



JEWISH GENEALOGICAL AND ARCHIVAL SOCIETY OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA

Many of us listened to Sydney Cruice, Professional Genealogist Speak about Utilizing Probate Records to Solve Family Mysteries. She gave us many examples of the genealogical value of PROBATE RECORDS. They really can lead to other records and provide so much information!

Using the handout, watch the presentation. She explains how to locate probate records in person and online. I'm inspired and can't wait to do some digging!

Sydney told us about FULL TEXT SEARCHING on Family Search. If you want to learn more about that, you can attend or watch on Zoom a presentation of the Main Line Genealogy Club. It's on January 20th. <https://www.mainlinegenealogy.org/> They have terrific programs too.

From our member Laurel:

I've just been watching today's mtng w/speaker Sydney Cruice re probate records. Happy to be able to do so online as we moved from Elkins Park last year to upstate NY.

Sydney mentioned the Full Text Search option on Family Search. I've been using it since it first hit their website in their test lab format. It truly is an amazing resource. I've found tons records there & not just probate...

Sometimes it's not just the mysteries you solve when finding records but new mysteries that appear. One time when using the full text search I found records showing that an uncle, my grandmother, one of her friends and the friend's son, all of who were living in Los Angeles, bought adjoining plots of land out in nowhere in northern California in 1947. All are long deceased and this is something I'd never heard about. So why did they do this? What happened to the land? The questions never end when it's genealogy.

From Enid responding to Philadelphia Flu epidemic question: <https://why.org/articles/up-close-and-personal-mutter-museum-maps-the-spread-of-phillys-1918-flu-epidemic/>

Here is the link for the recording: https://downloads.boxcast.com/2025-11-16-175000-a2vkteysmv367mhiy3sp-1080p-b0s-e7654.97s.mp4?response-content-disposition=attachment%3B&filename%3D2025-11-16-175000-a2vkteysmv367mhiy3sp-1080p-b0s-e7654.97s.mp4&Expires=1766158418&Signature=F7N-f9RfB25I3CK3r~d8wUeu5h6gaFNimKclEU8cjpj8M8rMdMzcCQI0~wHYiGfqtsENeyNQiDmp6IO9Sf7y8YaJrEmfS41H0dhZKw7ACo04ekRBS6ZVCj8mTbHT0~kPubbEy5n4qqGBrfKpdxov80Z~ENhyqcoBtDUWj4IQW7wl9pAma1mFligBRnMI~smQ8g81U-vdqfddm34R1pdpUssGml9s-CUSAwnfflor7-F~jioVE0uRbSkhMONiD5FIZFXVbAtX3v-WZhZPaLx0iCiU~L9gttTpBNpZ8jQJMaL0c9L~2T8wTHeRZYQqdZbnY9Mama3z6oGnFJEunnda7w_&Key-Pair-Id=APKAJ7GUCBQUK6NTWZCA

If you are giving a presentation to another JGS or a group, please let us know! Contact Mark if you have a presentation you think may be of interest to our society. mark@halpern.com

Beginner's Corner and Research Tips

Two fabulous resources are available on our website:



Don't forget about the fabulous Routes to Roots Foundation website when researching! Miriam was given an award last summer at IAJGS in Philadelphia! <https://www.rtrfoundation.org/Archdta1.shtml>



https://guides.temple.edu/PJAC_genealogy_resources

Go to the website to contact Casey Babcock for help.

Book Club Update



Hope to see many of you at our Book Club meeting. All are welcome any time! Our books are either written by an author with Jewish heritage or is one who writes about a Jewish theme. 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. Meetings are the 4th Wednesday of the month unless there is a holiday. PLEASE RSVP to membership@jgasgp.org.

Our Book club always starts at 7:30 PM.

If you'll be joining us, please RSVP to membership@jgasgp.org.

The Family: Three Journeys into the Heart of the Twentieth Century by David Laskin is a highly recommended book. David weaves a tale about his family combined with historical facts. We all agreed this was a well written book: it's a history lesson and a family journey. It's really nice to connect with our members in a different way. Please feel free to join us for our book club discussions. Our next meeting is on a Wednesday night. I've adjusted the dates to be the 4th Wednesday of the month.

1. **Inheritance: A Memoir of Genealogy, Paternity and Love** by Dani Shapiro

Wednesday, January 28, 2026, 7:30

2. **Lilli de Jong** by Janet Benton Wednesday, Feb 25, 2026 7:30

3. **The Invisible Harry Gold: The Man Who Gave the Soviets the Atom Bomb** by Allen Hornblum
Wednesday, March 25, 2026

4. **Opening doors : the unlikely alliance between the Irish and the Jews in America** by Hasia R. Diner Wednesday, April 28, 2026

5. **The Cost of Free Land** by Rebecca Clarren Wednesday, May 27, 2026

6. **Melting Point** by Rachel Cokerelle Wednesday, June 24, 2026

Chronicles

Dear JGASGP Members,

Do you have a story to tell? Did you meet any new relatives through your research? Have you made any unusual finds in your attic? We'd love to hear from you!

