KOSHER KOALA

Newsletter of the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society

www.ajgs.org.au

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Restored Grave of Samuel Shannon (see p.2)   *Photo: Sylvia Deutsch*

President's Report

The Annual Conference of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) is being held in Paris this year, starting on 15th July. These conferences take place in various parts of the world and attract hundreds of eager participants. A few of our members will be attending, including two with North African ancestry. The Conference coincides with the 50th anniversary of the coming to France of 140,000 Algerian Jews after Algeria gained independence. These Jews and their descendants now make up the bulk of the French Jewish community.

I recently watched the documentary *The Forgotten Refugees*, which tells the story of the million or so Jews living in North Africa and the Middle East who were forced to flee their homes after the establishment of the State of Israel. Though familiar with the history of European Jewry, I knew much less about the Mizrahi or Oriental Jews, the size of their communities and the extent of the persecution they had suffered. Their settlement in those lands extends back almost three millennia, greatly pre-dating the Arab invasion. Genealogically speaking, research opportunities in that area are patchy, so it will be interesting to see if new information emerges from the Conference. We have pre-ordered a DVD of the conference lectures; this will be available for access at our workshops in a month or so.

Jeannette Tsoulos
President

New Members

We extend a warm welcome to new member George Fisher.

COOMA GRAVE REDEDICATION

Sylvia Deutsch
with thanks to Earle Hoffman OAM and Margaret Beadman OAM for their research for this report

A group from Canberra's Jewish community visited Cooma on Canberra Day, Monday 12 March 2012, to rededicate the 19th century graves of two early Jewish settlers, the brothers Samuel and Israel (Lewis) Shannon. The event was organised by Australian Jewish Historical Society ACT founding president Earle Hoffman OAM, with research help from AJHS stalwart and committee member Margaret Beadman OAM.

Samuel and Israel Lawrence Shannon were sons of Jacob Lawrence Shannon. Born in London in 1774, Jacob was a confectioner or cook/baker by trade. He and his wife Bryna, known as Fanny, had 10 children – six girls and four boys – all of whom survived into adulthood. Their firstborn was Leah (c.1795); Samuel, born in Bishopsgate c.1802, was their fourth child, and Israel Lawrence Lewis, born on 30 January 1815, was their ninth child. Despite the surname, the Shannon family were not Irish but descended from Portuguese (Sephardi) Jews who fled the Inquisition, finding refuge in the Netherlands and subsequently moving to England.

In 1815 Leah married Abraham Moses in London. With four children, the youngest a baby, they sailed for Australia on the *Palamban*, arriving in Sydney on 10 January 1833. Abraham Moses was born in London in 1798. He had three older brothers already in Australia as convicts. After two years of profitable trading as owner of the Joiners' Arms Hotel in King Street, Sydney, he moved to the Monaro region 200 miles southwest of Sydney, where he opened a store. In 1838, he built a store and hotel at Reid's Flat (Jews' Flat). He sold it two years later to Solomon Solomon. Solomon was married to Rachael Abrahams, whose sister Amelia Abraham later became Samuel Shannon's wife. Abraham and Leah returned to Sydney, setting up an import-export business. Now wealthy, they returned to London c.1855.

Leah's brother, Samuel Shannon, was tried and convicted in 1821 for forging banknotes and was transported to Van Diemen's Land in 1822 on the *Richmond*. After serving out his full sentence, he was

granted his certificate of freedom on 28 August 1835 and immediately moved to Sydney, where he worked as a carpenter and labourer. On 10 February 1841, in the Bridge Street Synagogue in Sydney, he married Amelia Abrahams, sister of Solomon Solomon's wife Rachael.

The newly married couple moved to Reid's Flat (Jews' Flat, now Bunyan) where Amelia's sister, Rachael, was already living. There Samuel opened a general store. All their nine children were born at Jews' Flat over the years 1841-1857. Three of the children, including the final set of twins, died at birth and were buried at Jews' Flat. Meanwhile the settlement of Cooma, approximately eight kilometres south of Jews Flat, was starting to grow. While still retaining the store at Jews' Flat, presumably managed by Amelia, Samuel Shannon in 1854 set up a general store in Bombala Street, Cooma. The township continued to expand and in 1856 Samuel Shannon opened another store in Lambie Street, Cooma.

The following year, in 1857, Samuel Shannon built the Victoria Hotel (renamed the Prince of Wales Hotel in 1874) in Sharp Street, Cooma. Now the sisters Amelia and Rachael were again living in the same town. Samuel and Amelia concentrated their efforts on the Victoria Hotel. In the same year, 1857, Samuel Shannon bought a Cooma property "Wrens Nest". Ill since 1864, Samuel died at the hotel on 16 May 1868, aged 66, and the next day he was buried at "Wrens Nest". Amelia died in Cooma on 19 May 1891, aged 74, of senile decay. She was not laid in the empty plot next to her husband; instead she was buried next day on private land adjacent to Christ Church cemetery. In August 2011, Margaret Beadman and Earle Hoffman tried to locate Amelia's resting place, but were unable to find any trace of her grave.

