

# VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

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

Volume 4, Issue 7

April 2009

## President's Letter

Sonia and David Hoffman treated members and attendees to a very erudite presentation on "Town-Wide Research: Bringing Your Shtetl to Life". David is the founder of the Jewish Family History Foundation and president of the Litvak SIG while Sonia coordinates the Grand Duchy Project of the Jewish Family History Foundation and is past president of JGSLA. Access their handout on the JGSCV website under meetings, prior and meeting date.

The focus of their research was Ariogala, Lithuania. The techniques used can be applied to any shtetl. Ariogala was in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the geographic area that today encompasses Lithuania, eastern Poland, Belarus and northern Ukraine. Documents that the Hoffman's used in their research included candle taxpayers lists, poll tax lists, revision lists and other documents they located at the Kaunas (Lithuania) archives. This demonstrated that one could learn much about their ancestors and ancestral town from documents other than vital records, especially when

suggested checking for historical documents in museums and local universities as well as archives. David demonstrated how he was able to trace his family back before surnames were required by using naming patterns in the same locales. For more information on Grand Duchy of Lithuania, go to: [www.jewishfamilyhistory.org](http://www.jewishfamilyhistory.org).

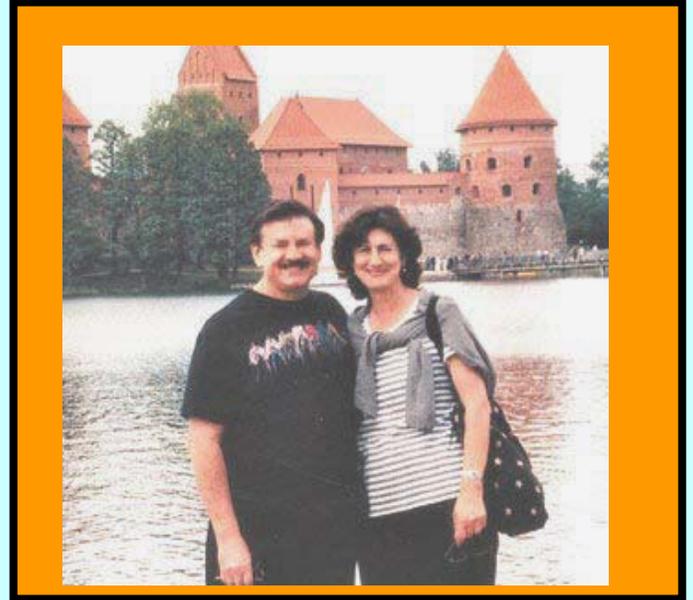
JGSCV member Sheldon Winston commented to me how he had read an excellent book by Father Patrick Desbois, "*The Holocaust by Bullets: A Priest's Journey to Uncover the Truth Behind the Murder of 1.5 million Jews*,"—it just so happens that Father Desbois is the keynote speaker at this year's IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy! Please go to [www.philly2009.org](http://www.philly2009.org) to register. See page 4 for more on the conference.

I hope you're planning on attending our exclusive research afternoon at the Los Angeles Regional Family History Center (LARFHC) on Sunday, April 5. Only current JGSCV dues-paid members will be admitted that afternoon and we will be the only ones there. The LARFHC will be closing in April 26 for renovations for approximately six months—therefore, this is an ideal time to go. If you haven't renewed or joined as yet, you can do so at the door. Please read the suggestions for preparing for your trip on page 5.

I just had the privilege to speak on How to Begin Your Genealogy to the Channel Islands PC Users Group. If you know a group in our area that would like a speaker on How to Begin Your Genealogy let me know—we are always interested in meeting with other groups as some of their members may be interested in joining JGSCV! The larger we grow, the stronger we become.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Family History Center on April 5<sup>th</sup>!

Jan Meisels Allen



**SEE PAGE 3 FOR MEETING NOTICES**

## 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 special shelves at the Agoura Hills Public Library. Members also receive our monthly newsletter which is circulated by email.

2009 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, addressed to Helene Rosen at 28912 Fountainwood St., Agoura Hills, CA 91301. Obtain new renewal/membership forms on our website at [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org) by selecting the membership button.

## CHICAGO WEBSITE RESOURCES

Recently, some new Chicago-related genealogical related resources have come online:

The Spertus Library has digitized issues of the "Chicago Sentinel," the weekly Jewish publication (1911 - 1949): <http://hannah.spertus.edu:8881/R>

The index built from the digitized images is quite good, compared to the indexing done for New York Times, LA Times or Chicago Tribune. However, the hits are not displayed in context: you must download the entire issue, which can be quite large.

Several holdings of the Newberry Library have been digitized and posted on the Internet Archive: <http://tinyurl.com/NewberryLibAtIA>

These cover a period from the 1870s to about 1920.

