



JEWISH GENEALOGICAL AND ARCHIVAL SOCIETY OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA

FROM
MARILYN GOLDEN VP
membership@jgasgp.org



CHRONICLES, OUR QUARTERLY
AWARD-WINNING JOURNAL: THE
SPRING EDITION HAS BEEN SENT OUT.

PLEASE SUBMIT ARTICLES TO OUR
CHRONICLES EDITOR, EVAN FISHMAN,
editor@jgasgp.org

6/12/2022

Hi Everyone,

Our second hybrid meeting was held with 20 attending in person and many virtually. **Jerry Zaks** explained how he researched his parents Holocaust history and how he achieved that goal.

What was new to me was the info. about the website trans-late.yandex.com/ocr. This site translates **text** (no handwriting) on a page. That's very cool! Jerry was able to translate German into English and found useful information.

We had a few glitches with this streaming program. It started later than expected. The audio was muffled at times and the slides weren't clear. We **will** post Jerry's slides and a YouTube link from Jerry this week where he gives a more detailed presentation. Stay tuned.

Beginner's Corner and Research Tips

Don't forget to look for our **Getting Started with Jewish Genealogy** on our website. ***We are very happy to announce the launch of our new JGASGP Resource Guide 2022!**

Our guide includes a lot of information about synagogues and cemeteries. **Ed Flax** has worked diligently on this new guide with the help of many volunteers. Check it out!

Fred recommends looking for information in **The Philadelphia Jewish Archives at Temple** or **The Historical Society of Pennsylvania**. **Don't be shy about asking questions. We will try to guide you in the right direction. We are here to help!**

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania is offering a course for beginners.



UPCOMING COURSE:

ROOTED: GENEALOGY 101

When: June 28, July 12, July 19, July 26 at 6:30 PM (EST)

Where: Zoom

Cost: \$150 for General Admission, \$125 for Friends of HSP

Learning about your ancestral origins can be rewarding, but perhaps also a little overwhelming. What is the best way to approach the questions you have? How do you have confidence you're "doing it right"?

This virtual course will assist entry-level and early intermediate genealogists in developing research skills, finding and evaluating historical records, and placing your people into the broader story of history. Successful case studies will walk you through how it's done and what to expect, while breakout sessions will facilitate discussion and collaboration. Walk away rooted in correct principles and practical strategies for tracing your family history!

Rooted: Genealogy 101 will run for four Tuesday evenings (June 28, July 12, July 19 & July 26) from 6:30 PM to 8 PM on Zoom with additional asynchronous instruction. A fifth onsite experience may be scheduled. All sessions will be recorded and made available to registrants who cannot attend a class.

Note: This course will primarily cover skills and methodology for the 1800s and 1900s. Computer literacy and an Ancestry.com subscription is required. [Details and Registration](#)

One of our members wrote to me looking for information.

Dear Marilyn,

In reading the great new issue of the Newsletter, I saw your write up of a group called Friends of Jewish Cemeteries and their efforts to clean up several older cemeteries.

Ten-15 years ago, I was active in fundraising and restoration of a small, historic cemetery called Hebrew Mutual Burial Ground, where many of my Dutch Jewish ancestors are buried, including my

paternal grandparents. It had a website, which eventually disappeared, and I have been unable to find out the current condition of the cemetery. The Phila Board of Rabbis once had information about the cemetery, but I had no response last time I checked.

Who would I contact to learn about the current condition of the cemetery? Here's the location.

Thanks in advance,

Linda Hart Scatton

Member, JGASGP

Here is a response from Addie Lewis Klein:

The cemetery was abandoned a number of years ago, and Federation went to Orphan's Court about a dozen years ago to claim it, so we technically own it. We pay to have the grass cut there, and we've arranged for a synagogue youth group to go there several times a year to pick up any trash that accumulates. It's a very small, enclosed cemetery. Many, many years ago (in the early 80's, maybe?) the tombstones were all knocked over, and they were put back up along the perimeter of the cemetery. So now there is open space in the middle of the small lot.

Addie Lewis Klein

Senior Director of Leadership Development and Community Engagement

Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia

2100 Arch Street

Philadelphia, PA 19103

Work: 215.832.0828

alewis@jewishphilly.org.

This information and these photos were on Find-A- Grave:

Hebrew Mutual Burial Ground

Also known as **B'nai Israel Burial Ground, Hebrew Mutual Burial Association**

LOCATION	1850 CEMETERY AVENUE PHILADELPHIA, PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, 19142 USA SHOW MAP
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MEMORIALS 377 ADDED (92% PHOTOGRAPHED)

PHOTOS BY RAYTRACER

MEMBER FOR

13 YEARS · 11 MONTHS · 17 DAYS

FIND A GRAVE ID

47012265





Next to the word MEMORIALS, the “[377 added](#)” are hot links to the grave information which may or may not include a photo. I was happy when Linda responded to me!

