



The Kasher Koala

Newsletter of the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society, Inc.

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EDITORIAL

לשנה טובה

Happy New Year 5762 to all our readers!
Recently back from a great conference for the second time in London, there was no rest for the wicked because preparations for a special workshop on genealogical research on German Jewry on 2nd September had to be put in train. We attracted a total of 18 members to hear Professor Konrad Kwiet condense the history of German Jewry, from the time of the Romans, the Crusades, the Enlightenment to the present in a masterly seventy minutes survey. Your editor

did a short presentation on the books and journals the Society has available on the topic, including books owned by members, and there was a short time to sample these books. For the first time we had a contingent of visitors from the North Shore Temple membership, thanks to publicity in their newsletter.

I brought back a variety of newly published manuals on Jewish genealogy, copies of which were also sent to our branches in Brisbane, Canberra, Adelaide and Perth. Their description is elsewhere.

We are now planning two big lectures.

(Continued on page 12)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Jewish Chronicle Project	<i>Miriam Pollak</i>	3
The London Conference, 2001	<i>Sophie Caplan OAM</i>	4
The Cohen Project	<i>Sophie Caplan OAM</i>	5
Bringing Science to the Search for		
Family Roots: Using DNA	<i>Julia Fuma</i>	5
Canberra Corner	<i>Sylvia Deutsch</i>	7
News From Western Australia	<i>Michelle Urban</i>	7
Queensland Report	<i>Morris S. Ochert OAM</i>	8
News from Victoria	<i>Lionel Sharpe</i>	8
News From South Australia	<i>Jeanie Susman</i>	8
AGM of I.A.J.G.S. 2001	<i>Sophie Caplan OAM</i>	9
I.A.J.G.S. Awards For Excellence		9
News About Hungarian Jewry in 2001	<i>Simon Sekel</i>	10
New Books in Our Library	<i>Sophie Caplan OAM</i>	11
Australian Family Finder		12

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SYDNEY WORKSHOPS 2001

All workshops are usually held at the Rev Katz Library, North Shore Synagogue, Lindfield, on Sundays, from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

October 7

November 4

December 2

VISITING SPEAKER

DAVID MONTEFIORE JACOBS

Of Vancouver, Canada

Aaron Hart from England was the first known Jew in Canada. A Canadian, whose Jewish Australian ancestry goes back to convicts Theodore Krakouer and his wife, Betty Israel, who came from England to Western Australia:

WHEN? ... 3PM On Sunday 14 October 2001.

WHERE? ..The SYDNEY JEWISH MUSEUM
THEATRETTE

148 DARLINGHURST RD, DARLINGHURST

ENTRY FEE...\$5 donation per person, incl. tea, coffee

RABBI JOHN LEVI

Author of *Australian Genesis* and *The Forefathers*

Speaks on

Jews in Colonial Australia

WHEN? 7.45 p.m. Monday 5 November, 2001

WHERE? The Great Synagogue,
Israel Green Hall

166 Castlereagh Street, Sydney

ENTRY FEE ... \$5 donation

INTERNATIONAL JGS CONFERENCES

Toronto Canada August 4-9, 2002

Washington D.C., U.S.A .2003

Jerusalem, Israel 2004

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

New South Wales

Ariel Green

Valerie and Shalom Nissim

Victoria

Harry Barr

Zev Barr

Solomon Berman

Dr Anthony Joseph, also a member of Sydney AJGS

Cheryl and Clive Pattie, Elana and Stan Turtledove

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>

THE GATEWAY TO EVERYTHING JEWISH IN AUSTRALIA

<http://www.jewishaustralia.com>

Identifying someone you know change people's lives!

<http://www.jewishpeoplefinder.com>

Society of Australian Genealogists Newsletter

<http://www.sag.org.au>

THE JEWISH CHRONICLE PROJECT

By Miriam Pollak

Background

The Jewish Chronicle Project came into being at the behest of Beverley Davis, then Secretary of the Australian Jewish Historical Society, Vic. Inc. She would probably say this wasn't so, but if it had not been for her input, the project would have just remained an idea, rather than becoming a reality.

In the early 1990s my husband and I moved to Melbourne from the Sydney region. At the time I was heavily engrossed in my own family history. As my father's family came from England, I spent a lot of time at the State Library of Victoria craning my neck while trying to make sense of the microfilms of the Jewish Chronicle. The Jewish Chronicle used to print personal notices on the front page each week. From these notices it is possible to see births, barmitzvahs, engagements, marriages, deaths and in memoriam notices for the whole of England (and sometimes the continent).

The State Library of Victoria has from 1841 to 1919 inclusive on microfilm in their newspaper library. They also have from 1920 in hard copy, but these are only available for serious research. Then I discovered that the library had copy machines that were capable of copying microfilm - it was a revelation. This meant that I could take a photocopy of the issue I wanted, but how would I know which issue to photocopy. At this stage I suggested to Beverley Davis that an index would be a very useful idea. She said, "go for it", and it has gone from there.

After some research it became clear that various people in England were already involved in creating indexes of the Jewish Chronicle (mainly death notices). However, they were all working before the turn of the century (1900). Therefore I decided to work on the first decade of the twentieth century (1900-1909 inclusive).

I have to admit that I didn't have a clue of the size of the task I was attempting. Input of the first year's data took me a year. I used to come home from work and sit at the computer every day. There were days when the amount of data entered was quite small, but I kept on plugging away at the task.