In addition, there are several other useful digitized Chicago resources:

Chicago City Directories (1869-1915):

<http://tinyurl.com/ChicagoDirectoriesAtIA>

Chicago Guidebooks:

<http://tinyurl.com/ChicagoGuidesAtIA>

Chicago pictorial works (nice historic photos):

<http://tinyurl.com/ChicagoPictorialsAtIA>

David Oseas

## YIDDISH BOOK CENTER

The National Yiddish Book Center's Steven Spielberg Digital Library is now online at the Internet Archive: [www.archive.org/details/nationalyiddishbookcenter](http://www.archive.org/details/nationalyiddishbookcenter)

David Oseas

## Riverside Cemetery Is Eighth New York-area Jewish Cemetery To Go Online

Riverside Cemetery in Saddle Brook, New Jersey has become the eighth Jewish cemetery in the New York City area to go online. It may be the first that is genealogy friendly—it has a "Genealogy Search" button on its home page. The site is located at <http://www.riversidecemetery.org/>.

Searching requires last name or initial portion of last name. Optionally first name or initial portion of first name can be included. Providing year of death is another option. Results are name, year of death and a record locator number. Clicking on this number generates an e-mail request to the cemetery for further information. Unfortunately this site was discovered today, Sunday, so it is unknown what additional information is provided.

Other cemeteries in the New York City area with online burial information are:

[www.mountararatcemetery.com](http://www.mountararatcemetery.com)

[www.mountcarmelcemetery.com](http://www.mountcarmelcemetery.com)

[www.mounthebroncemetery.com](http://www.mounthebroncemetery.com)

[www.mountjudah.com](http://www.mountjudah.com)

[www.mountlebanoncemetery.com](http://www.mountlebanoncemetery.com)

[www.mountmoriahcemeteryofnewjersey.org](http://www.mountmoriahcemeteryofnewjersey.org)

[www.mountzioncemetery.com](http://www.mountzioncemetery.com)

## CANADIAN RESEARCH

Those researching their Canadian roots may find a recent addition to the Library and Archives of Canada of interest — a new on-line searchable database on Census of Canada 1891. The database is available at [www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/census-1891/index-e.html](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/census-1891/index-e.html)

Information was collected for Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, British Columbia and the North-West Territories (which at the time covered much of modern-day Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, northern Ontario, northern Quebec, Labrador, Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut). You can access digitized images of original census returns which list the name, age, country or province of birth, nationality, religion, and occupation of Canada's residents at the time of the 1891 Census.

## GOOGLE LANGUAGE TRANSLATION

For over forty different language translation aids to or from English, see <http://translate.google.com>



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

The JGSCV will hold a meeting, on Sunday, April 5, 2009 at the Los Angeles Regional Family History Center, 10741 Santa Monica Blvd. West Los Angeles (on grounds of the LDS Temple) from 1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Parking is free.

## The Topic:

### Assisted Research Afternoon at the L.A. Regional Family History Center (FHC)

Experienced JGSCV members and Family History Center volunteers will be available to help members get the most out of the L.A. Family History Center's resources, including computer assistance with many popular genealogical databases including Ancestry.com (full access), Footnote.com, Heritage Quest, World Vital Records, Godfrey Memorial Library on-line resources and more! The FHC has an extensive collection of microfilms, including U.S. and international census records, Eastern European and other international and domestic vital records, maps and gazetteers. Bring your research documents with you and bring a flash drive if you want to download electronic images of online images. Hard copying is also available.

Barbara Algaze, volunteer at the LAFHC, and librarian for the JGSLA, will give an introduction to the resources at the L.A. Regional Family History Center.

This meeting is open only to current dues-paid members of JGSCV. Anyone may join at the door. Annual dues are \$25 for an individual and \$30 for a family. JGSCV is open to any one interested in researching their Jewish roots. 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.

For more information contact [information@JGSCV.org](mailto:information@JGSCV.org)

See: [www.JGSCV.org](http://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

- May 3, 2009: *The World Was Ours, The Jewish Legacy of Vilna*: A documentary film focusing on pre World War II life in this vibrant city known as the "Jerusalem of Lithuania. A program presented to commemorate Yom Hashoah Day (April 21, 2009)
- June 7, 2009: Genealogy in the Round: Share Your Successes, Failures, Artifacts and Brick Walls.
- July 12, 2009: "Facebook: The Ins and Outs of the On-Line Social Networking Way to Find Relatives and Others" Michael Gallop

# The International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies

And

## The Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Philadelphia

Are proud to co-host the



### 29th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy Philadelphia 2-7 August 2009

#### SHERATON CITY CENTER HOTEL-PHILADELPHIA

*How-to Genealogy & Family History Sessions, newcomer to expert  
Computer classes, beginner to advances  
Research Resource Room on-site  
Jewish Films  
Archivists from different countries  
Tours of Jewish Philadelphia  
Philadelphia historical sights  
& much more...*

**To register and find out more, please go to:**

**[www.philly2009.org](http://www.philly2009.org)**

The International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies has announced that registration is now open for the 29th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy to be held in Philadelphia from August 2-7. It is also possible to make hotel reservations at this time from the conference site at <http://www.philly2009.org>.