I found a bunch of my relatives, including my grandparents, with last names: Hart, Boutelje, Coster, Fish, DeHaan.

I was happy to see the plaque with names, which I'd never seen before.

You've made my day, Marilyn.

Thank you!

Linda

Here is an article from I came across about the Dutch Jews in Philadelphia from “The Forward”.

PHILADELPHIA STORY

By [STEPHEN SCHWARTZ](#) MAY 14, 2004

For someone who has searched out the traces of Jewish life in Eastern Europe, the story is hauntingly familiar: a cemetery “neglected, vandalized, and filled with trash, listed on the City’s roster of abandoned properties,” as the words of a fundraising appeal put it. Nestled among the almost total disarray are toppled memorial stones, some vandalized, and with no surviving descendants dedicated to their maintenance.

But rather than Romania, Serbia or another former communist country, this scene of neglect is set in Philadelphia, one of America's great cities. The half-acre graveyard in question is the Hebrew Mutual Cemetery, founded in 1857 by Dutch Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews, and located at 1850 Cemetery Lane in the city's southwest region.

Finally, after decades of disintegration, efforts are underway to restore the cemetery to its proper condition, thanks to Philadelphia's Association for the Preservation of Abandoned Jewish Cemeteries, a nonprofit organization headed by Stanley N. Barer, a community activist. The association has begun reconstruction of the walls, fence, and entrance to the 440-grave cemetery, which it describes as a "miniature replica of Amsterdam's Muyderberg [sic] Cemetery."

The memory of Philadelphia's Dutch Jewry is one of many obscured in the vast storehouse of Jewish Americana. In 1998, Elisheva R. Hurvich, a historian of the local Jewish community, researched the essential outlines of their experience. According to her study, at the onset of the American Revolution, about 300 Jews lived in the city, but more poured in as the colonists fought the British. Along with New York and Charleston, S.C., Philadelphia became a major Jewish center for the young republic. Congregation Mikveh Israel, the city's first synagogue, following the Portuguese Sephardic rite, was built in 1782. A number of its members were of Dutch origin, reflecting hospitality extended to the Portuguese Jews by the Netherlands during the 17th century when Amsterdam was the capital of the western Sephardim.

In 1795, Philadelphia also hosted the first Ashkenazic synagogue in the United States, Rodeph Shalom. With the emancipation of the Jews in the Netherlands, many Dutch Ashkenazim came to Philadelphia, and by 1830, according to Hurvich, Dutch immigrants comprised a quarter of the city's Jews. They included merchants and craftsmen of varying incomes. But, after 1848, the Dutch Jews of Philadelphia found themselves lost in the great wave of German Jewish immigration.

In the 1850s, the Dutch Jews of South Philadelphia founded Congregation B'nai Israel as an ethnic synagogue, and they soon purchased a burial ground, which came to be administered by a Hebrew Mutual Benefit and Benevolent Society of Brotherly Love. Several Jewish veterans of the Civil War were interred on its grounds. It was maintained separately from the adjoining Mount Moriah Cemetery, which currently remains open.