Please send your draft articles to editor@jgasgp.org.

With our thanks,
Ed Flax, Acting Editor editor@jgasgp.org
Debbie Terman, Acting Deputy Editor dcterman@jgasgp.org

CONTRIBUTIONS: UPDATE

We would like to thank members and friends who have made generous donations to our society

Evan Fishman (z'l) was beloved by the JGASGP community, and the outpouring of love has been a testament to that. Many have asked about making donations in Evan's memory, and the JGASGP will be making donations to some organizations that were important to Evan:

We are planning a day-of-learning in memory of Evan. If you would like to contribute to JGASGP in Evan's memory you can use PayPal under the Membership Tab or mail a check to our mailbox address.

Please make sure to write that it is to be used in memory of our beloved Evan Fishman.

Any problems, contact Jim, webmaster@jgasgp.org

Jewish Genealogical and Archival Society of Greater Philadelphia
1657 The Fairway, #145
Jenkintown, PA 19046

Everything Genealogy

Our next meeting: December 1st at 7:30 PM. ZOOM only

Bring you questions, brick walls, and suggestions! You never know what you'll learn!

These discussions have been very beneficial to attendees.

*Check out the link below and you can see what we talked about. It was created by
ZOOM CHAT using AI*

https://docs.zoom.us/doc/nT5LzUBBSWWY2747UnD8ag?from=doc_share&skipCheck=1

Details

- **Joe:** Asked about obtaining naturalization records from city halls, county courthouses, or state houses, specifically for Philadelphia and Atlantic County, NJ
- **Ruth:** Shared her experience accessing records at the National Archives in Philadelphia (formerly at 9th and Chestnut)

- **Walt:** Informed that Philadelphia has its own archives for district naturalizations before they went national (up to 1922), located at 6th and Spring Garden Street
<https://www.phila.gov/departments/departments-of-records/city-archives/>
- Spring garden location
- **Xandra:** Shared the current National Archives address (14700 Townsend Rd) but noted **it's closed due to government shutdown**
- **Mark:** Shared a link for Atlantic County naturalizations
<https://www.nj.gov/state/archives/catsunatura.html> for Atlantic County naturalizations
- **Rose:** Described finding undigitized naturalization records at the Westchester County clerk's office
- Emilie shared philadelphia.archives@nara.gov to request research or an appointment.
- Adam shared: <https://stevemorse.org/ellis2/mm.htm?mode=ellis>

Dan: Seeking information about his grandmother who attended college for two years according to the 1950 census, but can't find where she studied.

- **Suggestions for Dan:**
 - Contact Delaware Library/University of Delaware Library for potential college records
 - Create a timeline with addresses to identify potential schools near grandmother's residence

Walt: Shared that Woodbine is the only incorporated Jewish community in the country, celebrating its 130th anniversary in 2026

- **Walt:** Mentioned the Samuel Aziz's Museum is collecting information and documents
- **Girard College** info: <https://www.girardcollege.edu/visitors/founders-hall-museum/research/>

Alan located a grave for one of our members!

Thanks to everyone who offered some great advice!

You just never know!

JGASGP Meeting Schedule and Updates



The Zoom link or Livestream link will be posted on the HOME page of our website on Sunday morning before each meeting. There will be no chat and shmooze on Livestream; only when we use Zoom. 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 Q and A. All microphones and cameras will be turned off during the lectures.

See our website for more details about the speakers and the topics.



Date: Sunday, December 21, 2025
Time: 1:30 PM (1 pm for Schmoozing and Mentoring)
Venue: Zoom Meeting only
Speaker: Robinn Magid, President, Jewish Records Indexing Poland
Topic: 18th, 19th and 20th Century Research with JRI-Poland



Date: Sunday, January 18, 2026
Time: 1:30 PM (1 pm for Schmoozing and Mentoring)
Venue: Zoom Meeting only
Speaker: Deborah Long, Professional Educator and Author
Topic: Out of the Whirlwind: Resources for Holocaust Research

SPECIAL EVENT MEMBERS ONLY

A Day of Learning – In Memory of Evan Fishman Z" L

Date: Sunday, February 22, 2026
Time: 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM (To Be Determined)
Venue: Zoom Meetings only
Topics: TBA
Speakers: TBA

JGASGP will offer to members only at no cost a full-day virtual seminar covering two topics of great importance to members no matter their level of experience. There will be two workshops in the morning geared to less experienced genealogists, a break at mid-day, and two workshops in the afternoon geared to more experienced genealogists. Members can choose to attend any or all of these four workshops.

