



JEWISH GENEALOGICAL AND ARCHIVAL SOCIETY OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA

1/21/2021

Hi Everyone,

We had over 100 people join us for a fabulous lecture by Sharon Taylor last Sunday. My mailbox was full of positive comments. Her family story and use of Newspapers.com was very interesting and informative. You can read Linda's summary in the next issue of Chronicles. All of you should have received the handout. I have also attached it to this e-mail. I am using some of Sharon's research tips about newspapers in the Beginner's Corner below. Putting in the name of the town my ancestors immigrated from in Eastern Europe was something I hadn't thought about! Now, I have a lot more research to do!

FROM
MARILYN
GOLDEN VP

membership@jgsgp.org



CHRONICLES, Our quarterly
award-winning journal:

Please submit articles to our
Chronicles editor,
Evan Fishman,
editor@jgsgp.org.

We all have stories to tell!

Deadline for the next issue
of *Chronicles* is March 14th.

If you want to add a hard
copy of *Chronicles* to your
membership it is an extra

Beginner's Corner and Research Tips

Newspapers.com is a digitized searchable archive containing scanned newspapers from across the country and some international papers. It is a subscription service associated with Ancestry.com and offers a seven-day free trial. Vintage newspapers are a treasure trove of information for genealogists.

Historical newspaper content is an important primary source material that may add additional facts, prove relationships, and build your family tree.

Below are a few more website to check out for articles.

- For more search tips check out [Newspapers.com](https://blog.newspapers.com)'s blog Fishwrap: <https://blog.newspapers.com>
 - The Jewish Exponent (1887-1977) can be found at <https://newspaperarchive.com/free-newspaper-archives/>. [Genealogybank.com](https://www.genealogybank.com) has it from 2012-present. That leaves a 35-year gap. (Thanks to Gary Brownstein for this info.)
 - ProQuest <https://about.proquest.com/products-services/pq-hist-news.html>
 - [Fultonhistory.com](https://www.fultonhistory.com)
 - <https://www.archives.gov/research/military/ww2>
 - www.ahsgr.org (Society of Germans from Russia)
 - [Americanancestors.org](https://www.americanancestors.org)
 - Check local libraries, colleges and universities (Temple and U of Penn.)
 - Special Collections Research Center <http://library.temple.edu> (Contact Jessica Lydon, Associate Archivist at jessica.lydon@temple.edu)
- Thanks to our members for providing the additional research information during the Q and A.
- **Best Free Sites for Online Newspaper Research for Genealogy** ^{nu}, Gary Mokotoff, Editor *The Ancestor Hunt* has an article that describes what they consider the best free sites for online newspaper research. Read the article, which has links to the named sites, at <https://tinyurl.com/AHTopNewspaperSites>. Elephind, Library of Congress, Old Fulton NY postcards, Advantage Archives, Trove, and Google News Archives. The links are in the article.

New Website Update

Check out our new website in progress! www.jgasgp.org. There are pictures on a 'slider'. If you have old photos that you may want to share, Jim Meyer, our webmaster, would be interested in hearing from you! Contact Jim through our current website www.jgasgp.org. *Please **do not register** on the new site yet. We are not ready!

From the President's Desk

Genealogists utilize many different websites and belong to various organizations to advance our research. Although we are a society focusing on researching Jewish ancestry, it is possible to locate important documents on non-Jewish specific sites. Newspapers.com, Ancestry.com and FamilySearch are examples of these. Our most recent speaker, Sharon Taylor, delivered an outstanding presentation on the Newspapers.com site. Today, I will share one website that I use regularly, and which may be new to our members. Although it requires membership to gain full access to their databases and webinars, one may also join as a guest.

AmericanAncestors.org is the website for one of the oldest genealogy societies in the United States: The New England Historic Genealogical Society. It is located in the heart of Boston. Their massive online library includes manuscripts, public and private collections as well as a Reading Room and the opportunity to consult with their expert genealogists via chats or private appointments. During non-Covid times, one can tour the facility or make a day of using the in-house repositories. It is a treasure trove of American history, including our Jewish ancestors. Their website states,

“Founded in 1845, the New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) is the country’s leading resource for family history research. We help genealogists of all skill levels improve their knowledge and understanding of their family and its place in history. Although our name says New England, we provide expertise and research in nearly all aspects of family history, from 17th-century colonial New England through twentieth-century immigration research.”