Conference registration rates are:

- Early Bird Registration (through April 30, 2009): Full-\$250; Companion-\$150
- Regular Registration (May 1-July 24, 2009: Full-\$295; Companion-\$195
- On-Site Registration (after July 25, 2009: Full-\$325; Companion \$225.
- Daily Registration: Sunday (including Opening Reception: \$95; Monday-Thursday; \$75 per day; Friday morning: \$40.

To be eligible for companion registration, both parties must reside in the same household.

Are you artistically inclined? Submit a poster for Jewish Genealogy Month Poster Contest! The IAJGS is sponsoring the Jewish Genealogy Month Poster contest. The winning poster or flyer in this year's Jewish Genealogy Month Annual Poster/Flyer Competition will be unveiled in August at the 29th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in Philadelphia. The artist creating the winning entry will receive free registration for that conference. The theme this year will be "From One Generation to the Next: Passing Down our Family History in the Oral Tradition." There are certain criteria. For the rules go to <http://www.iajgs.org/jgmonth.html>. If you are interested please contact Jan Meisels Allen ASAP ([president@jgscv.org](mailto:president@jgscv.org)) as the deadline line for submissions is April 1<sup>st</sup>.

## Preparing For the Exclusive Research Afternoon at the Los Angeles Regional Family Center

JGSCV members are privileged to have an exclusive research afternoon at the Los Angeles Regional Family Center (LARFHC). This meeting is open only to 2009 current-paid members. Anyone may join or renew their JGSCV membership by paying their dues at the door. The LARFHC is closing on April 25 for at least 6 months of renovations so this is an opportunity to visit and receive assistance with your personal genealogy that is not to be missed! Car-pooling is best, so ask your friends from JGSCV about sharing -JGSCV itself is not putting together any car pools.

### Directions:

The LARFHC is located at: 10741 Santa Monica Blvd in Los Angeles on the grounds of the LDS (Mormon) Temple. From the 405 freeway get off at Santa Monica Blvd. and go east to Manning Ave. Turn north on Manning Ave, make the first left into the LDS Temple compound, proceed right until reaching the LARFHC. Park along the fence. There is construction going on but on Sunday there should not be a problem. The library is on the lower floor of the FHC—there are stairs and an elevator from the first floor.

LARFHC has the largest holdings of any branch FHC! Take a look at their website: <http://www.larfhc.org/> for a listing of the resources that are available. In addition to microfilms, microfiche, maps and books, they have about 60 computers (PCs not Macs) that have access to many genealogical sites at no charge that are available on their computers! These sites include: Ancestry.com (full institution subscription); CastleGarden.org; Stevemorse.org, EllisIsland.org, Footnote.com, Godfrey Memorial Library (godfrey.org), Heritage Quest/ProQuest (Heritagequestonline.com), WorldVitalRecords.com and more! Note: The LARFHC is no longer ordering microfilms or microfiches from Salt Lake City due to the impending closure at the end of the month. The microfilms and microfiche available at the LARFHC will be available for use.

At 1:30 p.m. there will be a presentation on an introduction to the Los Angeles Regional Family History Center by Barbara Algaze, volunteer at the LARFHC. In addition to Barbara, there will be several volunteers from the LARHC to help you with the resources to help you to do your research.

To make the best use of this experience you should prepare in advance and take your research papers with you:

Copies of your family group sheets, documents, family time lines, and family trees!

Prioritize your research lists: Foreign and state censuses, city directories, vital records (birth, marriage or death records), maps, naturalization records, WWI and WWII draft registration records.

For traditional methodology, bring: Paper pads, post-it notes, pens, pencils and a magnifying glass.

For electronic methodology, bring: Laptop computer, genealogy program, USB storage drives, writable CD Rom, digital camera.

If you are planning to use the foreign microfilms, remember the records are in their native language. Unless you are knowledgeable in the language, it is best to have some key-finding words in that language such as male, female, birth, death, marriage, wife, husband, father, and mother. While there are some foreign language dictionaries available at the LARFHC, the more you prepare in advance, the more your limited time will be used to its best advantage. Many records are handwritten, are in chronological rather than alphabetical order, and may not be indexed. Bring a magnifying glass to help you read the handwriting.