HAMEC



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

We offer personalized in-person or virtual tours for individuals, families, and classes during the week by appointment. These can last anywhere between thirty minutes to more than two hours. Please

2G Speaker Webinar Series

HAMEC speaker

Dr. Dina Lichtman Smith



Monday, December 1st at 7:00 pm

Join HAMEC in a webinar to hear Dr. Dina Lichtman Smith share her story. Dina was born in the Bergen-Belsen displaced persons camp to Polish-Jewish survivors from Auschwitz. After settling in North Philadelphia as a refugee child in 1949, she lived in poverty while also facing discrimination. Her parents' resilience and determination to overcome hardship inspired her to be better. Dina studied at Temple University and later became an executive coach to high-ranking leaders in business and government.

For the registration link, visit our website: www.hamec.org



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

www.hamec.org

Presents:

Hidden
A Musical

based on the true story of Ruth Kapp Hartz,
a "hidden" Jewish child in France during WWII

Travel Version

Tuesday, December 9 at 6:45 PM
Keneseth Israel
8339 Old York Rd
Elkins Park, PA 19027

Doors open at 6:30 PM.
Recommended for Adults
and grades 5-12

Join Ruth Kapp Hartz
for a Post-Show Q&A

Info: Jacob Dupré
Jacob@hamec.org
215-464-4701

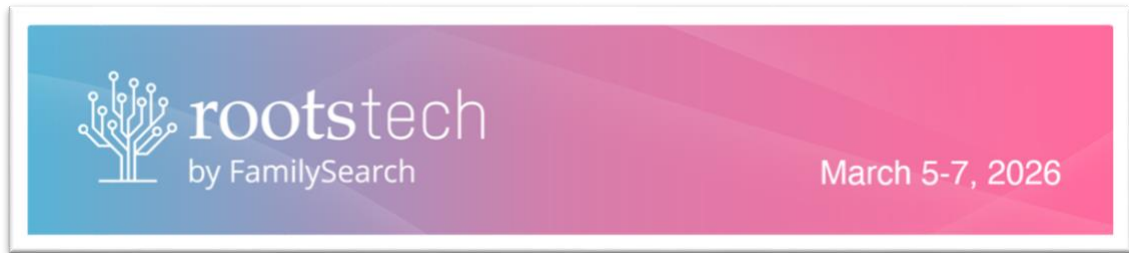
Admission: FREE
Reservations Recommended

contact us beforehand to schedule a tour or you can perform a self-guided tour below. See the website.

<https://hamec.org/>

HAMEC's annual Gala and Silent Auction, honoring Abby Gilbert, Anna Okropiridze-Cassidy, and Kira Gulko, will take place on Saturday, December 6, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the Radisson Hotel (2400 Old Lincoln Hwy, Trevese, PA, 19053). We have a few seats at our table. **Let Felicia know if you'd like to attend.**

In the News



Membership

You may renew your membership now for 2026.

The new membership form is on our website. <https://jgasgp.org/joinrenew>
Our prices are a bargain! \$30 individual. \$15 for Chronicles hard copies

****MAKE SURE YOU REGISTER ON OUR WEBSITE!***

It is NOT automatic because you are a JGASGP member. Jim needs to activate you individually. Don't delay. All members become inactive on Dec. 31st unless Jim has a current membership for you.

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 Ed Flax, - ejflax@gmail.com or Debbie Terman - dct@alum.mit.edu with Chronicles article questions.

Our new fiscal year runs from January 1st - December 31st, 2026.

Mentors

THANKS to [Alicia Weiss and Beth Steiner](#) who have joined our Mentor Team! They have been very helpful to those who have contacted them.

If you need a mentor or would like to volunteer to be one, let me know!

We love our volunteers!





Do you have website skills?

We could use your help. Please contact

Jim: webmaster@jgasgp.org

Programs from other societies-there are so many.

Check out the calendar from L'DorV'Dor!

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.

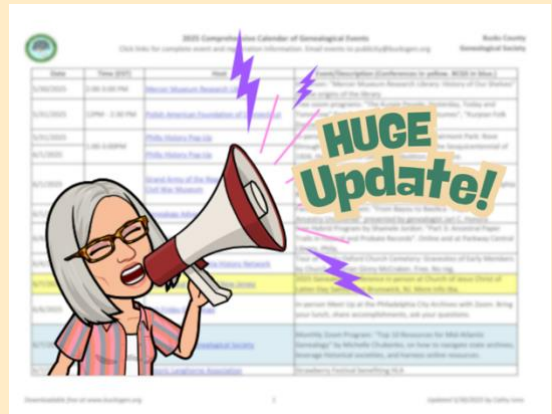
*See the calendar of genealogy events posted on the Bucks County Genealogy Society website.

