The Search Bureau for Missing Relatives was founded in 1945 after the remnants from the Shoah desperately began to search for whatever might have remained of their families. The intensity of requests for relatives went in waves, which coincided with the heavy waves of immigration: 1945, 1957, the 1970s and 1990s. In those years, there were between 200 to 350 requests monthly. Between 50 and 60 percent of those searches met with success.

The vast majority of searches were initiated from abroad, although some came from Israelis. Just as Jews lived all over the globe, the requests came in many different languages such as Russian, Polish, Hebrew, English, and German. Although the original aim of the Search Bureau was the reunification of families shattered by the Shoah, the latest requests concern mostly searches for lost branches of families for genealogy reasons.

The Bureau of Missing Persons has computerized records of all requests since 1945, as well as Israeli censuses up to November 1984. Searches can be done by name, by town, or by marriage – which includes the names of the parents. Those who married outside Israel prior to aliyah do not have their maiden name included in the database. From 1985 on, one can search for new immigrants through the Ministry of Absorption, or for others through the Ministry of the Interior. The Bureau of Missing Persons also has microfiches containing data from 1900 up to the 1950's.

There are many other helpful sources for finding relatives: Hevra Kadisha records; Landsmanschaften; the Histadrut; numerous professional organizations; the Central Zionist Archives; Yad Vashem; State Archives; the Archives of the Ministry of the Interior; the Kibbutz Movements; various city archives and more. The secret of a successful search is in giving as much accurate information as possible when making a request of any of the offices mentioned in this summary.

Born in Vilnius, Lithuania, Batya Untershatz came to Israel in 1972 and worked for the Jewish Agency until June 2000. She is a graduate of Vilnius State University and is a professional genealogist since 1996. Batya will be one of the speakers at the Genealogical Conference in Toronto, August 4 - 9, 2002.

The above article appeared in the October 2001 issue of Sharsheret Hadarot, the journal of the Israel Genealogical Society.
UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Doors open at 7:30, program begins at 8 p.m.
All members will receive further details
either by e-mail or by telephone.

Wednesday, June 26, 2002 - 8:00 p.m.,
Presenting—An Introduction to the 22nd IAJGS
International Conference on Jewish Genealogy

Wednesday, September 25, 2002 - 8:00 p.m.,
Program to be announced

For further information visit our website at
www.jgstoronto.ca or watch the "What's New" column in the Canadian Jewish News.
We wish you a pleasant summer.

Volume XVIII, No. 2

SHEM TOV is published quarterly by the Jewish
Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto) and is
distributed free to members. Current and back issues are
available for $4 per issue.
Contributions are invited. Submit material c/o The
Editor, P.O. Box 446, Station A, North York, Ontario,
Canada M2N 5T1.
The Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada was
founded in 1985 and currently has over 200 members.
Membership costs $30 per calendar year. $20 for
persons living beyond both Metro Toronto and its
adjacent suburbs. Meetings are held September to June,
usually on the last Wednesday of each month at 8:00
p.m. (doors open at 7:30) at Shaarei Shomayim
Synagogue, 470 Glencairn Avenue, Toronto (unless
announced otherwise). Guests are always welcome.
Details are usually printed in the Canadian Jewish News.
The goals of the Society are to provide a forum for
the exchange of knowledge and information through
meetings, outings, workshops and guest lecturers,
and thereby to promote an awareness of genealogy within
the Jewish community of Canada. The Society is affiliated
with the Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto and is
registered as a non-profit charitable organization.
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ADVERTISING RATES

SHEM TOV is now accepting display advertising for publication. Advertisers are requested to supply camera-ready art and payment by August 2002 for the Fall issue. Please indicate how many insertions you would like. As the chart indicates our basic rate is discounted for advertisements placed in four consecutive issues (one year) instead of a single issue only. By placing an ad in SHEM TOV, you are reaching a growing number of readers in Toronto, across Canada and internationally, and helping to support a unique and vital journal.

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Search ads are also available. Rates are $5 for the first 25 words and 25¢ per word thereafter, your name and address are free. Please write advertisement clearly with family surnames you are researching in UPPER CASE letters. Make your cheque payable to Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto) and mail to: IAJGS of Canada (Toronto), P.O. Box 446, Station A, Willowdale, Ontario M2N 5T1.
New Arrivals for Genealogists in the Canadiana Department from the National Archives of Canada

The North York Central Library Canadiana Department now has a complete collection of microfilmed immigration records from 1865 to 1935 from the National Archives of Canada.

