

# URGENT CALL TO IMMEDIATE ACTION FROM PRESIDENT OF IAJGS

Call your congressman today!

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## ATSMI UVSARI

“MY BONE AND MY FLESH”

עצמי ובשרי

Number 7

Fall, 2004

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# URGENT CALL TO ACTION FROM IAJGS

YOUR ACTION IS REQUIRED NOW as U.S. House Resolution 10, which may severely restrict access to birth information, is on the pre-election fast track. You need to contact your representatives, recommending specific modifications to the bill.

H.R. 10, whose purpose is to respond to the threat of terrorism, was introduced on September 24th, will likely get through the various House committees this coming week, and be voted upon during the week after. It is being sponsored by a wide array of House leaders, led by the speaker of the House, and will be pushed hard so that it can be signed by the President prior to the election.

The IAJGS has joined with the Genealogical Society of Utah, the FGS and the NGS in our opposition to the bill as it currently stands. I strongly urge you to send a letter to your representatives, letting them know of your concern with the bill, and recommending changes to address this issue.

## FAQs:

1) How do I find out the name and contact information for my representative?  
<http://www.house.gov/> and enter your zip code. **Follow the link to your representative's website to obtain his/her contact information. Speaker Hastert's website is <http://www.house.gov/hastert/>.**

2) How can I read any or this entire bill and follow its progress?  
<http://thomas.loc.gov/> and enter “HR10” **for all current information about this bill.**

3) How do I locate the section on birth certificates?

**As above and then click on “CHAPTER 2--IMPROVED SECURITY FOR BIRTH CERTIFICATES.” Within this chapter, you will see that SECTION 3063, paragraph (d)(2) directs that access to birth certificates be restricted.**

4) Why is this a problem?

**While it appears that the intention is to tightly control the issuance of certified birth certificates, the wording in the above section does not make the distinction between certified and non-certified certificates. Should the States react by restricting both, this may severely limit our family research.**

5) So, what do we want?

**The IAJGS recommends that clarifying wording be added to make it clear that this provision applies only to certified, and not non-certified birth certificates - nor to very old birth certificates.**

Again, YOUR ACTION IS REQUIRED NOW as House Resolution 10, which may severely restrict access to birth information, is on the pre-election fast track.

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Hal Bookbinder, president, IAJGS

*We strongly support the IAJGS position on HR-10, and urge all our readers to contact their US Representatives immediately. – Editor*

# This Year in Jerusalem

## Robert's report of the 2004 IAJGS Conference

by Mary Ann Jacobs and Rochelle Kaplan

Robert Neu recounted some of the lectures he attended at the International Conference of IAJGS in Jerusalem earlier this month. He found Jerusalem safe, as long as one stayed away from areas of conflict, which is easy to do. The Israelis are going about their lives as usual.

Yad Vashem, "Hand of the Lord," the Holocaust memorial, was an awesome place to visit. Yad Vashem is collecting the names of Holocaust victims. So far three million have been collected and work is progressing to add two million more. Yad Vashem was one of the highlights of the stay.

There were fewer sessions than in Toronto or Washington. The emphasis was on resources available in Jerusalem and Israel. Americans were the next largest contingent. Each participant received on CD a conference overview, workshop handouts, presenter bios, a recap of genealogical resources available in Israel, and the IAJGS 2003 member yearbook. Our club is mentioned. Robert will gladly lend his CDs to anyone interested. To purchase the lectures on CD, visit:

<http://www.isragen.org.il/ROS/CD/2004ConfCDlecture.pdf>

Some lectures attended:

- ✧ The American Jewish Archives has the holdings of Malcolm Stern, "Father" of American Jewish Genealogy.
- ✧ European Bourgeois Jewish families. Fifty percent remained Jewish through the years if the brides/grooms were not allowed to marry individuals who were

not Jewish.

- ✧ Jewish communities in the US were usually started by extended family groups and friends. Jews first worked as craftsmen, then moved into retailing and to other activities in later generations.
- ✧ Dr. Beider spoke about the origin of hereditary names in Poland. Surnames could be given by an Austrian official, a Jewish authority, or be self-chosen. There were really very few derogatory names.
- ✧ Steven Morse presented information about his website ([SteveMorse.org](http://SteveMorse.org)) which helps access Ellis Island data and U.S. Census information, especially the 1910, 1920 and 1930 censuses.
- ✧ The future of Genealogy is online, but may not remain free (some of it already isn't). It is conceivable that some of Jewishgen will be fee-based. Several universities in the U.S. now offer degrees in genealogy.
- ✧ A discussion of calendar systems included information about the Gregorian calendar, begun in 1582. In the Jewish calendar the day begins at sundown/6:00 p.m. the night before; the day begins at sunrise in the Hindu and Arabic calendars. This is a simplification as there is no perfect way, aside from tables, to transfer between calendars.
- ✧ "Roots of Names and Names of Roots": The names of Jews from Germany are often names of towns (Dreyfus from Trier, Kissinger[*continued on page 4*])

### Jerusalem cont'd from page 3

- from Gussing, Shapiro from Spier).
- ✧ Many items left behind by Holocaust victims are housed at the Jewish Institute in Poland. Artifacts are from Polish, German, Austrian and Bohemian / Moravian victims. There are also records for Majdanek and Riga and a catalog of Polish survivors.
  - ✧ One lecturer recounted the story of three “Horowitz” families from Moravia that moved to Sighet due to the marriage restriction and became surnamed Adler, Stern and Fruchte.
  - ✧ A place with one of the longest histories of Jewish presence is Livorno in Italy. Jews trace their presence back to the aftermath of the 70 C.E. conquest of Jerusalem.
  - ✧ Do all Jews with an Israeli base have a connection to Safed? It has had an uninterrupted Jewish presence since biblical times. Info is available at [Safedonline.com](http://Safedonline.com).
  - ✧ The Paul Jacobi index (Stambaum) – includes the family tree of 400 families, including 80 influential families. It is available at Hebrew University and covers 31,000 names.
  - ✧ Research information shared: Don’t neglect WW I draft registration lists. There were three. All males had to register no matter their age or nationality. Registration includes name, age, address, name of next of kin and physical description.
  - ✧ Also, look for non-direct immigration lists. Some immigrants would get as far as England, stay until costs for passage to the US or other ports could be found and then resume the journey. If they immigrated from Libau, Latvia to England, no health records were

required. Should the immigrants be stopped in New York City for health or other reasons, they would be sent back to England, not their home country. If they emigrated from Hamburg, health records were required, and if they were turned back at U.S. ports they were sent to the home country.

