Jamaican Jewish Genealogy
by Dr. Anthony MacFarlane

Dr. Anthony MacFarlane was born in Jamaica in 1937 and was educated there, including high school at St. George's College - a Jesuit institution. After two years at the University of the West Indies he came to Canada and studied at McMaster University, then the University of Toronto from whose medical school he graduated in 1965.

Dr. MacFarlane converted to Judaism in 1961 and is a member of Temple Anshe Sholom where he has just completed two years as president. In addition, he is a member of the Congregation of Israelites in Jamaica. He's also a certified mohel and a collector of antiquarian books on West Indian history. It was his collection of fascinating books that formed the framework for his talk at our society's meeting on October 27, 1999.

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Ruth Chernia
Contributing Editor

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The French Enlightenment and the Jews
The story of the Jamaican Jewish community goes back 500 years to the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. After 1492 some went to other communities around the Mediterranean, such as France, Portugal and Italy; some made their way to the Netherlands and eventually England; some hid their Judaism and travelled to the "New World" as Marranos.

Those who fled to Portugal were forced to convert in 1497. Many left and travelled to the south of France to cities such as Avignon, Bordeaux and Bayonne. By the time of the French Revolution in 1790 a census revealed that there were 5,000 Jews in the south, mostly Sephardi, compared with Metz whose Jewish population of 40,000 was mostly Ashkenazi. In that year the Jews of the south were granted full political rights (extended to the whole country in 1792). This enabled the poor southerners to engage in commerce and improve their overall status.

The Sephardim of England
Meanwhile, those Portuguese Jews who had migrated to the Netherlands and settled in Amsterdam and were originally regarded as "Catholics without faith, Jews without knowledge," were meeting for prayers in private homes by 1601. In 1675 the 2,500-strong community had schools, a printing press and connections with the wider Jewish world, and was able to build a magnificent synagogue, which still stands.

A rabbi of that community, Menassah ben Israel, led a delegation to Oliver Cromwell, then Dictator of England, in 1655, telling him that in order to fulfil the prophecy of the second coming of Christ, Jews would

have to live in every country of the world. Ben Israel pointed out that Jews had not been permitted to enter England legally since their thirteenth-century expulsion. Cromwell agreed that as long as the Jews did not attempt to convert Christians, he would ignore the law. Jews from Amsterdam and elsewhere began to return to England for the first time in 350 years. In 1701 they opened the Bevis Marks Synagogue (also known as the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue) in London.

A Record of the Jews in Jamaica
We now know that when Columbus sailed to Jamaica in 1494 there were several conversos (Jews who had converted to Christianity) on board: the ship's doctor, the pilot, the interpreter. When the British took Jamaica from Spain in 1655, Jews had lived in Jamaica for 160 years as Portuguese merchants. They had a synagogue there.

Upcoming Events

organized by the Jewish Genealogical Society
of Canada (Toronto)
at the Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue
470 Glencairn Avenue

Wednesday, December 15, 1999 at 8:00 pm
Brotherhood Hall
"Finding That Jewish Cemetery! Tips and Tools for
Adventurous Genealogists"
  The speaker, Valerie Fox, is one of our veteran members and a former vice-president of our society. She has been surveying Jewish cemeteries in Canada and overseas.

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Please mark the following dates on your calendar for
programs to be announced at a later time:

Wednesday, January 26, 2000 at 8:00 pm

Wednesday, February 23, 2000 at 8:00 pm

Wednesday, March 29, 2000 at 8:00 pm

We Welcome These New Members to Our Society

Rose Brass
Stephen Creed
Pat Gilbert
Barry Katz
Karen Lebon
Eleanor Mintz
Janet Page
Valerie Schatzker

20th International Conference on Jewish Genealogy
Salt Lake City, Utah
July 9-14, 2000

Salt Lake City is the home of the world-famous Family History Library. Conference coordinators, Gary Mokotoff and Sallyann Sack, are making great plans for an outstanding event.
Visit the website, which is being updated every week: http://www.iajgs.org/slcy2k

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Eventually there were ten synagogues in Jamaica, of which only one stands today.

Jews, Slaves and the Slave Trade

What is our knowledge of Jamaican history? Most North Americans know only that it was a slave society. Slaves were the property of their owners. The owner had complete power over the slaves. Slaves were totally dependent on the owner for clothing and food. They were to spend all their time working. Once sugar was picked, it had to be boiled continuously day and night. The slaves tending couldn't sleep but were allowed to drink to sustain themselves. Slaves were not permitted to marry. Their unions were considered illegal until 1831 and then were only legal if the minister was convinced that the slave understood the sacrament. (As late as 1950 80 percent of Jamaicans were born "out-of-wedlock.") Masters could bed their slaves and that is where Jamaican Jewish genealogy begins.

The Jews of Jamaica: Tombstone Inscriptions 1663-1880

In 1820 the population of Jamaica was 300,000 slaves, 20,000 whites. Of the latter, more than 2,000 (the figure is from the mid-1700s) were Jewish. In 1831 Jews were finally granted British civil rights but were taxed excessively. However, in the nineteenth century the Jewish population was an important part of the national life. They represented 25 percent of the House of Assembly. And many owned slaves.

