



# The Kosher Koala

Newsletter of the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society, Inc.

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## EDITORIAL

The last three months have seen us celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the State of Israel, as well as commemorate Yom Hashoah, the day on which we particularly remember our families and friends who perished in the Holocaust.

Our AGM on 22 March was enlivened by the presence of Lionel Sharpe, Chairman of the Victorian branch, who gave us a glimpse into his own research, by Bill Wallace, Ellis Setton and Sunny Gold all of whom told us of their recent research advances. There were no changes in the committee, but several members have now volunteered for various tasks, and this is greatly appreciated.

On 24 March we finally achieved incorporation of our constitution as a non-profit organisation and legal possession of our name in NSW. The Victorian branch is seeking incorporation in Victoria of a similar constitution, so that we can keep pace with one another.

On 10th May we heard Australia's foremost genealogist, Nick Vine Hall tell us "How To Find

Traces of Our Ancestors' Arrival in Australia". He also answered many questions on other topics. Nick has been campaigning for years for the retention of name-identified census forms, instead of their destruction, so that after one hundred years' restriction they will be available to medical and genealogical researchers. This has now been recommended by a parliamentary committee, and may benefit future genealogists.

Eight members from New South Wales and four from Victoria plan to attend Hollywood Chai, the 18th USA Jewish Genealogical Summer Seminar, where Lionel Sharpe will deliver a paper.

On 28 July we will share a talk on how to access lists of Holocaust victims and survivors by Peter Landé of the Washington D.C. Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives with the Sydney Jewish Museum at the Museum.

Later in the year Kurt Lippmann is coming to give a talk on his research for the Lippmann Family Book, as he did in Melbourne. The date is still uncertain.

*Sophie Caplan, Editor*

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## SYDNEY WORKSHOPS 1998

The Society will hold its usual workshops at the North Shore Synagogue, Lindfield in the Rev Katz Library on the following Sunday mornings, 9.30 am to 12.30 pm

June 14	July 5	August 9	September 6
October 4	November 8	December 6	

The library is occasionally open at other times. If you would like to be notified when a day or evening session is planned, please contact 9427-6075.

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**FOR YOUR DIARY  
AND NOT TO BE MISSED!**

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON HOLOCAUST VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS

### PETER LANDÉ

U.S. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM,  
WASHINGTON

**July 28, 1998, 7.30 p.m.**  
**The Sydney Jewish Museum**  
**148 Darlinghurst Road, Darlinghurst**

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## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

### New South Wales

*Jeremy Edmonds*  
*Norman Graeve*  
*Barbara and Mark Joffe*  
*Daryl Krol*

### *Leo & Ronnie Vilensky*

*Magdalen Langer*  
*Bella Morrison*  
*Debbie Nash*  
*Brett Rosenthal*

### South Australia

*Almuth Hauptmann*  
*Janet Rayment*  
*Helen Wishart*

### Victoria

*Pamela Aird*  
*Phoebe Eizenberg*  
*Viviane Fink*  
*Rosa Safranskys*

### Western Australia

*Ruth and Martin Levitt*

*Eric Svirskis*  
*Rebecca Wagen*

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## NOW ON THE INTERNET

### JEWISH GENEALOGY IN AUSTRALIA

<http://www.zeta.org.au/~feraltek/genealogy>

### AUSTRALIAN JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

<http://www.zeta.org.au/~feraltek/genealogy/ajgs>

### THE HOME OF JEWISH GENEALOGY

<http://www.jewishgen.org>



## NEWS FROM VICTORIA

by Lionel Sharpe, Chairman

The 3rd Annual General Meeting took place at the Beth Weizmann Community Centre in South Caulfield on Tuesday May 7. The major item of business was to set in motion the incorporation of the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Victoria) under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981. This was approved and the objects of the Victorian group are the same as those of the AJGS in NSW with minor changes. The committee will now proceed with incorporation.

Election of Office Bearers was held and it was with regret that the resignation of Sam Leon (Treasurer) was accepted for family reasons. Sam was thanked for his contribution to the work of the group since taking over as Treasurer.

The following were all elected unopposed:

Albert Braunstein, Ros Collins, Ester Csaky, Rodney Eisfelder, Kurt Friedlaender, Rhonda Lasky, Les Oberman, Lionel Sharpe, Bettye Susskind and Enid Yoffa-Elton. Lionel and Rhonda will remain as Chairman and Secretary and Kurt has accepted the position of Treasurer. Roles and titles will be decided when the new committee first meets.

Special thanks were extended to the AJGS in NSW for their assistance in the transfer of administrative functions to Victoria and to Ros Collins and her staff at the Makor Library for their co-operation in storing our resources and dealing with enquiries about our work. It was noted that we are very lucky to be able to provide easy access to our resources, as the library is opened five days each week.

Following the AGM our guest speaker, Kurt Lippmann, OAM, talked about his research which led to the publication of the history of the Lippmann family. He paid special tribute to his late uncle who had started this task before World War II broke out. He displayed a family tree which had been drawn up by a skilled calligrapher, building on an earlier version prepared by his late uncle. A high quality bound book has been sent to descendants of the early Lippmanns, who are now scattered all over the world and many of whom have now lost their Jewish identity.

Three of our members have indicated that they will attend the 18th Annual Seminar on Jewish Genealogy in Los Angeles in July. Sonja and Les Oberman and Lionel Sharpe will represent Victoria and Lionel is presenting a paper "Our Cousins in Australia - How to Trace Them". This will be an illustrated slide presentation.

Rabbi Dr John Levi, the recently retired Senior Rabbi of the Temple Beth Israel, spoke to the group on April 8 about his work in updating research on Jewish convicts who were transported to Tasmania in the early days of settlement in Australia.

A number of functions are planned for the coming months.

Jo Ferguson, a Council for Adult Education lecturer, will speak about the work of the Victorian Public Records Office in Laverton on May 27. Ester Csaky will discuss her research in assisting her mother, Doba-Necha Cukierman, write her autobiography, "A Guardian Angel: Memories of Lublin" on June 24. Another beginners' workshop will be held on Sunday 19 July at 2.00 pm and on August 19 Les Oberman and Lionel Sharpe will report on their genealogical discoveries in Odessa and Los Angeles.

