



# JEWISH GENEALOGICAL AND ARCHIVAL SOCIETY OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA

Jan. 14, 2025

We held our first “Everything Genealogy” meeting on January 6<sup>th</sup>. 50 members signed in to listen, ask questions, and learn from each other. The topics ranged from finding information about getting started and organizing to finding records in Ukraine and Romania. Some of the suggestions from the meeting chat include suggestions from the following members:

1. Eric Benshetler: To Charlie - Some information about Federal court naturalization records kept by the National Archives can be found here. Note the short part right above the list of facilities that mentions naturalization indexes, declarations of intention (and certificates of arrival), and petitions for naturalization. The certificate of arrival is a small form but confirms that the person was found in the original passenger manifest. <https://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/naturalization>
2. Elias Savada: <https://www.phila.gov/services/birth-marriage-life-events/get-archival-birth-death-and-marriage-records/>
3. Eric Benshetler: And here's the PA govt info on "who can apply for a birth certificate"... <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/health/programs/vital-records/birth-certificates.html#accordion-8440e572be-item-b9ee96eaf3>
4. Elias Savada: For Pennsylvania records: <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/health/programs/vital-records.html>
5. Eric Benshetler: Bertha - [Found at least a couple synagogue names in the Kensington/Port Richmond area mentioned here, including Shaare Yitzhok and \(in the comments\) Cong. Adas Israel...](#)  
[https://www.face-](https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1298634156971748&id=984652695036564&set=a.986865494815284)  
book.com/photo.php?fbid=1298634156971748&id=984652695036564&set=a.986865494815284 (just close the popup window if it asks you to sign in)
6. Xandra O'Neill: Piecing Together History: Using Maps and Directories to Rediscover Eastern European Towns Presented by Michelle Chubenko was the session that I was thinking of.

7. Eric Benshetler: Mount of Olives grave search: <https://mountofolives.co.il/en/har-hazeitim-grave-search/#gsc.tab=0>
8. Adam, JGAGSP board member: <https://michaeljayschatz.wixsite.com/website>
9. Xandra O'Neill: <https://stevemorse.org/> I was talking about the Unified Census ED Finder
10. **MARILYN: RESEARCH ADVICE WHERE TO START: OUR RESOURCE GUIDE AND OUR BEGINNER'S GUIDE ON OUR WEBSITE! ALSO CHECK OUT: (1) PENNSYLVANIA STATE ARCHIVES** INCLUDES MANY GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL RECORDS SCATTERED ACROSS MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF INDEXES AND SEARCHABLE DATABASES. NOT ALL IS ONLINE, BUT IT'S QUITE POSSIBLE TO FIND WHAT YOU NEED HERE OR PERHAPS A LINK TO MORE INFORMATION. (2) **POWER LIBRARY: PENNSYLVANIA'S ELECTRONIC LIBRARY** MASSIVE DIGITAL RESOURCE FROM ALL TYPES OF PENNSYLVANIA LIBRARIES, TRY OUT THE [DIGITAL COLLECTIONS](#) TO GET STARTED WITH YOUR FAMILY RESEARCH. YOU WILL FIND MULTIPLE COLLECTIONS FROM GENEALOGY TO LOCAL HISTORY.
11. Tom: Don't forget the archives at Temple **Special Collections Research Center**

### [SCRC Website](#)

- [Charles Library](#)
- (215) 204-8257
- [scrc@temple.edu](mailto:scrc@temple.edu)

The [SCRC](#) is the principal repository for and steward of the Libraries' rare books, manuscripts, archives and University records. We collect, preserve, and make accessible primary resources and rare or unique materials, to stimulate, enrich, and support research, teaching, learning, and administration at Temple University. SCRC makes these resources available to the Temple community and a broad constituency as part of the University's engagement with the larger community of scholars and independent researchers.

While we are constantly striving to increase the discoverability of our materials, this website only covers a small portion of our actual collections and holdings—which is over 90,000 linear feet, many terabytes, and growing. If you don't find what you are looking for on our website, we encourage you to visit, call or e-mail us.

### Access

Researcher registration and requests to use SCRC materials can now be made using your SCRC Researcher Account.

[HTTPS://LIBRARY.TEMPLE.EDU/SPACES/SCRC-ROOM](https://library.temple.edu/spaces/scrc-room)

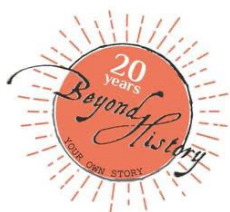
Our next “Everything Genealogy” meeting will be on February 3, 2025. We plan to meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of every month.