Although we know that Jews had lived in Jamaica since shortly after Columbus "discovered" it, many of those early records are dissolving. What we do know is that they had to declare their basic information. As well as arriving from Brazil and other British colonies, in the mid-1700s Jews began arriving from the south of France. David Pereira Mendes arrived with a son, Samuel, from Bayonne, France, in 1786. David Pereira died the following year but Samuel had thirteen children of whom one son, also called David Pereira, was Dr. MacFarlane's great-grandfather. David Pereira's daughter Agatha is Dr. MacFarlane's grandmother. She has Jewish identity but no Jewish status. Agatha formed a relationship with Alexander MacFarlane, who said he would marry her as soon as his wife died. Meanwhile, they had seven children. Because of their status, these children were very poor. The women were not educated at all. When Dr. Mac-Farlane was eight, he learned that his grandmother was Jewish and that Jewish people were stiff-necked and proud. Since he read a lot, his first encounter with a Jew was in literature - Rebecca in *Ivanhoe*.

Dr. MacFarlane came to Canada in 1959 for a summer holiday and decided to continue his studies at McMaster that fall. But first he wanted to visit New York City. On the bus ride home from that visit he sat next to a man who, it turned out, was Jewish. MacFarlane had so many questions. They had ten hours to kill and talked the whole way. Once back in Hamilton he told a friend about the encounter on the bus and she replied that she was also Jewish and invited him to attend Temple Anshe Sholom with her. Rabbi Bernard Baskin and the community made him feel welcome. When he was leaving Hamilton two years later to return to Jamaica, Rabbi Baskin completed his conversion.

Back in Jamaica Dr. MacFarlane went to services at the Congregation of Israelites, learned about the differences between Ashkenazi and Sephardi practices, and later became a member of that congregation too.

In 1962 he travelled to Paris where he became friends with Julius Katchin. His parents gave Dr. MacFarlane Arthur Hertzberg's book about the Jews of France, which he thanked them for but then put aside for twenty years until his interest in his history led him to read about his ancestors in France.

In the last ten to fifteen years there has been a great resurgence of genealogical studies in Jamaica. Donald Lindo, who has Jewish ancestors, has created a CD-ROM of Jamaican genealogy, *Out of Many, One People*, which is a true description of Dr. MacFarlane's homeland. The CD contains over 50,000 names, including all of the Jewish families. One name that appears is Andrade. The Andrade family are also descended from David Pereira Mendes. In 1941 Jacob A. P. M. Andrade published *A Record of the Jews in Jamaica*. This is now a rare book of which Dr. Mac-Farlane happens to own a copy. Another member of his family, Isaac Mendes Bellesario, b. 1795, was an artist. As a teen he travelled to England to study. He painted the interior of the Bevis Marks Synagogue and created the art, a miniature of the one in Amsterdam.

In 1997 the Ben Zvi Institute published *The Jews of Jamaica - Tombstone Inscriptions 1663-1880*. This book is, of course, treasured by the new Jewish Genealogy Society of Jamaica, which was formed by Donald Lindo.

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How to Self-Publish Your Family Tree Through the Magic of Computers
by Dr. Larry Gaum

Computers are truly magical, especially when they are used to publish your family tree. Computer technology today allows us to compile stories, facts, figures, family trees, pictures, diagrams, tables and art work together into one document with the greatest of ease. Gone are the days when all of this was performed by hand, on pieces of paper, with pencil and pen. In recent times the cost of computers, printers, scanners and programs has dropped dramatically, making it possible for almost anyone to purchase and have them available. Utilizing computers and all the accessories will allow us to self-publish our own family trees and histories with ease and sophistication. Everything from three to four pages to entire books can be created whenever and however we desire.

Recently I published my own book and I would like to show you how and what equipment I used to accomplish the task.

Computer
Pentium 133: If you are not including pictures and art work, a 486 is adequate. However, if your publication will contain lots of pictures, art work and diagrams, you should at least have a Pentium 133 or faster.
32-64 megs of memory with 1.5 gigs of hard drive or more will be needed if you are scanning photos, etc. It is always best to save these files that you have worked so hard to create, so it is important to have a backup to store them. Purchase a removable hard drive such as the Iomega 100 or 250 meg unit.

Programs
#1 Microsoft Word is an excellent word processing program and the one I used to write my book. It is simple to use and is compatible with all other Microsoft programs.
#2 Microsoft Publisher is the one I used and recommend for doing all of the diagrams, compilation of the photos and art work and laying out each page with the design you wish. It may not be as sophisticated as some of the professional programs, but it is ideal for the amateur and advanced person and will do everything you need to publish your document and more.
#3 Adobe Photoshop: After doing all of your scanning, this program or any other that is similar in nature will allow you to edit, retouch, darken, lighten, duplicate, recreate and store all of your photos and art work.
#4 Family Tree Maker: Of all the family tree programs available today, this is the one I recommend for most amateur genealogists. It is simple to use but can do everything the more sophisticated programs will do, only more easily.

Be Your Own Publisher
#1 You have complete control over the publication and you are the one who makes the final decisions.

#2 There is no middle person to deal with, which reduces costs tremendously.
#3 Do the printing yourself or work with a service bureau and printing company.