Victorian genealogists will have an opportunity to examine a computer data base on Jewish refugee arrivals (1939- about 1950) registered in the records of Jewish Community Services. The data base which has almost 3000 family names will be available for inspection for the first time at the current exhibition at the Jewish Museum of Australia in St. Kilda.

The exhibition, "I Am My Brother's Keeper", displays photos and records relating to 60 years of Jewish Community Services in Victoria. The exhibition was opened by the Governor-General, Sir William Deane, on May 17 in association with the launch of a new book, "A Serious Influx of Jews - A History of Jewish Welfare in Victoria" by Dr. Rodney Benjamin.

Negotiations are underway with AJGS (Vic) to continue updating this data base to the present day.

The Victorian Branch meets at the  
BETH WEIZMANN COMMUNITY CENTRE,  
306 Hawthorn Road, South Caulfield, Melbourne.  
Tel: 03-9273 5611  
Postal Address: P.O. Box 189,  
GLENHUNTLY VIC 3163, AUSTRALIA

Internet contacts:

Leslie Oberman                      oberman@tmxmelb.mhs.oz.au  
Dr Albert Braunstein              sbr@bbs.ausom.net.au  
Enquiries: Rhonda Tel: 03-9578 6456  
Lionel Tel: 03-9523-6738 Fax: 03-9532-7797

**YOUR LAST CHANCE FOR  
"HOLLYWOOD CHAI"**  
**18th Annual Seminar on Jewish Genealogy**  
**July 12-17, 1998**  
**Century Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles**

For information and last  
minute registrations see:  
<http://www.jewishgen.org/jgsla/seminar.htm>

**FOR YOUR FUTURE PLANNING**  
**New York**      August 8-13, 1999  
**Salt Lake City**      July 7-12, 2000  
**London**                      2001



## NEWS FROM THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH

by Klee Benveniste

Our March speaker was Joe Bolaffi who described the lives and history of his parents and relatives in the BOLAFFI and AMBAR families. His father had emigrated from Italy to Egypt at the end of the 19th century where he married Joe's mother who was born in Iraq. We were amazed as he named all the descendants of each branch of the Bolaffi family who had fled Egypt during 1950's to settle in places as far flung as France, Australia, Italy, England and Venezuela. He had visited many of them in their new countries and described how different their language and social traditions were now. When he visited the descendants of his brother Victor in Venezuela, 25 Spanish-speaking relatives came to the airport to greet him!

His mother's relatives from the AMBAR family left Egypt for Israel and Joe is corresponding with one at the Museum of the Jewish Diaspora in Tel Aviv. Joe is helping to fill in the names of all the BOLAFFI branches of the extensive family tree of the descendants of REUBEN AMBAR from Iraq.

We were captivated by his stories of his Sephardi heritage, their religious observance, and of traditions such as arranged marriages, dowries, and naming a child in honor of a living relative. Italian Jews in Egypt had also been conscripted into the Italian army. We are grateful to Joe for a fascinating presentation and were pleased that he taped it so his own descendants could listen to their history in years to come.

Hilde Hines will speak about the GUCKENHEIMER family at our May meeting.

The contact address for the South Australian branch is:  
Dr Klee Benveniste, Honorary Secretary,  
Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (SA branch),  
C/- Adelaide Hebrew Congregation,  
P.O. Box 320, Glenside SA 5065, Australia.

## NEWS FROM WESTERN AUSTRALIA

by Michelle Urban

A meeting of the Western Australian Jewish Genealogical Group, a wing of the AJHS in Perth, was held at 21 Broomhall Way, Noranda, on Sunday 17 May 1998. Convenors: Michelle Urban and Gillian O'Mara

Good resource materials displayed AJHS journals, an issue of AVOTAYNU, literature both fiction and non-fiction, general studies on Jewish histories and personalities within the fraternity. Also two fiche readers were available, a computer for disk and CDs, as well as a loaned copy of AVOTAYNU on CD covering the first ten years. While many of those present had conducted some research, to a greater or lesser degree, most were uncertain where to seek research resources either in Australia or elsewhere.

## CANBERRA CORNER

by Sylvia Deutsch

Canberra members of the AJGS should have received by now a list of current holdings in Canberra. Since then a copy of the following work has been donated by Sylvia Deutsch: Nick Vine Hall, *Tracing Your Family History in Australia. A Guide to Sources*, Rigby, 1985.

Please note the following meetings of the Australian Jewish Historical Society's Canberra branch in your diary. AJGS members are always welcome to attend. The Jewish community in Canberra is small, about 300 people in all. Not bad considering the last census listed only about 500, so it is not presently feasible to have a separate AJGS branch. Instead, Jewish genealogy is handled under the aegis of the local AJHS in the most amicable fashion, President Earle Hoffman OAM and vice-president Sylvia Deutsch are also AJGS members. The column will also list forthcoming AJHS functions, which all AJGS members are welcome to attend.

Forthcoming AJHS functions:

Monday 15 June, 1998

Bloom's Night      Speaker on James Joyce's Jewish character Bloom in *Ulysses*

Thursday 26 August, 1998

Sophie Caplan      LA Genealogical Seminar and her Genealogy night      trip to Poland, Belarus & Galicia.

Monday 30 November, 1998

Rabbi Raymond Apple      Topic to be announced

All meetings commence at 8.00 pm at:-

The National Jewish Memorial Centre, corner Canberra Avenue and National Circuit, Forrest, Canberra (entrance off National Circuit).

Enquiries to Sylvia Deutsch in Canberra.

Tel/fax: 02-6248-6196

Email: deutand@ozemail.com.au

Judy made it clear that when looking for material it was more economical, and better research procedure, to find the best source of information whether by phone, fax, e-mail, website or letter. Also, when requesting information enquirers ought to at least ask if there is a fee structure, not assume all is gratis. When writing for information, include a stamp of the country concerned, sufficient to ensure an airmail response, and, where possible, include an addressed envelope or an addressed label for the recipient's use to ensure that the letter finds its way correctly. International Reply Paid Postage Coupons are a possible source of stamps-at-a-distance, but not all post offices supply them and not all recipients can cash them.