Visit the Canadiana Department for:
- Ships Passenger Lists 1865 to 1935
- Border Entry Records 1908 to 1935
- Immigration Forms 1919 to 1924/5

Full descriptions and reel numbers can be found at: www.archives.ca

These records are a great addition to the genealogical resources of the Toronto Public Library and are already in use by genealogists researching immigrant arrivals in Canada from 1865 to 1935.

The Canadiana Department is located in: The North York Central Library, 5120 Yonge Street (North York Centre, Sheppard Subway Station), 416-395-5623.

Hours of operation: Mon. 12:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Tues. to Thurs. 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., Fri. 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sun. 1:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. (Open Sundays until June 23, then closed for the summer on Sundays. Re-opening on Sundays in mid-September, 2002).

Check out our new website at www.jgstoronto.ca

for current information about the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto) including valuable links.

CIVIL REGISTRATION CHANGES

The UK Government published a White Paper in January 2002:
Civil Registration: Vital Change - Birth, Marriage and Death Registration in the 21st Century.

by Laurence Harris

For genealogists there is some good news and some bad news. Like wise for those interested in privacy and civil liberties. There are plans to make birth, marriage and death details (post 1837) available online. Referring to historic records the paper states: "In time all these records will be computerized. The full historic records (those relating to people over 100 years of age) will be available." In the future, information (e.g., occupation) will be collected on both mothers and fathers. Dates of birth (rather than ages) will be recorded. There will be a central database for recording vital life events. Birth, marriage and death information will be linked for a given individual. For younger people, less than 100 years of age, the following information will cease to be available to the general public on certificates: addresses, occupations, cause of death. So get ready to order your certificates for events in the last 100 years while they are still available with this information. Of course this information will be available to the individual concerned and to certain specific authorities/institutions (e.g., police, government departments). Times for implementation, and the likely costs of access to these records, are unclear in the document (at least to me!). It is also unclear whether there will be access to the full information held on individuals who have died (or whether the full information will be withheld until 100 years after the birth of the individual).

A copy of the White Paper can be downloaded free (as a PDF file): www.official-documents.co.uk/document/cm53/5355/5355.pdf. Click on: "Birth, Marriage and Death Registration in the 21st Century".
New Eastern European Archival Database
by Miriam Weiner

Researching ancestral documents in the "old country" is now much easier and quicker with the new website developed by Miriam Weiner for the Routes to Roots Foundation, Inc. (a not-for-profit foundation). The website consists of two parts: (1) a 275-page book and (2) a searchable database (by town name) of archive documents for towns in Belarus, Lithuania, Poland, Moldova and Ukraine based upon the archival holdings of those countries.

While it may be tempting to first choose "Archive Database" from the Menu and then initiate a "town or locality" search, a few minutes of patience will be well spent by reading/printing the Introduction and the pages within the Introduction relating to specific countries. A town or locality search may be done in three ways:

(1) by exact town-name spelling (current)
(2) by the Daitch-Mokotoff Soundex search
(3) "begins with ..."

The results produce a list of document types in archives throughout the five countries. After you select documents for the town that interests you, you can then click on "archive name", which will take you to a page where you can find the archive addresses and other contact information. To search for specific family names, it is then necessary to initiate a search of the relevant archive (methods of archive access included in Introduction and in Frequently Asked Questions [FAQ]).

The archive inventory data was collected and verified in official cooperation with the state archives in all five countries and the archivists have agreed to continue updating the inventory as new material becomes known. The website menu includes: Introduction, Archive Acknowledgments, Archive Chapters, Archive Database, Maps, Foundation Data, Publications, Related Websites, Supporters and FAQ. Many of the website pages are excerpted chapters from Jewish Roots in Poland and Jewish Roots in Ukraine and Moldova, supplemented by similar new chapters from archivists in Belarus and Lithuania (in PDF files in order to preserve the format from the books). There are numerous links to other sites throughout this website which will save the user extensive time. For example, there is a link to a website in Poland where one can find addresses of Urzad Stanu Cywilnego offices (civil registration offices usually located at the local town hall) throughout Poland.

There are links to websites where one can find archives and libraries by country, throughout the world. The Home Page includes information about which version of browsers works best with this website and instructions about downloading and using Adobe Acrobat Reader for viewing PDF files on the website. See the Site Map on the Home Page which contains a detailed outline of the website. For questions and clarifications, see the FAQ section (last button on the Menu).

