

# VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

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



# JGSCV

June 2023

Volume 18 Issue 9

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

We hope this finds you well and safe.

JGSCV was privileged to have Michael Berenbaum, Ph.D., talk to us on May 7<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Berenbaum curated the exhibit at the Reagan Library, "Auschwitz: Not Long Ago. Not Far Away." It is a joint project of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and the Spanish company *Musealia*. See page 4 for the highlights of the program.

Earlier this month Israel celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary -- commemorating the Israeli Declaration of Independence on May 14, 1948. It is celebrated annually on the 5th of Iyar in the Hebrew calendar, which usually falls in April or May in the Gregorian calendar. Yom Ha'atzmaut commemorates the Israeli Declaration of Independence on May 14, 1948, which established the modern State of Israel.

From the JNF: "The story of Yom Ha'atzmaut begins in the late 19th and early 20th centuries when Jews began to return to their ancient homeland in the region known as Ottoman-controlled Palestine. Jewish National Fund was founded in 1901 by Theodor Herzl, and with the coins dropped into Blue Boxes by Jews the world over, land in Israel was repurchased. The movement for Jewish self-determination in Palestine, known as Zionism, grew in strength and intensity as Jews sought a haven from persecution and discrimination in Europe.

In 1917, the British government issued the Balfour Declaration, which declared its support for 'the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.' This was a significant milestone for the Zionist movement and helped pave the way for the establishment of the State of Israel decades later.

After World War II and the Holocaust, the need for a Jewish state became even more urgent. In November 1947, the United Nations General Assembly voted to partition Mandatory Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Arab. The Jews accepted the plan, but the Arab countries rejected it and declared war on the newly established state of Israel. Despite being vastly outnumbered and outgunned, the fledgling Israeli army was able to defeat the Arab armies and establish the State of Israel. This was a remarkable achievement and a moment of great joy and celebration for the Jewish people.

Today, Yom Ha'atzmaut is celebrated throughout Israel and by Jewish communities around the world as a day of pride, joy, and gratitude for the establishment of the State of Israel and the renewal of Jewish sovereignty in their ancestral homeland."

(Cont'd next page)

## NEXT MEETING

**Sunday, June 11<sup>th</sup>  
2:30-4:30 PM**

***"The Lady in Gold: The  
Extraordinary Tale of  
Gustav Klimt's Masterpiece,  
Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer"***



***Presented by  
E. Randol Schoenberg***

*More info page 8*

## JULY MEETING

**GENEALOGY IN THE ROUND  
(SEE PAGE 3)**

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

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

## 2023 JGSCV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Jan Meisels Allen, President and  
Program Chairman**

[president@jgscv.org](mailto:president@jgscv.org)

**Helene Rosen, VP Membership,  
Zoom Coordinator**

[membership@jgscv.org](mailto:membership@jgscv.org)

**Janet Fishman, Treasurer**

[treasurer@jgscv.org](mailto:treasurer@jgscv.org)

**Debra Wenkart, Secretary**

[secretary@jgscv.org](mailto:secretary@jgscv.org)

**Warren Blatt, Member Education**

[education@jgscv.org](mailto:education@jgscv.org)

**Barbara Finsten,  
Member at Large**

[Barbaraf@jgscv.org](mailto:Barbaraf@jgscv.org)

**Andrea Massion**

**Member at Large**

[Andrea@jgscv.org](mailto:Andrea@jgscv.org)

**Israel Perel, Librarian**

[librarian@jgscv.org](mailto:librarian@jgscv.org)

---

**Nancy Goldberg, temp FSL**

[Nancy@jgscv.org](mailto:Nancy@jgscv.org)

**Pat Fuller, Publicity**

[publicity@jgscv.org](mailto:publicity@jgscv.org)

**Diane Goldin,  
Newsletter Editor**

[newslettereditor@jgscv.org](mailto:newslettereditor@jgscv.org)

**David Oseas, Webmaster**

[webmaster@jgscv.org](mailto: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.