Data Input

The data for 1900 was entered into an early version of Microsoft Access (v. 1). The data for 1901 also went into Access, but by then I was beginning to be aware that Access was not the right sort of database for the work I was doing. Around this time I

decided to go to University and the work on the project ground to a halt as I spent more time working on my course than on my hobby.

During my course I learned about various forms of databases and indeed I was using the incorrect form of database. Access is a relational database and what I needed was called a flat-file or historical database. This kind of database does not rely on a relationship between the fields. This means that whatever is in the database is searchable because it doesn't change - the information is historical.

Towards the end of my course I included the JC Project as part of my Industrial Experience component. I enrolled the help of twelve students to create electronic files of Jewish Chronicle information that could be downloaded into a large flat-file database. The students helped me to create enough files to complete 1902.

Then I returned to the 1900 and 1901 files and re-designed the information so that it could also be downloaded into the flat-file database. To date there are over 8,000 entries in the database. At this stage I have to acknowledge the Jewish Museum of Melbourne which kindly lent me have a copy of a wonderful database program. This has made the progress of inputting of data much easier.

Searchability

The most important facet of the project was the need to make the information searchable and accessible. The use of a flat-file database meant that every field can be searched. This means that the researcher is not limited to search by name only. Searches can be conducted by name and city, or by year or month, or by address, or even by Rabbis conducting wedding ceremonies.

For example, I knew that my father's uncle, Lionel, had been born around 1900, but I didn't know the date or place where he had been born. I could spend a long time searching for the information, but by using the database I found that he had been born in Cardiff at 83 Hamilton Street, and that his date of birth was 16 April. The entry also gave his father's full name.

The Future

The project is not yet half way through. The idea is to make a database of the first decade of the last century. So far, only three of the ten years are complete. Finding the time and the energy to undertake such a lot of work is getting harder with age.

What I need are some volunteers who are prepared to give a bit of their time and energy. They need to have a computer and be a bit computer literate.

(Continued on page 4)

THE LONDON CONFERENCE, 2001

By Sophie Caplan, OAM

The 21st Conference of the International Association Of Jewish Genealogical Societies was a great conference. There were over 160 speakers, close to one thousand registrants and a huge menu of lectures, meetings and sightseeing trips to choose from. Each hour from 8:30 a.m. to 6 or 7 p.m. there were six different lectures from which to choose over five days. Lectures were so arranged that someone interested in a certain group of topics, e.g. British Jewish Communities, could stay in the same lecture room to hear a whole set of talks without moving. The main conference room had one day a whole set of talks on Jewish migration, the next day being wholly devoted to Genes and Genealogy, in particular the latest findings of DNA testing in regard to Jewish ancestry of various groups. Thus it emerged that Ethiopian Jews are apparently not originally Jewish, but that the Lemba tribe in the north of South Africa are. Distinguished English Jewish professors such as Aubrey Newman and Vivian Moses chaired these sessions.

Many authors of talks on British Jewish subjects lectured on the topics of their books and a few copies of the books were usually available for sale, e.g. Bertha Leverton on the *Kindertransports*, Paul Silverstone on *Aliyah Bet, Clandestine Jewish Immigration to Palestine*, Mervyn Goodman on the *Jews of Liverpool*, Gary Black on the *Jews' Free School, London since 1732*. Topics ranged from the time of Abraham and Babylonia to Jews of Kaifeng, to *A Non-Jew Researches His Jewish Ancestry*. Peter Nash spoke about *China – Tracing Former European Russian and Sephardic Communities*, and I spoke on *Waves of Jewish Immigration to Australia from England, Russia, Germany and elsewhere*.

As well, there were many well-known professional and quasi-professional, Jewish genealogists talking about the latest on their main subjects - Warren Blatt, (Jewishgen databases and Polish Jewish Genealogical Research), Stanley Diamond (Jewish Records Indexing – Poland), Micheline Gutman (Research in Paris), Karen Franklin (Genealogical Holdings of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York), Batya Unterchatz (Jewish Agency Search Bureau for Missing Relatives), Peter Landé (Sources of Information on Holocaust Victims and Survivors), Hadassah Assouline (Unexpected Genealogical Sources in the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People), Lawrence and Phillip Arbensur (Sephardi Families in the Alliance Israelite Universelle), Diana Rau (The Census of

Spitalfields, Whitechapel, London 1891), Judith Frazer (How to Find 19th-Century Polish Language Records and Unlock their Secrets), Miriam Rodriguez-Pereira (Bevis Marks synagogue Records – London) Michael Honey (The Horowitz Dynasty).

There was much for everyone, including two film nights, and meetings of various Special Interest Groups (SIGs), of editors of journals, of contributors to *Avotaynu*. And after nearly a week at the Conference, we were all exhausted.

The Australian attendance was outstanding. Hilde Hines from Adelaide, Lionel Sharpe, Lewis Coleman, Suzie and Rodney Eisfelder, Diane Gabb, Anthony Helm, Chana Ruschinek, and Ros Tatarka, from Melbourne, and from Sydney Peter and Rieke Nash, Jeanette Tsoulos, Glenda Goldberg, Sarah and Nigel Meinrath, Louise Rosenberg, Leslie and Sophie Caplan. There was also a couple named Stern who had lived in Japan and in England for over a decade. Breakfast and afternoon tea were usually the times when we touched base with one another.