There is no charge for access to this website and any page may be printed. The archive data is being continually updated and expanded as new information is received. The process of collecting/verifying data from archives is an ongoing process. The website includes a form for submitting new/revised material which will be added to the database upon verification by the appropriate archivists. See http://www.rrffoundation.org.

We Welcome These New Members to Our Society

Nathan Abramowitz Anna Bloom
Phyllis Fien Gary Gotter
David Groll Doreen Konikoff
Sarah Kelman Marla Daschko
Schafler Waltman

June 2002 Shem Tov
JOIN US AT THE SHERATON HOTEL IN TORONTO IN 2002

See the complete Programe on our website at: www.jgstoronto2002.ca

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More than 100 Lectures
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Most geographic areas, including Jewish roots in Galicia, Kingdom of Poland, Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine, Germany, Hungary, Scotland, England, Persia/Iran, Jamaica, Romania, Russia, Moldova, Spain, Bohemia, Slovakia, South Africa, Courland, Bavaria, Rhineland, the mysterious Kingdom of Khazaria, the Muslim World, and China.
Special Sessions on Poland are planned, including a panel of renowned scholars on the millennium of Polish Jewry, entitled: "Poles and Jews: Shared History and Divided Memory"

Features on Canadian and USA Research
Genetics and DNA
Holocaust Research
Workshops, Breakfasts with the Experts, Special Interest Group Luncheons and More...

Jewish Genealogy Film Festival
Art and Photography Exhibitions, Closing Banquet (fully kosher) with some BIG Surprises and fun!

Special Canadian Archives
Great Toronto Resources
Computer & Resource Rooms
Large Vendor Exhibition

Birds of a Feather Meetings
Special Interest Group Meetings
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Fabulous Sheraton Centre Toronto - A safe, secure and wonderfully central location

Special rates and offers on AIR CANADA - Official Conference airline
Reserve at the Special Conference Rate at the SHERATON CENTRE TORONTO HOTEL
SOME OF THE PRESENTATIONS FROM THE IAJGS CONFERENCE, AUGUST 49, 2002

We have over 100 speakers on many subjects. Below is a select list of presentations, but this is just a small part. Other subjects, such as computers, the internet, genetics, DNA and many others will be covered.

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Center for Jewish History Genealogy Institute Inaugurates New Website

Family history research just got a lot easier - no matter where you reside! - thanks to the Genealogy Institute at New York's Center for Jewish History. Visit the Center's website at www.cjh.org (The Jewish Agency for Israel recently named the Center for Jewish History website among the top ten Jewish websites in the world) and click on "Family History." You will find new web pages that provide detailed information about the wealth of genealogical records and resources housed at the Center.

"Ancestral Traces: A Virtual Exhibit," displays some of the unique and unusual genealogical records at the Center, including a transcript from a trial during the Inquisition in Mexico, a page of birth records from the Jewish community of Rangoon, HIAS arrival cards, a list of marriages in 1842 in Offenbach, Germany, a burial record from a landsmanhaft, and more.

"Frequently Asked Questions" provides the answers to how to do genealogy research at the Center. Plan your research in advance with the FAQs, as well as a complete listing of the Genealogy Institute's reference collection, including historical atlases and books on the Holocaust, travel, and Jewish history, which also is found on the website.

Center Genealogy Institute staff and volunteers have created a series of fact sheets that list the genealogical resources at the Center. All fact sheets now are available on the website as PDF files you can print at home. Was your ancestor a rabbi? Click on the rabbinic records fact sheet and find a listing of the books at the Center - in Yiddish, Hebrew, and English - with biographical information on rabbis. Want to know how to access records from Belarus or Lithuania? Print out the free fact sheets and learn. Wondering what Sephardic records are available at the Center? Read the fact sheets on Sephardic topics to learn that there are records in all the partner organizations, including records from Salonika in the archives of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research; records of the Curacao community in the holdings of the American Jewish Historical Society; records of the Hamburg Sephardic community in the collections of the Leo Baeck Institute, and records of the Amsterdam Sephardic community, and much more, collected by the American Sephardic Federation.

The Center Genealogy Institute (which can be reached at 212-294-8324 or on the web at gi@cjhc.org) is open Monday through Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Institute also is open one Sunday a month from 12:30 to 2 p.m., when the Jewish Genealogical Society of New York hosts its monthly meeting at the Center.