The next meeting on Sunday, 12 July, 1998 at 1.00 pm at 21 Broomhall Way, Noranda 6062. Fax (08) 9375 3574 or 9385 2643 Tel (08) 9375 3874. Our guest speaker will be Judy Joseph from Birmingham, UK.



## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

### **1998 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, SYDNEY, 22 March, 1998**

This is our sixth Annual General Meeting and my sixth report to you as president of this Society. We have thrived since our foundation in November 1991, and in December 1997 we reached a total of 227 members. Our membership year runs from January to December, except for those who joined us after October 1 of the previous year whose renewal is not sought until January, fifteen to thirteen months later. As it takes some members several months to renew, at this moment our membership stands at 151, plus 46 members of the Victorian branch, a total of 197. Most of our members, 116, are in NSW but, as you can see, not all choose to attend our AGM. As in many organisations, many of our members are content to belong and to receive our quarterly newsletter, and we only see them rarely.

We also have 13 members in the A.C.T., eight in South Australia, five in Queensland, four in W.A., two in Tasmania and one in the Northern Territory, though I have great hopes of this soon growing to two. We also have two overseas members.

The most important event in the life of our Society in the past year was our offer of autonomy to the Victorian Branch in 1998. This was mainly due to the fact that as an organisation depending on volunteers for its organisational work, the load on Rieke Nash, who does most of the day-to-day genealogical housekeeping for our Society, had become too heavy. We have with us tonight Lionel Sharpe, the chairman of the Victorian group who might tell us a little later how this autonomy has worked for them, and whether they are happy with it. We have continued to have most amicable personal and societal relations with the Society in Melbourne, and I have nothing but praise for all those members in Melbourne with whom I have dealt over the years, originally Rosaline Collins, Rhonda Lasky, Ester Csaky, Leslie Oberman and, of course, Lionel himself. We are still a happy extended family, but now we each run our own household. In November-December 1997 our treasurer returned \$1020 to Victoria to enable them to purchase the books they choose, or CDs, and to subscribe independently to those Special Interest Group publications which interest their members.

We still look after the interest of our members in Adelaide, in Perth, and in the dispersed membership in Queensland, by providing some of the important books and pamphlets on Jewish genealogy which may help them. Of course, we cannot afford to purchase more than a few books where there are but a handful of memberships coming in, and where there may be reduced fees all round. Committee members not only put in time and effort, but also pay entrance fees to functions, and pay all sorts of things from their own pockets.

In some states we have representatives who are active retired people with limited incomes, who help us with answering queries and by looking after our resources in their area or state, but some pay no membership fee. On occasion I have been asked how or why these representatives were picked, and the only honest answer I can give is "opportunity, availability, and readiness to render a service to Jewish genealogy in their area".

In June 1997, a Western Australian Jewish Genealogical Society was formed in Perth under the direction of Michelle Urban with five members and a promise of at least four workshops or meetings a year. It is a very fragile plant so far, as Michelle Urban, the main leader of the group, not only works in her husband's business, but also runs a small part-time concern of her own. But the whole thing coalesced when we opportunistically helped them to coordinate a meeting with our friend Chava Agmon when she visited Perth, as well as Sydney and Melbourne, in March 1997.

In recent weeks I have been able to encourage Sylvia Deutsch and Earle Hoffman, both members of our Society, already very active in several organisations in Canberra, to also contemplate holding four or more workshops a year in Canberra for members of our Society who have been yearning for some networking in Jewish genealogy. Because of all their other community responsibilities, neither Sylvia nor Earle want to actually found a branch of our Society at the moment, but this is what will be de facto, if not de jure.

We have continued to hold monthly workshops for our members and visitors at the Reverend Katz Library of the North Shore Synagogue in Lindfield every month except January, as we close down activities from mid-December to early February. Extra space has been provided for our resources with a cupboard to which one of our members contributed privately. This year we also held again our Central Coast Open Day at the home of Beulah and Dr Richard Gross with the participation of a number of committee members, coordinated by Rieke Nash who brought down a lot of our resources. In lieu of our usual annual Beginners' Workshop at Shalom College we held a special seminar on availability of resources for research in Poland in the Wilson Hall at the North Shore Synagogue on Sunday March 1. This seminar attracted forty participants, including three or even four from Canberra, plus half a dozen people who came for the usual library workshop. The attendance was all the more pleasing because our previous resources seminar on similar lines for research on Lithuania had been most disappointing, despite the presence of a lot of people of Litvak descent nearby.

We expect our next such Resources Seminar to be on Research on Germany either later this year or early in 1999.

We have not held a large number of meetings with speakers, as few new interesting genealogical speakers



came our way. On October 29 we heard an excellent address by Dr David Weinberg of Wayne University, Detroit, who was then a visiting scholar at UNSW, on "Jewish Emigration from Eastern Europe to Western Europe and USA from 1880 to 1939" at Beth Wizo in Bondi Junction. Despite the Eastern suburbs venue, attendance was fairly modest.

In late August Peter and Rieke Nash and I all spoke on our overseas experiences, both at the Paris International Conference and our visits to Poland, Belarus and Ukraine at the Jewish Folk Centre, also in Bondi Junction.

We have continued to publish our newsletter, the Kasher Koala, four times yearly in 1997 with two issues of 16 pages each and two of 12 pages, and have just started our Volume V of the publication with the March issue. Thanks to Rieke's devoted publishing skills it continues to look superb. As editor I am obviously biased, but I believe that we are up there with the eight or so top Jewish genealogical journals. Our stories are interesting, well-written, and by a variety of authors, and we try in each issue to cover different topics and Special Interest regions in our articles and book notices. We also try to keep up a high standard of syntax, spelling and punctuation, while yet leaving each contributor his/her special style. You, our target audience, must tell us whether we succeed or not, but imitation being the highest form of flattery, I am always delighted to have some of our features copied, and also to receive some letters of appreciation from overseas.