### Genealogical opportunity

# ***Old military records are a genealogy windfall***

by Danni Williams

The National Personnel Record Center that is responsible for maintaining archives of US military records is automating their storage and management of our military records. When this is complete they may destroy the hard copies .

If veterans or members of a deceased veteran’s family want to request those records be sent to them, they can make a request by mail:

National Personnel Records Center  
Military Personnel Records  
9700 Page Ave.  
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

or online at: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov/>

When you submit your request online, a downloadable signature form can be sent to you for submission. The National Personnel Records Center will then send you an e-mail acknowledging your request. ✧

## Googling Genealogy Style

# How to “Google” as you’ve never “Googled” before



*Kimberly Powell is member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, the National Genealogical Society, the International Society of Family History Writers and Editors, and several local genealogical societies. Her special area of expertise is breaking down proverbial brick walls. She can be reached via the About.com website .©2002 Kimberly Powell. All rights reserved. Reprinted with author’s permission.*

If you know what you are doing, you can use Google to search within web sites, locate photos of your ancestors, bring back dead sites, and track down missing relatives. Learn from these twelve Google search tips for genealogists, that are recommended on <http://genealogy.about.com/library/weekly/aa052902a.htm> .

**1) Search with a Focus:** Use a plus sign before words that are absolutely critical to your search. Use a minus sign before words that you want to be excluded from the search. Use quotation marks around any two word or greater phrase to find results where the words appear together exactly as you have entered them. Use OR to retrieve search results that match any one of a number of words. To get really fancy you can combine these options together to achieve truly focused search results. For example, `crisp +surname -apple genealogy OR genealogy OR +will OR “family tree”` will return sites with the terms smith AND surname, combined with either genealogy, genealogy, will, or the phrase family tree.

**2) Search Without Stops:** Stop words are small, common words that many search engines ignore, or don’t stop for, when

searching for documents that match your query. This is because these words are either too common to generate meaningful results (i.e. where, how, about, and, if, be, the...).

**3) Search Suggested Alternate Spellings:** The search engine’s self-learning algorithm automatically detects misspellings and suggests corrections based on the most popular spelling of the word.

**4) Bring Sites Back From the Dead:** How many times have you found what looks to be a very promising Web site, only to get a “File Not Found” error when clicking on the link? Genealogical Web sites seem to come and go every day as webmasters

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**Genealogical Web sites seem to come and go every day as webmasters change file names, switch ISPs, or just decide to remove the site because they can no longer afford to maintain it. This doesn’t mean the information is always gone forever however.**

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change file names, switch ISPs, or just decide to remove the site because they can no longer afford to maintain it. This doesn’t mean the information is always gone forever, however. *[Continued on page 6]*

## ***Google [continued from page5]***

Hit the Back button and look for a link to a “cached” copy at the end of the Google description and page URL. Clicking on the “cached” link should bring up a copy of

the page as it appeared at the time that Google indexed that page, with your search terms highlighted

in yellow. You can

also return

Google’s cached copy of a page, by preceding the

page’s URL with

‘cache:’. If you

follow the URL

with a space

separated list of

search words, they will be highlighted

on the returned page. For example:

cache:genealogy.about.com surname will

return the cached version of this site’s

homepage with the term surname

highlighted in yellow.

**5) Find Related Sites:** GoogleScout can help you find sites with similar content. Hit the Back button to return to your Google search results page and then click on the Similar Pages link. This will take you to a new page of search results with links to pages containing similar content. You can also access this feature directly by using the related command with the URL of the site that you like related:genealogy.about.com.

**6) Follow the Trail:** Once you’ve found a valuable site, chances are that some of the sites which link to it may also be beneficial to you. Use the link command along with a URL to find pages which contain links pointing to that URL.

**7) Search Within a Site:** While many major sites have search boxes, this isn’t always true of smaller, personal genealogy sites. Google comes to the rescue again, however, by allowing you to restrict search results to a specific site. Just enter your search term followed by the site command and the main URL for the site you wish to

search in the

Google search box

on the main

Google page. For

example, military

site:

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

pulls up 150+ pages

with the search

term ‘military’ on

the Family Tree

Magazine Web

site.

This trick is especially useful for

quickly finding surname information on

genealogy sites without indexes or search

capabilities.

**8) Cover Your Bases:** When you really want to make sure you haven’t missed a good genealogy site, enter allinurl:genealogy to return a list of sites with genealogy as part of their URL.

**9) Find People, Maps and More:** If you’re searching for U.S. information, Google can do so much more than just search Web pages. The lookup information they provide through their search box has been expanded to include street maps, street addresses, and phone numbers. Enter a first and last name, city, and state to find a phone number. You can also do a reverse lookup by entering a phone number to find a street address. To use Google to find street maps, just enter a street *[Continued on page 7]*

## ***Google [continued from page5]***

address, city, and state (i.e. 8601 Adelphi Road College Park MD), in the Google search box. You can also find business listings by entering the name of a business and its location or zip code (i.e. myfamily.com utah)

**10) Pictures from the Past:** Google's image search feature makes it easy to locate photos on the Web. Just click on the Images tab on Google's home page and type in a keyword or two to view a results page full of image thumbnails. To find photos of specific people try putting their first and last names within quotes (i.e. "laura ingalls wilder").

