

# AUSTRALIAN JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY e-REPORT

[www.ajgs.org.au](http://www.ajgs.org.au)



**January, 2010**

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Between 1920 and 1950 the Australian Jewish community was changed forever, as large numbers of European Jews migrated here, before and after the Shoah. Most of their family members who had remained behind perished.

Since the 1950s relatives and friends of those who perished in the Shoah have submitted Pages of Testimony for them to Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. These pages recording the names and biographical details of, so far, three million Jews are now online. That leaves another three million victims who could have a similar memorial if those who remember them are able and willing to have their loved ones' names recorded for posterity. As one of our projects this year, we are offering to those who would like to submit the names of murdered relatives and friends the opportunity to do so, and will train a number of volunteers to assist them. Please contact us if you are interested at [president@ajgs.org.au](mailto:president@ajgs.org.au), or by post at AJGS Inc, P.O. Box 42, Lane Cove, NSW, 1595.

Another project for the Society has been initiated by our member Stuart Shaw, who has photographed all the memorial boards at his synagogue. If anyone else would like to record their local synagogue, please contact me.

We have had a successful year, with interesting talks by two of our members and a special workshop to access the Shoah Testimonies at the Sydney Jewish Museum. The one activity that I believe best expresses our *raison d'être* as a Society would be our regular Sunday workshops, as it is here that we give practical help to those wishing to research their Jewish ancestry. Although they are well attended, we realise that not all members are able to make the trip to Lindfield, so one of our events this year will be a workshop in the Eastern Suburbs.

Our resources are most ably managed by Past President Rieke Nash, whose purchases for the library continue to increase its value as a reference library. Many thanks to Rieke and Peter Nash and all members who have donated books and CD-ROMs during the year.

Our e-Report, edited by Miriam Shifreen, remains our main method of communication with our members and enables us to keep you up to date with developments in research. Thank you to all of you who have contributed articles – they are very much appreciated.

We have pleasure in welcoming new members Leonard Matthews and Barry Charlton.

Our sincere condolences to the families of Bob Beecher and Bob Shteinman who passed away recently.

Congratulations to member Diane Armstrong on winning first prize in the NSW Society of Women Writers' Biennial Fiction Award for her novel *Nocturne*. Diane was the guest of honour at the Polish Embassy in September at a function marking the anniversary of the outbreak of World War II. *Nocturne* is a story of the Second World War in Warsaw.

We are thrilled to be hosting two exciting events in the next two months: a talk by well-known British genealogist Todd Knowles (date tba) and an address by Dr Sallyann Amdur Sack-Pikus, guest speaker at our AGM, at the COA on Sunday 14th March.

### **Workshop Dates**

Sunday: February 7, February 28, March 28, May 9 (Note changes from 1st Sunday in month).

Monday: February 15, March 22, April 12, May 17.

### **Annual General Meeting Reminder**

Avotaynu Co-founder, Sallyann Amdur Sack-Pikus, will be our guest speaker at the AGM on Sunday 14 March 2010 at 2.30 p.m. at the COA, 25 Rowe Street, Woollahra. Those who heard her speak when she was here in 2006 will want to hear her again at the AGM, so keep this date free.

Jeannette Tsoulos

President

### **OUR JEWISH ROOTS**

#### **2nd AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON JEWISH GENEALOGY**

Hosted by the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Victoria) in association with the Makor Jewish Community Library to be held at Beth Weizmann Jewish Community Centre Melbourne, Australia Sunday 7, Monday 8 and Tuesday 9 March, at the Beth Weizmann Jewish Community Centre in South Caulfield. General enquiries should be directed to Allan Jankie, Conference Convener at [ajgs2010@gmail.com](mailto:ajgs2010@gmail.com). The registration fee of \$120 includes conference attendance, morning and afternoon tea, lunch (Sunday and Monday only) and the Sunday night cocktail party. Kosher catering will be provided.

This is an opportunity to meet others with similar research interests, share your latest findings, discover recent innovations in the field of genealogy, and become inspired by a range of distinguished local and international presenters. The registration form can be downloaded from the new website of the AJGS (Vic) [www.ajgs-vic.org.au](http://www.ajgs-vic.org.au). This outstanding website was designed and constructed by committee members, Debbie Jurblum and Kaye Quittner with technical help from Conrad Truscott. It is well worth visiting even though it is still work in progress.