Printing Yourself
#1 Use a 600 dpi printer, especially for photos and art work, to print your master pages.
#2 Take the master pages you have printed to a commercial printer for multiple copies. They will also bind your copies and even put a fancy cover on your document, if you so desire.

Service Bureau and Printer
If you are publishing a book of 200-300 pages or more, it is better to have negatives made by a service bureau and then printing plates made up to allow for the printing of the numerous pages. I took all my files to the service bureau and the printer, including my cover. The pages and cover were then professionally bound. This is the route I chose to publish my book; and despite using the above companies, my costs were reduced about 50% because I was my own publisher.

As genealogists, we have spent a great deal of time researching our family roots. We have the knowledge and facts in our head and on scraps of paper. We remember the names of our ancestors and the delightful stories we heard and retained about them. This, as you know, is not enough and we must go one step further. That step is to publish all of our facts and to produce a document not only for ourselves but for others to see and read. If we don't, the stories, the names, the dates and places that are so vivid in our mind's eye will slowly fade; and when we are gone, the generation that steps forward to fill the breach and take their place, as we had done, will know nothing or very little about their family and roots. It is essential to record and publish our findings so that we may pass on everything we know to the new generations. I encourage each and every one of you to take this final step. Self-publish your findings, and let your family's history be an everlasting memorial to them.

Dr. Larry Gaum is an oral surgeon. About five years ago, after extensive research on his family in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, and his ancestry in Belarus, he set out to write and publish a book, From Belarus to Cape Breton and Beyond - My Family My Roots.

PRINT-ON-DEMAND PUBLISHER
Publishing Your Genealogy Book
by Richard W. Eastman

There are a number of book publishers specializing in short-run books. That is, the publication of small quantities of books. These short-run publishers usually charge the author for publication costs. Most genealogists who wish to publish their findings as books use short-run publishers for printing. Family organizations also use short-run publishers to reprint old family genealogy books that have long been out of print. These are the books you normally see on the shelves at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, genealogy libraries throughout the world and on the bookshelves of many genealogists.

A new player has entered the short-run publishing business with a couple of new twists: iUniverse.com claims to be the world's fastest, easiest, and most efficient way for new and out-of-print authors to get published, printed, and sold throughout the world. That's a strong claim but the company does appear to be serious about offering low-cost services.

iUniverse.com will publish a book for as little as $99.00. They have several programs available; some services may be as high as $299. Out-of-print books may be published at no charge. (See the website for details.) In addition, iUniverse.com can also make your book available online on their website.

The iUniverse.com service includes a custom cover and book design, an ISBN number, registration in the Ingram Books and Bowker's *Books in Print* databases as well as listings on Amazon.com, Borders.com and BN.com (Barnes and Noble's online site).

iUniverse.com also says that the books will be available through 5,000 bookstores. Note the word "available," which does not mean "on the shelves." Instead, it means that the 5,000 bookstores will have your book listed as being available on special order. Anyone can go to a local bookstore to order your book.

The key to making all this work is "on-demand printing." The publisher does not print hundreds or thousands of books in advance (for which the author must also pay in advance). Instead, books are printed one-at-a time as orders are received. On-demand printing reduces initial expenses as well as inventory problems.

In return, the publisher will pay royalties on the books sold. The print royalties will vary from 20% to 30% of the book's price, while electronic royalties will be 50%. Authors may also purchase copies of their own books for resale at a discounted price.

The new iUniverse.com site describes the process in some detail. The website does not yet mention genealogy. However, a reliable source has told me that iUniverse.com plans on launching specific programs tailored directly to the genealogy audience in the near future.

This looks like a great product for genealogists. Traditional short-run printing services normally charge $1,000 or more (sometimes much more) to print the first run of a few hundred books. The author is saddled with the task of selling these books in order to recover expenses. A "print-on-demand" publisher can be a much more cost-effective alternative.

For more information see:
http://www.iuniverse.com
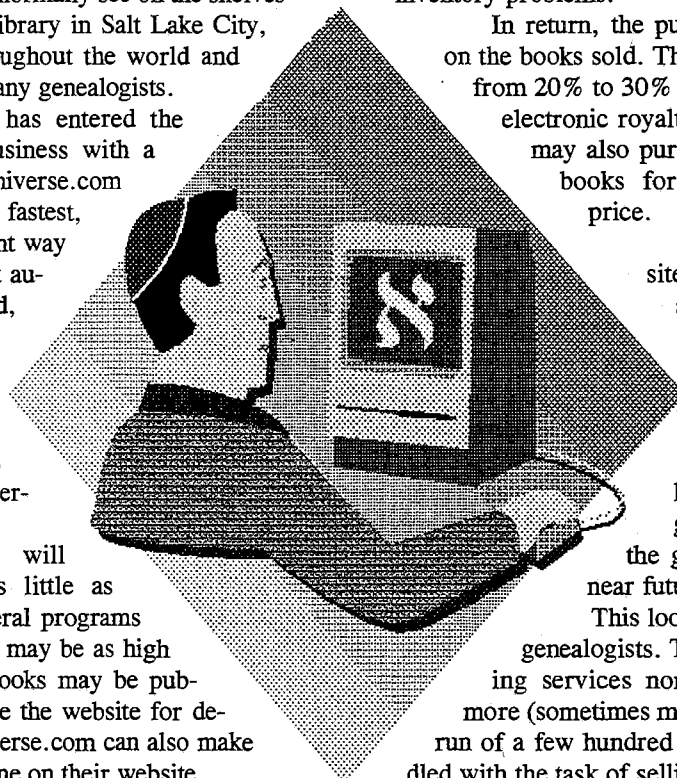
German/Austrian Holocaust Victim Databases Currently Available on the Web
by Peter Landé