**11) Glancing Through Google Groups:** If you've got a bit of time on your hands, then check out the Google Groups search tab available from the Google home page. Find info on your surname, or learn from the questions of others by searching through an archive of over 700 million Usenet news-group messages going back as far as 1981.

**12) Narrow Your Search by File Type:** Typically when you search the Web for information you expect to pull up traditional Web pages in the form of HTML files. Google offers results in a variety of different formats, however, including .PDF (Adobe Portable Document Format), .DOC (Microsoft Word), .PS (Adobe Postscript), and .XLS (Microsoft Excel). These files appear among your regular search results listings where you can either view them in their original format, or use the View as HTML link (good for when you don't have the application that is needed for that particular file type, or for when computer viruses are a concern). You can also use the filetype command to narrow your search to

find documents in particular formats (i.e. filetype:xls genealogy forms).

**13) Google Answers:** If you still aren't successful in your search after trying these tips, Google provides one more option - a new service known as Google Answers which allows you to ask a question and set the price you are willing to pay for an answer. A Google Answers Researcher will search for the answer and send you the information you're seeking, as well as useful links to Web pages on the topic. If you're satisfied with that answer, you pay the amount you specified. If not, then you may petition for a full refund. ☆

## **QUICKIE QUIZ:**

**"No one's name was changed accidentally at Ellis Island. Somewhere, in some record, that real family name can be found. Can you match the 'old country' names with their assimilated names? "**

— from "Three Myths of Jewish Genealogy" by Don Orenbuch, in *Chronicles*, newsletter of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Philadelphia, online at: [www.jewishgen.org/jgsp](http://www.jewishgen.org/jgsp)

Answers on page 12.

- |                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| a) Larry Zeigler     | 1) Woody Allen        |
| b) Milton Berlinger  | 2) Jack Benny         |
| c) Nathan Birnbaum   | 3) Milton Berle       |
| d) Joshph Levitch    | 4) Joey Bishop        |
| e) Milton Supman     | 5) Victor Borge       |
| f) Leonard Rosenberg | 6) George Burns       |
| g) Eugene Orowitz    | 7) Rodney Dangerfield |
| h) Alan Koenigsberg  | 8) Jerry Lewis        |
| i) Benjamin Kubelski | 9) Joan Rivers        |
| j) Joseph Gottlieb   | 10) Soupy Sales       |
| k) Borg Rosenbaum    | 11) Mel Brooks        |
| l) Joan Malinsky     | 12) Michael Landon    |
| m) Jacob Cohen       | 13) Larry King        |
| n) Melvin Kaminsky   | 14) Tony Randall      |

## Writing for publication

# Every family deserves a family newsletter!

by Don Fallick

In the old days, when the Internet and email were unheard of, a family newsletter was often the only way a large or far-flung family had to keep in touch. Today, with electronic bulletin boards and family web sites, a newsletter may seem old-fashioned. Not so!

The newsletter may be part of the web site or BBS, or may be a separate, hard-copy publication, but

there is still a need for collected family news that deserves more permanent preservation. If you have a literary bent, you may be just the person to edit such a publication.

### **What to include**

Is *everybody* in the family online, even Great-Grandma? If not, include a summary of family news: who graduated, got married, divorced, died, moved, took a cruise, etc. Make sure the details that would interest future genealogists, such as addresses and dates, are at least mentioned. If possible, include lots of photos of family members.

Even if the whole family is online, it's appropriate to include special family recipes, kids' poems, "granny stories," and items that make one part of the family "come alive" for their cousins, or their descendants. Kids love seeing articles about themselves, and back issues will be important to them, later, when they have their own children.

### **Where to get material**

You can ask for contributions, but as all newsletter editors know, you may not get them. Good sources of material are the

family website, if there is one, and the family *yente*, if that isn't you already.

You may have to write the material yourself. You need not be a professional writer to do this.

Include details, such as kids' grades and activities, and if possible, LOTS of photos. Get on everybody's email list, and ask the mothers what their kids (and other family members) are up to this year. Then follow up. Print summaries of family activities in every issue. Once they get the idea that you are the family news collector, it gets easier.

For an excellent summary of interview techniques, see Rochelle Kaplan's article on Eileen Hallet Stone's Interviewing workshop in Issue number 3. Be anal about details.

### **Family disputes**

Don't publicize family disputes, but don't ignore them, either. If you don't take sides, but just gently report that a dispute exists, you may be able to get spokesmen for each side to use your newsletter's "back pages" as a forum for discussion.

Be very careful if you do this. It's better to cancel an *Continued on page 9*

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**It's better to cancel an offensive letter or "guest editorial" completely than to edit it. Call the writer and ask him to edit the piece himself.**

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## Newsletters [continued from page 8]

offensive letter or “guest editorial” completely than to edit it. Call the writer and ask him to edit the piece himself. Don’t reply to letters yourself or editorialize on controversial subjects. Take the moral “high ground” and let your readers “duke it out,” themselves, but be even-handed. If space limitations force you to print only one side of an issue, invite a reply from the other side. You need not print every letter you get.

### **Paper or digital?**

Digital newsletter editors cannot easily cite “space limitations” as an excuse for not publishing something, a real disadvantage. Paper newsletters may be published less frequently than digital ones. They are also often held to higher standards, saved for later generations, and cost much more to produce and distribute. Digital is definitely cheaper, faster, and less durable. Of course, you can publish both ways, if you have the time and the inclination.

A newsletter of ten pages, printed double-sided on five sheets of copier paper and mailed in a long business envelope, will weigh exactly one ounce, with the staple. Figure costs at about \$1.20 to \$1.50 per copy. Publication costs rise significantly if you have to use two stamps or include a lot of color photos. Don’t expect to recover publication costs from your “subscribers.” You should be so lucky!