### **THE FAMILY MYTH – A (NEAR) MISS**

Peter Arnold

My late mother, a Litvak born and bred in South Africa, used to tell me that she had an uncle, older than her father, who was the founder of a renowned Jewish dynasty in England. In 1887, Uncle Ephraim ZIV, the eldest brother in the family, had been sent, as a teenager, from the *shtetl* in Lithuania (*Kelem/Kelme*) to the city (*Shavel/Siauliai*) to bank the family business's takings. He had 'disappeared', presumably robbed and murdered, and the family had sat *shiva*. They apologised to the Tzar's recruiting officer for their deceased son's unavailability to serve his 25 years in the Russian army.

Not too many months passed before Ephraim turned up in Manchester, England. He soon married Sara SOFER, and they begat Israel Moses SIEFF in 1889, followed by Joseph, Miriam, Pauline and William. Israel, in turn, married Rebecca MARKS, the daughter of Michael MARKS and Hannah COHEN. Rebecca had an older brother, Simon MARKS. Simon and Israel became best friends and Simon married Israel's sister, Miriam. (By now, if you are an astute observer of English commercial entrepreneurship, you might be recognising some of these names.)

Simon's and Rebecca's father, Michael ('a Russian-born Polish refugee'), had opened a stall at the Leeds market in 1884, with all goods priced at one penny. He moved to a shop in Manchester in 1893, and had established 12 stores by 1894. Looking for a partner, he was referred to Thomas SPENCER, who, recognising the young man's business acumen, provided some capital. By 1903, Marks and Spencer had become a public company. Simon MARKS joined the board in 1911, as did Israel SIEFF in 1915. Simon, later Baron Marks of Broughton, became Chairman in 1916 and Israel Vice-Chairman in 1926. The rest is history.

In the mid-1950s, my mother, visiting one of their stores in London, was astonished to see an enormous portrait of one of her (six) brothers on the wall. In fact, it was probably a portrait of the then Chairman of

M&S. One of my 'Miss SIEFF' Johannesburg cousins, shopping at the M&S 'Liberty' store in London when on a holiday, and paying with her credit card, was startled by the sudden attention she received from the staff. The name ZIV was very common in the Pale of Settlement. Jews, of course, have lacked surnames for most of our existence, but the Tzar wanted both soldiers and taxes (special 'box' and candle taxes on Jews), so surnames became the way out of the 'Isaac ben Avraham, Avraham ben Isaac and then Isaac ben Avraham' confusion.

The Russian aristocracy were Francophones – Russian was for the peasants. The French for 'Jew' is 'juif', but how is that written in Cyrillic? And then, how is that transliterated back into our Roman alphabet? So 'juif' became 'zhiv' (as close as one can show it in our alphabet) and 'zhiv' became ZIV, with its many variations: ZIF, ZIFF, ZEFF, SIFF, SIEFF, SEEFF, SHIF, SIVE, SIV etc. - the list is almost endless. Many ZIVs lived in *Ragole/Ariogala*, in Lithuania. Amongst them was Joseph (*ben Ephraim*), born in 1800. His sons included Noftel Chaim and Reuben. Our myth became a miss when first Reuben, and then Noftel, each produced a first son, both boys being named for their late grandfather. *Ergo*: two Ephraims, just 12 years apart in age. The Ephraim who 'disappeared' in 1887, was Ephraim *ben* Noftel Chaim, not Ephraim *ben* Reuben. He was my *zeide*'s first cousin, not his older brother. And my connection with the late, four-times married, illustrious World War II British soldier, businessman and Zionist, Lord Marcus SIEFF of Brimpton? Third cousins.

My thanks to my 'perhaps' cousin, Oscar FRIEDMAN, in Israel, who, trying to find his maternal SIEFF connection with Marcus, has tracked down much of my genealogy. Oscar's family in Tel Aviv were startled, when we met, by my resemblance to his mother's brother. Oscar, although discovering my connection to Marcus, has not yet found his own. I appreciate the details added by Micaela SIEFF, Marcus's niece, who also lives in Israel.

## **CZECH RESEARCH**

Daniela Torsh  
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### **Conscriptions (1850 – 1914) – Applications For Residence Permit Of Prague Police Headquarters**

Recently I made a huge discovery using this database. For 30 years I have been wondering about the siblings of my great grandfather, Jakob POLLAK, born in the Czech Republic in a small town called Běstín in 1861. The family legend was that he was one of 15 brothers and sisters but because the family name POLLAK is so common, I have never been able to make any progress on this subject. Jakob was my mother's grandfather and a central character in the family story I am trying to write. He set up a shop in Prague which prospered until he was sent to Terezín (Theresienstadt) the concentration camp north of Prague in the summer of 1942 where he died.

