The 23rd IAJGS Conference in Washington DC
Carolynne Veffer

I attended the 23rd IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy held in Washington D.C. from July 20 to 25. It was my fourth annual conference (including the last conference in Washington in 1995, New York in 1999 and of course Toronto in 2002), so I’m not exactly an expert, but thought I’d share my impressions for those of you unable to be there. Helping to organize last year’s conference in Toronto provided a new appreciation of the effort, issues, coordination, and support required to put together one of these conferences, so first and foremost, I’d like to extend my congratulations to the Washington committee for creating such a successful event.

There seems to be a number of things common to all conferences: speakers, tours, vendor room, computer room, resource room, exhibits, special luncheons/receptions, films, city resources, and a closing banquet. They also provide an opportunity for meetings of the IAJGS, Special Interest Groups, and JRI-Poland (Shetel Co-op Coordinators and Archives Leaders & Town Leaders). It’s a chance to reunite with fellow genealogists you’ve met at other conferences and to meet people with whom you’ve e-mailed for years but never met. At last year’s conference we had an informal luncheon of people who shared Ilza, Poland as an ancestral town. That meeting encouraged the eight of us to start an Ilza cemetery restoration project and Washington provided the opportunity to meet again (attending from Toronto, Montreal, New York, and Michigan) and to include Norm Weinberg (from Buffalo) and Eve Anderson (from Warsaw). Meeting in person helped us resolve many outstanding issues and plan our next steps more quickly than e-mails. So, as you can see, annual conferences aren’t just about speakers and archives.

Washington D.C. certainly had an excellent programme of speakers. There were over 120 lectures divided into 24 themes (e.g. Poland, Eastern Europe, Lithuania, Sephardic, Technology, Methodology, Books & Authors, United States, Holocaust). They ranged from beginner to advanced. The speakers included familiar and less familiar names. Two of our Society members (Henry Wellisch and Peter Jassem) were among the lecturers. We are planning to have Peter repeat his very successful presentation at our December 17th meeting (at Shaarei Shomayim). There was something for everyone from 8 a.m. to 5:15 (with a break for lunch). There were also a number of evening sessions. I attended some very interesting presentations, including one on Dutch – Jewish Genealogy (my father and his family are from Amsterdam) which fell under the category of “Lesser Known Jewish Communities” (only among Jewish genealogists can Amsterdam be less known than Opatow or Pinsk).

The tours ranged from specific archives (Library of Congress) to Washington landmarks (International Spy Museum, Washington Monuments by Night) to tours of Jewish DC and Jewish Baltimore. I didn’t have a chance to take any tours but heard they were very successful.

There were also some things unique to this conference (or at least compared to other conferences I’ve attended).

1. The resources available in Washington are certainly unique, including the Library of Congress, the National Archives, and the library and archives at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. There were sessions in the programme explaining how to do research at each archive, what was available there etc. I used the resources in the Library of

(continued on page 12)
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 email or by telephone.

Wednesday, September 24, 2003
Speaker: Sarah Taieb-Carlen
Origins, History and Naming of Sephardic Jews

Thursday, November 06, 2003
In association with National Holocaust Education Week
Gunnar S. Paulsson
Surviving the Warsaw Ghetto

Wednesday, November 26, 2003
Speaker: Jerrold Landau
The Ins and Outs of Yizkor Book Translating

Wednesday, December 17, 2003
Speaker: Peter Jassem
Discovering Jewish Roots in Poland: Poles Raised as Gentiles Return to Their Jewish Identity

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

Volume XVIV, No. 3

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The Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada was founded in 1985 and currently has over 200 members. Membership costs $36 per calendar year, $18 for students. (Please note that the out of town reduction has been deleted). 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 and on our website at www.jgstoronto.ca.

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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The recent annual IAJGS conference in Washington, DC, was the 4th held in that city and marked the 23rd conference since the first one was held in New York City in 1981. Despite the summer heat, Washington is a desired tourist destination and for genealogists provides the important collections housed in the National Archives, the Library of Congress and in the last decade, the US Holocaust Museum. The first two institutions were always the drawing cards for holding the genealogy conferences in Washington. The National Archives house the important Census records, Ship Arrivals records, Passport applications and Social Security applications. The Library of Congress, besides housing vast collections of Maps and Gazetteers, also has an extensive Judaica Collection (including a large number of Yizkor Books).

The first two conferences held in Washington were primarily focused on research facilities available in the two main institutions. To that has been added the magnificent US Holocaust Museum, which is not only a memorial, but also an active research centre.

With the introduction of the computer, a lot of personal research has shifted to on-line activities, although visits to the archives or Library of Congress may still be necessary and rewarding.