Electronic publication can cost absolutely nothing, but has its own constraints. Unless everyone in the family uses the same word-processor, you’re going to have to publish in “.pdf” format. It’s a good idea anyway, as popular word processors come and go, and you want your descendants to be able to read your newsletter. These days, virtually every program capable of desktop publishing has a “pdf publisher” application. Reading such files requires your subscribers to have Adobe Reader on their computers. It’s a free download from [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com).

The main disadvantage of pdf documents is that they are VERY LARGE files and take a long time to load. *Atsmi Uvsari* takes about twenty minutes to transfer from my slow computer without DSL.

One work-around for these slow transfer speeds is to post your newsletter to a website

and notify subscribers by e-mail, allowing them to download the newsletter themselves. If you don’t have a family website, this can be problematic. Keep a few paper copies for insurance.

CD-ROMs last about five years, floppies ten, and both can be marooned by changing technologies. It’s hard to find an 8 mm movie projector or reel-to-reel tape recorder. Technology changes, but reading lasts forever.

### **Publication schedules**

It’s unwise to tie yourself to a promised publication schedule, at least at first. If your newsletter is *[Continued on page 10]*

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## Newsletters [continued from page 9]

well-received, your readers will let you know when they are ready for regular publication. “Quarterly” or “semi-annual” publication tells your readers about how often to expect an issue, without tying you down to a particular time frame.

If you print schedules of family reunions or similar events, you’ll need to publish far enough in advance to carry timely information. Many commercial magazines plan each issue six months ahead of publication. There’s no reason why you cannot also begin planning each issue well in advance. You might even want to keep two or three issues under construction at a time, as we do for *Atsmi Uvsari*.

In the planning stage, we collect articles and decide what to write about. Collected articles are edited and stories are written in the second stage. In the final, “makeup” stage, we set up each page, write headlines, and actually publish the newsletter. We could take each issue through all three stages separately, but it’s easier to keep three issues under construction simultaneously. ☆

## **WHO ARE WE?**

**UTAH JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION, ORGANIZED TO BRING TOGETHER ALL UTAH PEOPLE INTERESTED IN PURSUING JEWISH GENEALOGY, REGARDLESS OF FAITH. UJGS MEETS BI-MONTHLY AT 7:00 PM ON THE THIRD TUESDAY OF THE MONTH AT CONGREGATION KOL AMI SYNAGOGUE IN SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH. ☆**

## **NEW PUBLICATION**

### **THE JEWISH VICTORIAN:**

Genealogical Information from the Jewish Newspapers 1861-70 by Doreen Berger

This latest volume is a companion to the JV 1871-80 and contains 400 pages. In this volume are all the births, marriages and deaths of the community taken from the Jewish newspapers of the period. Also included are condolence messages, obituaries, anecdotes and snippets of information about individuals from within the pages. It contains many links to countries abroad and the United States.

Among the fascinating stories from inside the pages of the newspapers are the vacillations of Rev. M.B. Levy regarding ministerial positions in the Sydney and Melbourne communities, the enticement of Esther Lyons from her home and the sensational trials that resulted from this case, the dastardly murder of the gentleman known as “the King of Whitton,” an extortion attempt upon the Rothschild family, the dreadful murder of Barnett Zussman, an action for slander brought against the Chief Rabbi, the missions of Sir Moses Montefiore to Morocco, the Holy Land and Roumania, the tragic death in childbirth of Evelina de Rothschild, the fight against cholera, and the argument about taking the English oath in a Court of Law.

£29.95, plus packing and postage (surface mail £6, airmail £11). Available from Robert Boyd Publications  
260 Colwell Drive  
Witney, Oxon OX28 5LW  
E-mail: [BOYDPUBS@aol.com](mailto:BOYDPUBS@aol.com).  
website: [www.boydpubs.co.uk](http://www.boydpubs.co.uk) ☆

## In our mailbox:

Please put this in your newsletter. Any help is very welcome! One of our members needs to determine whether her mother's paternal grandmother was Jewish.

What she knows:

- The great-grandfather was Jewish.
- They came to the US about 1905/1906
- They got married in this country, and though it is said that they came from the same town, then part of Russia, they did not know each other in the old country.
- They are not in the Ellis Island Data Base.
- Last name appears in the Hamburg Passenger List. It is not specifically Jewish.
- The family and children were not raised in the Jewish community.
- It is believed they became naturalized citizens.

She writes: I did research the naturalization records yesterday. They are not in the petition database, but possibly the sister and brother are, although the birthday seems probably wrong. Mary and Tom Piechocki are in there. (Brother and sister maybe to Anna Piechocki). However, as luck would have it, the actual records at the LDS library stop two years before their petition. So I need to send away for the documents.

There is only a slight chance that these are the people I'm looking for, but I'll follow up a little further on it. Interesting that I could not find Frank Derbin or Ann Piechocki Derbin in those indexes. It looks like they did not naturalize, at least not in Detroit.

I would think Tom Piechocki would have naturalized in Chicago because that is where he lived. Were naturalizations done in Chicago??

Suggestions:

1. Get marriage certificate and both death certificates. This might give us the birthplace and then determine whether a birth certificate can be found.
2. Get the information in the Naturalization papers of great-grandfather and great-grandmother if available to get the same information.
3. Get Military Registration for WWI of great-grandfather for same information.
4. Contact local Jewish Congregations in city of residence to see if they are/were any Jewish families with the same last name that could be descendants of great-grandmother.

If you have any other suggestions e-mail to editor and/or roneu1@yahoo.com and/or pamblack@soapcrafters.com

Pam

*Ideas, anyone? – editor*

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Our new website is now online. I hope you will visit it and perhaps decide to link to your website (or make its existence known to your members through your newsletter).

Jews once lived in the shtetl and gmina (rural district) of Kopciowo in Suwalki gubernia, now known as Kapciamiestis, Lithuania. This was a small community, and many of its residents were related by marriage. They lived here from the late 18th century until 1941. No Jews live in Kapciamiestis today, [*Cont'd on page 12*]

*Mail [continued from page 11]*

but their descendents can be found throughout the world. Please join help us collect and make available as much information as we can. [www.Kapciamiestis.org](http://www.Kapciamiestis.org)

The site currently includes history pages, photos, a cemetery database and research guidance to vital records. It may also be of interest to any of your members with roots in the Veisiejai area.