Lewis Shannon -who was possibly a shoemaker - was transported (for theft) in 1831. He arrived in Sydney on the *Surrey* in 1834 and worked as a servant. Like Samuel, Lewis served his full sentence and was granted his certificate of freedom on 29 May 1838. He married Sarah Tucker (born c.1812 in England) on 11 February 1839 in St. James Church of England, Sydney. Nine of their 16 children died at birth or in infancy. It is thought that Lewis and Sarah with their seven living children moved to Cooma in 1858, where they spent the rest of their lives. Lewis died on 4 December 1893, after a short illness. He was buried next day beside his brother in the grave at "Wrens Nest". Sarah survived him for another three years, dying on 9 June 1896 aged 85. She is buried in the Mittagang Roman Catholic cemetery, Cooma.

 "Wrens Nest" on Church Road, Cooma was built by naval captain Henry Erasmus Wren (c.1850), and combines an early farm cottage with Victorian wings. The building is now listed by the National Trust of Australia. It had several owners during the next 100 years. On 3 August 1955 Mr. Robin Simms and his wife purchased the property. They subdivided the land in the 1980s, retaining for themselves the block that includes the graves of Samuel and Israel Lewis Shannon, but not the historic house.

By this time the low stonework fence with its cast iron decorative railing surrounding the two graves had fallen into disrepair and Samuel Shannon's gravestone had broken from its base. (No gravestone exists for Lewis Shannon's grave.) About 11 years ago Earle Hoffman learned of the existence of Jewish graves on this rural property, came knocking at the door, and was astonished to meet a former colleague Rob Simms. Both are old boys of Queensland Agricultural College at Gatton and happily renewed their friendship. They discussed the eventual repair of the grave, and this has finally come to fruition, with Earle as benefactor. Local stonemason Peter Doughton re-erected the low stone wall and repaired the ironwork as best he could. He also refitted the gravestone into its base, while Mr. Simms outlined the lettering in white paint.

The Hebrew and English language reconsecration service, led by Dr. David Rosalky, consisted of psalms and memorial prayers for the setting of a tombstone, according to the tradition authorised by the Chief Rabbi of the (then) British Empire – a tradition that may have been familiar to the Shannons. Kaddish was read in English by Raffi Lehrer and recited in Hebrew by Dr. Vernon Kronenberg, to mark the Yahrzeit of his late wife Naomi, which fell on that day. (Vernon is the Canberra representative for the AJGS.) Also at the reconsecration service were Cooma and District Historical Society president Wendy Hain and archivist Heather Rhodes.

Fulfilling a long-held dream

Judith Wimbourne

Last year was our 50th wedding anniversary. For many years, we had contemplated a trip to Poland to search for our roots. We decided that this would be the perfect way to celebrate.

Since I was a young child, I have known that my mother's family came from Poland. It was not until I began researching my family history, that I found that my father's family also came from Poland.

I located my mother's grandfather, Simon ROSENBERG's naturalisation certificate and found his place of birth given as Linchitz, Russian Poland (now Łęczyca, Poland, not far from Łódź.

On my paternal great grandfather Gustav MAGNUS' naturalisation certificate, the place of birth was noted as Goslin, Prussia (now Murowana Goślina, Poland, just north of Poznan). His wife, Amelia CASPER, came from a nearby town, Rogóźno.

My husband's father, Tzi Dov WAJNBAUM, was born (1908) in Truskolasy, near Czestochowa, Poland. Thankfully, many family members migrated to England about that time. Those who did not make the move did not survive the Holocaust.

We made enquiries about travelling in Poland, via AJGen, and received much useful advice. Someone suggested that we contact *Ancestral Attic* (Genealogy Services and Private Poland Tours www.ancestralattic.com). As neither of us speaks Polish, we thought that this would be a good way to go. We received a prompt reply to our initial query. Via a series of emails, we provided them with the names of the towns we wished to visit, the family names we were researching, the type of accommodation we preferred and our request for a driver/guide.

Since the exchange rate was in our favour, the cost was very reasonable and we were very impressed with the service provided. This included transport to and from the airport, all bed and breakfast, en-suite accommodation, drivers/guides who had researched our towns before we arrived and gave us valuable background information, purchase of train tickets within Poland and suggested restaurants near all our hotels. This still allowed us free time in Warsaw and Krakow. We need not have been concerned about our lack of Polish as we met many people who spoke English.

Our first visit was to Łęczyca, my great grandfather Simon/Shimon ROSENBERG's home town. The road to Łęczyca is narrow and single-lane each way. Magda, our guide for the day, was able to tell us much about the area, about the Jews and their history in Poland and especially in Łęczyca. There were two synagogues. The smaller one was next to the town wall beside the Great Synagogue which was built in 1787.

Until 1830, on the city wall next to the synagogue, there was a plaque commemorating the martyrdom of more than 1,500 of Łęczyca's Jews, murdered by the Polish army in September 1656.

In 1940, the Nazis burned the synagogue and ordered the Jews to demolish the ruins. Today, the site is a pleasant park on the corner of Kaliska and John Paul 2nd streets. Across the road stands a large brick house, which was the *cheder* and home of the rabbi. In the surrounding streets, the old Jewish quarter, were private houses and a *mikvah*. The older houses are single-storey timber. There are also larger stone houses with balconies, denoting greater wealth.

There is a small Jewish museum In the local archive building. It is down in a fairly dark basement with poor lighting. There are only two complete gravestones remaining but many pieces of those which have been reclaimed from road paving. There are several other artefacts and some unidentified photos of local Jews printed on fabric – rather difficult to see in the dim light.