Volunteers who can translate Yiddish, Hebrew, Russian and other languages can be contacted to assist patrons in translating short letters, postcards and documents. All basic services are provided free of charge.

The Center for Jewish History has emerged from a vision of a unique central resource for the cultural and historical legacy of the Jewish people. The Center embodies the partnership of five major institutions of Jewish scholarship, history and art: American Jewish Historical Society, American Sephardic Federation, Leo Baeck Institute, Yeshiva University Museum and the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. The Center serves the worldwide academic and general communities with combined holdings of approximately 100 million archival documents, a half million books, and tens of thousands of photographs, artifacts, paintings and textiles - the largest repository documenting the Jewish experience outside of Israel. The Center's extensive program of exhibits, cultural events and intellectual gatherings will interest all who wish to explore the richness of the Jewish past and the promise of the Jewish future.

New Warsaw Jewry Website

Yale J. Reisner
The Ronald S. Lauder Foundation, Warsaw

A new website on the history of Warsaw Jewry was launched today by the City of Warsaw and the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland. It provides historical information about Warsaw Jewry, including a chronology of events, maps, photographs and other information.

Those interested in Warsaw Jewry are invited to visit this bilingual (Polish-English) website:
www.jewish.sites.warszaws.un.gov.pl

I have no direct interest in this website; this information is offered as a resource available to those interested.
Yad Vashem Holocaust databases
Zvi Bernhardt

In a letter on the list today it stated that Yad Vashem charges $10 per name. To clarify, Our minimum fee, which covers the first hour of research is $10. Prior to undertaking further research we contact the searcher and clarify what the further costs will be. Our charges are based on time, and number of pages printed. We have provided a new infofile to Jewishgen which clarifies our policies which we hope will be posted soon on the Jewishgen site. The vast majority of names requests are charged under $20, including multiple searches. Of course, there are complicated cases where we have to charge more, so please do not expect a request for all the Cohens in Warsaw to cost under $20.

Please note that in addition to the computerized Pages of Testimony, our databank now includes, the German and Berlin memorial books, the deportation lists from France compiled by Klarfeld, most of the lists of deportations from Bohemia and Moravia to Theresienstadt, a list of Jews deported from Thessalonika, transcription of the card catalogue of prisoners in Mauthausen and the lists of Hungarian Jews from the “Nevek” series. We are continuing to enter new lists into the databank, and the list of Dutch Jews should be in the databank within a week.

As to the obvious question of web access- within our funding and technological constraints we are doing all we can to bring this about as soon as possible. Those on the Jewishgen list will certainly be the first to know.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank- in the name of Yad Vashem - all the volunteers working on Yad Vashem’s and Jewishgen’s joint project computerizing lists. I am constantly impressed with your seriousness and precision.

And for those who don't know- the address for requests from Yad Vashem is: names.research@yadvashem.org.il.
Believe It or Not

Author Unknown
Submitted by Andrea Dey

Next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn’t just how you like it, think about how things used to be...Here are some facts about the 1500s:

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May and still smelled pretty good by June. However, they were starting to smell, so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children—last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in—hence the saying, “Don’t throw the baby out with the bath water.”

Houses had thatched roofs—thick straw, piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the dogs, cats and other small animals (mice rats, and bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery, and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof—hence the saying, “It’s raining cats and dogs.”

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could really mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That’s how canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt, hence the saying, “dirt poor.”

The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they kept adding more thresh until when you opened the door it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entryway—hence, a “thresh hold.”

They cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes the stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while—hence the rhyme, “peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old.”

Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man “could bring home the bacon.” They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and “chew the fat.”

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with a high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning and death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous.

Most people did not have pewter plates, but had trenchers, a piece of wood with the middle scooped out like a bowl. Often trenchers were made from stale payson bread which was so old and hard that they could use them for quite some time. Trenchers were never washed and a lot of times worms and mold got into the wood and old bread. After eating off wormy moldy trenchers, one would get, “trench mouth.”

Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or “upper crust.”

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whiskey. The combination would sometimes knock them out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up—hence the custom of holding a “wake.”

England is old and small and they started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig coffins and would take the bones to a “bone-house” and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, one out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. So they thought they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the “graveyard shift”) to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be “saved by the bell” or was considered a “dead ringer.”