Dorothy Leivers  
Hadlow, Kent  
[Dorfleiv@aol.com](mailto:Dorfleiv@aol.com)

*Done! – editor*

Zip tips

## Italian, Anyone?

*by Marilyn Zipser*

If you are doing NYC research, keep checking on [www.italiangen.org](http://www.italiangen.org). Click on databases button. They currently have indexes for the following (FOR EVERYONE, NOT JUST ITALIANS):

- Nassau Co. Naturalizations
- Suffolk Co. Naturalizations
- WWI Naturalizations at Military Camps on Long Island
- Southern District Ct NY Naturalizations (1906-1959)
- NYC Death index for 1891-1911

BUT they are going to be putting up birth, marriage and death indexes for NYC very soon. The NY JGS has contributed some funds help the Italian organization buy a good digital scanner. If you have ever struggled with the microfilmed indexes, bookmark this site and check it regularly.

## Check out surrounding states!

Utah Territory originally included all of what is now Nevada, and parts of other states. If your Utah Jewish ancestors came here during the Territorial period, there may be records of them in surrounding states.

Nevada now has federal census records online, for the years 1860 to 1920. They are available, free, at:

<http://dmla.clan.lib.nv.us/docs/shpo/NVCensus/index.asp>.

Nevada is the first state to offer **all** its federal manuscript census data online. According to Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter (web site: <http://www.eogn.com>) the database is not merely a name index, but also allows searches by occupation, residence, age, etc. Hopefully, other states will soon follow Nevada's example. ☆

— Marelynn

### ***My Bone & My Flesh***

*Atsmi Uvsari* is published quarterly by the Utah Jewish Genealogical Society. We reserve *first electronic and print* publication rights. **All other rights are retained by the authors** where named, or by the UJGS. We strive for accuracy, but cannot be responsible for unintentional errors. We welcome comments, submissions, and questions. Please send them to the editor, Don Fallick, via e-mail at: [d.fallick@mstar2.net](mailto:d.fallick@mstar2.net).

### Answers to quiz on page 7:

**a-13, b-3, c-6, d-8, e-10, f-14, g-12  
h-1, i-2, j-4, k-5, l-9, m-7, n-11**

# July / Sept. Minutes Digest

by Rochelle Kaplan

## July meeting:

Robert Neu recounted some of the lectures and meetings he attended at the International Conference of IAJGS in Jerusalem earlier this month. See his Conference Report beginning on page 2.

He found Jerusalem safe, as long as one stayed away from areas of conflict, which is easy to do. The Israelis are going about their lives as usual.

Five days in fewer than 45 minutes renders justice neither to the sessions Robert attended, nor the conference overall. If anyone wants more details on any of the presentations, Robert is at your disposal.

The 2005 International Association of Jewish Genealogy Societies convention will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada on July 10-15. The Nevada host chapter may need help.

## September meeting:

Robert summarized the current issue of Avotaynu. Alexander Beider notes that Jewish folk adopted or were given surnames derived from colors, place names, sizes, occupations, stones and other natural features.

Gary Mokotoff's article predicts the future of Jewish genealogy. Most likely, more research will be done at home, thanks to the Internet.

Two books were brought in to peruse:  
**AVOTAYNU'S GUIDE TO JEWISH GENEALOGY**, edited by SallyAnn Amdur Sack and Gary Mokotoff  
**LEGACY: THE SAGA OF A GERMAN-JEWISH FAMILY ACROSS TIME AND CIRCUMSTANCE**, by Werner C. Frank.

## Tidbits:

- Elaine is the contact person for Chabad.
- Jews were restricted by law to rural areas till late in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and their most common occupation was innkeeper.
- Yad Vashem's database is scheduled to be online on Oct. 1.
- the FHL is way behind on cataloguing material.
- The Bronx Historical Library contains city directories.
- The librarian will look up five names free of charge.
- The Archives of Ukraine and of Romania are notorious for not answering letters.

Folks were asked to consider where UJGS is headed. What topics are we interested in exploring in the next year?

Mary Ann and Jerry would like to find out more about the Family Tree of the Jewish People in JewishGen, and what is available on Rootsweb.

Rochelle would like to see workshops on wills and land grants, on Yad Vashem's resources and other Holocaust materials, how one finds good researchers in the old country; she'd like to see more book reviews, relevant films.

MaryAnn suggested we establish a buddy system or activities for senior citizens at the JCC.

Wilma would like to know how to access translators at the FHL.

There was interest in a workshop on JRI-Poland, another on the Pale of Settlement, on the 1915 and 1925 NYC Censuses and on accessing Canadian records.

*[Continued on page 14]*

## Minutes continued from page 12

We wish to get back to having one person each meeting discuss a personal genealogical stumbling block, in order to get ideas from the group.

Robert gave a talk on taking notes and citations. His resource was **EVIDENCE-CITATION AND ANALYSIS FOR THE FAMILY HISTORIAN BY Elizabeth Shown Mills.**

- ❑ W ?s: who, how, two whats, when, where: The first what is the name, the second what is other information that helps establish the person's identity; a composite.
- ❑ How is how we prove the info, the truth. It refers to our sources. We must search for the truth. Yet not everything must be proved; there is common knowledge, for example: the dates of the Civil War. It is useful to estimate dates, at times. For example, one might estimate that a marriage preceded the birth of a first child by a year. Robert noted that civil marriages came into being in Germany between 1850 and 1870. During the Plague in Germany, a couple married only if the woman was pregnant.
- ❑ Robert discussed when and where to put notes. He recommends putting notes on the front of the page. One must decide between endnotes and footnotes. Robert said that the Family Group Sheet allows for citations.
- ❑ There are certain commonly accepted acronyms/abbreviations; it is helpful to have a list of translations of acronyms in the front. NA stands for National Archives, FHL stands for Family History Library. Miriam promised to bring in a handout on acronyms, to the next meeting Nov. 16.
- ❑ Surnames can have spelling variants. My

husband's surname has been written variously as Lipson, Leibsohn, Leibson, Liebsohn, Lepson, Labson.

