



VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

NEWSLETTER OF THE JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
OF THE CONEJO VALLEY AND VENTURA COUNTY (JGSCV)

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President's message

Recently JGSVC was contacted by two religious organizations — Temple Adat Elohim and Oaks Christian School — to address their students on genealogy and how to research their roots. I will be talking to the Temple's 6th graders and Werner Frank, JGSCV newsletter editor, will be making presentations as part of Oak Christian's symposium on "Lifelines: Celebration of Cultures." Both of these invitations are wonderful opportunities to encourage our communities' youth to get interested in their family histories and recognize that knowing where we come from helps determine who we are. If you haven't started to tell your stories to your children and grandchildren, nieces and nephews — now is the time to start!

Our May meeting is going to be a celebration of our members, telling of their genealogical research success or failure (we learn as much from our failures as our successes). If you can share in 5 to 10 minutes a research story, a family artifact, a "genealogical brick wall" or some other genealogical quest — please contact me and we will add you to our list of presenters. This will be YOUR meeting! Please share with us. You may also ask questions to see if someone has suggestions on how to overcome a brick wall.

If you haven't renewed your 2007 JGSCV membership yet, or made the decision to join our Society, this is the time to do so. A membership form is downloadable from our website.

Jan Allen Meisels



Elizabeth Miller Discusses Family Findings

The January meeting addressed opportunities for genealogy research available from archival files of newspapers as well as from Yizkor books. JGSCV Board members Jan Meisels Allen and Werner Frank led the discussion on methodology including the use of family hearsay, cemetery books, Jewish history books, Jewish marriage records, searching older newspapers for obituaries and articles on family businesses. A valuable hand-out was provided to attendees that listed Internet sites which provide archival newspaper sources as well as identifying such resources available at the libraries of Los Angeles (City and County) and Ventura County. Organizations offering Yizkor books are also listed. This handout is now expanded and available on our website by selecting MEETINGS, PRIOR.

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP.....

For those of you who have not yet renewed your membership, please do so now. You may obtain a renewal form on our website www.jgscv.org under *membership*. We have a fantastic year planned and you don't want to miss any of it!



Make your plans to attend the 27th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy, July 15-20, 2007 in Salt Lake City. Go to www.sl2007.org for more information.

SEE PAGE 4 FOR SCHEDULE OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

ABOUT JGSCV.....

The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County meets once a month, usually on a Sunday. Meetings are oriented to the needs of the novice as well as the more experienced genealogist. Members share materials, research methods and ideas, as well as research success or failures. Members have access to the JGSCV library located on a special shelf at the Agoura Hills Public Library. Members also receive our monthly newsletter which is circulated by email.

2007 dues are \$25.00 for a single membership and \$30.00 for a household unit. To join, please send appropriate amount in check made out to JGSCV and addressed to Helene Rosen at 28912 Fountainwood St., Agoura Hills, CA 91301. Obtain new membership or renewal forms on our website at www.jgscv.org by selecting the membership button.

NEWLY CONSOLIDATED CATALOG

The Center for Jewish History in New York City has announced the availability of a new online catalog reflecting the holdings of its constituency. The combined library and archives collections of the American Jewish Historical Society, American Sephardi Federation, Leo Baeck Institute, Yeshiva University Museum, YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, and Center for Jewish History Genealogy Institute may now be searched via a link from the Center's home page, www.cjh.org.

THOUSAND OAKS LIBRARY RESOURCE

The Brimhall Thousand Oaks Library has a subscription to the ProQuest Historical Los Angeles Times. This database is accessible remotely on your home computer if you have a Thousand Oaks Library Card. A Thousand Oaks Library card is obtainable for non- Thousand Oaks residents for \$70 per year per single card. This library maintains the holdings of the Conejo Valley Genealogical Society.