At the New York Jewish genealogy conference in August 1999 I promised to prepare a list of currently available Holocaust-related databases useful for persons researching the fate of German or Austrian Jews. This information has been placed on the Gersig website. However, since some Stammbaum readers do not use Gersig, this information, slightly updated, is offered in this form as well.

Of course, the following lists include far fewer names than those contained in printed material, starting with the German government's Gedenkbuch1 and including the large number of city and town Gedenkbucher. Also, considerable information on individuals is contained in books or lists relating to individual concentration camps, e.g. Auschwitz, or deportation lists, e.g. France, Belgium and Holland, from which many German and Austrian Jews were deported. If I can help anyone with Holocaust-related issues, they may contact me at pdlande@compuserve. com or at 3002 Ordway Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008 USA.

Stutthof: http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/ stutthof.htm

Stutthof was one of the lesser-known concentration camps, with perhaps 40,000-50,000 Jews sent there. It is of unusual interest to German/Austrian researchers. However, since many Jews who were originally deported to Riga and Kaunas/Kovno were later sent to Stutthof (large numbers of Hungarian Jews originally scheduled to be deported to Auschwitz were also sent there), I have gone through the camp's records contained on 305 reels of film and attempted to extract the names of all German/Austrian Jews. Where their shipment to other camps or death in Stutthof is noted, this is included as well. This collection also includes information on a few persons not connected with Stutthof.

Westphalia: http://www.jewishgen.org/ databases/westphalia.htm

Bernhard Brilling, a rabbi and genealogist resident in Muenster, Germany after World War II, decided to collect as much information as possible on the fate of Westphalian Jews during the Holocaust. He wrote to dozens of towns and asked for information on the fate of Jews who had been resident in these towns. This composite database may be searched by family name or town of birth or residence.

Yad Vashem Hall of Names: http://www.yadvashem. org.il/remembrance/index.html

This collection contains the names of millions of Jewish victims of all nationalities, including Germans and Austrians, drawn from submissions by individuals, not from actual Holocaust records. This list is unusually useful since entries also indicate who submitted the information, thereby giving the researcher a link to a survivor/relative. All these names should be available on web shortly. For the time being individual inquiries may be sent to this address.

Austrians in concentration camps: http://www. jewishgen.org/yizkor/database.html

Unfortunately, the Austrians have never chosen to issue a memorial book, though one has been in preparation for many years and is promised shortly. This list is basically illustrative, showing the fate of these individuals in various concentration camps, thereby suggesting where a researcher might look.

Reichsvereinigung der Juden: http://www. jewishgen.org/yizkor/database.html

Reichsvereinigung was a roof organization for Jewish organizations operating in Germany from the mid-1930s almost to the end of World War II. The entire files of this organization survived the war and are available at the Bundesarchiv and the Holocaust Museum. This list simply serves as a finding aid to locate files on German Jews. The files themselves may be as slim as a single page or as large as a dozen pages. They include persons who perished in the Holocaust and persons who emigrated to a number of countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom and Brazil. In addition to these individual files, this collection contains many lists of names, e.g. the Berlin Jewish community, which are not indexed.

Nuremberg: http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/ database.html

Nuremberg was one of the later cities to publish a memorial book, but it was among the first to place its contents online.

Cologne/Koeln: http://www.museenkoeln.de/ns-dok

Cologne issued a memorial book some years ago and more recently it placed its contents as well as later corrections and additions on the web. There is provision for submitting further changes/additions and this website will be kept up-to-date.

* Hannover: http://www.nananet.de/institut/ juedischegeschichte/index.html

Hannover has placed on the web the names of all Hannover Jews who are listed on its memorial as having been deponed and killed.

Auschwitz work details: http://www.ushmm.org

The Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. is engaged in a major project to computerize and place online various Holocaust lists. The only list currently

* Persistence needed.

available online is a list of 5,000 Jews in work details in Auschwitz. Many of these persons were Germans or Austrians. The information on these persons also often includes material on family members. Further lists are being prepared and these will be added to this finding aid when they are available.

Austrian Financial Assets: http://www. avotaynu.com

Some years ago the Austrian Staatsarchiv published a book, *Recht als Unrecht - Quellen zur wirtschafllichen Entrechtung der Wiener Juden durch die NS-Vermoegnsverkehrsstelter* - a list of all Viennese Jews who had to submit property declarations in 1938, after which these were seized. This list has been available on the web by *Avotaynu* and persons may request copies of the contents of these files from the Staatsarchiv. (This website also offers a list of dormant Swiss bank accounts.) A far less significant but still interesting list of Austrian Jewish assets - in this case of accounts at the PSK (Austrian postal savings accounts) - was available at the PSK's website, but appears to have been deleted recently.