We continue to send copies of the Kasher Koala to all overseas JGS's and also to several local and overseas Judaica libraries, and to have exchanges with several Australian state genealogical societies and state libraries, as well as the British Society of Genealogists.

Since the last AGM we have continued to acquire books on Jewish genealogy, both by purchase for the Society and by gifts from our members, particularly in the areas of their special interests. e.g. Peter Nash on Shanghai refugees and prewar Berlin Jewry, Terry Newman on English Jewry, Kim Phillips a self-published book on her family, and me on Poland and recently on Jamaica. The Society subscribes to AVOTAYNU, to STAMMBAUM on German Jewish roots, to LANDSMEN, to KIELCE-RADOM Sig, and to GESHER GALICIA.

This last year our committee has consisted of Rieke Nash as both vice-president and secretary and in charge of our resources, as well as publisher of the KOSHER KOALA, Terry Newman as treasurer, Phillip Baynash as membership chairman, David Laufer as Minutes Secretary, Nigel Meinrath as committee member without portfolio, Gary Luke in charge of our on-line services, and I, Sophie Caplan, as both president and editor of the Kasher Koala. Apart from Gary and Phillip, most of them are stalwarts from the foundation of our Society, six and a quarter years ago. Our big failure has been to attract more people to our committee.

My goal, when I retire as president, is to leave a strong set of Australian JGS's, one in every Australian city where there is a strong Jewish community, with its own basic library of Jewish genealogical books and a viable continuity. At the present rate I will have to stay at your helm till I am eighty. If you want to avoid that fate come and join us and help.

It looks as though this week on March 24, 1998 we finally reached our long term goal of incorporation of the Society in NSW. At our inaugural meeting on 3rd November 1991 Leo Wassercug, a solicitor, undertook to prepare a constitution for incorporation. Sometime during 1992 we even held a special meeting to vote on several clauses he was suggesting. But when he left two or three years later for a year's delayed honeymoon trip, all his preparatory work was left behind with one of his friends. It took me several months to trace the friend and to get the paperwork back. At that juncture I reasoned that since we seemed to be operating perfectly well without a constitution, we had more urgent tasks to perform. Eventually my lawyer son, Jonathan Caplan, registered the name and set out to do something early in 1997, but left it to me to complete the task. This was taken on by Gary Luke and Philip Baynash, but it is Nigel Meinrath and a lawyer relative of his, who finally completed the task and performed the permanent re-registration of the name with the Department of Fair Trading and the registration of the constitution. We say "Schehechyanu" and a thousand thanks to Nigel for completing the task.

As Societies go, we seem to have our share of successes in reuniting people through the Forebears Family Finder column in Kasher Koala and in various other ways. We also seem to be esteemed in the world of Jewish genealogy, because we have helped a number of people to trace relatives. Recently I have been asked to join the Awards committee, the Nobel Prize jury of Jewish Genealogy, as the only non-American on the jury. Even though I am not afraid to speak up for other countries at the AGM of the Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies, or perhaps because I do speak up, I was asked to do so. I hope to represent Australia worthily on this committee.

*Sophie Caplan, President*

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## NEWS FROM BIRMINGHAM

Dr. Anthony Joseph has informed us that Zoe Josephs, the noted Jewish historian of Birmingham Jewry, died on Sunday 24 May 1998. Dr Anthony Joseph is to write Zoe Josephs' obituary for the London Jewish Chronicle. Zoe Josephs wrote herself, or edited with other contributors, five books: 'Birmingham Jewry, 1740-1914', 'More Aspects of Birmingham Jewry, 1740-1930' (which Kingsley Ireland recently gave to us), 'Survivors', 'Story of Her School Years' and 'Voices from the Past, Memories of Singers Hill Synagogue'.



## WHAT'S YOUR REAL NAME?

by Beulah-Rose Gross

Much has been written about the origin of Jewish surnames.

Alexander Beider (A Dictionary of Jewish Surnames from the Russian Empire) and others have discussed how, why and when surnames originated and changed. As a result, we now know that many surnames indicate a city or town where a family once lived. We also may learn an ancestor's occupation from his name; the Danziger family may have lived in Danzig at one time, and the original Papa Shochet probably was a ritual slaughterer.

Not so well documented is the reason that some Jewish surnames were changed in Russia during the 19th Century. Under the reign of Czar Nicholas I (1825-55), boys were rigorously conscripted into the Russian Army. Even before this time, the sons of Russian soldiers were housed in barracks known as cantonments. They were instructed in military matters, given a basic elementary education and disciplined by way of starvation and corporal punishment. Thus, young conscripts to the army came to be known as cantonists.

In 1827 and thereafter, military service was made compulsory for Jews residing in the Czarist empire. Young Jewish boys were included in this conscription with a view to force them to become Christians; individual Jewish communities were made responsible for supplying a quota of such conscripts.

Kidnappers, known in Yiddish as khapers (captors of recruits), took Jewish boys, some as young as eight or nine, from their homes, and these children were thus lost to their families and Judaism.

Under Czarist conscription laws, a family's eldest son was exempt from the draft to remain at home and support ageing parents. To protect their younger sons and keep their families intact, many Jewish families took advantage of this law by changing the surnames of the younger sons to the maiden names of their mothers, grandmothers or aunts, or by "adopting out" the boys to families that had no sons. Thus, brothers acquired different surnames that remained with them forever. (The cantonist schools were disbanded in 1857 after the death of Czar Nicholas I, but the tradition among Jews of adopting out sons to protect them from the draft continued for many years afterwards).

These name changes and adoptions were surreptitious, so there are no records of when or how often they occurred. For genealogists, there is only family legend to work on, so one must always examine and research any tiny reference or chance word that might open a whole new line of inquiry and discovery.

Such name changes occurred in both my maternal and paternal families, but family legend kept the stories

alive and allowed me to trace the related branches. My maternal great-grandfather's original family name was Chaimo. As the eldest son, he kept the name when the cantonist system was implemented, but to avoid the draft, his younger two brothers were adopted out to Polokow and Ausbruch families. My paternal family's original name was Manaschewitz, but again, only the eldest kept the name. One son became Herring, another Baetz (my maiden name).