While walking around the town, I tried to imagine Shimon (born 1832) as a young man living here with his parents and siblings within a Jewish community. How long were they here? Where did they come from? When did he leave – by himself or with others? Family legend has it that he was in the Russian army. The area was known as Russian Poland – was this the reason? I know that in England, in 1863, he married Frances Woolf in the New Synagogue "according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the German and Polish Jews", as I have a copy of their marriage certificate.

Unfortunately, there are no Jewish records in this town, and only a few in the civil registers of the nearby town of Kutno. So far, they do not appear to be related to my family. What I found interesting about Łęczyca in the 1880's was that all trade businesses were owned by Jews; only two shops belonged to Christians.

This visit gave me a picture I would otherwise not have had of the town.

Back in Warsaw we spent the next day walking around The Old Town, visiting the Jewish Theatre, the one remaining synagogue and the remnant of the Ghetto Wall between the rear of two houses in Sienna street. The latter was a very sobering experience. It is hard to imagine how it must have felt to those enclosed by that high brick wall.

Later that evening, we travelled by train to Poznan, where we were met by Eva, our guide for the next few days. The following morning, we set off for Murowana Goślina – home of my paternal great grandfather, Gustav MAGNUS.

Like so many others, this town is built around a main square which was the market place. Here the Town Hall contained a small exhibition of the local history. It included photos of the former Jewish cemetery and Cohn's Inn. We were told that Jews were often inn-keepers. Today, this inn is a private home and the cemetery no longer exists. Here also, the gravestones were used as street paving.

Eva told us that this area, like many others, had been privately owned by a wealthy family who built a wooden settlement about the year 1200. It became a town some time before 1389. Jews were allowed to settle there in 1782.

In 1817, there was a large fire. Because many Jews lost their timber homes and could not afford to rebuild, they moved away. But the population re-built; by 1841 there were 196 houses with 1,554 inhabitants, 510 of whom were Jews.

In the 19th century, the Jews were the second largest group (after Catholics) in the town. There was a synagogue but no rabbi. He had to come from a nearby town to conduct services. Most of the Jews were engaged in trade and were highly regarded. At one time, of the six members of the Town Council, three were Jewish.

Many of the German population (including Jews) emigrated to Germany in the interwar years. By 1939 only two Jewish families remained.

Today's population is 10,336. There are no Jews, and once more, there were no local records of the Jewish population.

After a lunch of delicious *pierogi*, we drove a short distance to Rogoźno – the possible birthplace of my paternal great-grandmother, Amelia CASPER.

Rogoźno is a smaller town. As in so many other towns, we found only references to a once thriving Jewish community. There had been as many as 1,500 Jews, almost half the town's population. There are two town centres – the Old and the New. In the Old Town German cloth makers and Jews lived in harmony. There had been two Jewish cemeteries. Both had been demolished during WW2 and the tombstones used for paving.

The Town Hall holds a small collection of artefacts dating from the medieval town on this site, but with no reference to the former Jewish population. We were told there were a few civil registrations of births, marriages and deaths of this town, but they are held in the State Archive at Poznań. When we returned home, I employed someone to search them – but found no connection to my family.

The following day, we returned to Murowana Goślina, where we were greeted by Jakub, a school teacher, and some of his pupils. He explained that they had been "trying to build the town's identity by dialogue with the past". They have been documenting the history of the Jews of their town and have been working

with the Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland.[1] A group of them went to Auschwitz to take part in the March of the Living. Jakub is so committed to the projects that he has learned to speak Hebrew and has visited Israel.

One of the projects they have undertaken is the installation of a memorial plaque beside their school – on the site of the former Jewish cemetery.

Jakub and his students provided us with poppyseed cake and tea while they presented their projects. The local historian led us all on a walk around the town to point out the former Jewish quarter. Some formerly Jewish-owned houses and businesses are still standing.

Judith and Brian Wimbourne with Jakub (in blue t-shirt) and his students at the Murowana Goślina memorial

The students presented us with several booklets about Murowana Goślina, Poznan and eminent people who came from or who lived in the area, and a DVD made at a concert to honour Irena Sendler, a Polish Catholic Social Worker who worked with the Polish Underground during WW2. Assisted by a small group of resistance workers, at great risk, she was responsible for saving 2,500 Jewish children by smuggling them out of the Warsaw Ghetto. She was recognised by Yad Vashem in 1965 as one of the Righteous Among the Nations, and was honoured in 2007 by the Polish Senate. She died in May 2008.

Next in our travels was a four-hour drive south to Częstochowa and nearby Truskolasy. The latter is a small village with several of the old timber houses still standing alongside the newer cement block and stucco houses.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries there had been a sizeable Jewish community. There had been a Jewish school, and a synagogue had been established in one of the dwelling houses in 1860.

During WW2, Truskolasy came under German rule. The Nazis burnt half the village and shot many inhabitants. All Jews were sent to Częstochowa ghetto and from there to Treblinka in 1942.

Sadly, as in Murowana Goślina and Rogoźno, there were no traces of the former Jewish community. However, some of the WAJNBAUM family had moved to nearby Częstochowa early in the century. As records for this town are available through the Częstochowa-Radomsko Area Research Group (CRARG) http://www.crarg.org, we will be able to build on the information for this family at least.

While I did not gain any new information about members of my families, it was wonderful to walk the same streets they would have known, and to get some sort of feeling for the towns in which they had lived. They no longer feel just like names on a page.

Czechs Advance Online
Daniela Torsh

Eureka! For the first time, Czech Jewish Vital Records are now available online. And coming soon are the Familiant books for Bohemia and Moravia, a significant new source for all Czech genealogy researchers.