Meeting old friends from earlier conferences and from other countries was one of the great joys for me, some not seen since Paris in 1997, or the first London conference of 1987, with about 120 people registered by Judith and Dr Anthony Joseph. Samuel Johnson once famously said, *Anyone who is tired of London (conferences) is tired of life*.

The **2002** Conference will be in TORONTO, OTTOWA, CANADA,
2003 will be in WASHINGTON D.C., U.S.A. and the **2004** in JERUSALEM, ISRAEL

Sophie Caplan OAM, Editor

The Jewish Chronicle Project (cont. from page 3)

Also they need to be good typists - I haven't the time to do heaps of proof reading. If you have some spare time and would be willing to help I would be delighted.

I believe that if I can get some help with the project, it could be completed within the next couple of years.

In the meantime, if you have family from England and you believe that they may have used the Jewish Chronicle for some family event, please contact me either by letter, email or by phone, and I will try to locate the records of the event for you.

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THE COHEN PROJECT

By Sophie Caplan

The Jewish people is for religious purposes divided into three clans - Israel, common people; Levi, the Levites who were the servants of Temple; and the Cohanim, plural of Cohen or priest, who were the priests at the Temple. Since the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. knowledge of which clan one belongs to has been purely on the oral tradition basis within each family, and the tradition is passed on in the male line from father to son. There are no written texts giving any lists, but within the services of the synagogues which has replaced services at the Temple, the Cohanim have certain privileges and certain duties, and the Levites do small services for the Cohanim before they bless the congregation. Although belonging to the Jewish people is handed down from mother to child, belonging to Israel, Levi or being a Cohen is strictly a male affair.

So about five years ago, when some molecular biologists decided to test the DNA of men who claimed to be Cohanim by analyzing a sample taken from the inside of the mouth of about 600 Jewish men, both Sephardi and Ashkenazi, half of whom claimed to be Cohanim and half of whom were a control group, who said they were not a Cohen. They chose to target a part of the individual's DNA attached to the Y chromosome i.e. to the male gender determinant which is passed on from natural father to son. Women have two X chromosomes and no Y chromosome and men have one X chromosome and one Y. The amazing result was that 97% of the men who claimed descent as a Cohen had one certain identical part to all the others who claimed to be Cohanim, while those who said that they were not a Cohen did not have this DNA marker on their Y chromosome. This seems to indicate that this chromosomal marker was an indicator of common descent among those who claimed to be: Cohanim whether they had Ashkenazic or Sephardic descent.

Thanks to developments in DNA research the biologists were able to determine that the Y factor for Kahanut (being a Cohen) had evolved genetically around 3,500 years ago, about the time when Moses and Aaron lived. This means that the putative descent of all Cohens from Aaron, the brother of Moses in the male line, may be absolute fact, making the tradition of being a Cohen and descending from Aaron an incontrovertible fact. Isn't it amazing that such a verbally transmitted genetic tradition can prove to be true? It gives hope that somehow other genealogical traditions, perhaps

descent from King David, may be proven through DNA technology one day.

Sophie Caplan, Editor

BRINGING SCIENCE TO THE SEARCH FOR FAMILY ROOTS.

Houston Based Company Using DNA to Match Up People with Long-Lost Relatives.

By Julia Fuma

Josef Meshorer, a 69-year-old Holocaust survivor who lost most of his family in Poland, spent more than 30 years on a quest to find his roots. For years, his search was an arduous, low-tech endeavour: He looked for people with similar last names, found 30 in Israel and 10 in the United States, and sent letters to all of them. Only one response, from a David Meshorer of Virginia, was fruitful.

"Over the years, David and I found a common interest in searching for our roots and became very good friends," said Mr. Meshorer, a retired engineer who lives in Toronto, Canada. The two men could not prove that they were related, however.

Then, this past June, Joseph and David Meshorer heard of Family Tree DNA, a company that does DNA testing for genealogical purposes.

"David and I jumped into it right away and ordered DNA tests," Mr. Meshorer said. "Only a few weeks ago the results came! We both tested identically for the 12 tested Y chromosome markers, so, most likely, we have a common ancestor within 14 generations," Mr. Meshorer said.

Mr. Meshorer now feels like he has new family members. When he had bypass surgery, his newfound "cousin" David called and sent flowers. Mr. Meshorer sent a gift to David's daughter for her wedding. Josef Meshorer also changed his name from the original Polish spelling, Mezsorer, to the more English spelling Meshorer. He said his children and grandchildren feel more comfortable with the new, easier to pronounce spelling of the name.

Mr. Meshorer is one of more than 1,000 people who have used the services of Family Tree DNA, a Houston company founded last year by businessman Bennet Greenspan that specializes in genealogical testing for Jews. The company capitalises on the growing Jewish interest in genealogy, which has seen thousands flocking to genealogical web sites such as jewishgen.org, joining one of the 60 local affiliates of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies and attending annual genealogical conferences

For Sam Zaidins, 40, a Florida real estate broker who recently used Family Tree's services, Jewish interest in genealogy grows out of the psychic losses of 2,000 years of dispersion and persecution. Because of that dispersion, Jews "have never been able to put down a stake" in their countries and have seen much family separation, he said. With genetic testing, Mr. Zaidins said, connections can be made with family members virtually overnight. While Mr. Zaidins and his brother thought they were the last of the Zaidins, testing helped them discover they were not alone in the world, he said. "Although socio-political causes pushed us apart, science brought us back together."