This database is slowly being digitised by the Czech National Archives on [www.nacr.cz/english/conscriptions.aspx](http://www.nacr.cz/english/conscriptions.aspx) and they have finally reached the P's.

I discovered that Jakob was the youngest of nine children of Isak and Elisabeth who lived in Prague from 1871 and not in the countryside as I had thought. So now I have a treasure trove of discovery ahead of me to trace his siblings and their families and to find the graves of his parents. Death dates are included in the document as well as towns of birthplace and year of birth. Also occupations for the parents are given.

I urge all members with Czech roots to check out this database.

## **AUSTRALIAN NEWSPAPERS ONLINE**

[//newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/home](http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/home)

This site continues to have valuable information added even though there are many years still to come online and the search results can be limited by problems with the scanning technique (OCR). The website lists the newspapers and their available dates and it is worthwhile experimenting with it.

While testing out the site, entries were unexpectedly found for the '*Hawkesbury River Tragedy*' in 1936 in the Canberra and Melbourne papers although the event happened in New South Wales. It was also interesting to

see in the Sydney Sun-Herald in 1954 that Hakoah soccer player Peter Nash (our member) scored an own goal against Sydney Austral!

### ***1. Sydney Morning Herald***

The first digitised issues of the Sydney Morning Herald are now available for the Sydney Herald 1831-1842

Sydney Morning Herald 1842-1852

Issues from 1852 - 1954 will be made available each week.

In early 2010 The Sunday Herald 1949-1953 will also become available.

### ***2. The Argus (Melbourne)***

The Argus (and its previous title the Melbourne Argus) from 1846 - 1945 complete and available online. The remaining 10 years (1945-1954) of the Argus will be made available in 2010 (mid to end of year).

### **LVIV (LEMBERG) HOUSE & STREET PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT**

Gesher Galicia announces a new resource for Lviv/Lvov/Lemberg researchers:

"The Lviv House & Street Photography Project" is now live at:

[http://www.jewishgen.org/galicia/projects/lviv\\_photography\\_project/](http://www.jewishgen.org/galicia/projects/lviv_photography_project/)

Last spring Dick Koops, a teacher who was born in Assen, The Netherlands, currently working in Moormerland Germany, generously volunteered to do work during his summer in Lviv, Ukraine on behalf of Gesher Galicia. Many of our members had expressed a desire to have photographs taken of the places where they, or their ancestors, once lived and so this photography project was born. For four weeks in July, Mr. Koops walked the streets of Lviv, Ukraine (formerly Lemberg, Galicia) in search of the streets, lanes and pathways our ancestors once walked.

These photos are listed in alphabetical order (from A to Z) according to street name, with the address provided. In some cases there are interior and street views as well and more than one house is included. There is a special folder for the Jewish hospital.

These photos can be downloaded to your computer, but can only be used for personal purposes as Mr. Koops holds the copyright. If you want to add a comment about the house (especially the age of the building or the identity and year of who lived there) please email me this information and also add it as a comment on Flickr via the link that has been provided.

Eventually we will incorporate this information into a searchable database, so others may benefit. In this way you may discover "neighbours" (and possibly other relatives) of your ancestors. There were many of you who actually lived in these buildings before and after the war and your stories are important to us.

We also plan to create an interactive map of Lviv, overlaying old maps on new maps, with click-able links for these photos, along with details about the residents of this community over time. More details on this project, including Mr. Koops contact information, is provided on our website. Click the URL above, or go to our home page at [www.GesherGalicia.org](http://www.GesherGalicia.org) and scroll down for the link.

Pamela Weisberger  
President, Gesher Galicia  
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### **RESEARCH IN ARGENTINA**

#### **Immigration Records in Argentina**

[www.cemla.com/home.php](http://www.cemla.com/home.php)

CEMLA (Centro de Estudios Migratorios LatinoAmericanos = Center for Latinamerican Migration Studies ). They have digitalized the immigration databases of the National Migration Direction. You can check online if the surname you are looking for is in their database. Then you can proceed as follows: The CEMLA Data

Base contains information of passenger and immigrant arrival at the port of Buenos Aires between 1882 and 1930. Available information contains: Family name, first name, country of birth, marital status, age at arrival, profession, religion, port of shipment, ship's name, date of arrival.

The access to the museum is free and there you can consult personally the database (there's an employee to whom you request the different names and search for you).