Not everyone can know if their family names were changed to avoid the Russian draft, or if so, what the original names were. If when doing research, however, one finds someone who appears to have been related, but one cannot determine exactly how, consider the possibility that brothers may have been adopted out and see if that hypothesis helps pieces fit together.

Uncovering the lost connections between family members that resulted from name changes of this type is important for Jewish genealogy. I propose to establish a database that lists original names, name changes and family relationships where known.

*Beulah-Rose Gross is a member of the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society. She can be reached on [rachi@ozemail.com.au](mailto:rachi@ozemail.com.au) or fax: 61-2-4369-1522*

## NEW BOOKS

Our Society in Sydney has purchased "JEWS IN BRISTOL, The History of the Jewish Community in Bristol from the Middle Ages to the Present Day" by JUDITH SAMUEL, Sansom and Company, 81g Pembroke Road, Bristol, BS8 3EA, ENGLAND, 1997. Price £ 17.95, plus postage £ 2.60.

The history of Bristol Jewry goes back further than most, in fact to shortly after the Norman conquest. In the autumn of 1986, during redevelopment of an old police station site in Bristol's Jacob's Wells Road, what was identified as a medieval mikveh (ritual bath) was found with a flowing hot spring and a Hebrew inscription 'Zochalim' (flowing). From various features, and the fact that this land was acquired by St Augustine Abbey, now the Bristol Cathedral, in 1142, the mikveh must be dated as earlier, probably circa 1100, making it the oldest ritual bath yet found in Europe and the only medieval Hebrew inscription yet discovered in Britain.

After the expulsion of Jews from England in 1290, Bristol also lost its Jews until the late sixteenth century. The modern community was established between 1740 and 1876, and has continued to this day.

The focus of this book is historical rather than genealogical, but anyone with an interest in the Jews of South-West England will find much of interest, including many names. There is an index, which renders it easier to use for the genealogical reader.

*Sophie Caplan*



## WHOSE MOTHER? WHICH WIFE?

A journey through the Jewish Registers of Fordon and Bromberg (now Bydgoszcz), Poland, in search of one man and his descendants.

by Jenny King

### *in the beginning*

When I began family research I had no idea it would lead me to Poland. When I realised that I could recognise names in registers written in a foreign language and the type of record, excitement set in. When a cousin in a distant city accidentally found a translator I was over the moon. When I joined the AJGS and experienced the friendliness and the helpfulness of its members, my entry into the world of Jewish research blossomed.

And so has begun a journey which has proved to be challenging, frustrating, exciting and rewarding in very many ways.

### *the table on the page opposite*

The table includes all the relevant information taken from translations of the Fordon and Bromberg Jewish Registers. I began with the Fordon registers, and then widened the scope to take in Bromberg, as it was a major centre a few kilometres from Fordon. Many records were missing that I felt should have been found there. Perhaps some have been lost or simply never entered.

Two areas are shaded. The shaded rows are for records involving Mendel CARO, the father, a few of his marriages and deaths of some of some of his wives. The shaded column gives the wives', or mothers' names used in the records. This column is the topic of this article.

There was considerable variation in information supplied in the registers which has been frustrating and has created some of the problems I am now trying to solve.

### *names, names, names*

I can cope with spelling variations but name variations are another matter. I am very much a learner when it comes to Jewish names and the way they can be interchanged between various languages.

Examine the Mother's Name column. Records 1 to 12 appear to be fairly straight forward. The earlier birth records (and marriages?) were not in the registers. The names Sara and Zore appear to be compatible but Scharne and Zielke? Record 12 rests on an assumption of mine. The marriage for Susannah Mendel CARO found in the Bromberg register matches Sorsche's birth but mother's names, Sara ITZIG and Sara LACHMANN? Was her mother the daughter of an Itzig Lachmann? Susannah uses the second name of Mendel. Her father had now died, so this was within the rules as I understand them. My assumption is that Susannah and Sorsche were one and the same.

Both Albertine and Aron, records 1 & 2, state 'mother dead' on their marriage records, 1839 and 1846 respectively. Who was she? The question remains. How many wives did Mendel Caro have?

There are no problems with Records 13 to 17. I can assume that Sara Itzig/Lachmann died between 1838 and 1841, but can I? Read on.

Record 17 gives two name variations, Jitel and Jette. Accept these as the same. The question is how many variations for Jette? Jitel, Janette, Julia, Gonette...

Records 16 and 20 are the most difficult to consider. Record 16, the marriage by Mendel Caro to Sara nee STYTKY; record 17, mother's name, Sara nee STYTKY; record 18, mother's name, Sara nee Priefe; record 19, mother's name, Pried Zore nee ITZIG; record 20, death of Sara STITZKY (sic)!

What is going on here? Is record 19 the same Sara ITZIG mentioned earlier in record 12 & 13? There could be up to three different wives or mothers involved here! I simply cannot work this section out.

At least Records 21 to 24 appear to be straight forward.

The possibility also exists that errors may have been made by those writing the entries into the registers.

### *and further questions*

Why was it necessary for Mendel CARO to marry so many times? Was it to provide mothers for children still yet to grow up? Did it provide security of a sort for the female - single or widowed? Did the wives have a dowry which was needed? I have not had access to material on social practices of these times.

What about the missing records - marriages and deaths of the wives of Mendel Caro? Where could they be if recorded somewhere? Why can't I find further records of many of the issue of Mendel Caro? The only deaths recorded are all for young children. Did all the other children survive? Did they emigrate to other lands before marrying? Did they simply move away? Record 2's Aron CARO, has been the only child who appeared to remain in Fordon. I have found records for his issue and many came to Australia. There are other possibilities in the Bromberg registers but those name variations play havoc again!

No births appear for record 1, Albertine CARO and Louis LIPPMANN. Where did they go after they were married? What about Susannah CARO and Ascher LOWENBERG? I may have to reorder the LDS films in again and recheck for information I may have discounted as not being relevant at the time because of those name variations. I did copy all records I found that had the CARO or OPPEL name mentioned and I thought I did a good job.