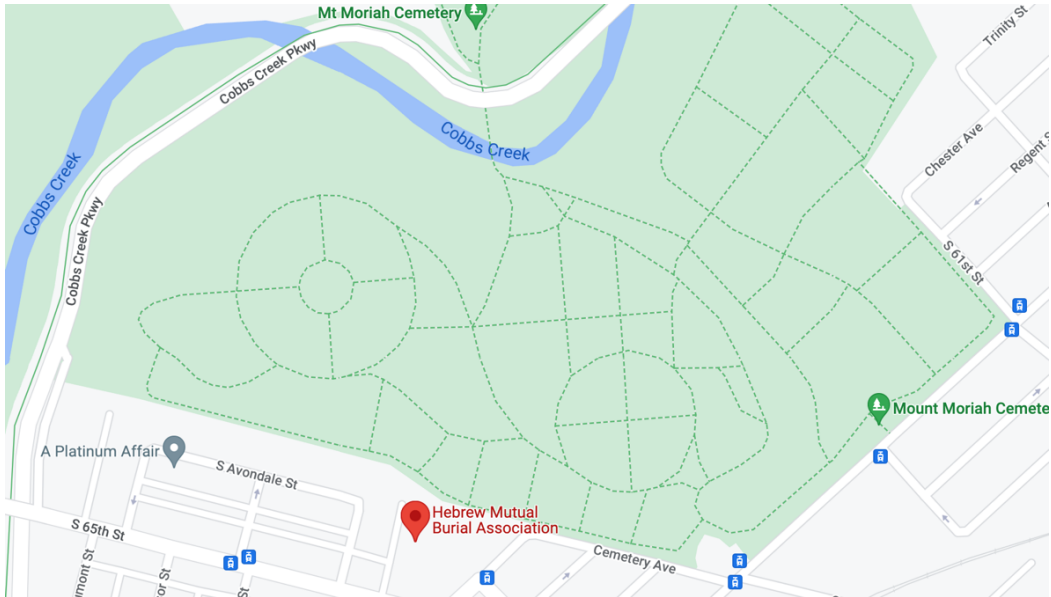
The congregation remained in existence until 1879, when its members left to join other synagogues in Philadelphia. Its last president, Joseph Sanson, was born in Amsterdam in 1825 and immigrated to America in 1839. As an adult, he moved to Philadelphia; his fluency in nine languages earned him the title of "the court angel" for his unpaid services as interpreter in the city's courts, and especially for his assistance to recent Jewish immigrants. Sanson and 28 of his family members are buried in the Hebrew Mutual Cemetery.

But in the ensuing decades, the society's membership declined, and the inscriptions on the cemetery's monuments were worn away over time by the elements. By the 1960s, rodents and trash-dumping had become serious problems, along with vandalism. Suggestions that the dead be re-interred elsewhere were unanimously rejected by local rabbis, again echoing better-known controversies in countries like Poland. Beginning in 1995, the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia organized cleanup days to

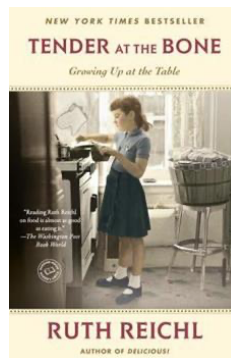
restore some dignity to the site, but the problem of collapsed, vandalized, and otherwise damaged memorial stones could not be solved by volunteers alone.

Then, in 1999, ownership of the cemetery was assumed by the Association for the Preservation of Abandoned Jewish Cemeteries, which estimates the total cost of the project at \$270,000 for restoration and \$200,000 in endowment funds. In addition to the reconstruction work, the association also intends restoration of the memorial stones, grading and leveling of the ground and the planting of a Dutch garden landscape, so that the site can once again recall the Muiderberg cemetery of Amsterdam.

Stephen Schwartz is a Washington-based writer.



Book Club Update



At Our third book club meeting we learned about Ruth Reichl's family. Our upbringing helps shape who we become. We all enjoyed the tales that Ruth told and agreed we'd like to try some of her recipes.

Here is one of her favorites.

Devil's Food Cake with Seven-Minute Frosting from Ruth Reichl

Copyright©1998 Ruth Reichl Tender at the Bone

Devil's Food Cake ingredients:

1 cup milk
¾ cup cocoa
1/3 cup white sugar
1 cup butter
1 cup brown sugar
3 large eggs
1/4 cup sour cream
1 tsp vanilla
2 cups sifted cake flour
1 ½ tsp baking soda
½ tsp salt

Seven-Minute Frosting ingredients:

4 egg whites
1 ½ cups sugar
1 cup water
1 tsp cream of tartar
1/8 tsp table salt
1 tsp pure vanilla extract

INSTRUCTIONS

To make the cake:

- 1) Preheat oven to 350° F.
- 2) Heat milk in a small pan until bubbles begin to appear around the edges. Remove from heat.
- 3) Mix cocoa and white sugar together in a small bowl and slowly beat in warm milk. Let cool.
- 4) Cream the butter with the brown sugar until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Beat in the eggs, sour cream, and vanilla. Add cocoa mixture.
- 5) Mix remaining dry ingredients together and gently blend into butter mixture. Do not overbeat.
- 6) Turn into two well-greased and floured 9" layer cake pans, and bake 25-30 minutes, until cake shrinks slightly from sides of pans and springs back when touched slightly in the center.
- 7) Cool on a rack for a few minutes, then turn out of pans onto rack.
- 8) WAIT until completely cool before frosting.

To make the frosting:

1) Combine egg whites, sugar, water, cream of tartar, and salt in top of a double boiler. Set over simmering water and beat with an electric mixer for about 5 minutes, until soft peaks are formed. Keep beating until frosting is stiff enough to spread. Use immediately. This looks like a lot but use it all: It is enough to fill and frost the cake.