The research is done personally (no email, fax or internet) and it costs about 2 pesos (50 US cents) per name researched.

Ariel PARKANSKY

<http://www.thefamilytree.com.ar>

**The Argentinean Jewish Community Association** is called Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA). Its Internet site is <http://www.amia.org.ar>. The site includes burials at four cemeteries in the city of Buenos Aires. The majority of Jews in Argentina lived and now live in this city. The database is not complete. Some names may not appear, especially older burials. AMIA does have the names of those not appearing.

**Argentinean Online telephone directory** is located at <http://www.teexplorer.com.ar>.

### **From NU? WHAT'S NEW? - THE E-ZINE OF JEWISH GENEALOGY FROM AVOTAYNU**

Volume 10, Number 22 | November 1, 2009 Editor: Gary Mokotoff,

### **FamilySearch Indexing Project to Top 325 Million Names**

It is expected that by the end of 2009, FamilySearch's more than 100,000 volunteers will have indexed in excess of 325 million names during the past three years. By comparison, in 2006, a few thousand volunteers indexed only 11 million names. At that rate, Paul Nauta, FamilySearch public affairs manager, expects that 500 million names will be transcribed by the end of 2010. FamilySearch is the genealogy arm of the Church of Jesus Christ of Later-day Saints (Mormons).

The efforts of FamilySearch demonstrate the great importance of volunteering to help index databases for Jewish genealogy. JewishGen has numerous indexing projects in progress. For a list of databases currently at the JewishGen site, go to <http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/>. Most are works-in-progress. Help grow these databases by volunteering.

### **"Holocaust by Bullets" Resource Center Opens in Paris**

Yahad-In Unum, the association chaired by Father Patrick Desbois, and the Sorbonne University have opened a new Resource Center in Paris dedicated to advancing the research on Nazi mass executions of Jews and Roma/Gypsies in Eastern Europe during World War II, sometimes referred to as "The Holocaust by Bullets." Father DesBois was the keynote speaker at the annual Jewish genealogy conference held in Philadelphia last August. The Resource Center will provide researchers access to Yahad-In Unum's investigations, including video testimony collected in the field, books about the Holocaust in Eastern Europe written in different languages and archival material, including that provided by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. The video stored at the Resource Center will include more than 1,100 testimonials of those who witnessed the killings in the Ukraine and Belarus. The collection will be accessible both at the Paris-based Resource Center and at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. Additional information can be found at <http://www.holocaustbybullets.com/en/about-yahad-in-unum/%E2%80%9C%9D-resource-center-opens-in-paris/>.

### **TRANSLATIONS ONLINE**

Yiddish has been added to the languages available for online translation on Google.

<http://translate.google.com>

Also try the Steve Morse website at [www.stevemorse.org](http://www.stevemorse.org)

Another site to help with transcribing old German script is [www.suetterlinschrift.de/Lese/Namen\\_schreiben.htm](http://www.suetterlinschrift.de/Lese/Namen_schreiben.htm)

### **MUSEUM OF FAMILY HISTORY**

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

Steve Lasky continues to add to his virtual family history site, The Museum of Family History and checking it out occasionally is worthwhile.

### **POGROMS IN THE UKRAINE IN 1919**

The book about these pogroms, written by Elias Heifetz in 1921, *The Slaughter of the Jews in the Ukraine in 1919*, New York: Seltzer can be downloaded. It is a general history of the 1919 Ukrainian pogroms. In 1921 Heifetz had presided or was presiding over the All-Ukrainian Relief Committee for the Victims of the Pogroms, operating under the Red Cross auspices. You can find the book online at the Harvard University website

<http://ocp.hul.harvard.edu/immigration/outsidelink.html/http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL:933117>  
or the Shorter version:<http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL:933117>

### **IAJGS WEBSITE NOVEMBER 2009 UPDATE**

We have published on our website the November 2009 issue of ECHO (<http://iajgs.org/echo/echo.htm>), where Peter Lande, from the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, wrote an article to assist genealogists with their Holocaust research. He explains some of the overlooked resources at the USHMM, Yad Vashem and ITS and how they can be accessed and he would be happy to grant you permission to print his article in your newsletters or journals.