Mr. Greenspan does most of the firm's advertising on the Internet and its testing through the mail. According to the company, two or more individuals can find out if they have a common ancestor by testing either their Y chromosome (from the father) if they are men; mitochondrial DNA (from the mother), or both. A single test costs \$219, both tests, \$299. Family Tree DNA sends out kits, which customers use to swipe a DNA sample from their cheek. The company tests the sample and returns the results in about seven weeks. The company also tests for the form of the Y-chromosome that is unique to the Jewish priestly class, the so-called Cohen gene that was discovered, to much fanfare, a few years back.

The tests rely on the special properties of the Y-chromosome in males and the mitochondrial DNA in females, according to Peter Underhill, a senior research scientist at the Stanford University genetics department. Although most chromosomes recombine during reproduction, so that in any child half the DNA comes from the mother and half from the father, the Y-chromosome is passed entirely, unchanged like a photocopy, from father to son. The same happens with mitochondrial DNA from mother to daughter. Mutations rarely occur. This means that a man is likely to have the same Y-chromosome as a male ancestor, and a woman is likely to have the same mitochondrial DNA as a female ancestor.

Because mutations occur so rarely, when they do happen it is relatively easy to spot where on a chromosome such mutations, called markers, have occurred. A fingerprint of a person's DNA can be produced by studying each marker. Men who have many similar markers are closely related. The fewer markers two people have in common, the less they are related.

Mr. Underhill said that the study of the Y-chromosome is meaningful mostly for studying the migration of populations. All Asians, for example,

have certain markers in common, he said, so science and common sense dictate that they have one common ancestor, that is, they come from a single, grand "lineage". Japanese men have markers that other Asian men do not, meaning that they have a discrete ancestor, or lineage, in the larger Asian family. In Europe, 95% of all men fall into one of 10 "lineages."

Mr. Underhill thinks that while genealogy tests such as those offered by Family Tree DNA are "valid," the companies "should give explanations of what the results mean. You have the same lineage as 10 million other people." In other words, the tests are not that meaningful by themselves. For example, all persons of Eastern European Jewish descent share many markers because they are descended from a rather small number of individuals, perhaps 50,000, who were alive in the year 1500.

Family Tree DNA explains on its web site that it tests for 12 different markers. If individuals share those markers, there is a 99.9% chance that they have a common ancestor, but only a 50% chance that that ancestor lived in the past 300 years and a 90% chance that ancestor lived in the past 1,200 years.

Despite what Mr. Underhill called the "coarse resolution of relatedness," Mr. Greenspan said many people are interested in the test. He said he started the company to satisfy his curiosity about whether he was related to another man. "I needed the service and it didn't exist," Mr. Greenspan said. Every couple of months, Mr. Greenspan put the name of his grandfather and the town in which he was born into a database on a web site called jewishgen.org. One day, he found a man living in Argentina whose grandfather had the same name and grew up about 10 miles away from that town. Mr. Greenspan began to exchange information with the Argentine and discovered that both families had been in the same business. He was convinced he was related to the man, but could not prove it. So he went to Dr. Michael Hammer, a geneticist at the University of Arizona who was working on the Cohen gene. After some pestering, Dr. Hammer finally agreed to test them, discovering that they were related.

Mr. Greenspan then approached Dr. Hammer and suggested he start a business testing people for genetic relatedness. But Dr. Hammer declined, so Mr. Greenspan made a deal with him: Dr. Hammer would provide the science and technology for the test, and Mr. Greenspan would handle the business of marketing it. Dr. Hammer agreed.

Like Mr. Greenspan, many individuals who opt to

(Continued on page 10)

CANBERRA CORNER

By Sylvia Deutsch

During his recent visit to Canberra Rabbi John Levi of Melbourne addressed a meeting of the local branch of the Australian Jewish Historical Society to which local AJGS members were also invited. He spoke on the Jews of the First Fleet, based on his book *Australian Genesis: Jewish Convict and Settlers 1788 - 1850*, co-authored with the late Dr G.F.J. Bergman. He is preparing to re-issue an updated version of the book, as well as an expanded version of a biographical dictionary of Australian Jews from 1788 - 1850.

Remaining genealogical workshops for 2001 are on Sunday 9 September and Sunday 4 November from 130 to 3 p.m. in the library of the National Jewish Memorial Centre, corner of Canberra Avenue and the National Circuit in Forrest.

Profound thanks to AJGS founding president Sophie Caplan for the generosity in donating several valuable reference books for use by Canberra AJGS member, and for other interesting material acquired on her recent trip to the International Jewish Genealogy Conference in London.

Local AJGS members Sylvia Deutsch and Dr Vernon Kronenberg were special guest speakers at a meeting of the Heraldry and Genealogy Society of Canberra on 7 August 2001. Sylvia spoke on the historical and cultural background to Jewish genealogy and Bernard spoke on Jewish genealogy on the Internet.

AJGS members in Canberra are on the mailing list for the ACT Branch of the Australian Jewish Historical Society, so that they are apprised of functions that maybe of interest. Please advise if you are not receiving AJGS notices.

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NEWS FROM WESTERN AUSTRALIA

By Michelle Urban

An enlightening talk was given by husband and wife team Carole and Marvin Feldman on 25th February 2001.

Speaking first, Marvin, an electronic engineer, who has travelled the world, informed us he was a descendant of Lithuanian Jews who settled in America.

Amongst his travels abroad Marvin visited Porto Judeo, the Azores, where an old man told him that 500 years ago a shipload of Jews evicted from

Portugal had been given refuge there. Hebrew inscriptions were to be seen on graves and Marvin was presented with a coffin-like box which, when opened, was found to contain a Torah on goat's skin dating from the time of the Inquisition.