June 2023

On May 17, 2023, Dr. Colleen Shogan assumed the role of the Archivist of the United States as the head of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). Shogan is the 11th Archivist of the United States and the first woman to hold the position permanently.

"Shogan's first briefing focused on veterans' services. Reflecting her priority to address the backlog of veterans' records with initiatives that will continue to improve service delivery including staffing and digitization efforts. To read more see: <https://www.archives.gov/press/press-releases/2023/nr23-33>

We are a membership organization. Therefore, we operate on your annual dues. If you have not yet joined or renewed, please do so now. Renewals now are good through December 31, 2023. Those who did not renew were contacted by email last month. They no longer receive meeting notices nor my biweekly emails. I ask now for those who have not renewed to do so. 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 Randy Schoenberg who will be talking about *The Lady in Gold: The Extraordinary Tale of Gustav Klimt's Masterpiece, 'Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer'*, based on the true story of Maria Altmann, a Jewish woman who took on and won a years-long battle against the Austrian government to regain ownership of a Gustav Klimt painting of her aunt, Adele Bloch-Bauer. The incredible true story of how Altmann, working in collaboration with Schoenberg, successfully sued the Austrian Government for the return of five Klimt paintings seized by the Nazis from the Bloch-Bauer family townhouse in Vienna during World War II.

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.
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](mailto:president@jgscv.org)

Hal Bookbinder continues with the 91<sup>st</sup> installment of his "Practicing Safe Computing" series with *Your own Internet access point* on page 6.

Looking forward to seeing you on June 11<sup>th</sup>!

*Jan Meisels Allen*



"Venturing Into Our Past" © is the newsletter of the Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley (JGSCV). All rights reserved. Permission is granted to reproduce any original content for non-profit use with prior notification to the editor and proper attribution."

JGSCV Presents:

# GENEALOGY IN THE ROUND

featuring **YOU!**

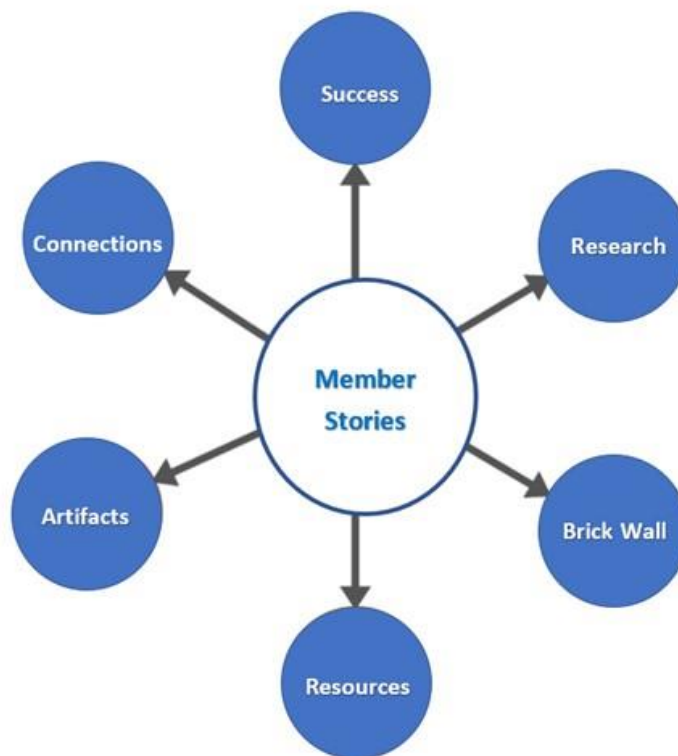
Members are invited to prepare **10 minutes** of Genealogy (slides or props are optional) for our July meeting.

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](mailto:president@jgscv.org) and let her know you are coming aboard! She can answer your questions.



# Highlights from: *“Michael Berenbaum and the Battle Against Hatred”*

By Andrea Massion

Michael Berenbaum spoke to members of JGSCV May 7, 2023, on his way to a meeting at the Reagan Library. It is at that library where the exhibit he curated, “Auschwitz: Not Long Ago. Not Far Away” is open to record crowds. It is a joint project of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and the Spanish company *Musealia*.