Riga work details: http://jewishgen.org/yizkor/ database.html

Thousands of German and Austrian Jews were deported to Riga. While transportation lists exist for many of these persons, very limited information is available from Riga itself other than the transport lists from Riga to Stutthof (see Stutthof previously). Recently some fragmentary work detail lists have become available and, while nationality is not given, most appear to be German, Austrian or Czech. This list does not give information on the ultimate fate of these individuals.

Buchenwald death list 1939: http://www. jewishgen.org/yizkor/buchenwald/buchenwald.html
Thanks to the efforts of Zev Rebhun of Kibbutz Lavi in Israel, it has been possible to compile the names of persons of Polish origin, Jews and non-Jews, who perished in Buchenwald in 1939. Many of these persons had been resident in Austria and were deponed to Buchenwald.

Peter W. Landé, a member of the JGS of Greater Washington, is a retired US Foreign Service Officer. Since its opening, he has worked as a volunteer at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum on a major project of compiling in a single computer database all victims and survivors of the Holocaust.

Ontario Certificates

How do I obtain a birth, death or marriage certificate in Ontario?

A birth certificate may now be obtained by the person named on the certificate, by a person's parents, regardless of the age of the registrant, by any person authorized in writing by the person named on the certificate, and, if the registrant is dead, by the next-of-kin.

A marriage certificate may be obtained by the bride or groom, or by the children of their marriage (natural or adoptive) or by any person authorized in writing by one of the persons named on the certificate. If a parent is deceased, children may obtain a certified copy of the marriage. Death certificates are available to anyone. Certified copies are available to next-of-kin only.

To apply for a certificate, obtain a "Request for Birth, Marriage or Death Certificate" form, available by mail from the Office of the Registrar General (ORG) or from most local municipal offices, employment insurance offices, passport offices and any Ontario land registry office. Generally, you will need to provide the full name of the registrant(s), the date and place of the event, and, for births and deaths, the full name of the registrant's father and the maiden and married names of his or her mother.

The application form also includes a section for authorizing a third party to undertake a search or obtain a certificate.

Applications may also be received and submitted by fax, provided the applicant is making payment by VISA or MasterCard. For further information, you may write to the ORG at:

Office of the Registrar General
P.O. Box 4600
189 Red River Road
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6L8
or fax (807) 343-7459
For information, call:
Toronto (416) 325-8305
Toll free 1-800-461-2156

Same-day counter service for birth, death and marriage certificates is available in Toronto at the Macdonald Block, 900 Bay Street (corner of Bay and Wellesley Streets) from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday to Friday, and in Thunder Bay at the Land Registry Office, 189 Red River Road, as well as the land registry offices in Hamilton, London, North Bay, Ottawa, Sudbury, Whitby and Windsor.

Hours of operation are 9:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday to Friday at all locations except Toronto (8:30 am to 5:00 pm). There is a surcharge for same-day service (Can $15 per document). Fees: Wallet- and file-size Can $15; certified Can $22.

From the website of the Government of Ontario

Jewish Genealogy Databases Unite to Create a Family Tree of the Jewish People

People throughout the world who are interested in tracing their Jewish roots and finding relatives will now have a vastly improved and readily accessible database of over 2 million names in a family tree format, thanks to a long-awaited agreement signed on Sunday, October 24. The three major Jewish genealogy organizations - the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS - 75 genealogical societies worldwide), JewishGen (the Internet site for researching Jewish ancestry), and Beth Hatefutsoth (the Diaspora Museum in Tel Aviv) - have agreed to combine their family tree information. The agreement will allow this valuable resource to be available on site at the museum, on the world wide web, and on CD-ROM.

Prior to this agreement, anyone searching Jewish family lines had to contribute their family trees to all three organizations to ensure that they could be found by lost relatives and fellow researchers. Now an Australian consulting the database on the web might find a cousin in Chicago who had registered the family tree with JewishgenR or IAJGS, and an avid genealogist cousin in Israel who had donated the family tree to Beth Hatefutsoth. Long-lost relatives can reunite and learn more about their shared history.

Harvey Krueger, a Vice Chairman at Lehman Brothers, Inc., genealogy enthusiast and philanthropist, envisioned this agreement to help Jewish people graft together branches of their families that were torn apart by the Holocaust and separated by emigration, and was the catalyst for its completion. Combining the three databases will create a 2 million-strong family tree of the Jewish people, a tree that can only grow and flower as it is nurtured by this agreement.

To learn more about searching the database, which should be operational by the end of January 2000, and about submitting trees to the participating not-for-profit organizations, please consult their websites:

Jewishgen: http://www.jewishgen.org
IAJGS: http://www.jewishgen.org/ajgs
Beth Hatefutsoth: http://www.bh.org.il
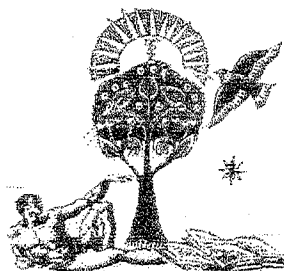
DNA Testing Kits to Ashkenazi Jews

You asked about the status on the project to send DNA testing kits to 5,000 Ashkenazi Jews. We are starting to send kits out at the end of this week direct to people for whom we have names and mailing addresses. Any that you can send us would be gratefully received and we will mail kits to them.