Reminiscing about his childhood, Marvin recalled Reverend Lieb Merenstein, a Polish Holocaust survivor who had been recruited to teach Hebrew to prepare the boys in his community for their Barmitzvahs. This impressive man knew the whole Torah by heart!

While Marvin grew up in Montgomery, Alabama, USA, Carole was raised in Rose Bay, Sydney NSW Australia. Her grandfather, Albert Abadee, and grandmother, Fanny Asher, who were the first couple to be married in Kalgoorlie Shule, had arrived in Sydney in 1919, where they established a box factory (to make wooden boxes for fruits and vegetables) in what became the Chinatown District of Sydney."

Stricken with polio at 8, Carole spent time in an iron lung. A further traumatic event occurred when her mother died 3 years later."

After obtaining a BA in French and Education at the University of Sydney, Carole went abroad on the Oronsay and travelled throughout Europe, teaching in London in the 1960s. She has held many interesting positions, including working as a translator and interpreter for the 9th International Congress of Accountants in Paris and being Chief of Protocol to the American Ambassador in Jakarta in 1981.

During her sojourn in Indonesia, Carole discovered and wrote about a small Jewish community and Synagogue in Surabaya. She has also lived in various parts of USA and had a stint in Canberra, where Marvin was working in 1995.

Of great inspiration to the women in the audience is the fact that Carole has overcome two bouts of cancer and now works as a volunteer for the Breast Cancer Support Service.

Carol and Marvin Feldman settled in Perth two years ago.

by Carolyn Milton-Smith

Our last meeting was held in May and our speaker Gillian O'Mara spoke on the Family History Records held by the Mormons.

Our next meeting will be held in August and will be a Beginners' Workshop - How to research your Jewish ancestry.

Enquiries can be directed to: Michelle Urban
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QUEENSLAND REPORT

By Morris S. Ochert OAM

A report, covering the period now under review, cannot be extensive as little has occurred out of the ordinary.

Enquirers, both Jewish and non-Jewish, are given whatever information we have, while, in many cases, we have to refer them to Sophie Caplan, our President

At the time of writing, we are hearing interesting reports of the London Conference, including an extensive letter from Dr Anthony Joseph, President of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain.

We have just received, but have had no time to examine the contents of, a parcel of books, which Sophie bought in London for our Queensland library.

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AUSTRALIAN JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY (Vic) Inc.

Report from Lionel Sharpe

A number of events took place from June to August. Uri Palti gave a fascinating account of his own personal research and the impact of a very unexpected genealogical discovery in a lecture entitled - "What genealogy DID for me!" on Wednesday, 27th June 2001 at 7.30 pm. Uri Palti is a well known broadcaster who was head of Hebrew /English programs on SBS Radio between 1976 - 1998 in Melbourne. In 1983 he was appointed 'Voice of Israel' broadcasting correspondent in Australia and has won a number of Australia Day Media Awards for his contribution to radio broadcasting.

A well attended hands-on workshop for beginners and others was held on Sunday, 8th July 2001, 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm at Beth Weizmann Jewish Community Centre.

On Wednesday, 25th July 2001, Danny Barr spoke to the society on "Genealogical Research from an Israeli Perspective". Danny was visiting Australia and shared his experiences in genealogical research from an Israeli perspective. He has researched his family at the Central Archives, the Jerusalem Municipal Archives, etc and his ancestors include

the Horowitz rabbinical line. Danny went on aliyah in 1981 and currently works as a dentist in Kiryat Shmona. His mother's roots go back to Jerusalem in 1862 and his father's, to Poland (Makow-Mazowiecki).

Returning from the 21st International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in London in July provided an opportunity for Melbourne delegates to give an overview of the conference and their subsequent travels in Europe. At the meeting held on Wednesday 22nd August, Rodney Eisfelder showed a video of his visits to cemeteries in Germany, where he uncovered ancestral tombstones. Lionel Sharpe spoke about and showed photos of his visit to synagogues in the East End of London, Prague and Budapest. Diane Gabb presented a written report on her experiences of personal research in London.

The Victorian participants in London were Lewis Coleman, Suzie and Rodney Eisfelder, Diane Gabb, Anthony Helm, Chana Ruschinek, Lionel Sharpe and Ros Tatarka.

The next meeting of the Society will be held on Wednesday, October 17th.

The President, Les Oberman and the committee wish all our interstate colleagues a happy and healthy New Year.

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See our home page on:
www.melbourne.net/csaky/AJGSmainpage.htm

REPORT FROM THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH

by Jeanie Susman

On Tuesday July 3rd members met at the home of our President, Marjorie Luno where a very successful study evening took place. Because we have no headquarters as such, we gather in private homes. It has been decided that alternate meetings will be devoted to study and research, when members may have access to our library material.

At the next meeting to be held in October, we look forward to hearing Hilde Hines talking about her time at the IAJGS London Conference.

Our special thanks go to Leslie and Sophie Caplan for their generosity in presenting to our Branch a number of very interesting publications they brought back with them from the London Conference.