This is from “Families”, the journal of the Ontario Genealogical Society, August 2001.
The 22nd IAJGS Conference on Jewish Genealogy

August 4 – 9, 2002
Sheraton Centre Toronto

Toronto is a Huron Indian word meaning Meeting Place (Lieu de Rencontre). Our new Conference logo reflects our special Canadian heritage and our plans to make Toronto a meeting place for genealogists from around the world. In 2002, Toronto will be the place to be for the annual International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. A great line-up of speakers, special events, programmes, tours and resources will be available to genealogists from beginner to expert. Mark your calendar now!

www.jgstoronto2002.ca

This is from Families, Feb. 2002, a publication of the Ontario Genealogical Society

Kingston Gazette Sat. Jan. 20, 1816
Wife Advertised

Whereas my wife, Mrs. Bridget McDallogh is again walked away with herself, and left me with five small children & her poor blind mother, and left nobody to take care of the house and home, and I hear she has taken up with Tim Ghigan, the lame fiddler, the same that was put in the stocks last Easter, for stealing Barney Doody's game cock: This is to give notice, that I will not pay for bite or sup on her account to man or mortal, and that she better never show the marks of her ten toes near my house again.

PATRICK MCDALLOGH

P.S. Tim had better keep out of my sight.
A n unusual and little-known fact to most people is that the King of Rock and Roll had Jewish ancestry. Elvis's great-great-great-grandmother, Morning White Dove (1800-1835) was a full-blooded Cherokee Indian who, in 1818, married William Mansell (1795-1842), a settler in Western Tennessee. The Mansell family was of French origin, migrating from Norman France to Scotland, and then later to Ireland. In the 18th century they came to the American colonies where William's father Richard fought in the revolutionary war. William fought in the Indian wars of the 19th century. The Mansells migrated to Alabama from Tennessee to claim lands in the Indian wars. They settled in Marion County in northeast Alabama near the Mississippi border. The Scotch-Irish were the predominant settlers of Alabama.

The Mansells prospered in Alabama due to their fertile land and built a large house near the town of Hamilton. They had three children: John, born 1828, who was Elvis's great-great-grandfather. He married Elizabeth (Betsy) Gilmore about 1850 and had nine or ten children with her. He also had numerous illegitimate children. His descendants still live in northwest Alabama and in northeast Mississippi.

John Mansell squandered the family farm. In 1880 he went to Oxford Mississippi and changed his name to Colonel Lee Mansell. His sons left Hamilton to seek their fortunes in the town of Saltilo, Mississippi near Tupelo, the birthplace of Elvis. The third of John Mansell's sons, White Mansell, became the patriarch of the family when John Mansell went to Oxford. White Mansell (b. 1849 Hamilton, Marion, Alabama d. Pontotoc, Mississippi) was Elvis's great-grandfather.

This is where the Jewish ancestry in Elvis's maternal family line occurs. White Mansell married Martha Tackett (b. 1852 Saltilo, Itavamba, Mississippi d. 1887) who was Jewish. They married in Saltilo on January 22, 1870. Martha was the daughter of Nancy J. Burdine, who was Jewish, and Abner Tackett. Both Nancy and Abner were born about 1825 in Tennessee. They married about 1850 in Pontotoc, Mississippi. They had two other children: Jerome, born about 1851 and Sidney, born about 1853. Nancy was the daughter of John F. Burdine of Saltilo, Itavamba, Mississippi.

The Mansells eventually had to become sharecroppers due to economic hardship. The fortunes of the family were gone. White and Martha's daughter Octavia (Doll) Mansell (1876-1935) was Elvis's grandmother. She married about 1903 a first cousin Robert Smith (1876-1932) who was the son of White Mansells' sister Anna (1854-1935) and her husband Milege (Ab) Smith (1837-1900). Octavia and Robert Smith had 9 children (6 daughters, 3 sons). Their daughter Gladys Love Smith (1912-1958) was Elvish's mother and she married Vernon Elvis Presley (1916-1979). Robert Smith had Indian ancestry as did the Mansells. He was a sharecropper and a moonshiner. Octavia Smith was bedridden throughout the marriage by tuberculosis.

Elvis's Jewish heritage ran uninterrupted through his maternal grandparents and according to Jewish law he would be considered Jewish. His mother was proud of it and acknowledged it to him at an early age. Her gravesite, which Elvis designed, included a Star of David in honour of their Jewish heritage. In later life Elvis wore a Chai necklace in his performances and learned the Hebrew alphabet and symbols.

Glen Eker is a past Vice-President of our society and a frequent contributor to Shem Tov.