For those of us researching American Jewish roots, check out the The Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center, which is physically housed at the NEHGS, can be found on the website but also has its own link: <https://jewishheritagecenter.org/> I experienced a thrilling discovery on this site when I found the previously private and unknown-to-me [Abraham C. Ratshesky Papers](#). “Cap” Abraham Ratshesky was a political, business and philanthropic leader in the Boston Jewish Community in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s...and one of my grandfather’s uncles. Click on his hyperlink above to come face to face with Abraham. This collection was found in the Wyner Digital Library and Archives.

Even if you do not have roots in New England, there is much to discover on the American Ancestors site. Try logging on as a guest. If you have any feedback, please share it with me!! I will be writing more about this organization and its website in a future issue of Chronicles.

Felicia Mode Alexander

Future JGASGP Zoom Meetings

Date: Sunday, February 7, 2021

Time: 1:00 check in, chat, and schmooze. Official program starts promptly at 1:30

Guest Speakers: **Ron Arons**, Author and Genealogist (the Host), with **Jordan Auslander**, Forensic



Genealogist (the MC), and **Mark Heckman**, (the Technical Producer)

Ron has presented at 14 of the past 18 IAJGS conferences on a wide variety of subjects and has also been behind the scenes at 4 IAJGS conferences to help produce "Game Show Night/Jewish Genealogy Jeopardy". Ron has traced his roots to Lithuania, Poland, Romania, England, Belarus, and the Ukraine. In 2006 Ron appeared on the PBS TV series The Jewish Americans. He has published three books including The Jews of Sing Sing, and most recently, Mind Maps for Genealogy. Ron earned a B.S. in Engineering from Princeton and an MBA from the Univ. of Chicago.

Topic: Game Show Night – Who wants to be a Rothschild? – or an original Jewish themed gameshow with member participants

The main presentation at our next meeting on Sunday, February 7, 2021 will be a Jewish Genealogy themed game show, “Who Wants to be a Rothschild?,” a takeoff on “Who Wants to be a Millionaire?” Ron Arons, Jordan Auslander, and Mark Heckman have developed this show, which will be part of the program at the IAJGS Conference here in Philadelphia August 2-5, 2021.

We are looking for 4 or 5 contestants for this show on February 7. **All contestants will be provided a full year’s membership in JGASGP!** If you have not yet renewed for 2021, your prize is a 2021 membership. If you have renewed for 2021, your prize is membership for 2022. All contestants will be winners. The objectives for

this program is to first, have fun with the gameshow and second, to help Ron, Jordan, and Mark to tune up the show for its introduction at the IAJGS Conference in August.

If you are interested in having fun as a contestant at the next meeting, please contact me at mark@halpern.com as soon as possible.

Sunday, February 21, 2021

1:00 pm Check-in, Chat, and Schmooze.

Official program starts promptly at 1:30

Guest Speaker: Miriam Weiner, Genealogist, Author and "Creator of the Consolidated Eastern



European Archival Database”

In 1989, Miriam Weiner accepted an invitation from the Polish National Tourist Office to visit the Polish archives as preparation for arranging genealogy tours to Poland. That visit led to a 30-year career working in the archives of Poland, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and Lithuania. On December 15, 2019, Miriam Weiner will give a presentation about her extraordinary and unpredictable odyssey as she “walked in the footsteps of her ancestors.”

In 1991, “The Jewish Week” in New York referred to Miriam as “The genealogist who lifted the archival iron curtain” and in 1998, “The Forward” referred to her as “The Indiana Jones of pre-war Polish Jewry.”

We are very lucky to have our Lifetime member join us for a special encore presentation!

Topic: Searching the new Surnames Databases.