Prospective donors should read all about the project on http://www.ucl.ac.uk/tcga/ashkenazim/ so that they know what we are about and, if they prefer, can email their name and mailing address to me at vivian.moses@kcl.ac.uk which has been set up especially for this project.

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The British Columbia Archives

The British Columbia Archives (BC Archives), the British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency (BCVSA), and the Information and Data Management Branch (IDMB) are pleased to announce the release of indexes to B.C. birth registrations (1872-1898) on the BC Archives website, effective 16 June 1999 (http://www.bcarchives.gov.bc.ca).

The BC Archives website provides an extensive source of genealogical information on pioneer residents of the Province of British Columbia. In addition to the Genealogical Resources page, the website offers direct on-line searching of historical BC Vital Event Indexes (nearly 1 million names in total), consisting of birth events over 100 years old, marriage events over 75 years old, and death events over 20 years old.

Indexes to marriages (1872-1921) and deaths (1872-1976) were first released on 13 January 1997. Earlier this year, those indexes were updated to include marriages for 1922-1923 and deaths for 1977-1978.

Since the initial release in 1997, the Vital Events portion of the BC Archives website has taken more than 3 million hits from around the world.

This project is the result of close cooperation between the BCVSA and BC Archives/IDMB, in partnership with the Genealogical Society of Utah that has provided the staff to microfilm the original registration documents. Volunteers from the West Coast Family Histories Society and the Victoria Genealogical Society provided an invaluable service by indexing early birth, marriage, and death registrations. Volunteers from the West Coast Family Histories Society undertook the very time-consuming task of sorting birth registrations in preparation for microfilming.

Microfilm copies of original birth registration documents (1872-1898), marriage registration documents (1872-1923) and death registration documents (1872-1978) are available for viewing in the BC Archives reading room in Victoria.

For a list of libraries and genealogical societies which hold a copy of the marriage and death microfilm released in January 1997, please consult: http://www.hlth.gov.bc.ca/vs/genealogy/microfilm.html

The full set of birth, marriage and death registration documents on microfilm (344 reels) may be obtained from the BCVSA for $2,775 ($3,163.50 with tax) and the COMfiche index for $25 ($28.50 with tax). The update set of reels released in 1999 (36 reels) costs $275 ($313.50 with tax). Prices are effective 16 June 1999, are quoted in Canadian dollars, and are subject to change. Please consult the BCVSA website page: http://www.hlth.gov.bc.ca/vs/genealociy/order.html for information on when copies of the newly released birth, marriage and death microfilm reels will be available for purchase.

For details on how to place your order, please contact BCVSA at: vsgene@moh.hnet.bc.ca or at the mailing address below.

Birth registrations are released 100 years after the date of birth, marriage registrations 75 years after the date of marriage, and death registrations 20 years after the date of death. These time frames are consistent with the protection of privacy provisions in the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (section 36) governing disclosure of personal information for historical or archival purposes.

BC Archives staff cannot provide photocopies of birth, marriage or death registration documents, nor do research in the on-line databases or registrations on behalf of remote users. BC Archives will refer all requests for genealogical services, including photocopies, received by phone, email, fax or mail, to:

British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency
818 Fort Street
Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W 1H8
Tel: (250) 952-2681 or toll-free (800) 663-8328

Services can also be obtained through independent researchers, including those listed at: http://www.bcarchives.gov.bc.ca/general/res_list.htm

Questions about the data in the on-line indexes or the genealogical services provided by the BCVSA should be addressed to: vsgene@moh.hnet.bc.ca

For more information about the project, contact the Public Access Group of the British Columbia Archives/Information and Data Management Branch: webmaster@bcarchives.gov.bc.ca

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The foregoing appeared in Dor L'Dor - Generation to Generation, the newsletter of The Jewish Genealogical Institute of British Columbia, September 1999.

EXLIBRIS
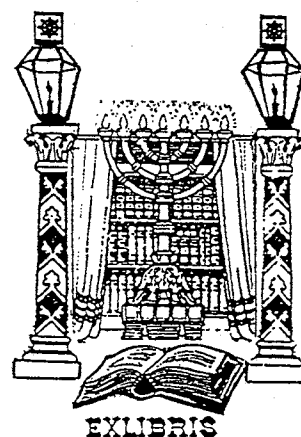
Access to the Hall of Names

First of all, let me introduce myself. My name is Zvi Bernhardt and I work at the Hall of Names at Yad Vashem. I have been monitoring the list for a while, and I would like to describe our position.

As many of you will be aware, Yad Vashem has created a computerized databank containing information on millions of Jews in the Shoah. This meta-databank contains, among other sources, almost our entire collection of Pages of Testimony. We are currently developing a user-friendly interface which will allow us to grant access to this databank on the web hopefully by spring of 2000. Parallel to this effort, we are continuing to enter additional documentation into the databank. We hope within a few years to have in this central databank any and all information we can find about as many of the Holocaust victims (including survivors) as possible. May I suggest that from time to time you check our website to keep updated as we progress: http://www.yadvashem.org.il

I assume these new developments will completely satisfy researchers. By the way, I will be happy to answer general questions about the Hall of Names.