Berenbaum is the Director of the Sigi Ziering Institute: Exploring the Ethical and Religious Implications of the Holocaust, and a Distinguished Professor of Jewish Studies at the American Jewish University in Los Angeles. His credits and achievements are vast and span not just academia but the arts (Emmy winner), journalism, encyclopedias and curating this current exhibit. His mandate is clear: "Hatred and its permissibility are on the rise...that includes Antisemitism."

In 2022, the exhibit visited Malmo, Sweden. The Museum of Auschwitz website states that through the cooperation of the exhibition's creators with local museums, the content was enriched with objects and stories emphasizing the relevance of Auschwitz for the residents of Scandinavia. These included the story of Danish Jews fleeing to Sweden, the Swedish diplomat Raul Wallenberg who rescued Jews in Hungary, and the relief operation for concentration camp survivors commissioned by the Swedish government in spring 1945 known as the "white buses".

The Auschwitz exhibit also appeared at the Union Station in Kansas City where hundreds of survivors arrived after WWII to create new lives. Its website states "The exhibition explores the dual identity of the camp as a

physical location—the largest documented mass murder site in human history—and as a symbol of the borderless manifestation of hatred and human barbarity."

So why the Reagan Library?



The website gives a detailed account of President Reagan's military service during World War II. Due to poor eyesight, the actor was consigned to the First Motion Picture Unit (FMPU) a division of the Army Air Corps, under the leadership of Jack Warner. In May of 1945, raw footage filmed by FMPU secret combat-camera crews at German concentration camps arrived to be edited for viewing at the Pentagon. Ronald Reagan was among the handful of officers on the base to see the original uncut film footage. Reagan never forgot.

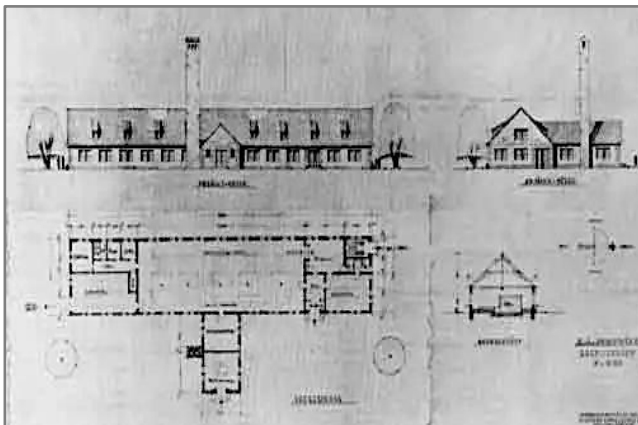
On April 22, 1981, then-President Reagan signed into being U.S. Holocaust Remembrance Day. "I remember seeing the first film that came in when the war was still on... Our troops had come upon the first camps and had entered those camps. And you saw, unretouched -- no way that it could have ever been rehearsed."

Seven hundred original artifacts of immense historic value are part of the exhibit. Most of these objects have never been shown to an

audience on the West Coast, and hail from museums and archives around the world.

Unlike most Holocaust museums and memorials, the curating is focused on Auschwitz, one of the few camps to tattoo its victims with numbers. There are no holds barred on content. Beginning with the Nazi Conference in the Berlin suburb of Wannsee to discuss, create and coordinate the implementation of what they called the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question" and moving on to the need to generate income to pay for the most efficient annihilation of the Jews, the exhibit explains the mass collections of victims' hair for manufacturing uses, gold from teeth and the design specifics of Zyklon B cages to save costs when murdering Jews by gas.

In addition, Berenbaum shared numbers: how many trains arrived per day, how many



Ground plan and front elevation of Georg Werkmann's first design for a new crematorium in Auschwitz, autumn 1941.

in each car, how many Jews lined up 5 across (for easier counting) as they awaited selection with seemingly benevolent doctors in white coats. The realities of these numbers and designs only emphasize the amount of energy and effort applied by the Nazis to annihilate the Jewish people. Berenbaum

shares these the details with unflinching candor.