In early November 2010, I gave a talk for the Canberra Jewish Historical Society, where I announced the Czech digitisation project. In June, I'd visited the Czech National Archives in Prague and met with Dr Matušiková to discuss a donation for the conservation of some of the *Matriky* (registers) in her collection. As we went to lunch nearby walking across the tram tracks on Milady Horákové, she revealed the amazing

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[1] For more information see http://www.fodz.pl/?d=1&l=en

news that the Archives had decided to digitise the entire collection and put it online. The digitisation began on October 18, not long after our lunch in Dejvice.

Dr Lenka Matušiková and Dr Michal Ďurovič

Many people from the worldwide Jewish Genealogy family stumped up donations towards the conservation and restoration of the collection. Contributions large and small came from America, Australia, Canada, England, Europe, Israel, and New Zealand. Our funds enabled the Archive's conservation laboratory Director, Dr Michal Ďurovič, to employ more restorers as they didn't have enough staff to do the work in-house.

At least 13 *Matriky* have been restored as part of the digital project. The extent of the work can be appreciated when you consider that it takes an estimated 120 hours to conserve one *Matrik*. Recently, the Austria-Czech SIG also contributed funds which assisted in speeding up the checking of the digital scans of the vital records before uploading. The Czech National Archives allocated its own substantial funds towards the huge cost of digitising the millions of vital records in 2011.

Although the records were completely digitised last year, it is only now that they have started being uploaded to the internet. Most Bohemian, Moravian, and Silesian Births, Deaths and Marriages records from Czech towns with names starting with A to part way through Sušice have been uploaded to http://www.badatelna.cz/fond/1073 which is linked to the Czech National Archives website. Prague, with the largest set of records, will be uploaded in the last tranche later this year.

Because some BDM volumes were being restored, they were not digitised with the bulk of the *Matriky* last year. So some towns' records still have to be digitised and then uploaded. All the scanned pages of the *Matriky* had to be checked to make sure that the scans were accurate. Where inaccuracies have been found, those volumes are yet to be corrected and re-done.

The news that the Czech Jewish Vital records were available was announced by Austria-Czech SIG co-coordinator Randolph Schoenberg on May 21st this year. Soon afterwards on May 27th Wolf-Erich Eckstein, the curator of the Austrian records at the Israelitische Kultus Gemeinde (IKG)[2] in Vienna told us that their records had also been finally uploaded on the Family Search website of the Mormons at http://tinyurl.com/wien-Jewish-BMDs

For now I shall concentrate on the Czech Records.

With the double release of the Czech and Vienna Vital Records, Randy Schoenberg wrote on the Austria-Czech SIG in late May that he felt like he'd died and gone to heaven though he was actually in Palm Springs, USA, for the weekend having a holiday.

Long time researcher, Peter Lowe wrote from the UK:

> It is really wonderful to be able to see, with such ease, images of Register entries that my relatives in Prague examined with such great difficulty in the early 1970s. To see a single register at that time often involved more than one trip to the Archive, and could be met with suspicion particularly if there was any mention of relatives in the "West".

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[2] The Jewish Community of Vienna

Now the Austria-Czech SIG is buzzing with people's messages about their discoveries and how to access the Czech material and especially how to save and print copies of what one can see on screen. All of the records can be accessed and copied free.

One assiduous SIG correspondent Phillip Moravcik from Hawaii posted that he will miss trekking into the National Archives building in Holešovice (a northern suburb of Prague) to go up to the study room, (that's *badatelna* in Czech) and looking through the tatty, dusty tomes in person, slipping out at the lunch break for a sausage and a beer at the nearby pub down the main street of Milady Horákové.

Dr Lenka Matušiková has written a detailed description and history of the Archive's collection of Jewish Vital records which can be found on the National Archives' website at www.nacr.cz/Z-Files/zm/zm_english.pdf

Her article explains how the more than 4,000 documents (both Jewish and Catholic) were collected over the past 250 years from the time when Joseph II, one of the Austrian Hapsburg rulers who predated the modern Czech Republic, passed laws in 1784 which regulated the creation of the births, deaths and marriages registers for Jews in the Czech Lands.

> *It was the Rabbi who was charged with keeping registers in the place where he was appointed. Jewish families, living in seclusion in the country, belonged to the Rabbi from the nearest laid [sic] community or they were recorded by Catholic parish priests on the last pages of the registers of the parish where they were settled.*   Matušiková on above website

An earlier set of laws, known as the Familiant laws, promulgated by Emperor Karl VI in 1726 from Vienna, regulated how many and where the Jews could live in the Czech Lands of Bohemia and Moravia and whom they were permitted to marry, and the use of German rather than Yiddish or Hebrew for the official records.

The Familiant (family) books are a set of records which list the names of the Jews in each city and town who were given a number by the authorities and with it the right to reside in the Czech city or town. For more details, see my 2009 article "Tolerance and the Stranger".[3]

Dr Lenka Matušiková, the senior Czech archivist in charge of all the Jewish and other religious records has indicated that the 184 Familiant books from Bohemia and also some additional Moravian ones will be uploaded to the *badatelna* website by the end of 2013.