On Sunday, our speaker was **Andrea Bentschneider**, Professional Genealogist based in Hamburg, Germany.

Her topic: Voyage of Hope and Hardship: The 19th Century Emigration Experience through German ports – Atlantic Crossing Realities and Requirements

She provided us with an amazing amount of information about our ancestor’s journeys from Germany, what the conditions were like, and the port choices they chose. She discussed Hamburg 1850-1934, Bremerhaven 1832-1939, and Stettin 1869-1901. FamilySearch and Ancestry.com do have a lot of this information.

Here is the Share Link to watch the recording: [https://uso6web.zoom.us/rec/share/tYNduQpoDqDRPQLh-tumKoP8rnmw1jWsQEodAqpQmDgxYwhWTZqqvaQTSlaLZmb98.y7l\\_G3Q3TQX3JuwU?pwd=NAQQjMiqpYykhFUDdIx5So-xd6xU-WAhZ](https://uso6web.zoom.us/rec/share/tYNduQpoDqDRPQLh-tumKoP8rnmw1jWsQEodAqpQmDgxYwhWTZqqvaQTSlaLZmb98.y7l_G3Q3TQX3JuwU?pwd=NAQQjMiqpYykhFUDdIx5So-xd6xU-WAhZ)



## Andrea Bentschneider

President of Association of German Speaking Professional Genealogists

Vorstandsmitglied | Officer on Board of International German Genealogy Partnership

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### Celebrating 20 Years of Excellence - Beyond History's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2024

We invite you to join us in commemorating two decades of Beyond History. Throughout the year, we will be sharing a series of exclusive programs, insightful news, compelling stories, and special giveaways.

**Stay Informed:** Ensure you are up-to-date by subscribing to [our newsletter here](#). Your engagement in our celebratory year is greatly valued.

Thank you for being a part of our continued journey.

[www.beyond-history.com](http://www.beyond-history.com) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

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### Beginner’s Corner and Research Tips

Two fabulous resources are available on our website:



**ARE YOU READY FOR AI?** CHATGPT-GEMINI-COPILOT-POE-PERPLEXITY-CLAUDE... YOU ARE ALREADY USING AI IF YOU ARE A RESEARCHER! ON JANUARY 4<sup>TH</sup>, I PARTICIPATED IN A ZOOM PRESENTED BY THE NORTHWEST SUBURBAN GENEALOGY SOCIETY. THE LECTURE WAS GIVEN BY **DR. BLAINE BETTINGER** – 10 GENERATIVE AI PROMPTS EVERY GENEALOGIST NEEDS TO KNOW. HE TALKED ABOUT USING LLMS (LARGE LANGUAGE MODEL PROMPTS)

If I’m speaking a foreign language to you, it’s time to do some research about Artificial Intelligence and learn how it’s used in genealogy research. There are many plug ins from your web browser extension store. Free plugins are available to us on Chrome and even Google. Look for lectures from other societies. There is something new to learn every day!

### Book Club Update

The link will be sent out to all on the morning of each meeting. See our website under Events for updated Book Club titles and descriptions. All members are welcome to join us.




Our books are either written by an author with Jewish heritage or is one who writes about a Jewish theme. Hope to see many of you at our Book Club meeting. All are welcome any time!

Our next selection is **The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store** by James McBride  
Wednesday, Jan 22, 2025 , 7:30pm

Please RSVP if you are attending. Once again we will be reading a favorite author.

1. **The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store** by James McBride Wednesday, Jan 22, 2025 , 7:30
2. **Nightingale** by Kristin Hannah Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2025, 7:30
3. **Mazel** by Rebecca Goldstein Wednesday, March 26, 2025, 7:30
4. **The Book Spy**, by Alan Hlad Wednesday, Apr 23, 2025
5. **Florence Adler Swims Forever** by Rachel Beanland Wednesday, May 21, 2025
6. **Held** by Anne Michaels Wednesday, June 25, 2025, 7:30
7. **The House is on Fire** by Rachel Beanland Wednesday, Sept, 2025, 7:30 (TBD)
8. **The Family: Three Journeys into the Heart of the Twentieth Century** by David Laskin Wednesday, Oct., 2025 (TBD)

### Chronicles



Please submit your well-thought-out and organized stories to [Evan Fishman, editor@jgasgp.org](mailto:Evan Fishman, editor@jgasgp.org). Please let us know if you have something in the works. Before submitting your article, have someone else read what you wrote to ensure clarity. Chronicles is posted on our website in the member's only section.