Book Club Meeting #4 is on June 29th at 7:30 PM.



We are reading The Book of Lost Names by Kristen Harmel.

This is a historical novel.

Beth Steiner and I will be responsible for asking the questions.

Members will be taking turns as leader for each book we choose in the future.

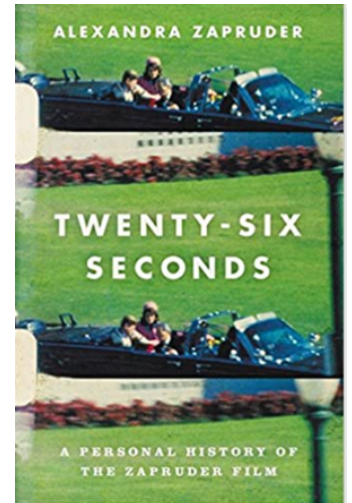
Inspired by an astonishing true story from World War II, a young woman with a talent for forgery helps hundreds of Jewish children flee the Nazis in this "sweeping and magnificent" (Fiona Davis, best-selling author of The Lions of Fifth Avenue) historical novel from the number one international best-selling author of The Winemaker's Wife.

We are not meeting in August because of the IAJGS Conference.

Book Club Meeting #5 will be in September at 7:30 PM. Meeting date TBA.

We will be reading **Twenty-Six Seconds: A Personal History of the Zapruder Film** by Alexandra Zapruder

The moving, untold family story behind Abraham Zapruder's film footage of the Kennedy assassination and its lasting impact on our world. Everyone will take turns leading the Q and A discussion. Please join us to discuss some interesting Jewish authors or Jewish themed books.



Chronicles

The latest version has been sent out electronically. Hope you received and enjoyed the fabulous articles. The hard copies will be mailed out soon. There was a glitch at the printers. The SPRING issue is being printed this week and will be mailed out ASAP!

Jim, our WEBMASTER, has posted Chronicles on our website. Now you won't have to download this copy if you don't want to. https://jgasgp.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Chronicles_Vol_39-1-Spring-2022-ELECTRONIC.pdf

Make sure you read below for an update to Chronicles under Membership and Society News *Announcement. Changes are coming!

Please submit articles to editor@jgasgp.org. Let Evan know if you are working on an article. Do you have successes to share? Any unusual finds you'd like to share? We enjoy hearing from fellow members. Our editors are happy to help you with editing your article. If you're not sure your topic is appropriate, ask Evan. We want to hear from you!

Contact Jim, webmaster@jgasgp.org for any questions about receiving your copy. Jim has posted all issues of Chronicles dating back to 1982 (Vol 1 # 1).

Contributions

*We would like to thank the following members who have made generous donations to our society.
Your kindness is greatly appreciated.*

From the President's Desk

Thank you to all JGASGP members who have submitted articles for publication in our journal, Chronicles.

We have received some truly exemplary pieces that outline your research projects and family histories.

Please continue to send your original writing to our editorial team editor@jgasgp.org by email

attachment. Special thanks to our members Harry Boonin and Dan Rottenberg for their generous book

donations to our first time Chronicles authors!

A few gentle reminders regarding the submission process:

- *Please proofread your work so our editing process does not require a complete overhaul of your article.*
- *Make sure that any graphics you use are clear enough to be reproduced and include the sources.*
- *Any photos or graphics should be cited and/or include the copyright so we do not violate anyone's intellectual property rights.*

We love to see the research scope and talent of our JGASGP members! Keep writing and submitting your work to Chronicles!

Felicia Mode Alexander

President, JGASGP

Future JGASGP Zoom Meetings

We started meeting live in May. Virtual meetings will also continue!

With your permission we are recording all sessions. **If anyone does not wish to be recorded, please do not participate in the live program.** All cameras will be turned off during the lecture but may be turned on during the Q and A. Thank you for your cooperation.

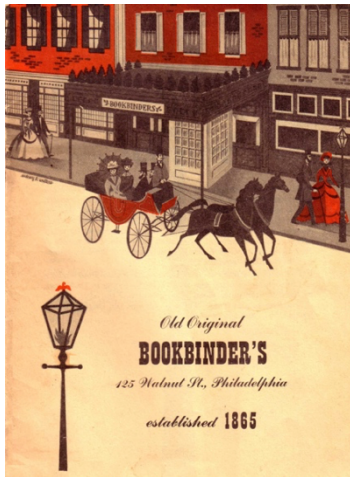
Date: Sunday, July 10, 2022, **Virtual meeting**

Time: 1:00 PM check in, chat, and schmooze (Optional)

Official program starts promptly at 1:30

Speaker: Hal Bookbinder, Genealogical Writer, and Lecturer

Topic: The Bookbinder Family of Philadelphia Restaurant Fame



Hal writes and lectures extensively on diverse genealogical topics, including border changes, migration, citizenship, safe computing, Jewish culture, and Jewish history. He has identified over 4,000 relatives reaching back to the mid-1700s in modern Ukraine. Other roots reach into adjacent areas of Moldova, Poland, Belarus, and Russia. He has served as president of the IAJGS and has been honored with its Lifetime Achievement Award.