- ❑ A bibliography is a list of books you used; it provides references to readers. A citation is a quote; a reader can find the same info you did. Hypertext allows one to go to another link on the computer.
- ❑ Regarding quotes, if you use more than three paragraphs in your manuscript, you must get the author's permission. Be careful about what you put out publicly; you don't want the information to fall into the wrong hands or be used in a way you wouldn't want it to be used. ☆

**WE WOULD RATHER DO  
BUSINESS WITH 1000  
ARAB TERRORISTS THAN  
WITH A SINGLE JEW**

This sign was prominently displayed in the window of a business in Philadelphia. Most would be outraged at the thought of such an inflammatory statement. One would think that anti-hate groups from all across the country would be marching on this business. And the National Guard might have to be called in to keep the angry crowds back. But, believe it or not, no protestors marched and no police were called..

We are a society which values Freedom of Speech as perhaps our greatest liberty. And after all it is just a sign....

You may be wondering what kind of a business would dare to post such a sign in these post-911 times?

**GOLDBERG'S FUNERAL HOME**

SPECIAL FEATURE:

# Onomastics Is Not a Dirty Word

by Rochelle Kaplan

*This is the first of a series of articles on Onomastics. Rochelle is a world traveler and a retired teacher, besides being our club Secretary, Program Chairperson, and general macher.*

Not a dirty word at all, onomastics is the study of names. In the past five years, Jewish onomastics, the study of both given names and surnames, has become a respectable specialty in the genealogy field. Two speakers at the IAJGS Conference in Jerusalem were Aaron Demsky, professor of biblical history and director of the Project for the Study of Jewish Names at Bar-Ilan University in Israel, and Haim Ghiuzeli, historian and director of the Internet and Databases Department of Beth Hatefutsoth – The Nahum Goldman Museum of the Jewish Diaspora in Tel Aviv. I didn't make it to Jerusalem for the conference, but I did purchase the CD-ROMs of the lectures and have started listening to them. I summarize the Demsky and Ghiuzeli talks below.

At the outset, I'll cite some resources each of the speakers mentioned: These Are the Names – Studies in Jewish

Onomastics (vols. 1-4), Jewish Personal Names: Their Origin, Derivation and Diminutive Forms by Rabbi Shmuel

Gorr, Beider's Dictionary of Ashkenazic Given Names and the Beth Hatefutsoth website:

[www.bh.org.il/Exhibitions/virtual.asp](http://www.bh.org.il/Exhibitions/virtual.asp).

Clicking on the last site, I found that the museum lists for its name of the week:

“PRIESAND, PRIZAND, PRYZANT. Many Jewish family names were originally personal nicknames. Priesand means "gift" in Yiddish. The name and its variants are recorded as a Jewish family name since early 19th century with Jewish families living in various towns within the Jewish Pale of Settlement of the Russian empire: the variant Prizand is recorded as a Jewish family name, mainly in the region of Brest-Litovsk (now in Belarus), the variant Prizant is documented in Grodno (Hrodna), Brest-Litovsk, and Pinsk (all in Belarus) and in Riga (Latvia), while the form Pryzan was found in Lukow, Siedlce, Radzyn, Janow, Chelm, and Warsaw (all in Poland).

Distinguished bearers of the family name Priesand include the American rabbi Sally Priesand (b. 1946), the first woman to be ordained a rabbi in the Unites States.”

This website also contains a search order form. For a small fee, you can ask that a family surname be researched. Ghiuzeli stated that Beth Hatefutsoth has 20,000 names in its database.

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**Chinese women who converted to Judaism were given a Hebrew name plus bat Adam, to signify that no Jewish persons preceded her in her family.**

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Looking at the Gorr book, I found that my maternal grandmother's given name, Devorah (Deborah), is biblical. It is mentioned in Bereishit, 35:8, Shoftim, 4:4. “A bee.” The wet nurse of Rivkah, wife of Yitzhak. Deborah was the [Continued on page 16]

*Onomastics [cont'd from page 15]*

as daughter of Utz, son of Nahor, who was Abraham's brother. Another Devorah was the wife of Lapidot, and was the Prophetess of God. The name may have originally been given to a baby girl because her crying had the humming sound of a bee. The Gorr book then gives variants such as Dvora and Vera.

Demsky cites a goal of the family genealogist, to identify the names of family members. He reminds us that Jews are often given two personal names, a modern name and a traditional (Hebrew, Yiddish, Ladino) name. The modern name is secular and the traditional name is sacred, shem ha'kodesh. Demsky feels names offer a window into Jewish culture and humor. Two jokes illustrate this point. In the first apocryphal story, Yankel Cohen arrives at Ellis Island where a friend advises him to take a Gentile name to ease his

adjustment to America. Spying a sign on the wall, he reads Hutchison River Parkway and

decides to use that. But when he is asked his name by an official, he blurts out in Yiddish, "Oy, shum vargessen." The official writes down Shawn Ferguson.

In the second joke, there is a fancy bris on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. Folks are surprised that the parents select for both the English and Hebrew name, Shmuel. Someone approaches the grandmother to ask why the family chose the name Shmuel. The grandma proudly replies, "He's names after his deceased grandfather, Scott."

Demsky points out that names have been used to change one's identity and consciously

forget heritage, to affect how others perceive one's identity, and names often indicate an intergenerational tension. The legacy of Jewish names is more than 3500 years old. The professor listed some popular given names today in America: Jacob, Michael, Joshua and Matthew are the four most popular boy's names. In the top ten of girl's names are Hannah and Abigail. The Bible serves as a core text for many names, but Rabbinic tradition, halalic law and Aggadah (narratives) also serve as naming sources. Demsky also cites psychological factors over time which led to name changes, say from Joseph to Johosah to Yossi or from Moses to Avigdor to Victor.