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

### Contributions

We would like to thank members and friends who have made generous donations to our society. Your continued kindness is greatly appreciated. Please let us know if you want to donate in honor of or in memory of someone special.

Felicia and David Alexander
Fred & Jonie Blum
Marsha Bolden
Ellen and Stan Fayer
Stewart & Beverly Feinberg
Edward & Deidra Flax
Michael and Marilyn Golden

Joseph Greenberg & Cheryl L.

Gail Klein

Ruth Kurschner

Arlene & Kenneth Lutz

Barbara Lewis

Cirel Magen

William & Margaret Meyers II

Benjamin & Greer Noble

Lawrence Parish

Tom & Carol Perloff

Avivah & Gabriel Pinski

Ronald and Celina Riebman

Murray & Lorna Rosenberg

Sam and Judy Rosenberg

Steven Ross

Dan and Barbara Rottenberg

Mary Schechter

Philip and Joan Steel, Jr

Joel Spector and JoBeth Kendall

Walter Spector



**\*2nd Webmaster to share responsibilities with Jim  
WE NEED YOU!**

We are looking for an additional webmaster. This position will split the responsibilities with our webmaster (Jim). Tasks will be divided. Website update suggestions gladly accepted to help keep us modernized with the best website of any society!

### JGASGP Meeting Schedule and Updates



### SOMETHING NEW!

*JGASGP: Everything Genealogy evening meeting for all members. Our first meeting was held on January 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm.*

*Our next Everything Genealogy will be held on Monday, February 3rd , 2025*

*This will be on Zoom. The link will be sent out that day.*

### **ZOOM Meetings resume for the winter!**

*The Zoom link will be posted on the HOME page of our website on Sunday morning before each meeting. Livestream will not show the audience.*

*Most of our programs will be recorded with the permission of the guest lecturer. **Using Zoom, if anyone does not wish to be recorded, please do not participate in the live program.** All microphones and cameras will be turned off during the lecture but may be turned on during the Q and A. Thank you for your cooperation*

*\*To shorten the Newsletter, detailed content of meetings will only be posted on our website. New lectures will be added monthly AS THEY ARE SCHEDULED.*

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Date: **Sunday, February 2, 2025**

Time: (1 pm for Schmoozing and Mentoring) Official start time is 1:30pm.

Location: Zoom Only Meeting

Speaker: **Susan Weinberg, Author, Researcher, and Speaker**

Topic: Mining the Manifest

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Date: **Sunday, March 2, 2025**

Time: (1 pm for Schmoozing and Mentoring) Official start time is 1:30pm.

Location: Zoom Only Meeting

Speaker: **Phil Goldfarb, President JGS of Tulsa**

Topic: The History, Unusual Facts, and Under-Utilized Records of The United States Census

*This meeting is open to the public.*

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**Sunday, March 23, 2025, at 1:30 pm,**

(1 pm for Schmoozing and Mentoring)

Hybrid Meeting – In Person Venue TBD

Speaker: **Rabbi Lance Sussman, Emeritus Rabbi Keneseth Israel and Historian**

Topic: The Remarkable Jewish Story of the National Farm School

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**Sunday, April 27, 2025, at 1:30 pm**

(1 pm for Schmoozing and Mentoring)

Hybrid Meeting – In Person Venue TBD

Speaker: **Carol Moskot, Award-Winning Publication Designer and Art Director and Child of Holocaust Survivors**

Topic: The Five Postcards: The story of my grandfather (tentative title)

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**Sunday, July 13, 2025**

(1 pm for Schmoozing and Mentoring)

Zoom Only Meeting

Speaker: **Sunny Jane Morton, Family Tree Magazine, Contributing Editor**

Topic: Comparing the U.S. Newspaper Giants: What Jewish Content Do They Have?

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**Sunday, September 15, 2025 (The Steve Schechter Memorial Lecture)**

(1 pm for Schmoozing and Mentoring)

Hybrid Meeting – In Person Venue TBD

Speaker: **Dr. Benjamin Nathans, Alan Charles Kors Associate Professor of History, University of Pennsylvania**

Topic: Selective Integration: The Evolving Legal Status of Jews in Imperial Russia, 1795-1917

# HAMEC



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

HAMEC: <https://hamec.org/event/international-holocaust-remembrance-day/>

## INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY WITH HAMEC

**SPEAKER FRED BEHREND**

**JANUARY 26 @ 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

**Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am at Keneseth Israel synagogue: 8339 Old York Road, Elkins Park**

[Click here](#) to register or scan the QR code below!