Topic: The Bookbinder Family of Philadelphia

Restaurant Fame

The newspaper coverage of the bootlegging trial of Emanuel Bookbinder during Prohibition is especially engaging, with lots of twists and turns. But, as Philadelphians, you may be aware of this. The first Bookbinder, Levi, arrived on the Webster in June 1857. In October, his wife, daughter and 3-year-old son, Simeon, arrived on the Casilda. Simeon would later be known as Samuel and start his oyster house in the 1890s. We may leave this meeting hungry!

*Check out the announcement below. Hal is speaking on JewishGen Talk on Wednesday.

Help Wanted

Friends of Jewish Cemeteries help:

Dates added for Har Nebo and Har Jehuda

Har Nebo June 26 from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Har Nebo Cemetery, 6061 Oxford Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19149

Har Jehuda. July 24 from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Har Jehuda Cemetery, 8400 Lansdowne Ave, Upper Darby, PA 19082

2022 Association for Jewish Libraries Conference

****Felicia and I will be there! We will have a JGASGP table in the exhibit hall. Stop by and see us. We will have copies of Dan Rottenberg's new book with us for sale for \$18.***



From JGASGP member Jackie Ben Efraim: Help make the Association of Jewish Libraries conference on June 27-29, 2022, at the Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History a

success by volunteering an hour or so of your time. People who are NOT registered for the conference can attend sessions on the day they volunteer and purchase meals separately. THANK YOU in advance for your help! https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfIjGyfVH-GirPGQAUxSVfmsxoxApknZPngAouplbuOUErz16w/viewform?usp=sf_link

In the News



The 42nd Annual International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies will be held as an ALL-Virtual Conference from 21-25 August 2022. Registration is now OPEN! Go to the Conference Website www.iajgs2022.org and click on Registration Overview for all the information you need.

Early Bird registrants are entitled to several lectures available prior to the conference.

s4.goeshow.com/iajgs/annual/2022/pre_cons.cfm

Inbox - mazergold... Inbox - mazergold... (45) iCloud Mail -... Freedom Credit U... https://www.faceb... SARAH AND DAN... Genealogy Consumer reports Shopping GIANT Food Stores

Where We Lived

42nd IAJGS Conference on Jewish Genealogy

iajgs2022.org

All Virtual August 21-25 2022

IAJGS JGASGP

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SELECTION

Registration Payment

Pre-Conference Early Bird Sessions

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Pre-Conference Early Bird Sessions

Welcome to the first ever Early Bird Bonus! These presentations will become part of the conference program once the conference opens, these presentations will become part of the conference program.

Note that these presentations do not count toward the 20 or 50 presentation limit for Regular or Enthusiast Level registrants, respectively.

To view a presentation, follow these steps:

STEP 1: Click on the titles to read the descriptions of the presentations.

STEP 2: You can bookmark a session to view later by clicking its "Add Bookmark" button. Later, to view the programs that you have bookmarked, click on the "My Sessions" button just above the list of presentations.

STEP 3: To watch a program, click on its "View Recording" button. In the Video Preview window that opens, click on the white triangle icon to start playing the video. Expand the small thumbnail image to full screen by moving the mouse over the thumbnail and clicking on the small icon with four outward-pointing white arrows in the lower right corner of the thumbnail. (To exit full-screen mode, press the ESC key.) Enjoy!

If there is no "View Recording" button, it means that the session is not yet available. Those sessions will be uploaded over the next few weeks. Please look over the descriptions and bookmark them for future viewing.

Video Preview

START PLAYING

GO FULL

iajgs/annual/2022/asc_login.cfm

The Jewish Genealogical and Archival Society of Greater Philadelphia (JGASGP) has invited a number of excellent speakers to enrich the virtual program at the 42nd IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy.