Miriam's website: <https://www.rtrfoundation.org/index.shtml> and her two new surnames database: <https://www.rtrfoundation.org/lnintro.shtml> will be demonstrated. She will teach us how to search her two new surname databases with all the bells and whistles!

Date: Sunday, February 28, 2021

Time: 1:00 check in, chat, and schmooze. Official program starts promptly at 1:30

Guest Speaker: Leora Tec, Founder and Director, Bridge to Poland <https://bridgetopoland.com/about->



[leora](#)

Leora Tec is the founder and director of **Bridge To Poland**, which seeks to educate people about Jewish history in Poland with an emphasis on how the Jews of Poland are being remembered by non-Jewish Poles today. Leora is the Special Projects Partner of **Brama Grodzka-Teatr NN** in Lublin, Poland and a Mary Elvira Stevens Traveling Fellow from Wellesley College (2018-2019). In cooperation with Brama Grodzka-Teatr NN Leora has created the online video archive, [The Neshoma Project: Conversations with Poles Rescuing Jewish Memory](#). Leora sits on the board of the **American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies**. She is the author of several articles including "Bridge Building in the Polish Jewish Landscape in *Jews in Dialogue* (Brill 2020) and the forthcoming, "An Inclusive Model of Memory Work in Poland: Bridge To Poland as a Case Study" with Professor Jolanta Ambrosewicz-Jacobs in the Polish journal **Politeja**. Leora's mother, Nechama Tec, is a Holocaust survivor and Holocaust scholar whose book, "Defiance," was made into the film of the same name starring Daniel Craig and Liev Schreiber. Leora holds a B.A. from Wellesley College and a J.D./LL.M. from Duke University School of Law.

Topic: What is there for Jews in modern day Poland? An Introduction to [The Neshoma Project](#)

As we know, ninety percent of Polish Jews were murdered during World War II. It's understandable that some people, especially Jews of Polish descent, might have reservations about going to Poland, the site of such vast pain and loss. And yet, Poland is an integral part of Jewish history.

Leora Tec has travelled all over Poland having conversations with non-Jews who, in different ways, are remembering the Jews who used to be their neighbors. Those interviewed, working to heal historical wounds, come from many different fields including: scholarship, teaching, guiding, grassroots activities, museum work and the arts.

Date: Sunday, March 7, 2021

Time: 1:00 check in, chat, and schmooze. Official program starts promptly at 1:30



Guest Speaker: Joel Spector

Joel is a Past President of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Philadelphia, where he has also been chairperson of its Russian Special Interest Group. Joel has given presentations and workshops on the Russian language, both contemporary and pre-Revolutionary, and has provided translations of documents to individuals and groups. Currently Joel is a member of the Ukraine Research Group and serves as its Director of Metric Record Projects. Joel has been actively engaged in genealogy for over 30 years and has been conducting research in several historic Russian language encyclopedias. He has produced a unique English language Index to the Russian language Evreiskaya Entsiklopedia.

Topic: “Finding Your Ancestors: How to Get Started and Where to Go.”

The presentation will focus on how to find information about your ancestors, both those you know and those you didn't even know you had. We will explore what data is immediately available and review what information can be derived from the many types of resources - local, national and international - and from on-line resources. Throughout, we will focus on the excitement in discovering information about your little-known ancestors and on the various types of information that make the search in Jewish genealogy fun.

Date: Sunday, March 21, 2021

Time: 1:00 check in, chat, and schmooze. Official program starts promptly at 1:30

Guest Speaker: David Brill



David Brill has been researching his family history in Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, and the United States for over 25 years. A longtime member of JGASGP, he coordinates the Russian Interest Group, and is an avid (and self-taught) translator of prerevolutionary Russian records. In addition to managing the Tuchin, Ukraine, Kehila-Links page, David leads the Rovno Uezd Jewish Records Project for the JewishGen Ukraine Research Division, which is currently translating more than 52,000 records of Jewish families from Tuchin, Rovno and nearby towns. In his non-genealogical existence, David is a research civil engineer with the Federal Aviation Administration, specializing in the design and evaluation of airport runways. He has a Ph.D. in civil engineering from Rutgers University, and also graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, where he met his wife Michelle. They have two grown children, Ari and Rachel.