### International Holocaust Remembrance Day Sunday, January 26th at 11:00 am



#### Meet Holocaust survivor Fred Behrend

Fred Behrend witnessed the flames of Kristallnacht at age 12, seeing synagogue after synagogue on fire, and was soon fleeing Nazi tyranny to Cuba.

As a GI several years later, he achieved his own victory over the Nazis, teaching democracy to German POWs. Yet at age 92, he discovered one last triumph still awaited—a miracle 80 years in the making.

Location: Keneseth Israel: 8339 Old York Road, Elkins Park  
Registration link: visit [www.hamec.org](http://www.hamec.org)

Fred will also have copies of his book, "Rebuilt from Broken Glass," for purchase

Holocaust survivor, Fred Behrend, will share his story of survival in Germany and the incredible role he played in the American Army to fight Nazism. When the Nazis came to power, Fred Behrend witnessed Kristallnacht and would escape persecution in Germany for Cuba and then to the United States. Fred Behrend would go on to experience brushes with history involving the defeated Germans. By the age of twenty, he had run a POW camp full of Nazis, been an instructor in a program aimed at denazifying specially selected prisoners, and been assigned by the U.S. Army to watch over Wernher von Braun, the designer of the V-2 rocket that terrorized Europe and later chief architect of the Saturn V rocket that sent Americans to the moon. Upon returning from service in the U.S. Army, he rose out of poverty, built a successful business in Manhattan, and returned to visit Germany a dozen times, giving him a unique perspective into Germany's attempts to surmount its Nazi past.



[www.hamec.org](http://www.hamec.org)



## HAMEC WEBINAR WITH MARY ROMNEY SCHAAB

FEBRUARY 3 @ 7:00 PM - 8:15 PM

Webinarlink: [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_uQd1ET45R6GdMnxCsAogQA](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_uQd1ET45R6GdMnxCsAogQA)

### 2G Speaker Webinar Series

HAMEC speaker

Mary Romney Schaab



Monday, February 3rd at 7:00 pm

Join HAMEC in a webinar to hear Join Mary Romney-Schaab as she shares the powerful narrative of her father, Lionel Romney, one of the few Black civilians to survive the Nazi concentration camp system during World War II. Through extensive oral histories and her own poignant reflections, Mary explores Lionel's harrowing experiences and her visits to the camp that held him captive.

For more information, please visit our website calendar for the registration and webinar link.

Join Mary Romney-Schaab (7 pm) as she shares the powerful narrative of her father, Lionel Romney, one of the few Black civilians to survive the Nazi concentration camp system during World War II. Through extensive oral histories and her own poignant reflections, Mary explores Lionel's harrowing experiences and her visits to the camp that held him captive.

<https://mobile.hamec.yourcultureconnect.com/experiences>

See Hamec's website for ongoing programs.



Holocaust Awareness  
Museum and Education Center  
Preserving History to Learn From the Past

[www.hamec.org](http://www.hamec.org)

### JGASGP Membership

We currently have 304 members!

ANNOUNCEMENTS: DUE'S HAVE INCREASED FOR 2025!

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

Only paid-up members have access to all areas of 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 new fiscal year will run from January 1st - December 31st, 2025.**

Our 2024 membership form is on our website. \$10 extra for printed Chronicles. Prices will increase on 1/1/25.

### Mentors

Alicia Weiss and Beth Steiner have joined our Mentor Team!  
If you need a mentor, let me know!



### News Update



## RECLAIM THE RECORDS

*cheerfully introducing government archives, agencies, and libraries to freedom of information laws since 2015*

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox/FMfcgzQXKqllzvrCfxcRRFWVgwxrGMQg>

**Read more on their website!**

Hello again from [Reclaim The Records!](#) We're that little non-profit which likes to pry historical and genealogical files and databases out of government archives, libraries, and agencies, and then puts them all online for totally free public use (which we're able to do [with your generous support](#)). And we're here in your inbox to announce a really unique and exciting resource that

our work has identified and now made available: the first-ever free public access to [the BIRLS database](#), the main index to the VA's records of veteran benefits files. This particular story has a lot of background to explain, so we're actually going to have to break up this announcement into a few separate newsletters over the next few weeks.