*In memory of former JGASGP Board member, Dr. Toni Pitock, Assistant Professor of History and Judaic Studies at Drexel University in Philadelphia will deliver the **Steve Schecter Memorial Lecture** on "Jewish Mercantile Networks in Colonial Philadelphia, 1736-1776."*

***Mark Turdo**, Curator of Exhibits at Philadelphia's Museum of the American Revolution will speak on "By the Above Constitution: Seeking Jewish Rights in Revolutionary America 1783."*

***Dr. Robert Watson**, Distinguished Professor of History at Lynn University in Florida will speak on "The Nazi Titanic: A Shocking, Unknown Story from the Final Days of the Holocaust."*

Rachael Cerrotti, award-winning author and the Inaugural Storyteller in Residence for USC Shoah Foundation will tell the story "We Share the Same Sky," the title of her book and podcast about her Holocaust survivor grandmother.

Sydney Cruice-Dixon, President of the Philadelphia Area Chapter of the Association of Professional Genealogists will present "Learn About Jewish Record Resources in the Greater Philadelphia Area."

Our members **Mark Halpern, Joel Spector, and Sharon Taylor** are also presenting during the conference! Robert Watson will give an updated talk about Hamilton. Look for their lectures in the pre-recorded library.

We look forward to participating in these lectures. Don't forget to take notes! We want your feedback in the way of an article for our fall Chronicles. Please write about your favorite lecture or two from the conference. Be prepared to submit your article to Evan!



Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Center
Preserving History to Learn From the Past | Est. 1961

To learn more, go their interactive website: <https://mobile.hamec.yourcultureconnect.com/experiences>



FamilyTree Magazine published its annual list of 101 Best Websites for 2022. To see the list, go to: <https://familytreemagazine.com/best-genealogy-websites>


Websites new to their list for 2022 are indicated by an asterisk (*). Sites marked with a dollar sign (\$) require a subscription or other payment to fully take advantage of their content; otherwise, free sites that have some sort of premium tier or paid add-on have this noted in the write-ups. Here a selection not all that are listed on the website.

The Best Big 5 Genealogy Websites are:

Ancestry\$
FamilySearch
Findmypast\$
HeritageQuest Online
MyHeritage\$

Jan Meisels Allen, Chairperson, IAIGS Public Records Access Monitoring Committee

Membership and Society News



**JEWISH GENEALOGICAL
AND ARCHIVAL SOCIETY
OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA**


HOME	ABOUT US	EVENTS	MEMBERSHIP	RESOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	ARCHIVES	LINKS
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2022 Phila. Area Resource Guide

JGASGP is excited to present our 2022 Greater Philadelphia Jewish Genealogical Resource Guide for our membership. This major work is a freshly researched update to the original directory created for the 2009 IAJGS conference we hosted in Philadelphia.

Our volunteers and editors compiled information on synagogues, cemeteries, funeral homes, *landsmanschaftn* (benevolent societies,) private sector and government resources, and created a visually attractive and easy to read reference tool.

It has been formatted to allow you to have it printed two-sided and spiral wire or plastic coil bound on the short side, so that opens flat, and it can be used in the field as a reference tool.



Click here to access the [2022 Resource Guide](#)

A huge thank you to Ed Flax for all the hard work organizing volunteers, editing, and putting together the new 2022 Phila. Area Resource Guide!

Many volunteers helped and they are acknowledged in the guide. All items on our website can be edited. If you find a broken link or error of any kind, please let me know. We strive for excellence.

Look for the guide under the **RESOURCES** tab.

**We currently have 390 members! So far 257 have signed up for our website!
We are growing and strive to make our society the best!**

Each quarter, Chronicles has been e-mailed to everyone. There will be a change for delivery after this issue. All members will receive a link to read the issue on the members only section of our website.

Newsletter will continue to be sent out as pdfs. The paper copies will be mailed out next week.

**MAKE SURE YOU REGISTER ON OUR WEBSITE!
It is NOT automatic because you are a JGASGP member.**

Please don't wait until the last minute. Jim is available to help with registration. Let's try to iron out any problems in advance of the summer issue.

Our website has so much to offer members.

As always, we enjoy receiving suggestions. If you come across an error on the website, please let Jim know.

Only paid-up members have access to our website, JGASGP Newsletters, Chronicles, and meeting notices. Members have access to our members only portal. Tell your friends!

Contact Marilyn (me) (membership@jgasgp.org) if you have any dues related questions.
Contact Jim (webmaster@jgasgp.org) with web access questions or receiving hard copy problems.

Contact Evan (editor@jgasgp.org) with Chronicles article questions.

Our fiscal year runs from January 1st - December 31st, 2022.

Our 2022 membership form is on our website. \$10 extra for printed Chronicles.

Why do we have to defend our interest in genealogical research? Read this recent letter to the editor by our member Dan Rottenberg.