> Zvi Bernhardt
> Hall Of Names
> Yad Vashem
> P.O. Box 3477
> Jerusalem

Yad Vashem Has the Arolsen Records
Tom Venetianer

I am placing this information on behalf of Miriam Lava who authorized me to do so. Yad Vashem has the Arolsen records on microfiches. They are alphabetical lists of surnames which belonged to concentration camp inmates, victims and survivors.

The lists were compiled by the Red Cross, using Nazi documentation, and also records made by the allied forces which liberated those camps.

The details included are:
* Number of the record/file, its date of filing
* Name of the person in question
* Birth date and place
* Nationality
* Next-of-kin
* Source of information
* Last-known location
* Prison: arrival - liberation
* Transferred: from - to
* Died on
* Cause of death
* Buried on
* Grave
* Remarks

Of course the records have fields which are not filled in. The procedure is as follows: Once you are in the Yad Vashem archive (currently closed), ask for the fiche that covers certain family surnames of your interest. Then sit in front of a microfiche reader and begin searching. Having discovered people that belong to your family, you can have that fiche photocopied, and *signed* with the official Yad Vashem seal. Such certified documents can be used for heritage claims and Holocaust victims' restitution programs.

US Census
Chuck Weinstein

For the benefit of our non-US readers, the constitution requires our government to take a census of all inhabitants of the United States every 10 years. Since the first census was taken in 1790, every census since was taken in a year ending in "0". By law, all census information relating to specific individuals is confidential for 72 years from the date of the census. All censuses prior to 1920 are public records and are available from a number of sources, both inside and outside the US, but are not available in an easily usable form online. Most of the 1890 census was destroyed in a fire, so only a few records from that census are available. Most census records are indexed or soundexed, and those indexes are available either on microfilm or in book form.

Census information may (depending upon the date) include the names of all residents of a household, ages, occupations, place of birth, language spoken, place of birth of parents, and other information. It is not always totally accurate, as the census-taker heard what he heard. Dates were often fuzzy to the person who responded to the questions, spelling was often arbitrary, etc. My great-uncle is not mentioned with the rest of the family in the 1910 census, probably because my great-grandfather, having experienced the Czar's army, feared that he was coming to the age of conscription. He would have been 15 at the time. There is probably the germ of an info file here, but that is the basic information on the US census. The 1930 census will be opened to the public on April 1, 2002, but apparently it is not indexed or soundexed, so it probably will not be nearly as easily accessible as its predecessors.

For more information on the US census, please refer to the JewishGen FAQ at:
> www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/faq.html#census

British Telecom
Peter Mednick

Available online now is British Telecom's white pages at the web address:
> http://www.thenewbt.bt.com/phonenetuk/

Jewish Roots in the Ukraine and Moldova
Pages from the Past and Archival Inventories

by Miriam Weiner in cooperation with the Ukrainian State Archives and the Moldovan National Archives. Published jointly by YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, 15 West 16th Street, New York, NY 10011 and the Miriam Weiner Routes to Roots Foundation Inc., P.O. Box 1376, Secaucus, New Jersey 07096-1376. 1999, 600 pages, $60 US. ISBN 0-9656508-1-2

Reviewed by Mordechai Roitman

Books are somewhat like people in that they possess both a visible body and a hidden inner spirit. Miriam Weiner's newest work *Jewish Roots in the Ukraine and Moldova* is a book that has the rare quality that would make it both the winner of the Miss America Pageant and the Nobel Peace Prize.

Upon first opening this work, one is struck by the magnificent layout with over 1,200 photographs, maps and document samples. Many of these pictures, over 900 of which are in color, are rare pre-war postcards of places and buildings no longer extant. To quote the people who perfected ancestor worship, "A picture is worth a thousand words," and Miriam Weiner has taken this to heart in her excellent utilization of illustrations in her work.

When I showed my father, who was born in Ukraine in 1911 and lived in Odessa in the 1930s, the section dealing with Odessa, his eyes watered as the old photos evoked the nostalgia of his youth when Odessa was the tenth-largest Jewish city in the world at that time. I found that the photographs of cemeteries in ruins that are shown for virtually all 140 cities and towns emote a poignant feeling of loss for a time and place that, a mere generation ago, was home to so much vibrancy. Encapsulating the Phoenix-like nature of the Jewish people, this work ranges from the ashes of the Holocaust (Chapter 7) to the survival and continuity of the Jews in Ukraine of today (Chapters 5 and 6).

Miriam Weiner has infused this volume with the enthusiasm of her life's work in archival research in this region. Over the past eight years she has made countless trips and consulted with dozens of archivists and local historians. As the Talmud says "Who is wise? He who learns from all men." Ms. Weiner has four pages of closely cropped acknowledgments as well as 32 pages of bibliographic references. She has consulted the actual field archivists who have the best grasp of the complexities of the problems and best solutions to a field of work that has been described by the Director of the Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lvov as "inaccessible" for the past 70 years of Soviet rule. In addition to tapping into the minds of experts in the black-and-white micro-world of records, documents and archival repositories, Miriam Weiner has gleaned the wisdom of historians and professors who build these details into the sociological, historical and biographical works that reveal the color and poetry of our ancestors' lives. To provide one example, Professor ChaeRan Freeze, who wrote the essay "Following the Paper Trail - Genealogical Resources in the Ukrainian and Moldovan Archives" in the introduction, utilized 19th-century primary documents for her nearly 600-page 1997 Ph.D. dissertation, "Making and Unmaking the Jewish Family: Marriage and Divorce of Jews in Imperial Russia, 1850-1914."