Demsky talks about the small Jewish community of Kaifeng, China, which dates to 970 A.D. and which was cut off from world Jewry. The resources the community used to

find names were the Bible and Torah scrolls. A memorial book of the dead in Hebrew and

Chinese, dating from 1670, is housed in Cleveland. Chinese women who converted to Judaism were given a Hebrew name plus bat Adam, to signify that no Jewish persons preceded her in her family. Some common names among the group were Moshe, Ruven, Shimon and Levi.

The professor also referred to Italian Jewry. Sometimes comparative names were given. For example, Mordechai might become Malechi and then Angelo, since both mean messenger or angel. Some names were avoided such as Matthew or Miriam or Joshua, due to their Christian associations.

*[Continued on page 17]*

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**Why did the family choose the name Shmuel?  
The grandma proudly replies, "He's names  
after his deceased grandfather, Scott."**

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## *Onomastics [cont'd from page 16]*

In Ashkenazic traditions, and here Demsky cites Alexander Beider's seminal work, it was common to have double names. He cites translations of names like Yitzak to Isaac, diminutive forms so that Menachem becomes Mendel or Yaacov becomes Koppel, and kinnum (secular equivalents of Hebrew names) so that Benjamin becomes Wolf or Naftali becomes Hirsch. Sometimes the name might have a symbolic value, such as an animal characteristic. Thus Judah was associated with the lion, Benjamin with the wolf or Zev. The characteristics of an ass became transmuted to Ber. Demsky suggests that feral animals appealed to the wild side of Jews trapped in the Pale of Settlement. Sometimes, the animal characteristics became preserved in family names such as Wolfson or Berman.

Other examples Demsky uses are combinations of verbs plus nouns to a given name, as in Chaje Sore; lyrical references as in David Zvi, as in my beloved is like a gazelle, or date references, as in Moshe Mordechai because the birth of the person occurred on the seventh of Adar – commemorating a date significant in the life of Moses. Later on, Demsky points out, this meaning can be lost if someone is named after an ancestor Moshe Mordechai.

Genesis, Exodus, the Song of Songs and the Song of Esther all influenced Eastern European Jewry in their naming practices. Demsky points to the advent of printing after

1450 as a significant factor in naming. Once the Bible was printed in vernacular languages, names from this source were used more frequently. Demsky stressed how important it is for genealogists to understand Jewish names.

The lecture made me realize that in conducting oral interviews, I should ask what the person's Hebrew name is, and I should ask for the double name. In later generations, someone may be given a name using only one part of a Hebrew double name. For example, a great-grandfather's Hebrew name might be Osher Zelig but his namesake might be Zachary.

**In 1937, the Nazis ordered that Jews Hebraize their names so that Jews would be more recognizable as Jews. Thus Gustav Schultz might become Gustav Israel Schultz and Gertrude might become Gertrude Sarah.**

In response to the question, "Who is the arbiter of the name of the child?" Demsky responded that there are different traditions among the Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews. The Ashkenazic honor a dead ancestor, the Sephardic a living relative. Traditionally, for some, the first child's name is derived from the Bubbie's (grandmother's) side. In response to another query, "Why do some names become popular and others disappear?" Demsky gave examples. Moses was a popular name for a time, then disappeared only to be reborn in medieval times.

In the 1920s, in the Third Aliyah, when Zionists came to Israel, Biblical names became popular. Some names reflected a sense of protest– Nimrod, Hagar, Anat. A name Yaram, which was popular in the 1930s, is eschewed today because of its connotations to nerdiness.

*[Continued on page 18]*

*Onomastics [cont'd from page 17]*

Some names became Iberianized as Jews moved to the Iberian Peninsula and then South and Central America. German Jews in the mid-1800s cast off their Hebrew names in favor of German ones. So Hersch became Herman, Abraham became Adolph or Arnold, Itzig became Isidore.

§

The title of the second lecture in the onomastic series was “Roots of the Names or Names of the Roots.” Ghiuzeli is concerned with why particular surnames were adopted. He explores the

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**People had choices... Most family names were chosen for clear reasons. It's one task of the family historian to find out why.**

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etymological use of surnames and links to families. Over time, the reason for adopting a particular name become lost or transmogrified. The Beth Hatefutsoth Museum contains two databases: Genealogy & Family Trees and the Jewish Family Names Database. Except for tribal names such as Cohen and Levi, other Jewish surnames were adopted, often at emancipation at the end of the 18th century. Sometimes a surname reflected a place of origin, but this is not always true. Berlin, for example, might be a diminutive of Ber, rather than a reference to the city. A surname Rosenau might have been assigned to a pretty Jewish woman by a flirting German bureaucrat. Rosenau, now a rare word, meant a forest clearing of roses. Jews themselves sometimes chose a surname as an identity marker in a social group. Traditionally, of course, Jews had no surnames; instead, they were known as their given name, son of the

father's name, as in Shmuel, ben Moshe.

Ethiopian Jews have a complex naming tradition with no surnames. When some Ethiopian Jews made aliyah to Israel, law required that they adopt surnames. This posed a conflict as names were often assigned by phonetic closeness to the Ethiopian name, with no regard to the name's meaning in Amharic or Tigrinya. The name Alemo in Ethiopian might become Alom (oak tree) in Israel. Sometimes Israeli authorities asked the Ethiopian his grandfather's name and then the authority picked some close equivalent. Ethiopians were forced to renounce their

traditional naming practices. Fortunately, in the 1990s, the law was changed so

that Ethiopians could keep their names. Also, with more experienced translators, one could properly translate an Ethiopian name, rather than pick a phonetic equivalent. However, because of differing naming practices and laws in Ethiopia and Israel, Ethiopian women in Israel get the surnames of their husbands, and their children get this surname as well. As the meanings of the Ethiopian names are forgotten, marriages between fourth and fifth cousins have become more common.

