website name] wild cards. For example, Ancestry wild cards.

Emily also suggested to use the JewishGen Discussion Group archive <https://groups.jewishgen.org/g/main>, scroll down. There are over 596,000 messages so its worth looking at the hashtag titles to refine your search. Also look at the JewishGen info files. To sign up for the JewishGen Discussion Group go to: main+subscribe@groups.jewishgen.org.

She suggested we take a look at Joel Weintraub's YouTube Channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/@JDWTalks>

You do not need a Google account to search YouTube (a Google product). But, if you find a YouTube channel you would like to follow, she suggested subscribing to YouTube with your Google password (which is the same as your Google account email password).

4. Chase references - Continue searching through source notes, references cited and links.
5. Chase authors - Find additional works by those who have published in your area of interest.
6. Use results to add content to or reformat guide.
7. Locate materials (translate if necessary) Translate websites: Google translate <https://translate.google.com/> , Google Chrome browser and DeepL.com. You can also go to JewishGen's View Mate (<https://www.jewishgen.org/viewmate/>) for rules on how to use. For those on Facebook, you can also try Facebook: Genealogical Translations.

февраль	February	fee-VRAHL'
март	March	mahrt
апрель	April	ah-PRYEHL'
май	May	mahy
июнь	June	ee-YOON'
июль	July	ee-YOOL'
август	August	AHV-goost
сентябрь	September	seen-TYAHBR'
октябрь	October	ahk-TYAHBR'
ноябрь	November	nah-YAHBR'

8. Tweak research question/rethink scope: Is it too big? too small/ or just right!

In summary, Emily said for resource guides to:

- start broadly-with familiar and accessible resources;
- follow author's citation's-- consider it detective work;
- and, build your knowledge base—it will bring you greater understanding.

Emily then answered questions from the audience.

You want to make the resource guide a tool for your research. In her handout for the talk, Emily provided a DropBox link to an example of a locality research guide for the community of Zaleszczyki, Galicia.

Emily Garber is an archaeologist by training (B.A., and M.A.), Emily has been researching her Jewish family heritage since 2007 and holds a certificate from Boston University's Genealogical Research program. She is a family history researcher, writer and speaker and owns Extra Yad Genealogical Services. Emily blogs at <https://extrayad.blogspot.com/>, has written two books and several articles on genealogical research. She serves as chair of the Phoenix Jewish Genealogy Group and board member of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies and the Arizona Jewish Historical Society. Her email is extrayad@gmail.com.

Practicing Safe Computing Article #90: *Artificial Intelligence*

By Hal Bookbinder



The dangers of artificial intelligence (AI) are increasingly in the news. AI is the ability of computing to emulate human thinking, with instantaneous access to an almost limitless supply of information. Often, when interacting through email, text, or voice, we are not sure whether we are dealing with a human or a machine. This has enormous potential for both good and for harm.

The one sure thing is that this is part of our future. Governments are starting to show interest in legislating controls for artificial intelligence. Italy recently banned ChatGPT until it is satisfied that it does not violate EU privacy rules. Ireland has expressed support for Italy's action. The CEO of ChatGPT, Sam Altman, said that he intends to fully address Italy's concerns.

ChatGPT can create original written material, including poetry, fiction and more. As a college instructor, I recently took part in a discussion with my peers about how to deal with students' use of ChatGPT to create written assignments that conform to the professor's instructions, appearing to be original work and yet are not the original work of the student.

We agreed upon methods for detecting the use of ChatGPT which, while workable now, will quickly become outmoded as this technology advances. Cheating on educational assignments is just the beginning. The ability of AI to mislead and to scam people is almost limitless and will be a challenge to control. It is imperative that society implement adequate controls for this wondrous technology.

I call it wondrous as it may vastly speed scientific discovery, replace a huge part of the analytical work currently done by humans, and even help us improve sustainability of the planet. But, until we get a handle on it, we could be in for a wild ride. My focus for this article is its ability to scam us through emulation that is personal, responsive, and believable.

With AI, the days of misspelled, grammatically incorrect, and illogical spam may be ending. We can no longer rely on these red flags to detect cyber-criminality. We each need to be ever more careful before we share personal information or take actions no matter how plausible the request. If asked for personal information, stop; if you feel pressured to act, stop. Check, independently, before you act.

The Federal Trade Commission is alerting consumers about a next-level, more sophisticated family emergency scam that uses AI which imitates the voice of a family member in distress. There is a panicked voice on the line. It is your grandson. He says he is in deep trouble — he wrecked the car and landed in jail. But you can help by sending money.

You take a deep breath and think. You have heard about grandparent scams. But darn, it sounds just like him. How could it be a scam? You have experienced voice cloning. You cannot even trust the sound of a familiar voice! Using a short clip of his voice, say something he posted on social media, AI could construct a message, and even scarier, respond to questions that you might ask in real time.

Click here to read more about this scam on the FTC website: <https://consumer.ftc.gov/consumer-alerts/2023/03/scammers-use-ai-enhance-their-family-emergency-schemes>.