Topic: Getting the Most from Revision Lists - A Regional Approach

Revision lists are among the most important genealogical resources from the Russian Empire, and they are often the only available confirmation that an ancestor actually lived in a particular shtetl. They may contain important information pertinent to neighboring towns too. Fortunately, we now have access to greatly expanded online databases, plus new sources of online revision lists and other original documents (such as Alex Krakovsky's wiki page, topic of last April's meeting by Joel Spector). This means that it is now easier than ever to expand one's research beyond the borders of a single shtetl and discover previously unknown genealogical connections to nearby communities. David's presentation shares examples from the ongoing Rovno Uezd Jewish Records Project (present-day Rivne, Ukraine) that illustrate the power of a region-wide search. In addition, David will discuss the current status of the Rovno regional translation project, and what a deep reading of the revision lists can tell us about our ancestors' lives in the Russian Pale of the 19th-century.

Date: Sunday, April 11, 2021

Time: 1:00 check in, chat, and schmooze. Official program starts promptly at 1:30



Guest Speaker: Ellen Kowitt <https://www.ellenkowitt.com/>

Ellen is Director of JewishGen's United States Research Division and National Vice Chair of the DAR Lineage Committee Jewish Task Force. She is past president of JGS Colorado and JGS Greater Washington DC, has served on the IAJGS board of directors, and been recipient of IAJGS Program and Stern Awards. Ellen publishes articles in Avotaynu: The International Journal on Jewish Genealogy and Family Tree Magazine. Ellen is a member of the Colorado Chapter Association of Professional Genealogists, she accepts clients, and lectures often. Currently, Ellen is participating in the ProGen

46 study group cohort and was recipient of the UGA Jimmy B. Parker Scholarship for SLIG 2021. For the dates of upcoming lectures or more information, visit www.EllenKowitt.com.

Topic: "Comparison of Jewish Resources on the Giants; Ancestry, FamilySearch, Findmypast, JewishGen, & MyHeritage."

Enjoy this comparative overview of Jewish record collections and research tools on the global powerhouse websites referred to as "Genealogy Giants." This lecture has been updated to reflect the ever-changing content found online and many record examples will be shared. Learn about how each site can be especially helpful for documenting Jewish families and get tips on each site's best features or challenges, including how JewishGen collections found on Ancestry.com differ from comparable collections originating on JewishGen.org, both in content and in the search experience

Date: Sunday, May 2, 2021 **HELP WANTED!**

Time: 1:00 check in, chat, and schmooze. Official program starts promptly at 1:30

Speakers: To Be Determined

Topic: Genealogy in the round... Ask the Experts

We already have a few members who are experts within certain fields, such as Russian, Polish, Ukrainian, and Philadelphia research. Would you consider yourself an expert in a certain area? Or a Translator? If so, send me an e-mail with a description of your expertise and experience. Put ASK THE EXPERT in the subject line. You will be contacted by Mark Halpern as he plans the program.

Date: Sunday, June 23, 2021

Time: 1:00 check in, chat, and schmooze. Official program starts promptly at 1:30

Guest Speaker: TBA

Zoom Meetings of Interest

Witnessing Holocaust History: From Generation to Generation

Wednesday, January 27, 2021 9 A.M. EST

International Holocaust Memorial Day



[World ORT](#), the [WE ARE HERE! Foundation](#), and the Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Center of Philadelphia have partnered this year to provide an international experience of Holocaust education and remembrance to students around the world. This is an international project that commemorates the Holocaust and also provides opportunities for global Holocaust education, engaging the next generation of learners.

The Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Center will provide [Witness to History Survivor Testimony](#) programs to ORT, the global education network driven by Jewish values, where students will have the opportunity to engage directly with a Holocaust survivor and hear their stories. These students will also, through the WE ARE HERE! Foundation, learn the importance and legacy of the Partisans' Song, and join together globally through sharing that music in their own languages. The Partisans' Song, the song of hope, is the legacy of the partisans and the survivors.