Berenbaum's approach to content is straight forward and blunt. The facts are there on day-to-day routines, protocol and plans, and no Holocaust denier should argue with such details in place.

Articles about the exhibition have encouraged people to bring their children ages 12 to adult because as the last of the survivors leave the planet, it will be future generations who must "never forget."

Before leaving for his appointment, and after answering all kinds of questions, Berenbaum left us with a 32-minute film made with the Kansas City group that earlier hosted the exhibit. Along with Dr. Shelly Cline, Director of Education at the Midwest Center for Holocaust Study, Berenbaum and she point out key components of the Auschwitz exhibit and some of the personal stories behind the relics. There is also testimony from survivors. The video may be accessed at <https://vimeo.com/656771628>

---

*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.*



# Practicing Safe Computing Article #91: “Your own Internet access point”

By Hal Bookbinder



If you are one of the 95%+ of folks who carry a mobile phone, you’re likely also carrying a mobile hotspot, permitting you to connect your laptop or other Wi-Fi enabled device to the Internet, even when out of range of a functioning and accessible Wi-Fi connection.

At 5:40 pm, I discovered that my home Wi-Fi was not functioning, and I was to teach a class at 6:00 pm. I did not know whether my wireless router had failed, or if my Internet Service Provider (ISP) was down and I did not have time to find out. Instead, I activated the “hotspot” on my iPhone, connected my desktop through it to the Internet, and was able to teach the class.


The hotspot feature on your iPhone or Android device uses the phone’s data plan to connect to the Internet, and provides a Wi-Fi connection that your laptop, desktop, or other Wi-Fi enabled device can use. This then allows for connectivity from any location where there is no Wi-Fi, or where you prefer not to use an available but potentially unsafe Wi-Fi.

To turn on the mobile hotspot on your iPhone, click “Settings”. If “Cellular” is off, click it and turn it on. Then, choose “Personal hotspot” and “Allow Others to Join”. You will notice that your iPhone’s name (in the form of “xxxxx’x iPhone”) along with your Wi-Fi Password are displayed. Although you may want to do so, you need not turn off your phone’s Wi-Fi connection.

To turn on the mobile hotspot on your Samsung Android, click “Settings”, choose “Connections” and then “Mobile hotspot and Tethering”. Now, turn on your “Mobile hotspot”. It will note that you must turn off Wi-Fi. Acknowledge this and tap “Mobile hotspot” once more to see the Network Name and Password.

Display available networks on any nearby desktop, laptop, or other Wi-Fi enabled device and you will see the Network Name that is displayed on your iPhone or Android. Select it and enter the password. The device will connect via Wi-Fi to your smart phone and through it to the Internet. Practice this to ensure you are ready when needed.

Once you no longer need to provide Internet access through your smartphone, it is good practice to turn off the hotspot. It is also good practice to have a complex hotspot password that is not easily guessable. Since it will display on your smartphone, you need not remember it. Be aware that you may be charged for data usage that exceeds your monthly limit.

 **https:** *Separate topic:* The lock symbol provides a false sense of security. It only means that encryption is turned on and not, as many believe, that the site is safe. Read this article about Google’s plans to retire the lock symbol, and why encryption does not equal safety:

<https://www.pcmag.com/news/google-to-kill-chromes-lock-icon-now-considered-outdated-and-misleading>

*This is the ninety-first 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

## 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>.



Nancy Goldberg is temporarily taking over as JGSCV's Family Search Library contact:

[Nancy@jgscv.org](mailto:Nancy@jgscv.org)

Rabbi Diamond is working on Temple Adat Elohim's fall schedule. Once that is finalized (in July), we will confirm our JGSCV meeting dates past September 10<sup>th</sup>.

## Family Histories: Call for Entries

In July 2020, our speaker, Joan Adler, suggested members write down family memories and/or genealogical discoveries. We've published fascinating and personal family histories and would love to include more of these stories in this newsletter.