Ethiopians have strict rules regarding marriage. Ethiopians are not supposed to marry someone related less than seven generations, or even better, twelve. The complex naming tradition they used was clear to fellow countrymen; each Ethiopian could name his ancestors back twelve generations – orally. For example, the first name had to relate to something that happened to  
*[Continued on page 19]*

## Onomastics [cont'd from page 18]

the parents during the child's birth or in the month before the birth; the second name had to be the parents' expectations for the child, a third name was a biblical or Hebrew name. Given names must be chosen at birth, not beforehand. Examples of some names are: Golden Shoes, Waters of the Nile, Strong, He Shall Help. In addition, the grandparents often give the Ethiopian child their own special name. And upon marriage, the mother-in-law gives a special name for her new daughter-in-law. But the lady is also known by her dominant given name and the name of her father (never her husband). Ethiopians know their family ancestry orally. They rehearse it.

Thus when it is time to marry, the family history can be constructed and it can be determined if a marriage will be allowed. Upon entry to Israel, an Ethiopian's surname is often based on the given name. This is similar to the name Hymovich, which means son of Hyman. The Ethiopian names have meaning which reflect family history, much as Sephardic surnames reflect memories of Spain. Today, in Israel, it is easy for an Ethiopian or anyone else to change his name.

The lecturer talked about recurring naming patterns in Rexingen, Germany. Jews there had emigrated from Eastern and Central Europe. Two hundred years ago, a third of the population of Rexingen was Jewish. In 1827, Jews were ordered to adopt surnames, where they had used patronymics before. They chose names significant to them, to identify themselves and reinforce their origins.

Thus Hirsch became Nikersumer, reflecting the birth town of Nikersum. (Please note I spell this phonetically and realize I am misspelling the town name.) Jacob Rexinger changed his name from Nikersumer when he left Rexinger, to reflect the town he

emigrated from. His siblings kept the surname Nikersumer.

The surname Lemberger referred back to Lemberg, the old name of Lvov. Mr. Ghiuzeli said that in studying small towns with many historical documents, historians can reconstruct naming practices.☆

## news briefs:

### **Kapciamiestis, Lithuania website**

Jews once lived in the shtetl and mina of Kopciowo in Suwalki gubernia, now known as Kapciamiestis, Lithuania. This was a small community, and many of its residents were related by marriage.

They lived here from the late 18th century until 1941. No Jews live in Kapciamiestis today, but their descendants can be found throughout the world.

The [www.Kapciamiestis.org](http://www.Kapciamiestis.org) site currently includes history pages, photos, a cemetery database and research guidance to vital records.

### **Brest-Litovsk (Brisk), Russia ShtetLink:**

<http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/brest/home.html> may be of interest to anyone whose ancestors were born, died, married or emigrated from Brest-Litovsk, Russia (now, Brest, Belarus).

One of the most important projects that the Brest, Belarus Research SIG is undertaking is the research of ancestral records currently housed in the Minsk Archives. More information about this research project can be found at:

[http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/brest/Research\\_Minsk\\_Archives\\_2004.html](http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/brest/Research_Minsk_Archives_2004.html).

In addition, a group of Briskers have organized the Brest, Belarus Research SIG. It's growing really fast. For anyone interested in joining this FREE site it is:

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/brest\\_belarus/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/brest_belarus/)

President's message:

# It's All in a day's work

\_\_\_\_\_by Robert Neu

Two common sayings also apply to Genealogy: “no man is an island” and referring to “our ancestors.” Genealogy depends on “records.” Somebody had to create those records. Somebody had to preserve them. Somebody had to discover they existed, microfilm, catalog, index and digitize them. The further back we go, the more widely we share them with others. Before long we share them with everyone. Genealogy might teach us all that we are all one big family.

So it behooves us to also help others in their research. Being here in Salt Lake City is a particular advantage. FHL library access does not exist in Israel. I let it be known that I would look up films for anyone there, and was given the opportunity to do so.

I am involved in a transcription project of Hungarian records. One of the volunteers was from the town of Rehovot in Israel, home of the Weizmann Institute. A volunteer for the project also worked there. I told her I had a cousin in Rehovot, connected with that institution. I gave her the name, but she did not seem to connect.

In Jerusalem this summer, we met, and, yes, they knew each other. She had gone to school with my cousin's wife! While there I met two others that I had helped, and spoke with another who could not attend. Two of those were recruited as transcribers.

I was asked to look up 19<sup>th</sup> Century Jewish birth records of the town of Presov in Slovakia (at the time part of Hungary.) While perusing the records I also found records with four less common names of individuals known to me. I gave the information to each of the parties.

The Szinai information was a bull's eye. These were cousins of his father who had perished in the Holocaust. This led to the question of the origin of the Szinai/Sinai name; one locality mentioned in the records was Szina. It was enough to raise the question, though not to resolve the issue.

Tom Venizianer had made questioned the origin of his family name. Is it derived from Venice or Vino (wine)? I found there were Venizianers in Presov and also a small town called Veniczia. Tom indicated he would look at the records himself.

When you do research you don't know who you will help as you increase your own knowledge.. As we find people connected to our ancestors it brings us one step closer to each other. ☆

## Contact us:

UJGS website:

[www.rootsweb.com/~utjgs/](http://www.rootsweb.com/~utjgs/)

President: Robert Neu

Program Chair: Rochelle Kaplan

Editor: Don Fallick [d.fallick@mstar2.net](mailto:d.fallick@mstar2.net)

## Family DNA Research

More than likely you don't have any Auten, Blanton, Rockwell, Lee, Fitzpatrick, Cory/Corey, Brice or Campbell on your family tree but you might still want to go to [www.relativegenetics.com](http://www.relativegenetics.com) and see what they did with DNA research.

– Robert Neu ☆