Brimhall Library
1401 East Janss Road
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
(805) 449-2660
www.toaks.org/library

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS..... Yad Vashem and Names Recovery Project

JGSCV is participating in a worldwide Name Recovery Project sponsored by Yad Vashem—to register names of Shoah victims. Yad Vashem in Jerusalem is the Jewish people's memorial to the murdered Six Million and symbolizes the ongoing confrontation with the rupture engendered by the Holocaust

"Yad Vashem, together with its partners, has collected and recorded the names and biographical details of half of the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis and their accomplices. Millions more still remain unidentified. It is our collective duty to persist until all their names are recovered. It is the final sign of respect we can show them."

Several years ago, the Yad Vashem database documenting the lives of over 3 million of the Jewish Shoah victims went online. Each Page of Testimony has been digitized, and translated into English—with the original Page visible online. Each Page of Testimony represents a single person who perished during the Shoah and is remembered by a surviving family member, friend or neighbor. Many names are still not remembered by having a Page of Testimony completed and submitted to Yad Vashem.

JGSCV is asking its members to volunteer to educate and share the Pages of Testimony forms with other organizations—your synagogue, Hadassah or B'nai Brith group- or other organizations where there would be interest in completing the Pages of Testimony. Adding just one name by submitting a Page of Testimony means that person is not forgotten!

You can access the Yad Vashem Website (<http://www.yadvashem.org/>) to research the names of those Shoah victims who perished. You can submit additional names at:

http://www.yadvashem.org/lwp/workplace/IY_HO_N>Welcome.

You can download the form to submit the pages of testimony at http://www1.yadvashem.org/download/index_download.html

In addition to performing a "mitzvah" for those who died in the Shoah, you may find a new genealogical connection by making contact with those who have already submitted names.

Anyone interested in volunteering to contact Jewish organizations in our community please get in touch with Jan Meisels Allen at president@slc2007.org.

Newspaper Resources Available In Our Local Libraries

Jan Meisels Allen

Historical newspapers are great sources for genealogical research with respect to articles of the times, obituaries, advertisements and more. We are fortunate that we can access historical newspapers at several of our community resources. Some of the resources in the ProQuest "National Newspapers" are "full text" while others are abstracts.

Ventura County Library System

ProQuest Historical newspapers for the Los Angeles Times (1881-1985) and the New York Times (1851-2003) and 350 other newspapers—both national and regional—in "ProQuest Newsstand" from the 1980's forward, and America's Newspapers (Newsbank) with 5 California newspapers, including the Ventura County Star (1997- current) are available through the Ventura County Library System. Additionally, there is access to both ProQuest Northern California and Southern California Newsstand, which includes many California area newspapers. They are accessible remotely by using your Ventura County Library card. <http://www.vencolib.org/>

All of the libraries of The Ventura County Library System share the same computer system for databases and resources. You need a Ventura County Library Card to access the databases from your home computer. You do not need to live in one of the Ventura County communities to obtain a free library card. The 15 branches of the County Library are:

Avenue Library in Ventura

Camarillo Library

Fillmore Library

Historical Museum Library (Ventura)

Miners Oaks Library (Ojai)

Oak Park Library

Oak View Library

Ojai Library

Piru Library

Ray D. Preuter Library (Port Hueneme)

Saticoy Library

Simi Valley Library

Albert H. Soliz Library (Saticoy)

H.P. Wright Library (Ventura)

E. P. Foster Public Library (Ventura)

Los Angeles Public Library

Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL)

630 West Fifth St. (between Grand and Flower, downtown)

Los Angeles, California 90071-2097

There are 71 branches plus the main library. The closest LAPL to the Conejo Valley and Ventura County is the Woodland Hills branch located at 22200 Ventura Blvd Woodland Hills. (818) 226-0017. There is no charge for a library card. <http://www.lapl.org/>

The LAPL system offers ProQuest Historical newspaper for the Los Angeles Times (1881-1985). In addition, they have a subscription to "ProQuest Newsstand" which offers hundreds of newspapers- both leading national and regional papers. These may be accessed remotely—from your home computer—by logging in with your LAPL library card. LAPL also has a subscription to the New York Times from the 1980s forward- but must be accessed at a branch of the library.