Many other Familiant books held in local and regional Moravian archives have been found and listed by Ing. Jaroslav Klenovský, who works for the Brno Jewish Community. His survey will enable Dr Matušiková to find, collect and digitise the complete set. So there could be as many as 200 Familiant books digitised. The Familiant project, initiated by the Czech Archives, was assisted by a contribution from the Austria-Czech SIG, thus speeding up the digitisation process.

Zdeňka Mužíková repairs the spine of an historic register

The National Archives' so called Police Conscription records are now also completely uploaded. This means that, if you had a family member living in Prague from 1850-1914, you can find their residence records online. Together with the City Archives of Prague, which has also digitised its Jewish residence records and put

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[3] Torsh, Daniela, "Tolerance and the Stranger". Talk for Australian Jewish Genealogical Society, Sydney, 2009.

them online, it is now possible to do a huge amount of Czech family history research at your own computer without leaving home.
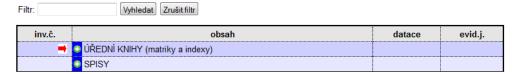
The icing on the cake of all these newly available records is the restoration of so many *Matriky* with the donated funds by Jewish genealogists in our global rescue mission. The Jewish communities which have had their oldest registers restored include Strážnice (Strassnitz) in Moravia, Jesenice in Bohemia (Jechnitz), Gaya (Kyjov) in Moravia and Mährisch Weisskirchen (Hranice) in Moravia. Also planned for this year are conservation of another register for Olomouc (Olmütz) in Moravia and the construction of 150 special protective boxes (from lignin and acid free board) for approximately 150 Jewish registers. The preservation of this priceless collection means that our great-grandchildren will be able to touch and see their history for hundreds of years to come.

How to access the Czech Jewish vital records.

1. Go to http://www.badatelna.cz/fond/1073

2. Click on the green tab that says *Inventar* (Inventory) next to an icon of a book.
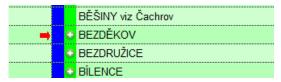

3. Click on the green circle with the white plus sign next to "UREDNI KNIHY (matriky a indexy)" [OFFICIAL BOOK (registers and indexes)]
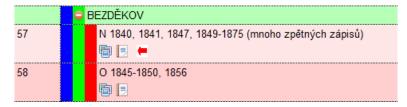

   Now you see a list of towns, page 1/30. The ones from ANDELSKA HORA to part-way through SUŠICE have scans attached. Prague and the rest of the towns should come later this year.

4. Click on the green circle with the white plus sign next to the town you want (scroll ahead to the next page using the green arrows).

   You will see a list of files (with dates).

   N stands for birth records (narozených in Czech)
   O stands for marriage records (oddaných)
   Z stands for death records (zemřelých)

5. When you find a register you want, click on the first icon, (the one that looks like three computer screens) and you should get a new screen with the cover of the book.

6. Scroll through the book by using the green arrow buttons.

7. Use the - and + buttons to zoom in and out.

8. Click and hold your mouse button and drag to move the image in the screen.

9. Indexes, image number and page number

Some of the larger cities have registry books that contain an index at the beginning. The index contains the names of the newborns in chronological order and gives the page number, the item number, and the year. It is important to recognise that the page numbers are not the same as the image numbers. In fact, each image is of two pages in the *Matrik*. It's as if you were in the Archives with the book open in front of you and you have the two pages flat on the desk. The page number corresponds to the part of the *Matrik* containing the birth records, i.e., these page numbers start after the index. Each page contains the page number as the Folio Number. The item numbers are indicated on the relevant page, often in red.

I am indebted to Randy Schoenberg and Thomas Fischer Weiss for these instructions. If you want more details, go to the SIG archive, as I have not included here the details of how to print images which is a very lengthy explanation and also depends on what software you use.

Due to Czech privacy legislation, only records older than 100 years from the last entry in the Births Registers and 75 years from the last entry in the Marriages and Deaths Registers will be made accessible.

I'll be back in Prague later this year and will be able to give a full report after that visit on the progress of both the Vital records and also the Familiant books' digitisation and uploads. Thanks to both Dr Lenka Matušiková and Dr Michal Ďurovič for their assistance in the preparation of this article.

For up to date information about this project and its progress, join the Austria-Czech SIG on JewishGen to keep up with the latest news.

News

Maitland Jewish Cemetery – Draft Conservation Management Plan

Maitland Council received a grant to conduct a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) of the cemetery. The draft CMP includes recommendations for preservation of monuments, restoring the original timber picket fence, appropriate planting, and an end to burials. An important recommendation is for the cemetery to be nominated for inclusion on the State Heritage Inventory as a site having significance for NSW heritage, not just for local Jewish history. Research for the CMP has turned up new information about the history of the cemetery property, and the condition of the monuments has been researched in detail by an experienced conservation stonemason. Consultation with the team who conducted the CMP has been the first task of the recently formed Friends of Maitland Jewish Cemetery.

The draft Conservation Management Plan for Maitland Jewish Cemetery will be on exhibition at Maitland from Thursday July 12th to Monday August 13th, 2012. A copy will be available at the AJHS office at Mandelbaum House in Sydney on Tuesdays or Thursdays between 10:30am and 4:30pm. For an appointment please email: admin@ajhs.com.au or phone (02) 9518 7596. The Plan will also be available online at the Council's community engagement website: http://tinyurl.com/mjc-heritage

For more information please contact Clare James, the Heritage Officer of Maitland City Council clarej@maitland.nsw.gov.au or phone (02) 4934 9832.