My time at the conference was spent proportionately between attending lectures, workshops and SIG meetings, and doing research at the National Archives, as well as renewing friendships and having informal discussions. Of course this required a great deal of planning and juggling of time.

The two most significant lectures I attended were on "Passport Applications in the National Archives" by Claire Prechtl-Kluskens and two presentations by Stephen Morse (a computer whiz) who skilfully developed shortcuts to accessing the 1930 US census and demonstrated how to "create your own one-step search application". I also thoroughly enjoyed Hal Bookbinder's eloquent and informative talk on "Sharing Ideas to Solve Genealogical Research Problems".

I attended three luncheons, Sephardic SIG (everyone present except myself traced their ancestry to Mediterranean or Middle Eastern lands), South African SIG (where everyone except myself had Baltic ancestry) and BOHMOR SIG (where the Lederers originate). Unfortunately, I couldn't attend the German SIG because it coincided with the Avotaynu luncheon (sponsored by them for the corresponding editors).

An interesting evening was spent at the Holocaust Museum and I suspect the vast majority of attendees participated because it was very crowded.

The highlight of my visit was undoubtedly my visit to the National Archives. I was inspired by the lecture on Passport Applications to search for two relatives (a Lederer and a Schiff). Passport applications post-1925 are available from the State Department, but applications prior to 1925, though patchy (i.e. incomplete) are located in the National Archives (on Pennsylvania Avenue). The available applications are indexed alphabetically on microfilm.

At one time I was the sole Canadian attendee at the annual conventions, and once Gary Mokotoff told me I was among a half dozen or so participants who had been present at the most conventions. Since the early 1990’s more and more Canadians from across the country have attended and this time there were an impressive 44 (overall approximately 1,100) attendees. Hopefully this figure will soar at next year's meeting in Jerusalem!

Dr. Lederer is a Past President of the JGS of Canada (Toronto).

Three past presidents of the JGS of Canada (Toronto) at the Washington Conference. From left: Dr. Rolf Lederer, Gert Rogers and Henry Wellisch.
Here is a personal overview of the conference in which I will share some observations about the events and lectures I attended and comment about some presentations I missed due to scheduling conflicts - there was so much going on, it was impossible to be everywhere at the same time!

There were about 1,200 genealogists, from 17 countries with more than 150 lectures to choose from. I think the best part is the realization that hits me at every conference – that we, the JGS of Montreal, are part of an amazing international genealogical community. It’s something we know, but it is really felt and driven home at conferences.

The conference was a whirlwind of learning, networking, renewing friendships and forming new ones.

The days were packed with lectures, Breakfasts with the Experts, Special Interest Groups, Birds of a Feather, smaller meetings bringing together those researching a particular shtetl, and various informal events. There were exhibitions and a resource room with translators for many languages. The resource room had the JGS of Montreal’s Drouin project surname list and we received many research requests and orders for copies of records.

There were about forty computers with access to the Internet and previously unavailable databases, and a vendors room, selling genealogical products, books and Judaica.

A Holocaust Museum representative showed pre-World War II photographs of shtetls. Each person could then request digitized photos be sent to an email address.

The exhibition of historic Jewish Washington, featuring a number of well-documented photographs occupied an entire meeting room on the mezzanine and was well worth a visit.

In addition to attending lectures & events, checking the notice board for people I wanted to meet and others wanting to find me, I had the pleasure of meeting with my Washington-area cousins.

It seems that every conference I attend, I am able to connect to relatives living in the area...another bonus.

Highlights:

Claire Prechtel-Kluskens, of the National Archives and Records Administration, in Washington, DC spoke on “Passport Applications in the National Archives,” This was an excellent, meaty lecture.

Romania Special Interest Group...or ROM-SIG Meeting. Rosanne Leeson, aided by Paula Zieselman, chaired the meeting. The room was packed. Rosanne led off with some breaking news: ROM-SIG has decided to combine efforts with B’nai Brith International and the Director of their Romanian Jewish Heritage Project to preserve the Jewish heritage in Romania and to try to convince the Romanian authorities to open their Archives to genealogists. Stefan Maier gave us an overview of the Romania Jewish Heritage project. Finally, Professor Ladislau Gyemant offered full access to all of the files and records of the Institute for Jewish History at the University of Cluj, of which he is the Director, and announced other helpful measures that he was proposing. He received a standing ovation from the audience.

The Lodz Area Research Group meeting was moderated by Roni Leibowitz, the Belchatow shtetl coordinator, and a member of the Board of JRI-Poland.

Stephen Morse, innovator of the Morse One-Step Ellis Island Database search system, spoke on “Playing Hide & Seek in the 1930 Census.” It was an excellent lecture delivered with his delightful sense of humour.