Letter to New York Review of Books. Letters@nybooks.com

'Anxious for a Mayflower'

To the Editors:

In her review of Francesca Morgan's, *A Nation of Descendants* (NYR, May 12), Caroline Fraser argues that genealogy "thwarts our emotional needs, revealing only fragments of a story." She also remarks that "Jewish families' post-Holocaust curiosity reached a heightened pitch with the popularity of the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, which premiered on Broadway in 1964, a phenomenon that led researchers straight to the extensive records held in Salt Lake City." As the author of *Finding Our Fathers* (Random House), which launched the modern Jewish genealogy movement in 1977, I would dispute both assertions.

Jewish interest in genealogy was almost nonexistent prior to the publication of *Finding Our Fathers*, the first English-language guide to tracing Jewish ancestors. At that time, virtually all-American Jews, traumatized by the Holocaust and preoccupied with asserting their American identity, resisted tracing their ancestors and in any case assumed that the task was impossible. In my lonely pursuit of this hobby since the 1950s, I often found myself wishing that someone would write a guidebook for Jewish genealogists. As I describe in my recent memoir, *The Education of a Journalist*, my frustration led me to produce such a book myself, despite my lack of rabbinic or scholarly credentials.

Finding Our Fathers had the good fortune to be published at precisely the moment when the entire country was salivating over *Roots*, Alex Haley's best-selling 1976 exercise in Black genealogy. It also arrived at a time when second- and third-generation American Jews began to demonstrate the validity of Marcus Hansen's law of immigrant families: "What the son wishes to forget, the grandson wishes to remember." By the late 1970s, secure in their American identities, American Jews of my baby-boomer generation were eager to assert their roots and preserve their heritage before the traces of our European backgrounds were lost forever.

Perhaps most important, *Finding Our Fathers* arrived at a watershed moment in the history of technology. Thanks to photocopy machines, microfilm, and computers, all those arcane historical documents that were once the private preserve of scholars and librarians now became accessible to mass audiences.

The subsequent introduction of the Internet and DNA testing, plus the collapse of the Soviet bloc (which released vast troves of previously suppressed records) exponentially expanded this interest. The modern Jewish genealogy movement has since blossomed into a formidable cottage industry

embracing dozens of local, national, and international societies, esoteric research publications, extensive computer databases, global conventions, and academic institutions, all involving literally thousands of professionals and amateurs whose research has far transcended my wildest dreams back in the '70s.

Fraser correctly notes that genealogy has often been used for racist or exclusionary purposes. But genealogy today is more concerned with discovering who we are and where we came from, and with fitting our individual lives into the larger context of world history. There are worse hobbies than one that constantly reminds its clients that each of us is merely a link in a chain that existed long before we were born and will continue long after we're gone.

Conventional wisdom holds that billions of people who once walked the Earth have been lost to history, and that the task of identifying these lost people grows more difficult if not impossible with the passage of time. But actually, the reverse is true: Thanks to modern research tools that barely existed a generation ago (not to mention the specialization that inevitably accompanies population growth), today we know much more about the past than any past historian ever did.

It is not unreasonable to suggest that, in some future day, millions of genealogists, armed with professional training and technological tools we can't even imagine, will be able to reconstruct the lives of billions of individuals, Jewish and Gentile, who perished in wars, holocausts, plagues, and Crusades since the dawn of time. When that happens, these once anonymous victims will come to life again in ways that no one ever imagined possible. Genealogy, I submit, is at the beginning of its history, not its end.

Dan Rottenberg
Philadelphia, Pa.

The writer is the author of 12 books, most recently of The Education of a Journalist: My 70 Years on the Frontiers of Free Speech (Redmount Press, 2022).

**Dan has graciously donated copies of his new book. If you are interested in a copy, let me know and I will meet you. \$18 donation to our society.*

Webinars, Conferences, Podcasts, and Zoom Meetings of Interest

The entire community is invited to join us for our next free JewishGen Talks webinar:

Topic: The Ships of our Ancestors

Speaker: Hal Bookbinder

Date: Wednesday, June 15, 2022

Time: 3:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time

Registration: Free with a suggested donation. [Please click here to register now!](#)

About the Talk

During the active years of Ellis Island, 83,000 ship arrivals were recorded. Between 1880 and 1914 about two million Jewish immigrants arrived from Europe, with most passing through Ellis Island. Until

the age of flight, immigrants arrived by sea, first on sailing ships and after the middle of the 19th Century, on steamships. This presentation focuses on the ships on which our ancestors traveled, discussing the shift from sail to steam and the governmental regulations which made ship travel safer and more civilized. It will address the experience of our ancestors in getting to the port of embarkation, being processed for passage, life aboard the vessel, on Ellis Island and in getting to their final destination. It will also address various myths related to our ancestors' emigration travels.