Submissions should be addressed as follows:

General Manager
Maitland City Council
PO Box 220
Maitland, 2320

Or emailed to: mcc@maitland.nsw.gov.au

South African Country Communities Project request for information

The SA Friends of Beth Hatefutsoth are documenting the history of the Jewish communities in all the towns and villages of South Africa, but have excluded the nine major cities, including Kimberley and Oudtshoorn. The project covers over 1520 towns and villages in South Africa where Jews have lived or are living.

The information, when it is finalised, will be housed at Beit Hatfutsot – Museum of the Jewish People – in Israel, at the Jewish Museum in Cape Town, and at the S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies in Johannesburg.

The group is asking for people who came from these towns and villages, or whose ancestors lived there, to make contact. They need information, anecdotes and photographs, especially of the small places.

They can be contacted by email: museum@beyachad.co.za

For more information in Australia, contact Eli Rabinowitz: eli@elirab.com

Main towns to be researched in Southern Transvaal, Gauteng and Western Transvaal:

> Alberton, Amersfoort, Balfour, Benoni, Bethal, Bloemhof, Boksburg, Brakpan, Breyten, Carletonville, Carolina, Christiana, Coligny, Delareyville, Delmas, Devon, Eerste Fabriek, Ermelo, Florida, Fochville, Germiston, Greylingstad, Groot-Marico, Hartbeesfontein, Heidelberg, Hendrina, Irene, Kempton Park, Kinross, Klerksdorp, Koster, Krugersdorp, Leandra (Leslie), Leeudoringstad, Lichtenburg, Magaliesburg, Makwassie, Maraisburg, Meyerton, Midrand, Morgenzon, Nigel, Ogies, Olifantsfontein, Ottosdal, Piet Retief, Potchefstroom, Randfontein, Roodepoort, Rustenburg, Sannieshof, Schweizer-reneke, Springs, Standerton, Swartruggens, Trichardt, Vanderbijlpark, Ventersdorp, Vereeniging, Verwoerdburg, Volksrust, Voortrekkerhoogte, Wakkerstroom, Westonaria, Wolmaransstad, Zeerust.

Previously published volumes can be purchased in South Africa. Contact: museum@beyachad.co.za

* Volume 1 – Northern Transvaal and the Great Escarpment.
* Volume 2 – ten regions in the Northern, Western and South-western Cape.
* Volume 3 –Southern and Eastern Cape, including the Transkei.
* Volume 4 – Kwa-Zulu Natal
* Volume 5 – Free State

US 1940 Census – update

Indexing of the US 1940 census continues at a rapid rate, but the reported error rate is rather higher than the slower efforts for earlier census indexes.

* *Ancestry.com* has indexed 26 states
* *Familysearch*(LDS) has indexed 34 states
* *Findmypast* has indexed 31 states

As at mid-July 2012, *ancestry* is the only site which has indexed New York State, and no-one has yet completed New Jersey.

AVOTAYNU (1985-2011) Online

All 105 back issues from 1985-2011 – more than 7,000 pages – are now available online by subscription. The cost is $35 for access to the data for an entire year's issues. For details of how to subscribe see: http://www.avotaynu.com/journal.htm

Scotlandspeople reduces prices for wills and testaments

With the merging of the National Archives of Scotland (NAS) and the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) to form the National Records of Scotland (NRS), the payment process for all records has been standardised.

Searching the wills & testaments index is free and it now costs 10 credits to view any document – about half the previous price.

New Sub-Carpathia SIG

Marshall Katz, JewishGen Sub-Carpathia SIG Coordinator, has announced the formation of a new Special Interest Group (SIG) for Sub-Carpathia. The SIG focuses on parts of the pre-WWI Hungarian *megyek* (counties) of Bereg, Maramaros, Ugocsa and Ung, today located in Sub-Carpathia, Ukraine.

Sub-Carpathia SIG's ongoing projects:

* gazetteer of Sub-Carpathian villages and towns by their former Hungarian and present Ukrainian names, with both lists linked to show the location on a map;
* transcription of the Velikiy Bereznyy (Nagyberezna) *mohel* book;
* transcription of the new Mukacheve cemetery tombstones;
* transcription of the Berehove cemetery tombstones;
* transcription of the Pryborzhavs'ke cemetery tombstones; and
* providing guidance for travel in Sub-Carpathia.

New projects, some of which have already begun, and others awaiting volunteers to participate and/or lead them include:

* translation of the Vynogradiv *yizkor* book;
* cemetery projects – photographing and transcribing tombstones;
* collecting travel photos from visitors to their ancestral towns; and
* transcription of vital records.

Sub-Carpathia SIG's web site is at: http://www.jewishgen.org/Sub-Carpathia/

To subscribe to the discussion/mailing list, go to: http://www.jewishgen.org/ListManager and select "Sub-Carpathia SIG."

Online Petition to halt cuts to State Records NSW

The History Council of NSW has created an online petition to try to halt the cuts to State Records' budget.

Points from the preamble to the petition:

* The city reading room has now closed.
* State Records has been directed, along with other state government agencies, to make substantial savings to their budgets. Over the next four years, State Records is expected to save a total of $1.8 million.
* The budget cuts have a severe impact on the accessibility of records and services.

Between May 3 and July 18, the petition collected 736 signatures. Many more are needed to send the State government the message that access to these records is important. Follow this link to sign the petition: http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/stop-the-cuts-to-state-records-nsw-funding.html

Thanks to Stuart Shaw for alerting us to this activity.