We are delighted also to receive a gift from the
(continued on page 12)

AGM OF INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETIES

By Sophie Caplan

The annual general meeting of the I.A.G.J.S. took place in London during the Conference. This year the executive was due to change, and despite some unpleasantness regarding one nomination, eventually everything was resolved. The new president is Hal Bookbinder of Agoura Hills, California, who served a long apprenticeship on the executive with two years as treasurer and another two as vice-president. Hal has also edited the excellent Jewish Genealogy Yearbook for the Salt Lake City Conference which contained all the conference information and the smaller Yearbook for the 2001 AGM, with other Conference information yearbooks being edited in London.

The immediate past president is Howard Margol of Atlanta, Georgia, and the new vice president is Anne Feder Lee of Hawaii. The new honorary Secretary is Joel Spector of Philadelphia, the honorary treasurer is Michael Posnick of Minneapolis.

A new member of the committee, Arnold Tolkin of Palm Beach, Florida, was also formally elected in London after serving nearly a year as a co-opted director to replace Arline Sachs who resigned in August 2000 after the Salt Lake City Conference.

There is a tendency for members of the executive of the I.A.J.G.S. and so-called directors (committee members) to be recruited from the US societies because the three or four directors' meetings which take place annually, do take place in the home location of the president and it is too expensive for members of European or other JG. societies to pay for fares to and from the USA several times yearly, though accommodation seems to be provided.

Sophie Caplan, OAM Editor

I.A.J.G.S. AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

Each year, the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies presents achievement awards to recognise excellence for Jewish genealogy. Award plaques were presented at the at the conclusion of the conference banquet in London on 12 July 2001.

Dan and Rosanne Leeson

Outstanding Contribution via Print Award for their indexes of the 1784 Alsatian Jewish Census and of 18th century Alsatian marriages. The 1784 Alsatian census was organised by villages, making its use difficult. Their published index, originally in book form, continues to be available through microfiche. Their more recent publication of an index to 18th

Century marriage contracts allows researchers to reach back beyond 1784.

Nancy Goodstein

Outstanding Contribution via Electronic Media Award for the index of Jewish records in Family History Library. In addition to all of the generally known records, Nancy located and made more accessible, many Jewish records not previously known, including obscure records not otherwise easily found. The resultant index has been made available through both C,D-ROM and on the Internet.

Michael Tobias

Outstanding Contribution via the Internet Award for Jewish genealogical database development. Michael has rapidly developed the technology behind numerous databases including, among others, the Jewish Records Indexing - Poland Database and the JewishGen Family Finder, ShtetlSeeker, Family Tree of the Jewish People, and the Discussion Group Archives. His efforts have made vast amounts of material readily available to the Jewish genealogical community.

Asociacion de Geneologia Judia de Argentina

Outstanding Publication Award.

In recognition of TOLDOT for the scope and quality of its articles. Each issue is filled with original material impressive both in its scholarly content and in its readability.

JGS, Palm Beach County, Inc. Florida

Outstanding Programming Award.

Recognising its efforts to spread awareness of Jewish genealogy through its extensive local publicising of Jewish Genealogy Month. 25 March to 23 April 2001.

Jewish Genealogy Society, Inc. (New York)

Outstanding Project(s) Award.

Recognising several of the Society's projects aimed at making historical records in the New York area more available to researchers everywhere; including projects to index Brooklyn naturalisation records, burial societies in the New York Metropolitan area, and New York landsmanshaftn and other Jewish organisations.

Peter Landé

Lifetime Achievement Award. In deep appreciation of Peter's contributions to the world of Jewish genealogy, both in his selfless assistance to others in pursuing their own research and in his efforts in gathering and indexing genealogical materials for the benefit of all. Among these are his outstanding work on identifying resources and creating finding aids at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, his extensive support for the Yizkor Book Project, and his ongoing contributions to Stammbaum

From Jewish Genealogy Downunder, Melbourne

NEW BOOKS IN OUR LIBRARY

By Sophie Caplan OAM

JEWS IN LIEPAJA, LATVIA, 1941-45, A MEMORIAL BOOK by Edward Anders and Jures Dubrovskis, Anders Press, Burlingame, California, USA, 2001, pp199, was given to us by the Australian Jewish Historical Society who themselves received it from the authors, one of whom was himself a survivor, originally named Alperovitch.

A chapter on *The killings in the Cities, Liepaja* details the course of the Shoah in that town, including dates and numbers of victims. Other chapters give more details. There is also an introduction to the alphabetically indexed list of names of victims in both English and Russian. The list is 164 pages long and contains 7066 names and gives first name and surname, and frequently also women's maiden name, date and place of birth, date and place of death, address in 1941 and previous address, and often some information on how they died. Places of birth include many East and West European countries. Copies of this book can be ordered from Edward Anders, 525 Almer Road, Suite 105, Burlingame, CA94010-3945, USA. Tel/Fax: (1)-(650) 343-6910. Among the many surnames are such names familiar in Australia as Balkind, Bashan, Baskin, Elinson, Elterman, Esterman, Epstein, Lipschitz, Feitelberg, Lurie, Sacks, Prager, and many others.

THE IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE, THE JEWISH AMERICANS, Howard Muggamin, Sandra Stoksky, General Editor, 1996, Chelsea House Publishers, New York, pp128 is one of a series of books on immigrants to the USA which includes African Americans, Americans Indians, the Amish, Arab Americans, Chinese Americans, Greek Americans, Russian Americans and indeed every possible group of hyphenated Americans except the original English. It discusses general facts of Jewish history, culture and religion and those factors which encouraged Jewish emigration from various European countries to North America.