LitvakSIG Meeting – This was a problem-solving session, with Harold Margol, Judy Baston, and Davida Noyek Handler; with such experts, this had to be an informative and helpful session and it was.

“JewishGen - a New Era!” presented by Susan King, Managing Director of JewishGen, with Michael Tobias & Warren Blatt: among the announcements and surely the most spectacular, was the unveiling of JOBWR, the JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry database, a compilation of burial records, gravestone photographs and information about the individual cemeteries. The database features 643 cemeteries, 314,778 burial records and 11,461 gravestone photographs from cemeteries in 25 countries. In the coming year, these numbers will grow by at least 50%.

LitvakSIG and Lithuanian Research, Davida Noyek Handler lectured.

John Philip Colletta teaches at the National Archives, Smithsonian Institution and local universities and is the author of several recognized genealogy textbooks. His lecture, “U.S. Passenger Arrival Records – Beyond the Basics” was very informative and entertaining.

I met with Dr. Jeffrey Malka, winner of an award for his recent book, “Sephardic Genealogy & its Resources”, the first to appear on this subject in English. Dr. Malka will be the JGS of Montreal’s speaker this coming November. It will be our society’s first lecture on Sephardic genealogy.

I attended a panel discussion on “Travel to your ancestral shtetl” moderated by Judy Baston, who has traveled to Poland, Lithuania and northern Belarus. Speakers were Stanley Diamond, who has visited Poland every year since 1995, Ruth Gavis, member of JGS of Greater Washington, who has served on the Board of Advisors of ROM-SIG, and who has traveled to Bukovina, and Howard Margol, immediate past-president of IAJGS who travels regularly to Lithuania and Latvia. For anyone planning such a trip, reading the syllabus notes and listening to the discussion on tape is highly recommended.

Linda Cauthen Klein, Director of the Red Cross Holocaust and War Victims Tracing Center since 1994 delivered a lecture on “Holocaust Tracing, Family Searches, and Wartime Documentation Through the Red Cross.”

Bruce Reisch, who spoke to us in Montreal last May, is the webmaster of the Radauti, Sadagura and Czernowitz websites,
and the moderator of the Czernowitz-Sadagura mailing list. Bruce arranged a lunch for those of us with an interest in these areas. Twenty-one of the 110 List Subscribers were there, including Alti Rodal of Ottawa (who spoke to us in June about the Czernowitz Jewish Cemetery photographing and indexing project), George Bolotenko and Lawrence Tapper of the National Archives of Canada, Hymie Reinstein, President of JGS of Ottawa, and Boris Feldblyum, a professional researcher, with experience in Russia and the Ukraine. With such an illustrious group, it was impossible not to be stimulated and informed!

Stuart Tower, writer, educator, speaker and world traveler, lectured on “TheWayfarers - The Story of the Fusgeyers of Romania: Those Who Went by Foot.” It’s a subject that has always fascinated me and was well received by his audience.

Ladislau Gyemant, Deputy Dean of the Faculty of European Studies of the University in Cluj, Romania and a professional researcher lectured on “The Historical and Demographic Background of Jewish Family History Research in Romania”;

Belchatow “BOF” Meeting – a first for me, and an eye-opener. Moderated by Roni Leibowitz, the Belchatow Coordinator for JRI-Poland, this was a gathering of about a dozen researchers. Roni brought photocopies of documents that are important for this area’s research. Like all Birds of a Feather meetings, this was a wonderful opportunity for networking – informal, friendly and very informative.

Judith Caplan, Diane Freilich, Ellen Kowitt & Gladys Paulin gave a fantastic multi-media presentation on “The Family Newsletter as a Genealogical Tool”. While they use different formats for their family newsletters, each one is incredibly innovative. They shared information on formatting and budgeting as well as the adjustments they have had to make as technology has changed.

Joan Goldman Rosen, Vice-president for Programs of the JGS of Greater Philadelphia and the cataloguer for their library collection co-lectured with Donald Davis, Head Archivist of the Philadelphia Jewish Archives Center. Their presentation, “The Philadelphia Jewish Archives and Other Unique Genealogical Sources in Philadelphia”, was a multi-media, in-depth presentation and well worth attending.