New Resources

2012 Jewish Genealogy Yearbook

http://www.iajgs.org/Jewish_Genealogy_Yearbook_2011.pdf

IAJGS has placed *the Jewish Genealogy Yearbook 2012* online.

It is a useful compendium of information on the 147 affiliated organisations dedicated to supporting Jewish genealogy. Information includes contact addresses (email and snail mail), websites, library holdings and databases or other resources.

Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, Volume 2

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has published *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933–1945, Volume II: Ghettos in German-Occupied Eastern Europe.* 2,096 pages, 192 b/w illus., 20 maps, 8.5x11, May 2012.

This is the second volume of a planned seven-volume series. It provides a comprehensive account of how the Nazis conducted the Holocaust throughout the scattered towns and villages of Poland and the Soviet Union. It covers more than 1,150 sites, including both open and closed ghettos and includes photographs, charts, and maps.

To purchase, visit http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/encyclopedia/

My Warsaw – *Warszawa jest moja*

My Warsaw – Warszawa jest moja is a smartphone application designed by the Museum of the History of Polish Jews and the History Meeting House. It combines the features of a travel guide to Jewish Warsaw, an orientation-based game and an encyclopedia about the life of Janusz Korczak (aka Henryk Goldszmit), educator, children's author, and pediatrician who died in Treblinka.

The application spans two tourist routes. The first one guides you through places related to Janusz Korczak's early and late childhood while the other shows Korczak's life story during World War II. Both routes comprise almost fifty described places. The guide shows now non-existent Warsaw through pictures, audio recordings, a quiz, quotations and the augmented reality system. You can walk a whole route at once or choose to take a break at any time and come back to it whenever you feel like it.

You can download this bilingual Polish-English application free at:

* GooglePlay for android phones: http://tinyurl.com/mywarsaw1
* AppStore for iPhones: http://tinyurl.com/mywarsaw2

Interesting websites

Scottish Post Office directories

http://digital.nls.uk/directories/index.html

The National Library of Scotland has placed online over 700 digitised directories covering most of Scotland from 1773 to 1911. They have an alphabetical list of a location's inhabitants and information on their profession and address. Thanks to Dick Eastman (http://blog.eogn.com/eastmans_online_genealogy/) for this alert

British Prisoners of War – WW1 & WW2

http://www.findmypast.co.uk/

Findmypast has added records for British Prisoners of War in both world wars.

Belfast Ireland Cemetery Records

http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/burialrecords/index.asp

The Belfast (Ireland) City Council has placed about 360,000 burial records online. They include Belfast City Cemetery records from 1869, as well as more recent burials at Roselawn Cemetery and Dundonald Cemetery. You need at least a partial surname to search. The results can include: name, age, sex, place of last residence, date of death, date of burial, cemetery, and grave section. You can also see if there are multiple burials in the same location, and for records over 75 years old, you can purchase an image of the burial registration for £1.50.

Thanks to Jan Meisels Allen and the *IAJGS Digest* for this information.

National Library podcasts

http://www.nla.gov.au/podcasts/

The National Library of Australia has a large selection of podcasts available for download on its website. In the Exhibitions Collection, there are several which were made in connection with the *Dunera Boys – Seventy Years On* exhibition.

Natalie Kestecher on ABC National radio

http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/360/my-fear-of-poland/4064246

Natalie Kestecher talks movingly about her visit to Poland. This program was first broadcast in 2010 and recently repeated on Radio National. The podcast can be heard online, or downloaded to an mp3 player.

New IGRA databases

http://genealogy.org.il/databases/

The Israel Genealogy Research Association (IGRA) has uploaded nine new databases to its BETA search engine. The databases for Safed span the period from 1433 to 2003. The rest deal with Eretz Israel, spanning the period from 1908 to 1945. At present, the databases can be searched in English only.

The databases are:

* Safed Burials 1433 to 2003;

* Safed – collection of various documents 1912 to 1947;

* List of Students & Staff of *Gymnasia Haivrit*, Yaffo 1908-9;

* First National Conference of *Edot Hamizrah* in Eretz Israel – Protocol 1925;

* Voters' List for Haifa 1928;

* Voters' List for Municipal Council Petah Tikva 1930 and 1932;

* Members of the Teachers' Council (Histadrut) 1939; and

* Hebrew Soldiers of the Yishuv who fell and perished in World War II 1940-45.

Yad Vashem on YouTube

http://www.youtube.com/user/YadVashem

Yad Vashem has placed a large number of survivor testimonies on YouTube.

JRI-Poland – update

http://www.jri-poland.org

New to the database are indexes to LDS data from: Bedkow, Dzialoszyce, Rypin, Secemin and Strykow.

Updates and additions have been added for the cities/towns: Aleksandrow Lodzki, Chelm, Kozienice, Malogoszcz, Nowogrod, Ozarow, Sobota, Warszawa and Zuromin.

Pre-1825 patronymic data have also been added for: Dzialoszyce, Grojec, Strykow and Warka. They are searchable from the JRI-Pol database or can be viewed from the patronymic webpage: www.jri-poland.org/patronym/status.htm

Lodz Ghetto Chronicle 1943-4 now online

http://www.getto-chronik.de/de/

Fritz Neubauer reported in the *LODZ Digest* that the publishers and authors of the five-volume *Chronicle of the Lodz Ghetto* have now put online the complete text of the Ghetto's last year from August 1943 to July 1944.