There are brief surveys of the various waves of Jewish immigration and photographs of famous Jewish landmarks with biographical notes and photos of some well-known contemporary American Jews. There is an index.

This book was donated by our member Selma Jackson.

WEBSITES FOR GENEALOGISTS, 2001 Edition, Fully revised by Cora Nunn of Cumberland Park, South Australia, has several

hundred websites listed including a page of Jewish websites, both Australian and international.

BIRTH AND DEATH CERTIFICATES, ENGLAND AND WALES 1837 TO 1969 by Barbara Dixon published in 1999 in Berkshire, U.K., a thorough description of what to find on these certificates.

MARRIAGES AND CERTIFICATES IN ENGLAND AND WALES by Barbara Dixon, 2000 published in Berkshire UK. This booklet gives the history of marriage registration and everything about the information to be found on marriage certificates from England and Wales.

These books have been donated to the Society Library in Sydney by Sophie Caplan.

(Continued on page 11)

Using DNA to Match Up People

(Cont from p.6)

use Family Tree DNA services have done some prior genealogical research. Mr. Zaidins, who started his search for family by scanning directories for people with the same last name, used Family Tree DNA to discern whether two East Coast families named Zaidins, who had recently arrived from the former Soviet Union, were his relatives. Now, Mr. Zaidins said, he knows that those families must be descendants of his great-great grandfather. To the great shock to all three Zaidins families, the test showed that they were all Cohanim. None of them had known.

After they discovered they were cousins, the three Zaidins families held a family reunion. To their delight, several of them actually looked alike, Mr. Zaidins said, adding that during the reunion he felt an "instant connection" to his new relatives.

The new Russian relatives were excited because they thought that all their family had died in World War II. The best part was that before meeting their new relatives, the Russians "felt like immigrants the whole time, now they feel like Americans," Mr. Zaidins said.

Even for Mr. Meshorer, the DNA test is just one part of an ongoing search for his family history. On a trip to Israel, Mr. Meshorer discovered that the name Meshorer is associated with the singers who sang psalms in the first and second Temples. By tradition, such *meshorerim* are descendants of Asaph, the first official singer and poet in King David's court. According to Mr. Meshorer, "our Cohanim markers indicate that we might be descendants of these Meshorerim, which is quite exciting"

From *FORWARD*, August 17, 2001

NEWS ABOUT HUNGARIAN JEWRY IN 2001

Translated From *MIDRASH Monthly* From The Polish Language

By Simon Sekel

The Yavne School established by the Ronald Lauder Foundation in Budapest has very soon become the largest and most important Jewish education institution in Hungary. The name of Yavne is, of course, to commemorate the town where Jochanan Ben Zakai established the Rabbinical Academy, after the destruction of Jerusalem. The modern complex of buildings, opened by the Hungarian President Arpad Goncz, is an extensive campus including multiple lecture halls, its own synagogue, gymnasium for physical education, scientific laboratories, computer rooms and cafeteria. The library has already accumulated close to 20,000 books in many languages as well as religious ones.

The land on the hill above the Danube was given to the school by the Budapest municipality on a 99 year lease. There are now 700 students in the six primary and six high school classes. There are many extra-curricular subjects like art, acting, cooking and Hebrew, Jewish History and Judaism. These are in addition to the normal local education requirements. Under the leadership of well-known actress, Margit Balla, the students performed several successful plays. The headmistress is Anne Szeszler. The student band often performs klezmer and other Jewish traditional music. All Jewish festivals are observed. The elite group of teachers were selected locally, as well as from Israel and the USA. This contributes to a very high standard of education and results. Close to the Yavne complex is a Jewish kindergarten with 80 children. The school tries to encourage parent involvement which is very essential, as the parents, educated under Communist regime, are often far removed from Judaism. Friday night services have been one successful way to encourage parents and children to join.

In November 2000 the Yavne School hosted a conference called *Arachim*, dedicated to Jewish education and scholarship. About 200 educationalists from 29 countries participated and represented the full range of religious trends from Ultra-orthodox to reform or Neolog as the Hungarians call it. There was a large delegation from Ukraine, as well as other ex-Soviet countries. The Lauder Foundation organises summer camps in Szarvas, where in the past 8 years, thousands of youngsters from all of Middle Europe participated.

Rabbis and teachers from USA and Israel look after the Jewish education during these camps.

I must add that without the Lauder Foundation, Polish, Belarusian, Ukrainian and some other Jewish communities could not function or exist.

By the way, the number of Jews in Hungary, mostly Budapest, is variously quoted between 60,000 - 100,000. This is due to assimilation and the heavy rate of intermarriage. There are about ten synagogues in Budapest, the Dohan Utca being the largest in Europe.

Attendance during the weekly Shabbat services is mainly by the very old and young, with the middle aged missing. The Cantor Laslo Fekete is a very well-known singer and is the vocalist for a Klezmer band, performing for the past few months in one of the largest clubs. Most musicians are not Jewish. During the performance, the Cantor wears Chassidic clothes with tsitsis hanging out. In reality he is a Neolog, not a Reform Jew just not extreme Orthodox. This paradox exemplifies the mixture of identities and cultural life of Hungarian Jewry.

Simon Sekel is president of COA, the Sydney Jewish Council for the Ageing, and father of our Treasurer, Gary Luke.

New books in Our Library (cont from page 10)

Three booklets published by the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain were purchased for each of the branches in Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Perth and Sydney as a gift from Leslie and Sophie Caplan.