Join us on January 27, 2021 at 9 A.M. EST for a special broadcast program which will showcase the testimony shared with the students, allow them to describe and share their experiences with each other, and connect globally through the harmony of learning experiences and the singing of the Partisan Song.

Upcoming events

"JRI-Poland Update and More" by Stanley Diamond

When 24 Jan 2021

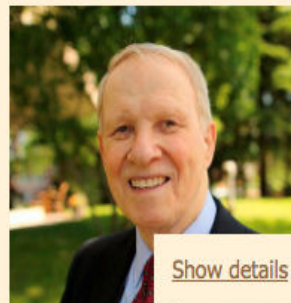
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (CST)

Location From the convenience of
your home computer.

[Already registered](#)

Stanley Diamond to present update on JRI-Poland on Jan. 24, 2021

Jewish Records Indexing-Poland's founder and executive director, Stanley Diamond, will present "JRI-Poland Update and More" for the Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021, virtual meeting of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois. His live streaming presentation will begin at 2 p.m. Central Standard Time.



[Show details](#)

- JewishGen.org/live! Has many recorded lectures and continuously adds new programs.
- **YIVO:** <https://www.yivo.org/Calendar> Ashkenazi Jews and Chinese Food. This was very interesting, and you can find it on their Youtube page. There are numerous videos from YIVO on Youtube.com with a variety of topics.
- **The Center for Jewish History** is holding a free virtual Genealogy Coffee Break webinar at 2:30 p.m. Central Time *every Tuesday* on Facebook Live. If you are on Facebook, go to: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/centerforjewishhistory/501317183869918>.
- **The Chicago Jewish Genealogical Society** has a calendar of past recorded lectures free to view HTTPs You need to register on their website.
- **The Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston** offers numerous monthly programs and previously recorded lectures. <https://www.jgsgb.org/event>
- ConferenceKeeper.org has many events listed for the month.
- MyHeritage is continuing to offer many live or recorded lectures. Even if you can't make it to the live events, you can still enjoy all recorded FB Live sessions in the Videos section of the [MyHeritage Facebook page](#). Many of the webinars are available for free viewing on the [MyHeritage Knowledge Base](#).
- IGRA, the Israel Genealogy Research Association, is holding free webinars mostly in English about Jewish genealogy research resources. Scroll down their calendar of events to register for coming webinars: <https://genealogy.org.il/calendar/>
- "Resources for Sephardic Jewish Research: An Introduction" by Schelly Talalay Dardashti can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywoXcY2YRis&feature=youtu.be>
- The Bucks County Genealogy Society is having Steve Morse in February. You must be a member to attend.
- <https://familytreewebinars.com/upcoming-webinars.php> Offers many free webinars!
- The next Orange County California Jewish Genealogy Society meeting is Sunday January 24th at 10:00 am Pacific Time. Alexander Beider is speaking on *What's in a name? Unraveling the Mystery of Jewish Migrations Through Onomastics*. Free to members and \$5 for nonmembers. Register at www.ocjgs.org
- The Jewish Genealogy Society of Southern Nevada (JGSSN) invites you to a Zoom meeting at 1:00 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time) on Sunday, February 21: "What's New at FamilySearch" with **Todd Knowles**. We heard Todd speak to our group. He is very informative!!!

To request a Zoom link, please complete this short form: [Zoom Link Request](#)

Members of JGSSN can attend for free. Non-members can either pay \$5.00 on the [Donate page](#) or pay \$20 for a subscription to the 2021 series of outstanding speakers (8 lectures planned). Take a look at the lineup on our [Meetings page](#). To become a member and sign up for the 2021 series, go to the [Membership page](#).

FamilySearch is one of the largest genealogical websites and grows more every day. This presentation will show some of the newest features of FamilySearch and how best to utilize them to find your Jewish ancestors.