For ideas and assistance, please contact our newsletter editor, [Diane Goldin](mailto:Diane Goldin) and Jan Meisels Allen at [president@jgscv.org](mailto:president@jgscv.org).

## Help Wanted

- Record our meetings (audio and video.) It's easy! -- recordings can be done using a smart phone. Files can be transferred to JGSCV's computer by USB or other means.
- Assist the Publicity Committee by sending out email re: JGSCV meetings to local libraries, senior centers, synagogues, etc. It takes less than 2 hours a month. We will provide the meeting announcement and the list of places to email it to.

Please contact Jan at [president@jgscv.org](mailto:president@jgscv.org)

JGSCV Welcomes  
New Member

**Simona (Sam) Wildman**

**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**

**Sunday, June 11<sup>th</sup> from 2:30-4:30 p.m.**

**Ask the Experts/Schmoozing Corner begins at 2:10 PM. (led by Hal Bookbinder)**

**NOTE THE NEW MEETING TIME**



**JUNE PROGRAM**

***The Lady in Gold:***

***The Extraordinary Tale of Gustav Klimt's Masterpiece,  
'Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer'***



*E. Randol Schoenberg*

**The Program:**

“Lady in Gold,” is based on the true story of Maria Altmann, a Jewish woman who took on and won a years-long battle against the Austrian government to regain ownership of a Gustav Klimt painting of her aunt, Adele Bloch-Bauer. The painting was completed between 1903 and 1907. This is an incredible true story of how Altmann, working in collaboration with Schoenberg, successfully sued the Austrian Government for the return of five Klimt paintings seized by the Nazis from the Bloch-Bauer family townhouse in Vienna during World War II.

**The Speaker:**

E. Randol Schoenberg is an expert in handling cases involving looted art and the recovery of property stolen by the Nazi authorities during the Holocaust. Among his most prominent cases is that of “Republic of Austria v. Altmann” which resulted in the successful return of five paintings by Gustav Klimt, including the “Woman in Gold,” to their rightful owner.

Schoenberg graduated from Princeton University with a degree in Mathematics and a certificate in European Cultural Studies. He serves on the board of JewishGen and administers the Austria-Czech SIG. Schoenberg is a volunteer Geni.com curator and founded the Jewish Genealogy Portal.

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](mailto:information@JGSCV.org) or call  
Jan Meisels Allen@ 818-889-6616  
See: [www.JGSCV.org](http://www.JGSCV.org)



## 2023 JGSCV Meeting Dates

<b>NEXT MEETING: SUNDAY, June 11</b>		
<b>**2:30-4:30 PM – Temple Adat Elohim**</b>		
<b>2023 Meetings</b>		
<b>DATE</b>	<b>PRESENTER</b>	<b>PROGRAM</b>
June 11 2:30-4:30 pm	E. Randol 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



Tracing Jewish Roots



43rd IAJGS International Conference on  
**Jewish Genealogy**  
LONDON 2023



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



The United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) part of the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has published a new list of forms and fees. The genealogy forms, G-1041—Genealogy Index Search Requests a G-1041A Genealogy Records Request (for each microfilm or hard copy file) remain at \$65 for each form number-**at least for this time**-there was no mention of whether or when an increase for these forms may occur, although they were originally proposing increases of 54% to 300%. **The edition date is May 15, 2023.**

The list of forms and documents may be found at:

<https://www.uscis.gov/g-1055>

For the fee schedule form see:

<https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/forms/g-1055.pdf>



**ISRAEL STATE ARCHIVES**  
A Trove of Knowledge

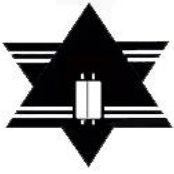
Despite Digitalization, Most Israeli State Archives Files  
Can't Be Found Online

<https://tinyurl.com/y5utvcvc>

## Tablet

Many Jewish veterans of WWII were mistakenly given Christian gravestones. Operation Benjamin is trying to fix that.

<https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/community/articles/operation-benjamin-jewish-veterans-gravestones>



## 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.)