Daniel Horowitz

IAJGS Board Member / Webmaster

### **DNA SUCCESS STORIES**

<http://jewishgen.blogspot.com/2009/11/dna-success-story.html>

On Friday, Ann Rabinowitz (assistant blog coordinator) posted the first of what will become regularly posted DNA success stories on the JewishGen blog. These stories will offer family researchers encouragement and greater understanding of DNA testing, which has become a popular part of the genealogical research world since its inception. To view the article, please visit

Avraham Groll

[AGroll@mjhny.org](mailto:AGroll@mjhny.org)

Administrator of JewishGen

Museum of Jewish Heritage - A Living Memorial to the Holocaust

### **MUSEUM OF THE HISTORY OF POLISH JEWS**

[www.sztetl.org.pl/lang=en](http://www.sztetl.org.pl/lang=en)

This website provides background historical data for many of the towns in Poland where Jews once lived. The information for each town varies depending on the resources still available but the English version helps to overcome the language difficulties of researching Polish resources. This site is a must for anyone researching Polish towns.

### **LATVIAN JEWISH ENCYCLOPEDIA**

[www.shamir.lv](http://www.shamir.lv)

The Jewish community in Riga, Latvia is compiling a Latvian Jewish Encyclopaedia. The Executive Director, Victoria Shaldove is keen to add entries for Jews who originated in Latvia, but who emigrated to other parts of the world. Contact her at [shamir@apollo.lv](mailto:shamir@apollo.lv)

### **EARLY JEWISH LIFE IN THE SOUTHERN USA**

[www.lib.unc.edu/apop/sitemap.html](http://www.lib.unc.edu/apop/sitemap.html)

A fascinating website, *A Portion of the People: 300 Years of Southern Jewish Life* was created by the University of North Carolina. Both Sephardic and Ashkenazi families are featured.

### **THE DUNERA BOYS EXHIBITION**

[www.nla.gov.au/exhibitions/](http://www.nla.gov.au/exhibitions/)

The 70th Anniversary of the arrival of the HMT *Dunera* with its cargo of German and Austrian Jewish internees is being celebrated with an exhibition at the National Library of Australia, Canberra from 12 February, 2010.

### **LOCATING PEOPLE IN ISRAEL**

//english.b144.co.il/Default.aspx

### **AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL ROLLS**

[www.ancestry.com.au](http://www.ancestry.com.au)

Australian Electoral Rolls to 1954 are now available online at Ancestry.com

### **ENGLISH CURRENCY CONVERTER**

[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/)

This site helps to understand the value of English pounds in the past and its buying power.

### **NEW ADDITIONS TO OUR LIBRARY**

The latest publication, *Jewish Migration to South Africa. Passenger Lists from the UK 1890-1905 (Vol 1), 1906-1930 (Vol 2)* edited by Saul Issroff, 2008 is an addition to the earlier publication, *Jewish Migration to South Africa. The records of the Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter* published in 2006. The latest can be ordered from [janine.blumberg@uct.ac.za](mailto:janine.blumberg@uct.ac.za).

While this is a most useful new reference for our library with its lists of passenger's name, age, occupation, date of departure and ship's name, there are those unavoidable transcription errors that seem to creep into most databases of this type. For example, a 'Fergil' should have been 'Israel' and 'French, aged 37' was actually 'Frensch, aged 30'. For those members who can't make it to a workshop, we are happy to do a look-up for you. Contact [president@ajgs.org.au](mailto:president@ajgs.org.au) with your information.

Another interesting publication that has been added to our library, is a collection of stories from the members of the Sydney Child Holocaust Survivors Group. *The Words To Remember It*, Scribe Publications, 2009. There is a moving introduction by Caroline Jones, AO to the 30 individual stories of the war-time experiences of Jewish children. Four of the contributors are members of our Society. Each story is different, each is moving and as Caroline Jones says "*These are stories to remind us always that the price of liberty is, indeed, eternal vigilance, by all the people, on behalf of all the people*".

### **Newsletters in our Library**

We receive a number of very interesting newsletters from other Genealogical societies, so when you visit our library, ask to see what's new in our collection.

### **30th IAJGS CONFERENCE, LOS ANGELES, July 11-16, 2010**

Click on [www.jgsla2010.com](http://www.jgsla2010.com) to check out the latest. This conference promises to be a worthwhile one especially as it is probably the closest for travelling from Australia.

### **THE AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH STUDIES**

is holding its next conference in Sydney on February 14 and 15, 2010. Speakers will be attending from interstate and overseas. Bookings can be made at the AAJS website <http://www.aajs.org.au> .

**Hope you have made some interesting discoveries over the holiday period, and perhaps find time to write that story you've been meaning to share with our members. Remember we welcome updates on your research, new discoveries and new finds.**

**Miriam Shifreen**

**Editor**

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