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

COMPREHENSIVE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The calendar has again been updated - as we begin to add a few going forward to 2026! It includes community and heritage fairs as well as many new in-person, hybrid and virtual events!

If you know of another that you would recommend, or are looking for a specific topic, please email: publicity@bucksgen.org. Here is the link: [Comprehensive Calendar of Events](#)



Did you know you could search for specific topics? Simply click control+F once opened. Be sure to scroll through to take advantage of early bird registrations and deadlines! At the bottom there is a list of other sites with even more courses, webinars and podcasts!

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](https://www.eogn.com).

"Indexes and Databases: What Indexers, Proofreaders, and Genealogy Researchers Should Know" presented by Ken Ryesky, Esq. (MBA, JD, MLS):

Date and Time: October 27, 2025 7:00 - 8:00 pm Israel time

[NOTE that this occurs between the Israel reversion to standard time and the USA standard time reset, so the time for the Eastern US would be **1:00 PM**].

Topic: This presentation will uncover the hidden challenges to accurate genealogical research, focusing on the critical role of indexes. Using real-world examples, you'll learn how indexes are created, quality-controlled, and used effectively. Understand their capabilities and limitations to enhance your research skills and make more reliable discoveries.

The presentation will be in English; although many of the examples are from the presenter's experiences as an indexer and proofreader on certain IGRA projects, the presentation covers issues that pertain to ALL genealogical research.

{There will be some Philadelphia stories in the "real-world examples," including one implicating the JGASGP website}.

Live attendance is at no cost for those who register in advance at

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/OhvOB0zXQIm7c5OIMlnKkg#/registration> ;

Recording of the presentation will subsequently be available on the IGRA website
[<https://genealogy.org.il>] to IGRA members.

If you are unable to attend (and even if you are able to), please inform other genealogy-minded people of this.

--KHR

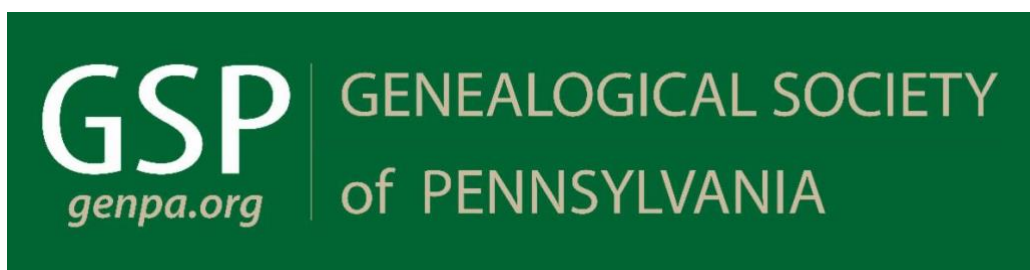
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Kenneth H. Ryesky, Esq.

MBA, JD, MLS

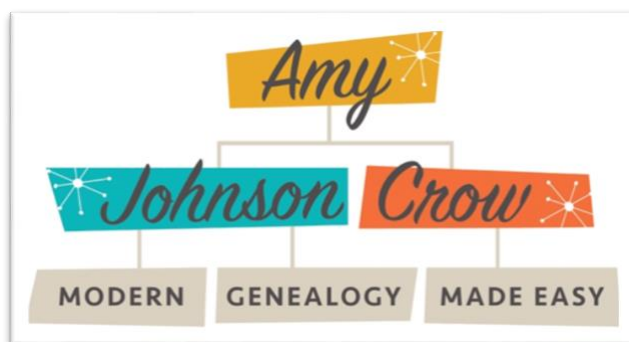
Petach Tikva, ISRAEL

profryesky@yahoo.com



Click the green box to see the available programs at GSP.

PODCAST and INFORMATIVE NEWSLETTER. <https://www.amyjohnsoncrow.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: Suggestion Box! I appreciate the program offerings and Youtube videos I've been receiving! Below are a few suggestions I've received:

Ancestry

Maybe you can let members know that Philadelphia Free Library system now has a free library edition of Ancestry.com. You must be in the library. I visited Bustleton Branch.

Montgomery County also has this. Access must be in the library. Some features are missing, but it is a great help to me. We can send the documents that we see to our computer by supplying an email address.

My Heritage

We can use a Philadelphia library card (or from another town) to access this site **from home**. It is free. I use Huntingdon Valley Library, Online Resources. We just type in our library card number.

FamilySearch

This is free from home.

So now we have three free sources ---MyHeritage, Family Search, and Ancestry. They each have different advantages.

From Carol Robins ☺

In case your members don't know about this -- Timothy Snyder has a series of 32 FREE lectures about the history of Ukraine on YouTube going back to early history. There are a couple of Jewish-specific episodes. Snyder made these when a professor at Yale, now at U. of Toronto.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=timothy+snyder+yale+couse+ukraine+vikings

From Trisha G.

Condolences



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.