W. Todd Knowles is an accredited Genealogist who specializes in English and Jewish research. For the past 20 years he has been a member of the staff at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, where he currently serves as a Deputy Chief Genealogical Officer. He is past President of the Utah Jewish Genealogy Society (UJGS).

Todd has lectured all over the world and his articles have been widely published. His own genealogical search began at the age of twelve with the desire to find more about his family and grows every day. His quest to find more about his GGGrandfather, a Polish Jew, has led to the creation of the Knowles Collection, six databases that contain the records of the Jewish people. It currently (as of Jan 2020) contains the records of over 1.4 million people.



Celebrate Your Family Story

Hosted by
FamilySearch

rootstech  **CONNECT**
25-27 February 2021 | [rootstech.org](https://www.rootstech.org)

RootsTech Connect, a free online genealogy conference, will take place Feb. 25-27, 2021. Register at:
<https://www.rootstech.org/?lang=eng>

For the first time ever, the world's largest family celebration event will be entirely virtual and completely free.

Get ready to celebrate shared connections with people from around the world. Connect with friends, your family, your past, and your heritage and homelands—all from the comfort of your home and in your browser.

RootsTech Will Match Registrants' Trees

One of the features of previous RootsTech conferences was they would compare registrants' family trees to demonstrate if two registrants were related to each other. Called "Relatives at RootsTech," this feature will be offered at the virtual RootsTech conference next month. But instead of matching against a mere 20,000 registrants, the virtual conference will likely have more than 200,000 registrants.

Participation in the project is optional and requires you submit your tree to the RootsTech database. Here is what to do:

Visit <http://familysearch.org/connect>.

- Sign in with your FamilySearch account.
- Follow the instructions on the opt-in page for joining the experience and confirming your registration.
- See your results.

The complete announcement is at <https://www.familysearch.org/blog/en/relatives-rootstech/>.

I also suggest registering on these websites to get timely information! Feel free to post other genealogical events on our Facebook page and continue to send them to me.



Chronicles

Expect delivery of the winter Chronicles in February 2021. Keep those research articles coming! Please continue to pay your dues to guarantee delivery of Chronicles to your mailbox.

Membership Dues

***Now is the time to pay your dues for 2021.** If you paid in the fall, **no** payment is due. Your payment went towards 2021. Our fiscal year runs from January 1st - December 31st, 2021. All new payments will go towards 2021. Please use the attached membership form if you send a check. The form is also available on our website. \$10 extra for printed Chronicles! Use jgsgp.org until further notice.

***We are Currently fundraising for the 2021 IAJGS Conference.**

Thanks so much to those of you who have made generous donations! We are working hard to plan a fabulous event! Whether it's live or virtual, you won't be disappointed!

Volunteers

Working on the Philadelphia Resource Guide has begun with numerous volunteers. Thank you to everyone who is helping us with this fabulous project! About 30 members have been researching and updating information about cemeteries and funeral homes. Next will be the synagogues! Our plan is to have a newly revised 2021 Resource Guide for the City of Philadelphia ready for the IAJGS Conference 2021! The previous guide from 2009 is currently on our website! It has a lot of information and is worth checking out!

In the News

Exploring a Har Nebo Restoration Pilot Program Rich Blumberg, Community Volunteer, has begun to organize a Har Nebo Cemetery restoration project. He is involving community volunteers including Addie Lewis Klein, director of community engagement from the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia. I attended the first Zoom meeting where he laid out his ideas for community involvement. It was encouraging that many of our members participated. You can read more in the Jewish Exponent from January 14th. [This is NOT a JGASGP project.](#) Because so many of us have relatives buried in the cemeteries in and around Philadelphia, it is important to keep informed. Contact Rich.blumberg@comcast.net if you want to receive more information about involvement.

JGASGP extends condolences and well wishes to member's families. If you know of the illness or passing of a



past or current member, please email a link of the obituary or provide the information to me.

I hope everyone is continuing to experience good health and keeping busy!

Disclaimer: The purpose of our group is to help foster research, education, collect family records and family connections. No political comments or advertising for services or merchandise are permitted .