One is a manual on how to do Jewish genealogical research in England, the second one is on Jewish genealogical research in Latvia and Estonia, and the third on German and Austrian Jewish genealogical research.

A fourth booklet on how to do Jewish genealogical research in Scotland written and published by Harvey Kaplan of the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre at Garnethill Synagogue, 129 Hill Street Glasgow, G6 6UB, was also donated to all the branches.

We also purchased *THE JEWS OF DEVON AND CORNWALL, Essays and Exhibition Catalogue*, published in 2000 by a group of authors including Evelyn and Albert Friedlander, Helen Fry, Frank Gent, the late Rabbi Bernard Susser, and Julia Weiner. The essays include biographies of various former prominent Jews of south-west England, artists, merchants and rabbis as well as descriptions of rabbis and ministers, including Isaac and Marcus Bishofswerder who may have been related to the Australian Felix Werder née Bishofswerder.



FOREBEARS AUSTRALIAN FAMILY FINDER

00089 INGOLF STRASSMANN, Geiseltasteigs Strasse 12, D-81545, MUNICH, GERMANY, Tel (49-89)-640 671 Fax (49-89) 643 975. Seeks GENIA LIPSCHITZ, born 1923, daughter of HEINRICH and JOSEPHINE LIPSCHITZ. Father tailor, born 1883, lived in ALTENBURG, SAXONY 1931-1938, then immigrated to AUSTRALIA via BELGIUM. Any details about her or her descendants. Can also contact Sophie Caplan Tel: 61-2-9958 6317 with information, or through AJGS address.

00090 LAWRENCE GOLD email: Lawrence.Gold@guycarp.com seeking any information on DAVID KOZOVVOY who immigrated to Australia by ship in 1923 from Russia. Place of settlement unknown. If still alive would be in his 90's. Descendants also sought.

00091 HARVEY L. KAPLAN, 1/L 11 Milwood Street, GLASGOW G41 3JY, SCOTLAND. Email: harvey@hkaplan.freemove.co.uk Seeks information on JOHN LAZAR, born in Edinburgh in 1801, fourth Mayor of Adelaide as mentioned in Cecil Roth, *The Rise of Provincial Jewry* (p59). Any information welcome.

00092 EVELINE BLUM, 20 CHEMIN DU GRAND BUISSON, BESANCON, 25000, FRANCE, email: eve.line.blum@libertysurf.fr is looking for KASSEL KAPLAN, Shoah survivor, whose daughter is an accountant. His mother was DORA CHALFIN KAPLAN.

00093 GERT ROGERS, 237 MELITA AVENUE, TORONTO, ON. M6G 2A1, CANADA, seeks uncle AVRAM or NUSSAN GOLDMAN, originally from MIEDZYREZEC, PODLASKA, who is said to have survived WW2 in Russia, returned to Poland, lived in France, and emigrated to Australia. He would now be in his nineties, so descendants are sought. Avram's parents were ZELIG GOLDMAN and ESTER GITEL WODA. Siblings were CHANA, HENIA, GOLDA, SURA, NUSKE and HERSCHEL.

Report from South Australia (Cont from page 8)

AJGS in Sydney of a special book entitled *Portraits of our Past*.

These will all be very valuable additions to our reference collection.

The South Australian Branch contact is :

Marjorie Luno, President,

AJGS (S.A. Branch), c/- Beit Shalom Synagogue,

P.O. Box 47, Stepney. SA 5069

E-mail: chatsworth@picknowl.com.au

Editorial (continued from page 1)

On Sunday 14th October at 3 p.m. David Montefiore Jacobs of Vancouver, Canada, will speak to us at the Sydney Jewish Museum, 148 Darlinghurst Road, Darlinghurst on *Aaron Hart's Children - Jewish Genealogy in Canada*.

Aaron Hart was the first known Jew in Canada. David Jacobs is a vigorous and entertaining speaker, and our function is jointly with the Sydney Jewish Museum. Entrance \$5.

The second lecturer will be Rabbi John Levi, the joint author with the late Dr George Bergman of *Australian Genesis, Jewish Convicts and Settlers 1788 -1850* and by himself of *The Forefathers, the Dictionary of Biography of Australian Jewry 1788 -1830*. Both books were published in the 1970's and Rabbi Levi is preparing revised and enlarged editions of each to be published in the next few months. Much new information has come to light since 1974, including the fact that eight hundred children with at least one Jewish parent were born in Australia between 1788 and 1850. The talk will be titled *Jews In Colonial Australia* and although we initiated this evening we invited the Australian Jewish Historical Society to jointly sponsor the function at the Great Synagogue, Israel Green Hall, 166 Castlereagh Street, Sydney, on Monday 5 November 2001, at 7:45 p.m.. Entrance \$5.

We are also planning two other lectures in early 2002. The first will be Mara Moustafine on *The Jews of Harbin* and the other by one of our members who is a well known author.

We welcome back Rieke and Peter Nash from their long odyssey in Europe and wish them Mazeltov on the birth of a fourth grandson while they were away. Mazeltov also to David Landor on the birth of a granddaughter, also a fourth grandchild.

In London I was asked by many people when there would be an international Jewish genealogy conference held in Sydney. There is evidently some interest for such an event to take place in Australia. Alas, I had to reply that we simply do not have an adequate number of volunteer workers to stage such an event. Watching the number of dedicated English members who manned the registration and information desks in London, I wonder whether we will ever have the capacity to stage an important conference. What do you think?

Sophie Caplan OAM Editor