I examined the Archival Holdings Indexed by Town section (Chapter 12) in reference to the various towns in which I was interested and compared them to the documents I had received from Ukraine as well as the only other current work in English on Jewish archival records in Ukraine - *Some Archival Sources for Ukrainian-Jewish Genealogy* by Aleksander Kronik and Sallyann Amdur Sack. I had dealt indirectly with the Vinnitsa Vice-Director, Faina A. Vinokurova, in reference to my grandfather's ancestral town of Dashev in the Podalian province of Ukraine. Eventually in 1998 I obtained various birth, death, census and draft petition documents for my paternal ancestors for the mid-19th century. The fond number of the documents sent to me (D-904) corresponds exactly with the index information. While the Kronik book makes reference to this fond (page 23), it gives no details, unlike Miriam Weiner, of what is contained therein. Also, Miriam Weiner gives two additional fond references not found in Kronik for Dashev. I did not obtain any information from them as they applied to time periods when I did not have any ancestors residing in Dashev. I searched both works for various other towns relating to my paternal ancestors and summarize:

Town	# of fonds listed Weiner	# of fonds listed Kronik
Balta	6	0
Olgopol	6	0
Konela	1	0
Gaysin	11	2 (1 not found in Weiner)
Kitay-gorod	5	2

I found an interesting and very instructive anomaly in comparing my primary documents with

the archival index fond numbers listed in both books.

I received about four documents from Ms. Vinokurova that pertained to various petitions. These petitions cover the time period 1854-1857 and are to Czar Nicholas I and Alexander II and relate to complaints over various abuses committed by the local Jewish community leaders in drafting underage Jewish youth in Dashev during the Crimean War. I was able to cross-reference at least one community leader to the Deych database for Jewish community leaders (1854-1855) to further authenticate the documents. The strange thing is that on the covering document dated 1862 it appears to be from fond 608/1/1720 (or 1220). There is no reference to any such fond for Dashev. However, in perusing Miriam Weiner's index I discovered that this fond and opus number appear in only one other place, albeit with different Delo. It appears in the Vinnitsa holdings and is marked as containing census records compiled in 1865 for the town of Pliskov located about 40 miles from Dashev!

I think we can derive at least two lessons from this apparent archival aberration: first, there obviously is different historical, and consequentially genealogical, information scattered in places where one wouldn't expect it to be; and second, only an experienced and astute archivist/researcher could have any hope of locating it. I can only hazard a guess as to how in this case Faina Vinokurova located this information. It does emphasize once again the importance of selecting the right people for this difficult job, something which Miriam Weiner has amply accomplished.

Incidentally, Faina Vinokurova wrote the article "Jewish Documents in the State Archive of Vinnitsa Oblast" (Chapter 4) as well as an article on the Holocaust (Chapter 7).

Finally, to be an impartial reviewer of this volume, I am obliged to point out some shortcomings. Due to the extremely poor mail system currently in Ukraine, computer-based contacts could have been given for the various archives, regional offices or the archivists themselves to facilitate swift communication which is vital in this type of research. I believe that most of these addresses must have some internet connection by email or web link. The availability of a more sophisticated index would also be desirable. Despite the fact that many parts of the book are arranged through an alpha-based method, there are numerous documents and references throughout that could more readily be located with a comprehensive index.

In summary, this is truly a massive work that will be a classic in the field of Jewish genealogy.

Mordechai Roitman is a longtime member and former librarian of our society.

Family Who's Who
Published by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1970)
Review by Henry Wellisch

In 1963 the Hebrew University in Jerusalem decided to establish the "Family Endowment Plan" with the goal of raising $100 million. Such a fund would enable the university to anticipate earned income which would help provide security and autonomy.

Some 2,700 endowments appearing in the first edition of the *Family Who's Who* list mostly Canadian contributors to the fund. The importance for Jewish genealogists is the genealogical information provided in this volume. The progeny as well as the forbears of the contributors are listed, often going back several generations.

Among the names appearing in this volume, one can find prominent Canadian Jewish families as well as less-known ones. Some of the families listed are: **Abbey, Bronfman, Freiman, Harris, Keyfetz, Starkman** and **Steinberg**. I located the families of at least two members of our society, and there could well be others.

This valuable addition to our growing library collection was donated by our veteran member and former president Bill Gladstone.

Recommended Reading

The Practical Guide to the Genetic Family History by Robin L. Bennet, M.S., C.G.C.
Published by John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY
1999, 356 pages

"Filling a need in genetic counseling education, this book raises the family history in routine medical care to the level of prominence it deserves."
    Kathryn Steinhaus, M.S., C.G.C.
    "Genetically Speaking"

Ex Libris