About the Speaker

Hal writes and lectures on diverse genealogical topics, including border changes, migration, citizenship, and safe computing. He has been researching his own roots for more than 30 years and has identified over 4,000 relatives. Hal traces two of his lines back to the mid-1700s in modern Ukraine. Other roots reach into modern Moldova and Poland.

Genealogy Coffee Break from the Center for Jewish History

The Center for Jewish History is changing the format of their Genealogy Coffee Break series. *While we will continue to produce and share a new episode each month, we will no longer air the episodes live. In our May episode, we reveal our favorite tips for using [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org). You may now view this episode and all of our previous episodes anytime on the Center for Jewish History' [Facebook page](#) or [YouTube channel](#) (closed captions are available on both).* To receive updates on future episodes, please "Like" or "Follow" our Facebook page or subscribe to our YouTube channel.

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Moriah Amit
Senior Genealogy Librarian, Center for Jewish History
New York, NY
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New Gesher Galicia Record Inventory Tool "Genealogy is fun video" With Tips on How to Use the new Inventory Tool.



Great discussion by Yonah on his family research and how to use our new Record Inventory tool (3:45) and how it helped him in his research. We at Gesher Galicia love to hear stories like this. Makes our hard work that much more rewarding. Thank you Yonah Paley for this.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Qlc7g373mc&t=2s>

Steven Turner
President, Gesher Galicia

Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Long Island

Topic: Jewish Genealogical Resources in the Archives of Southern and Southeastern Ukraine

Speaker: Alex Denisenko

Date: Sunday, June 26, 2022

Time: 2:00 PM Location: Zoom – see registration info below

The talk will focus on how to do research in Southern and Southeastern Ukraine, an area that has belonged to several countries and administrative districts with often changing borders. Jewish population in these territories were mostly Ashkenazim Jews who came from the territories of Lithuania and Poland, and partly, from the Ottoman Empire. Alex will provide a brief history of the region.

Archival collections for a particular town could be scattered among several archives. Alex will review the various archival collections of the former Ekaterinoslav, Kharkov, Kherson and Tavride guberniyas of the Czarist Russia. What information has survived. For example, the State Archive of Dnipropetrovsk oblast has only the rabbinic vital statistical records of Ekaterinoslav from 1859 to 1919. The State Archives of Luhansk contains vital statistics for 1857 to 1920.

There are significant collections of documents relevant for Jewish historical heritage and genealogy research. Most are in good condition. However, reading the documents requires special skills in old Russian hand-written texts, knowledge of historical archaisms, acronyms, and specifically Jewish terms.

Alex Denisenko is a researcher, genealogist, and tour guide from Lviv, Ukraine. He graduated from Lviv State University, studied at Institute of International Tourism in Moscow, Russia, and Yad Vashem International School of Holocaust Studies, Jerusalem, Israel. Since 1991, he has been involved in research/teaching/touring programs dealing with Central European history and its Jewish segment with the purpose to find documents/material/oral evidence about the Jewish residents and their heritage in the Central Europe. He has worked with the Ukrainian, Polish, Belorussian and other archives and has done research projects on the Jewish-Polish-Ukrainian-Russian-German relations in Galicia connected with the events of the First and Second World wars.

To Register for the Zoom meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZArc-6ur-DosGNTC38vgdl3EAtYXGefIEAC5>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

We look forward to seeing you all!

Barry Goldberg, board member

Check out these sites for more lectures and events!

2022 Comprehensive Calendar of Genealogical Events

compiled by the [Bucks County Genealogical Society](#)

Conference Keeper [Conference Keeper](#), "the most complete collection of Genealogy events online!" Sign up for the weekly Newsletter.

Genealogy Facebook groups! I advertise our lectures on Facebook

The Main Line Genealogy Club sends out a great Newsletter Subscribe here for **The Dispatch** and meeting information

<https://mainlinegenealogy.us4.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=874962702de67e596050fc4cf&id=a4ddc48ca8>

JewishGen.org Discussion Group Sign up for daily discussion questions or post your own.

Website Update

Don't forget to register for our website! It is **NOT** automatic because you are a JGASGP member.
If you need help contact Jim, webmaster@jgasgp.org.

Send your **personal** photos to Jim to be included in a future slideshow! If you haven't seen the
slideshow yet, check it out!

Condolences



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 for me to share.

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.