This is the ninetieth 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

Effective Immediately: Water at Meetings

For all JGSCV Meetings:
We will provide bottled water and No other beverages or refreshments will be provided. We need someone to assist keep the water bottle table neat and to assist in clean-up at the end of the meeting. Please contact Andrea Massion from our board who has graciously accepted to take on this coordinating role, at: andrea@jgscv.org.
Sincerely,
Your Board of Directors



Community Contribution Program

Whether you are a friend or member we appreciate your support and hope you will sign up for Ralphs and Food-for-Less community programs.

These programs give donations to JGSCV when you shop.

For more information and signing up go to JGSCV's website under Noteworthy <https://jgscv.org/noteworthy.html>.



← With in-person meetings, we must now pay for speaker travel and accommodations (in addition to honorariums.) We've always had stellar programs and that will not stop! Support our efforts to bring dynamic programs to our society by participating in one of these community shopping programs.

JGSCV Family Histories

This is 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.

Please send submissions to Diane at newslettereditor@JGSCV.org and Jan at president@jgscv.org

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

will hold **an In-Person** meeting at
Temple Adat Elohim, 2420 E. Hillcrest Drive in Thousand Oaks

This is our annual Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) program.
(The actual date of Yom Hashoah was April 18, 2023.)

Sunday, May 7th from 2:30-4:30 p.m.
Ask the Experts/Schmoozing Corner begins at 2:10 PM.

*Note: Dr. Berenbaum will start talking **EXACTLY** at 2:30 PM. Please arrive early.*

MAY PROGRAM



Not long ago. Not far away.



Michael Berenbaum

The Program:

The exhibition brings together more than 700 original objects of great historic and human value; objects which were direct witnesses of the horrors of Auschwitz and the Holocaust. These objects serve as the guiding thread of a rigorous and moving account on the history of the German Nazi camp Auschwitz and its dwellers, both victims and perpetrators.

Through this daunting selection of objects from the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum as well as more than 20 institutions and museums all over the world, the Auschwitz exhibition portrays the complex reality of the notorious camp, universal symbol of the human tragedies that resulted from Nazi ideology, and the world of victims and perpetrators with a clear goal – to elucidate how such a place could come into being and dig into how its existence has determined our present worldview.

The Speaker:

Michael Berenbaum is the author and editor of 20 books and scores of scholarly articles and journalistic pieces. He is the Director of the Sigi Ziering Institute: Exploring the Ethical and Religious Implications of the Holocaust and a Professor of Jewish Studies at the American Jewish University, He was Project Director overseeing the creation of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the first Director of its Research Institute and later served as President and CEO of the Survivors of the Shoah **Visual History Foundation.**

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>

For more information contact: information@JGSCV.org or call
Jan Meisels Allen@ 818-889-6616
See: www.JGSCV.org



2023 JGSCV Meeting Dates

NEXT MEETING: SUNDAY, MAY 7th

****2:30-4:30 PM** via Zoom**

2023 Meetings

DATE	PRESENTER	PROGRAM
May 7 2:30-4:30 pm	Michael Berenbaum	<i>"Auschwitz: Not long ago. Not far away."</i>
June 11 2:30-4:30 pm	E. Randoll Schoenberg	<i>The Lady in Gold: The Extraordinary Tale of Gustav Klimt's Masterpiece, Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer</i>
July 9 2:30-4:30 pm	JGSCV Members	Genealogy in the Round
August	NO Meeting (IAJGS conference)	<i>IAJGS Conference will be held in London, England July 30 to August 3, 2023</i>
September 10 2:30-4:30 pm	Andrea Massion	<i>Reaching Rebecca: The Hunt for a Lost Relative</i>
October 2:30-4:30 pm	TBA	
November 7:00-9:00pm	TBA	
December 2:30-4:30 pm	TBA	Annual Meeting, Elections, Chanukah Party

Genealogy Odds and Ends

April 2023 Database Updates ~
Exciting changes for Researchers!

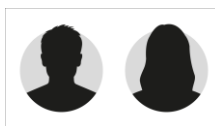
<https://tinyurl.com/44nxfkw>

JRI
Poland

Genealogy's Star

United States Social Security NUMIDENT
records added to FamilySearch.org

<https://tinyurl.com/7iztapc7>



Study: Ancestry sites giving away
identity of sperm and egg donors

<https://tinyurl.com/wca53knr>

As seen in *The Weekly News Nosh*
JewishGen Weekly E-Newsletter
Phil Goldfarb Tulsa, Oklahoma USA, Editor

Seven Holocaust Films You Should See

These under-the-radar movies about the Shoah are affecting,
powerful and nuanced.

<https://tinyurl.com/5n798v42>



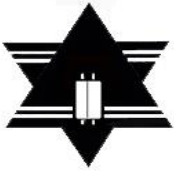
Family Records: The Story of China's
Largest Genealogy Collection

<https://www.sixthtone.com/news/1012694>

Tracing Jewish Roots

43rd IAJGS International Conference on
Jewish Genealogy
LONDON 2023

<https://site.pheedloop.com/event/EVEXVEQJLXVIO/home/>



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.)