The library provides many research helps in the form of word lists, writing examples, etc. Professionally printed research outlines, word lists and publications can be purchased at the library. These range in price from \$1.25 to \$4.50, some are free. Nearly all can be downloaded from the website, some at no cost. <http://tinyurl.com/2bk6z2>

An extra feature at the LARFHC are the availability of permanent libraries of genealogy societies including our sister society, JGSLA. The books are available for anyone to use. Other genealogy societies also maintain their libraries at the LARFHC, and are available to any patron, these include the libraries of the Polish Genealogical Society of Southern CA, British Isles Family History Society, and Deutscher Verein (German group).

Remember, all books, microfilms, microfiche, maps, etc may only be used at the FHC-nothing is borrowable for taking out of the FHC.

There is a small lunchroom with vending machines. We don't know what/ if food will be available on a Sunday. If you want to bring a snack or lunch you may eat and drink ONLY in that designated area.

If you wish to print a document off a microfilm or microfiche reader it costs \$0.25 per page. Copies of documents made from copy machines are \$0.10 per page. It is best if you bring a supply of quarters and dimes for these machines as we will have limited change-making capabilities. As with the regular operating days, everyone's bags (attaché cases, pocketbooks, laptop carriers) will be inspected when leaving, as nothing may be taken from the library.

## New Additions to the JGSCV Traveling Library

Since our last report in September 2008's Newsletter the following books have been added to the JGSCV traveling library:

Ancestry's Red Book American State, County and Town Resources; Revised Edition ed. Alice Eichholz, Ancestry. 1992 (Category C)

Dictionary of Sephardic Surnames Including Christianized Jews: Conversos, Marranos, Italians, Berbers, and their History of Spain, Portugal and Italy. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Faiguenboim, Guilherme, Valadares, Paulo and Campagnano, Anna Rosa; Fraiha Publishers 2003 (Category A)

Discover Your Ancestors. Hugh Peskett, Arco Publishing 1978. (Category C)

From Memories to Manuscript: The Five-Step Method of Writing Your Life Story. Joan R. Neubauer, Ancestry 1994 (Category C)

Google Your Family Tree: Unlock the Hidden Power of Google, Daniel M. Lynch, FamilyLink.com 2008 (Category A)

Keeping Memories Alive: Portraits From the Past, Keeping Memoires Alive 1999 (Category C)

Mannie's Crowd: Emanuel Lowenstein Colorful Character of Old Los Angeles, Norton B. Stern California Jewish History III, Arthur H. Clark Company 1970. (Category C)

Mexican Jewry in the Land of the Aztecs: A Guide enlarged, revised 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Ira T. Lerner B.Costa-Amic, Mexico 1967 (Category B)

Secrecy and Deceit. The religion of the Crypto-Jews, David M. Gitlitz. The Jewish Publication Society 1996 (Category C)

They All Are Jews: From Moses to Einstein. Jordan Publishing Company 1951. (Category C)

The Census Book: A Genealogist's Guide to Federal Census Facts, Schedules and Indexes William Dollarhide, Heritage Quest 2000 (Category C)

Using Civilian Records for Genealogical Research in the National Archives, Washington DC Reference Information Paper 110 NARA Revised 2006.(Category C)

Once We Walked-Revised Edition. Sally Ann Sack, Avotaynu 2002 (Category A)

If you have genealogically relevant books that you would like to donate, please contact Jan Meisels Allen at [president@JGSCV.org](mailto:president@JGSCV.org). The books in the traveling library are categorized A, B, or C determining which come to which monthly meeting. All A books come to every meeting. Categories B and C alternate from one meeting to the next. A full list of all of our permanent and traveling library holdings may be found on the website: [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org).

We welcome new members: Bobbie Match, Rabbi Shimon and Carol Paskow, Alan N. Ringer, Annette Shniderman

## JGSCV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jan Meisels Allen, President

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

Stewart Bernstein, Member-at-large

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

Warren Blatt, Member Education

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

Debra Kay Blatt, Information Chairman

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

Dorothy Drilich, Secretary

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

Werner Frank, Newsletter Editor

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

Fred Land, Treasurer

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

Helene Rosen, Membership

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

Sharon Rosenthal, Member-at-large [sharon@jgscv.org](mailto:sharon@jgscv.org)

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Raya Sagi, Librarian: [librarian@jgscv.org](mailto:librarian@jgscv.org)

Frank Tessel, Cemetery Project: [frank@jgscv.org](mailto:frank@jgscv.org)

Mailing address: 6052 Hackers Lane, Agoura Hills, CA 91301

Phone: 818-889-6616

Website: [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org)

David Oseas, Webmaster: [webmaster@jgscv.org](mailto:webmaster@jgscv.org)