But the super-short version of the story is this: *we figured out how to get access-by-FOIA to some amazing veteran records from the VA, from the late nineteenth century to the present day, really unusual records that aren't available anywhere else, and now we want to help you get these files, too.*

## Webinars, Conferences, Podcasts, and Meetings of Interest

\*There are MANY programs from other societies. These sites are my favorite for comprehensive information. I have decided to cut back on the number of programs that I post. If you come across something you think is relevant to us, please let me know. Also, you can share on Facebook too!

See <https://conferencekeeper.org/> for a full calendar of many Genealogical events. Also Bucks County Genealogy Society has a terrific calendar of programs.

[The L'Dor V'Dor Foundation \(LDVDF\) Announces Worldwide Jewish Event Calendar.](#)

The calendar, called JDays, was unveiled at the 44th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. Read more including FAQ's at: [JDays - L'Dor V'Dor Foundation \(LDVDF\)](#) This is a real "game changer" in the posting and discovering Jewish educational events 24/7/365 from around the world. A single place to post and a single place to view Jewish events!

You can have the programs sent to your calendar so you don't miss anything. See instructions on their website!

### \*Live Chat

**[Did you know that American Ancestors has a free 'Live Chat' feature on their website, available Monday through Saturday 9am to 5pm ET?](#)** Just enter your question in the chat box during the times listed, and one of their expert genealogists will respond. You can access the feature directly [here](#), or find it on the home page of the [American Ancestors](#) website, scroll down just a bit to the "Stay in Touch" section, where "Ask a Genealogist - Live Chat!" is one of the options. Click on Chat Now and ask away.

See <https://www.bucksgen.org/index.php/bcgs-programs>

**Sign up for Newsletters too:** JewishGen.org Discussion Group - Daily Summary <https://groups.jewishgen.org/g/main> and Eastman's online genealogy newsletter Eogn.com.



## Suggestion Box

Do you have any ideas for our society? We want to hear from you. Please send your ideas or thoughts to me. Subject: Line Suggestion Box!

## Condolences

Condolences If you know of the illness or passing of a past or current member, please email a link to the obituary or provide the information for me to share.

### Stanley Mark Diamond

Peacefully on Tuesday December 18, 2024. Beloved husband for 59 years of Ruth Peerlkamp. Loving father and father-in-law of Paula and Ian Diamond-Bier, Rachel Diamond-Calow and Jeff Calow, Jessika Diamond. Cherished Opa of Nicholas and Sam Calow; Bekah and Amira Diamond-Bier. Predeceased by his siblings, Arthur, Rhoda and Sher-Lee. Stanley will be sadly missed by his nieces, nephews, family, friends from around the world, the Jewish genealogy community, and all of those who knew and loved him.

Funeral service from Paperman & Sons, 3888 Jean Talon St. W., on Friday December 20 at 11:00 a.m. Burial at The Shaare Zion Congregation Section, Eternal Gardens Cemetery, Beaconsfield. In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Jewish Records Indexing, Poland (JRI-Poland).



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



*See below for a special recipe!  
If you have a special recipe that you'd like to share, let me know*

The annual Kugl Kukh-Off competition in Los Angeles and books like Nina Yellin's **The Kugel Story** (which features 175 different kugel recipes!) attest that—even centuries after its introduction into the Jewish culinary canon—the love of a good kugel is something which all Jews can agree on.

### **Sweet Potato Kugel**

This deliciously healthy twist on traditional potato kugel has all of the “Jewish soul-food” street cred as the standard recipe, without all the heavy baggage.

Adapted from Aviva Allen's The Organic Kosher Cookbook

#### **Kugel Base:**

6 small sweet potatoes, grated  
3 apples, peeled, cored, and grated  
1 cup whole wheat flour  
1 cup raisins  
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon  
1 teaspoon salt (sea salt is best)  
1 and 1/2 cups water

#### **Topping:**

1 and 1/2 cups pecan halves, chopped  
2 tablespoons maple syrup  
2 tablespoons butter  
Pinch of salt  
Pinch of ground cinnamon  
Pinch of ground ginger

#### **Directions:**

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

In a large bowl, mix all ingredients together (except for the topping), then press into a large glass baking dish.

In a small bowl, mix together topping ingredients and set aside.

Place baking dish in oven and bake for 35 minutes. Remove and cover with topping mixture. Return to oven for another 20-25 minutes.

Remove from oven and let stand for about 15 minutes. Cut into 12 squares and serve.

By **Leah Koenig**, a freelance writer whose work has been published in The New York Times Magazine, Gastronomica, Jewish Living, Lilith, Culinate, Beliefnet and other publications.