### *and now for Julia*

(continued on page 11)



# CARO RECORDS IN THE FORDON AND BROMBERG JEWISH REGISTERS

## Abbreviations

RN - Record number, E - Event Type (B - Birth, D - Death, M - Marriage) JR - Jewish Registers (F - Fordon, B - Bromberg)  
In Forename (f - female, m - male) In Supporting Information (F- Father, M- Mother)

RN	E	Event Date	Forename	Mother's Name	Supporting Information	JR
1	B	c1815	Albertine (f)		c1815 - birth on countback from marriage information	
	M	21.05.1839			21.05.1839 - marriage: Albertine CARO, 24, F: Mendel CARO, shopkeeper, M: dead & Louis LIPPMANN, 26, partner of the shopkeeper Mendel CARO	F
2	B	c1822	Aron (m)		c1822 - birth on countback from marriage information	
	M	10.03.1846			10.03.1846 - marriage: Aron CARO, 24, trader, F: Mendel CARO, shopkeeper in Fordon, M: dead & Jette LEBENHEIM (m.2. Rosa Aronsohn)	F
3	B	c1827	Maje (f)		c1827 - birth on countback from death information	
	D	11.02.1831			11.02.1831 - death: Maje, daughter of Mendel CARO, 4 yrs	F
4	B	05.01.1825	Itzig (m)	Zielke	05.01.1825 - birth: Itzig, son of Mendel CARO, trader & Zielke	F
	D	21.07.1825	Itzig		21.07.1825 - death: Itzig, son of Mendel CARO, 6 mths	F
5	B	20.05.1826	Scharne (f)	Scharne	20.05.1826 - birth: Scharne, daughter of Mendel CARO & Scharne	F
	B	15.05.1827	unnamed		15.05.1827 - birth: unnamed child to Mendel CARO, shopkeeper	F
7	B	03.05.1831	Lewin (m)	Sara	03.05.1831 - birth: Lewin, son of Mendel CARO, shopkeeper & Sara	F
8	B	14.10.1832	unnamed	Sara	14.10.1832 - birth: unnamed female to Mendel CARO, shopkeeper & Sara	F
9	B	18.02.1834	Julius (m)	Zore	10.02.1834 - birth: Julius, son of Mendel CARO, shopkeeper & Zore	F
10		1834	Mendel KARO	Naturalised in the Grand Duchy of Poland	Residence: Fordon	
11	B	28.02.1835	Isabella (f)	Sara	28.02.1835 - birth: Isabella, daughter of Mendel CARO, shopkeeper & Sara nee .....	F
12	B	1836	Sorsche (f)	Sara nee LACHMANN	1836 - birth: Sorsche, daughter of Mendel CARO, shopkeeper & Sara nee LACHMANN	F
	M	11.03.1859	Susannah	... nee ITZIG- CARO	11.03.1859 - marriage: Susannah Mendel CARO, 22 yrs, daughter of deceased businessman Mendel..... CARO & .... ITZIG-CARO and Ascher LOWENBERG	B
13	B	1838	unnamed (f)	Sara nee ITZIG	1838 - birth: unnamed female to Mendel CARO & Sara nee ITZIG	F
14	M	21.04.1841	Mendel CARO & Rikel nee CARO		21.04.1841 - marriage: Mendel CARO, 50, shopkeeper, F: dead, M: Jette CARO & Rikel nee CARO, 36, F: Moses CARO, wine..... in Breslau	F
15	D	09.1842	Rikel CARO		09.1842 - death: Rikel CARO wife of shopkeeper Mendel CARO, 53 yrs	F
16	M	09.08.1843	Mendel CARO		09.08.1843 - marriage: Mendel CARO, shopkeeper, parents dead & widow Sara Moses STYTKY	F
17	B	16.07.1844	Jitel (f)	Sara nee STYTKY	16.07.1844 - birth: Jitel, daughter of Mendel CARO, shopkeeper & Sara nee STYTKY	F
	D	09.12.1844	Jette		09.12.1844 - death: Jette, daughter of Mendel CARO, 5 mths	F
18	B	20.08.1845	Pauline (f)	Sara nee PRIEFE	20.08.1845 - birth: Pauline, daughter of Mendel CARO, shopkeeper & Sara nee PRIEFE	F
	D	09.1845			09.1845 - death: Pauline, daughter of Mendel CARO, 3 wks	F
19	B	13.11.1846	Scheindel (f)	Priew Zore nee ITZIG	13.11.1846 - birth: Scheindel, daughter of Mendel CARO, shopkeeper & Priew Zore nee ITZIG	F
20	D	29.11.1846	Sara CARO nee STITZKI		29.11.1846 - death: Sara CARO nee STITZKI, wife of shopkeeper Mendel CARO, 38 yrs	F
21	M	29.06.1847	Mendel CARO & Gonette FRAENKEL		29.06.1847 - marriage: Mendel CARO, 55, shopkeeper, parents dead & Gonette FRAENKEL	F
22	B	07.10.1848	unnamed (m)	Janette nee SEELIG	07.10.1848 - birth: son of Mendel CARO	F,B
	D	14.10.1848			14.10.1848 - death: son of Mendel CARO who died before receiving a name	F,B
23	B	24.10.1849	Seelig (m)	Jette nee SEELIG	24.10.1849 - birth: Seelig, son of Mendel CARO, shopkeeper & Jette nee SEELIG	F,B
24	D	24.05.1850	Mendel CARO		24.05.1850 - death: Mendel CARO, shopkeeper, 59 yrs	F,B



## JEWS IN POLAND IN 1997

A brief synopsis of various Polish Jewish affairs from "Midrasz" the first issue of a journal of the Polish Jewish communities, 1997

by Simon Sekel

How many Jews are there at present in Poland? The official statistics claim 3,000. There are however those that claim a minimum of 15,000 Jews or descendants of Jews. The real figure depends on the definition of who is a Jew? Is it only the one who has a Jewish mother? The one who attends a service at least twice a year, or attends some happenings connected with Judaism?