For each day, the presentation includes the original manuscript and other documents such as lists, announcements and posters. In German or Polish, but you can use an online translator.

All Galicia Database (AGD) – update

http://www.search.GesherGalicia.org

AGD has added ten new databases:

* Bukaczowce (Bukachivtsi, Ivano-Frankivs'ka oblast): Homeowners List 1848;
* Drohobycz (Drohobych, L'vivs'ka oblast): Homeowners List 1879 and Homeowners List 1880;
* Gliniany (Hlyniany, L'vivs'ka Oblast): Homeowners List 1845;
* Grzymalow (Hrymailiv, Ternopil's'ka oblast): Jewish Marriages 1942;
* Halicz (Halych, Ivano-Frankivs'ka oblast): Homeowners List 1875;
* Kalusz (Kalush, Ivano-Frankivs'ka oblast): Homeowners List 1850;
* Mosciska (Mostyska, L'vivs'ka Oblast): Homeowners List 1852; and
* Tarnopol (Ternopil, Ternopil's'ka oblast): Jewish Death Records 1941-2 and Jewish Marriage Records 1942.

Hungarian Special Interest Group – update

http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Hungary/

JewishGen's Hungarian Special Interest Group (H-SIG) announced that more than 12,200 birth, marriage, and death records from the former Hungarian county of Maramaros have just been released as three new databases on JewishGen.

This represents the first live searchable data from the Máramaros/Maramureş County Jewish Records Project (see: www.MaramarosJewishRecords.com)

Maine (USA) Jewry

http://www.mainejews.org/index.php

This website describes itself as "a collaborative genealogy and history of Maine's Jewish communities". It is a wonderful example of communities documenting their history and culture.

Dates for your diary

AJGS workshops and meetings

Aug 5	9:30am-12:30pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield
Aug 13	10:00am-1:00pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield
Sep 2	9:30am-12:30pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield
Sep 10	10:00am-1:00pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield
Oct 14	9:30am-12:30pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield
Oct 22	10:00am-1:00pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield
Nov 4	9:30am-12:30pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield
Nov 12	10:00am-1:00pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield

Canberra Talk

Robyn Dryen: Buried Treasure – Unlocking the Secrets of the Broken Hill Jewish Cemetery

Tuesday 7 August 2012 at 7.45pm at the National Jewish Memorial Centre, Canberra

Robyn Dryen has been digging up her family's past for nearly 15 years, uncovering a rich tapestry of multiple migrations over 200 years. Her Krantz and Dryen forebears arrived in Broken Hill in the early 1890s and played a significant role in establishing a Jewish community there. An historian by training, and a researcher by profession, Robyn was keen to document the historical Jewish Cemetery in Broken Hill, as part of the 2010 synagogue centenary celebrations.

The National Jewish Memorial Centre is on National Circuit, Forrest, at the corner of Canberra Avenue (entrance off National Cct.). There is plenty of parking in the grounds. The function is being run under the auspices of the Australian Jewish Historical Society ACT, as there is no separate AJGS branch in Canberra.

Please RSVP to Sylvia Deutsch on deutand@grapevine.com.au or telephone 02-6248-6196 for security and catering purposes.

Cost: $5 donation towards the cost of the supper

The last word...

In Nu? What's New? Vol.13(20), May 13, 2012, Gary Mokotoff wrote

Will Genealogy Eventually Become an Obsolete Hobby? Will there be a period sometime in the future that genealogy will have been such a popular hobby in the past that most family histories will be done?

I received an e-mail yesterday through the JewishGen Family Finder that got me upset. It said: "I have been working on my family history, and I am related to Joseph Tartasky born 1878 and his father was I believe Menachem Leib Tartasky. Perhaps, you could provide me with some insights."

My response should have been the following:

Dear Karen:

Your genealogy has been done. Attached is a family tree that includes the 86 descendants of Joseph Tartasky I have documented in the 20 years I have been researching the Tartasky family. Also attached is a list of the ancestors of Joseph Tartasky going back four generations to before 1760.

You will never know the joy of discovering records of your Tartasky family, the thrill of problem solving, the frustration of brick walls, the excitement of interviewing distant cousins. I stole that from you by being the first person to research the Tartasky family history.

When I read this, I was left smiling wryly. I had just made contact with a long-lost second-cousin once removed. His grandparents' 1923 divorce had left one part of my Krantz family isolated in South Africa and years of searching had failed to uncover any information of descendants beyond their names.

I immediately shared my family tree. Yes, I denied him the thrills I have had discovering the names and the stories, but my work is not done. When my new cousin comes to Sydney next March, we will add to each other's knowledge. He will hopefully fill in some of my blanks about the South African story; I will fill in some of his blanks about the family's many migrations and early life in Broken Hill. My previous research meant that within 48 hours of making contact with me, he was able to speak for the very first time, with his only Krantz first-cousin. As they age, many of our older relatives need shortcuts to make contact with family diaspora. They may not have the luxury of years to research and find.

I see the family tree as a framework on which to build the rich tapestries of my relatives' lives. With new databases coming online every other day, we can add so much more than births, deaths and marriages. There are newspaper reports of daily doings, scandals and celebrations. There are new passenger lists allowing us to track more family moves. So no – I don't think genealogy will become an obsolete hobby – there will always be more we can discover. Sharing and collaboration can only enrich our efforts.

Robyn Dryen
Editor
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