County of Los Angeles Public Library (COLA)

There are 88 branch libraries and bookmobiles. The two closest branches in our area are:

Agoura Hills Library

29901 Ladyface Court

Agoura Hills, CA 91301

(818) 889-2278

Westlake Village Library

31220 Oak Crest Drive

Westlake Village, CA 91361

(818) 865-9230

The Agoura Hills Library specializes in Holocaust Studies and maintains our JGSCV Library. COLA has a subscription to the LA Times from 1986 forward. Additionally, they subscribe to ProQuest National (27) newspapers (not historical newspapers), with many of the subscriptions from the late 1980s and 1990s to current. The subscription includes the full text of nine national U.S. newspapers from 1986 to current: Atlanta Constitution Journal, Barron's, Boston Globe, Christian Science Monitor, Denver Post, New York Times, USA Today, Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post. These newspapers can be accessed remotely with a LA County Library Card (www.colapublib.org)



**Learn About the National Archives
Come to the Jewish Genealogical Society of the
Conejo Valley and Ventura County***
(* and surrounding areas)

Sunday, February 11, 2007 2:00 p.m. -4:00 p.m.
at Temple Adat Elohim
2420 E.Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks

**"Lesser Known Resources at the National Archives
and Records Administration"**

Randy Thompson, Archivist at the National Archives,
Laguna Niguel, CA

Mr. Thompson will provide an introduction to some little known genealogical resources available at NARA, including immigration records, Federal court records, as well as a variety of military records. Also covered in the presentation will be NARA's online resources, the Archival Research Catalog (ARC) and Access to Archival Databases (AAD). NARA is a major resource for your genealogical research.

Mr. Thompson has been employed with the National Archives and Records Administration-Pacific Region since 1995. As an archivist, he is responsible for the accessioning, preservation, arrangement, and description of historically valuable records created by the Federal government.

Meeting co-sponsored with Temple Adat Elohim
There is no charge to attend the meeting.
Anyone may join JGSCV.

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

Future JGSCV Meeting Dates
All Meetings are held at Temple Adat Elohim
2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks

March 18, 2007: Joel Weintraub, "Navigating the New York and Federal Censuses with Fewer Tears." Discussing how the One-Step program created by Steve Morse is of critical help to genealogists in researching censuses and other databases.

April 15, 2007: "There Once Was A Town" — award winning PBS documentary on a visit to an ancestral shtetl. In 1941 Nazis invaded the small town of Eishyshok, Poland (now Lithuania), and brutally murdered nearly all 3,500 Jewish residents. Fifty-six years after the massacre, four survivors and their families return to their childhood home led by Israeli scholar Yaffa Eliach return "to awaken old memories and confront long-silenced ghosts."



E-BAY CAN BE A RESOURCE FOR GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH

Werner L. Frank

The contemporary photo of the half-timbered structure on the above left had been the only clue to what has been called the “Old Synagogue” in my once German hometown of Eppingen, located in the state of Baden-Württemberg. It was built in 1772 and served the local Jewish community until 1873 when a “New Synagogue” structure was dedicated. The older building had recently been a multi-dwelling of apartments located on three levels. The town’s historians conjectured that the Jewish place of worship would have been on the second floor of the house.

Suddenly, the mystery of the building’s utilization as a house of worship was resolved through the discovery of a postcard that was offered for sale on E-Bay [see upper right]. This e-marketplace in old post cards offered an 1898-stamped collector’s item which had the caption “Gruss aus Eppingen” [Greetings from Eppingen] with four illustrations: overview of the town, photo of the old and new synagogue, and a picture of the building where the Jewish school met. The lower left corner of the card made explicit the appearance of the old synagogue during the end of the nineteenth century, showing elongated windows stretching from the second to the third story. The synagogue must have occupied two stories.

This sensational find provided the necessary clues which will permit the town to restore the building as a Jewish heritage center. For me the revelation of the building’s characteristics added another notch to my ongoing family research.

- We welcome contributions from our members regarding their genealogical research experience. Submit your story to this Newsletter at newslettereditor@jgscv.org .

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS: Judy Karta, Nancy Nee, Jack Snader, Pearl Salomon

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