Amongst the older group are the ones who retained their Jewish identity throughout their whole life and are convinced they are the last generation of Polish Jews. The next category are middle aged or even younger who rediscovered their Jewish identity and by choice decided to join and take some part in some of the activities available in the 15 centres scattered through Poland. The "TSKZ" or Social & Cultural Jewish Association seems to be the busiest one. Then there are religious communities as well as ex-servicemen's groups. The collapse of Communism has brought about some increased activity and even in some towns the return of premises and some synagogues used for fifty years for many purposes.

In Katowice about twenty people meet in the "TSKZ" monthly. It is mostly the desire to be with other Jews that brings them together. They exchange the latest gossip, news of Israel, have a cup of coffee and cake. It all has a somewhat clandestine atmosphere and if someone at work finds out about their Jewish activities, that is the end of their career for sure. Also there must not be any visible sign outside the building, or the place will be vandalised or burned down. The meeting place is very modestly equipped, some Israeli posters on the wall and, if not for the Lauder Foundation, most of these clubs would not exist. During the New Year and Yom Kippur or Passover Holydays the attendance increases.

Lublin, once a huge Jewish community, now comprises twenty-two members of TSKZ. They are mostly very old or sick with eight males only, so there is no minyan available. Lately some commemorative plaques were attached to ex-Jewish community buildings, thanks to the efforts of a Doctor Symcha Weiss who has some influence in city affairs. This gives the overseas tourists some idea of past history.

Wroclaw (formerly Breslau) is yet another story. The very dynamic Mr J Krichler, who originally came from Cracow, introduced many activities including Hebrew lessons, study of Judaism etc. During High Holydays up to 250 people attended. It is a very liberal community and even those who only had a Jewish father are accepted. It is worth noting that it was in Breslau that Reform Judaism was born practically 150 years ago.

Now however, Mr Krichler finds that because of all the activity, a lot of his members are lost to Aliyah.

Warsaw, of course, has a synagogue, a rabbi, a Yiddish theatre, TSKZ club, Jewish pre-school, historic society, even a periodical called "Folks Sztyme". The political repercussions of March 1968 which just about extinguished Jewish activities in Poland somehow did not affect the Warsaw community. However, earlier this year the synagogue in Twarda Street was torched and badly damaged. The mayor of Warsaw as well as other representatives, like the leader of the Greek Orthodox Church, came to a special service, but no one from the 95% Catholic community appeared.

In Poznan the less than twenty people occasionally meet in private homes mainly Mr Beryts' place. They are mainly old, but lately a few young interested people seem to join occasionally.

In Gdansk out of 10,000 only twenty-two survived. As recently as two years ago a group organised a Pesach Seder with about 70 people participating. This led to establishing an active community once again. Mr Jaacub Szadaj, the leader at present, remembers when in 1967 the Polish leaders instructed the Gdansk Jews to condemn Israel. The Jewish community walked out and disbanded as a group and any activities.

The Lodz community also recently returned to life. About 130 belong to the Lauder renovated "Great Synagogue" which was damaged by fire in 1987. About 60% of all properties in Lodz were Jewish owned before 1939. The Poles in Lodz, as in other ex-Jewish communities throughout the country, are constantly in fear that the rightful owners or descendants will return and claim their assets. This paranoia contributes to the active anti-Semitism in all of Eastern Europe.

Krakow has the active "Remu" and "Temple" synagogues, TSKZ Club with about 30 members and even a youth club. Some cafes claim a Jewish atmosphere and food but are mainly tourist-oriented and run by enterprising Poles. The Kazimierz district is full of Jewish relics. In the first week of July each year a festival is organised and a lot of so-called "lovers of Jewish Culture" participate. The festival is organised by Poles and no Jewish Club or group officially takes part.

*Simon Sekel is the father of our committee member, Gary Luke, and an active practical supporter of our Society. Ed.*

### SOME VALUABLE SITES IN THE UK

BMD Certificates for England and Wales as well as Census data from Family Records Centre can now be ordered through a web site. The cost varies depending on how detailed your information is. Also available are records from the London Metropolitan Archives and Guildhall Library. <http://www.gendocs.demon.co.uk>

A Victorian London A-Z Street Index can be found on <http://www.gendocs.demon.co.uk/lon-str.html>



## WHOSE MOTHER? WHICH WIFE?

(continued from page 8)

Julia CARO has not yet been mentioned. Julius CARO, record 9, in his will dated 1907 in Australia, left a small bequest to his sister Julia OPPEL, of Fordon, if still alive. There was no birth found for a Julia Caro. However, I did find a marriage, Jette CARO to Lewin OPPEL, 183(6?) in the Fordon registers. No ages or parents' names were stated. This meant that Jette (or Julia?) should have been born circa 1820 or earlier.

There are several children recorded for Jette and Lewin, one of whom Flora, appears in an old address book owned by a relative in Australia, 'Flora OPPEL, Stargard, Pommern', most likely recorded in the late 1800's. Unfortunately the early pages up to 'G' are missing in this book.

If anyone reading this has some ideas or even solutions to the challenges arising out of these records, I would certainly appreciate their thoughts. I can be contacted by email: jking@ix.net.au or through the AJGS, PO Box 154, Northbridge, NSW 1560, Australia.

*Jenny King is a member from Orange, NSW descended from both Joseph Caro and from the Vilna Gaon.*

### Sources

LDS films: Fordon Jewish Registers:

c 1820 to 1888 814573, 814574, 814575

Bromberg Jewish Registers:

c 1823 to 1865 813087

Edward LUFT, compiler, *The Naturalised Jews of the Grand Duchy of Posen in 1834 and 1835*. Brown University, Scholars Press, Georgia, USA, 1987.

Address book of Emil Caro (son of Aron) who emigrated to Australia c 1885.



## FOREBEARS AUSTRALIAN FAMILY FINDER

Our Family Finder column will be charged for at the rate of \$AUS 8 for 25 words plus address, telephone, fax or email number of inquirer. For overseas advertisements \$US5 if sent in cash OR for cheques \$US15 due to new high bank exchange rates for cheques in other currencies. Please communicate directly with inquirer, but kindly inform us if this column has helped you to advance in your research.

00066 JOHN PAUL LOWENS, 225 Broadway, Suite 3604, New York, NY 10007, USA. Fax: (212) 962 7966. Tel: (212) 962 7960. Seeking information on family KAHN, wife HANCHEN LOEWENSTEIN, her parents ELEASAR LOEWENSTEIN and MICHLA EHRMANN, born in Beerfelden, Germany. HANNCHEN, also possibly HANNA/JOHANNA born in Breckenheim, Hesse, Germany, 3 February 1845, came to Australia probably 1863-1873, lived either Melbourne or Brisbane. Any information welcome.

00067 ROBYN VIVIENNE KASSAS, PO Box 3437, PARRAMATTA, SYDNEY, 2124, NSW. Tel: (02) 9687 2929; Fax (02) 9687 2990. Born Robyn Vivienne Ann on 24 April 1947 at Crown Street Women's Hospital, Sydney to GLADYS DAVIS, daughter of Rev. ISAAC DAVIS who worked at Great Synagogue. Gladys had a brother Charles and a sister Dot. Robyn was adopted at birth and seeks information about her birth mother's family and any information about her father.

### AUSTRALIAN JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY DATA BASE

Names being researched by our new members June, 1998

Id	Surname	Town	Country	Dates
287	SCHEONFELDT	ANY	POLAND	1800's
191	SHROOT	NASIELSK	POLAND	1880-1940
416	SINGEREVITCH	DAUGAVPILS	LATVIA	1850+
415	SOLOMON	LONDON	ENGLAND	1800 to 1910
416	SOUSA	ANY	BELGIUM	
416	SOUSA	ANY	NETHERLANDS	
294	SRIBNECK	RIGA	LATVIA	1860-1890
294	SRIBNECK	LONDON	ENGLAND	1890-1940
287	TUCHLER	ANY	POLAND	1800's
419	VAN NOORDEN	BERLIN	GERMANY	1800's
416	VILENSKY	DAUGAVPILS	LATVIA	1850+
410	WEISS	SATU MARE	ROMANIA	Pre 1944
410	WEISS	SOLDUBA	ROMANIA	Pre 1944
191	YULOVITCH	PIKELIAI	LITHUANIA	1880-1905
287	ZAKRZEWSKI	ALEKSANDROW KUJ	POLAND	1800's-1939
191	ZELMANOVITCH	NASIELSK	POLAND	1880-1940



# **AUSTRALIAN JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY DATA BASE**

Names being researched by our new members

June, 1998

Id	Surname	Town	Country	Dates
410	AMOASI	DARABANI	ROMANIA	Pre 1944
416	ASHKENAZI	DAUGAVPILS	LATVIA	1850+
416	ASHKENAZI	CHERIKOV	BELARUS	1850+
413	BEUTEL	DZIERZGON	POLAND	1876
191	BLASS	PIKELIAI	LITHUANIA	1880-1905
191	BLASS	BIALYSTOK	POLAND	1880-1910
414	CHONISZKEN	ANY	RUSSIA	1845-1880
415	COHEN	LONDON	ENGLAND	1800 to 1920
413	CYFKA	CHORZOW	POLAND	1907
419	ESKELL	MANCHESTER	ENGLAND	1800's
287	FALKENSTEIN	ANY	GERMANY	1800's-1939
287	FALKENSTEIN	ANY	USA	1895
294	FORSTEIN	ANY	POLAND	1860-1890
294	FORSTEIN	LONDON	ENGLAND	1896-1956
294	FOSTER	LONDON	ENGLAND	1896-1956
294	FOSTER	AUCKLAND	NEW ZEALAND	1956-1963
414	GOGOLEWSKI	PARCZEW	POLAND	1845-1880
414	GOGOLEWSKI	LUBLIN	POLAND	1900-1925
294	GOLDCHICK	ANY	RUSSIA	1870-1890
294	GOLDCHICK	AUCKLAND	NEW ZEALAND	1950-1983
294	GOLDCHICK	LONDON	ENGLAND	1890-1950
413	GURSKI	DZIERZGON	POLAND	1876
415	HALBSTADT	LONDON	ENGLAND	1800 to 1910
410	ISAAC		ROMANIA	
294	ISAACS	LONDON	ENGLAND	1884-1930
421	ISRAEL	LONDON	ENGLAND	1820-1848
287	JACOBIOUS	CEKZIN	POLAND	1800's
287	JACOBIOUS	ANY	RUSSIA	1800's-1939
287	JACOBIOUS	GDANSK	POLAND	1800's-1939
294	JACOBIVITCH	GRODNO	BELARUS	1860-1884
294	JACOBIVITCH	LONDON	ENGLAND	1884-1913
415	JOFFE	MOSKVA	RUSSIA	1800 to 1920
415	KATZ	LINKUVA	LITHUANIA	1800 to 1920
410	KLEIN	BOGHIS	ROMANIA	Pre 1944
415	KLEIN	LINKUVA	LITHUANIA	1800 to 1920
414	KROL	LODZ	POLAND	1920
287	LESZCZYNSKI	ALEKSANDROW KUJ	POLAND	1800's
421	LEWIS	LONDON	ENGLAND	1820-1860
415	LYONS	LONDON	ENGLAND	1800 to 1910
419	LYONS	ANY	SCOTLAND	1798
414	MARCINKIEWICZ	TOMASZOWKA	POLAND	1925-1939
294	MELONDOVITCH	VILNIUS	LITHUANIA	1860-1900
294	MELONDOVITCH	LONDON	ENGLAND	1900-1920
410	MOSCOVITZ	DARABANI	ROMANIA	Pre 1944
419	MOSES	BERLIN	GERMANY	1719
416	ROET	ANY	BELGIUM	
416	ROET	ANY	NETHERLANDS	
420	ROTHSTEIN	CHERKOSKIJ	RUSSIA	
415	RUSSELL	BAY OF ISLANDS	NEW ZEALAND	1800 to 1910
415	RUSSELL	SYDNEY	AUSTRALIA	1800+
415	RUSSELL	HOBART	AUSTRALIA	1800+
416	SARPHTIE	ANY	BELGIUM	
416	SARPHTIE	ANY	NETHERLANDS	