The closing banquet on Thursday evening was a time of camaraderie and friendship shared over a delicious dinner. The guest speaker was Hadassah Lieberman, wife of Presidential candidate Joe Lieberman. The following awards were announced:

a. Outstanding Contribution to Stephen Morse, for his one-step web pages, which are well-known to most of us, the most spectacular being the Ellis Island Database and its subsidiaries;

b. Outstanding Project to the JGS of Montreal, for Quebec Vital Records Indexing; in the words of our member, Anne Joseph, “…this honour is in recognition of the extensive work done by Montreal members in order to produce a unique and valuable database of Jewish vital records in Quebec, culled from the Drouin Genealogical Institute microfilms…accepting the award for JGS-Montreal were Stanley Diamond, Ruth Diamond and Alan Greenberg. These three did, as we all know, the lion’s share of the work, the original idea for the project, coming from Stanley. In thanking the IAJGS for this recognition, Stanley praised the work of all the volunteers involved in various aspects of the project, highlighting the role played by his wife Ruth, as she struggled to decipher so many hard-to-read microfilms, as well as the indispensable technical expertise provided with such unfailing good humour and patience by Alan.”

c. Outstanding Publication to the JGS of Palm Beach County for their Beginner’s Guide;

d. Lifetime Achievement Award to Miriam Weiner.

As you can see, this conference, as they all are, was an opportunity for learning, for making new discoveries on many fronts, for constant networking, meeting old contacts and making new acquaintances and friends, and generally putting faces to email addresses and names. *

Merle Kastner is a member of the JGS on Montreal.

Some of the award winners at the Washington conference; from left to right: Stephen Morse, Stanley and Ruth Diamond, Miriam Weiner, Alan Greenberg, Sylvia Furshman Nusinov, Marvin Hamburg.

We Welcome This New Member to Our Society

Shelley Stillman
New Family Roots Classified Section in the Jewish Chronicle
Rosemary Wenzerul, Member of Council JGS of Great Britain

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain in conjunction with the Jewish Chronicle, printed in London but published internationally, has initiated a Family Roots Classified Section which appeared for the first time in the Friday 13 June edition. I received an answer to my advert the next day on the Vandermolen family - not bad eh!

This is an excellent opportunity for anyone researching their family history to reach an enormous number of people. Don't forget, the JC is read all over the world and most people, regardless of whether they are researching their family history will look at the classified section. You can't help but notice the JGSGB Family Roots section as it takes up two columns and is headed with the Society's contact details.

Please pass this information onto your local Family History Society, family, friends and any interested parties.

By supporting this JGSGB/JC initiative you will be supporting the free publicity for the Society and encouraging more people to trace their families. There will be a trial period of 6 months when the JC will assess the number of people using it and decide whether it is a viable proposition.

To advertise in the column, please contact the Jewish Chronicle Classified Department:
Telephone: 020 7415 1515 Fax: 020 7831 5188
E-mail: announcements@thejc.com

If you decide to place an advert, for personal security, if you can possibly avoid it, I would suggest that you DON'T include your full postal address in the actual advert.

Website for articles and books on Ashkenazi DNA and Y chromosome
Anne Mizrahi Hart, M.A.

http://booksreviewed.tripod.com/dna7/

Other articles on DNA also at: http://www.newswriting.net http://dnanovels.tripod.com/novels.html/

Canadian immigration and US immigration via Canada
Shawn Weil

Thank you to all who responded to my original query. Since I have received so many good suggestions, and found some good resources on the web, I thought that I would send the list some links with information about The National Archives of Canada:

Includes much information about Canadian immigration, broken down by date, port, and circumstance.
http://www.archives.ca/02/02020204_e.html

The Ships List also has a very informative page on the subject http://www.theshipslist.com/Research/canadarecords.htm

National Archives and Records Administration - article on the St. Albans lists which describes the information that you would find in the St. Albans border crossing lists.

Another informative page about the St. Albans - an FAQ - can be found here:
http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~holdenclan/albans.htm

What the NARA article does not make too clear is that the St. Albans lists are not a complete record of all border crossings into Canada. For example, my grandmother's record was actually found in M1480: Manifests of alien arrivals at Buffalo, Niagara Falls, and Rochester, New York, 1902-1954. I suspect that my FIBISH family is in record M1462. Alphabetical Index to Canadian Border Entries through Small Ports in Vermont, 1895-1924. Although they crossed through St. Albans in 1906 and 1907, they were not the big "St. Albans List" - M1461: Soundex Index to Canadian Border Entries through the St. Albans, Vermont, District, 1895-1924.

Because M1462 is not available through the family history centers, I will have to wait a while to find out if I am correct - I do not live near any of the NARA branches, and I do not believe that the NARA staff will look for immigration records for me; it is just too time consuming.

Some other films to try for Canadian emigration:

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It is with great sadness that we are announcing the sudden death of our member

HAROLD NISSENTHALL

His passing will leave a void which will be difficult to fill

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6 September 2003 Shem Tov
French Underground or Resistance
Eve Line Blum-Cherchevsky

There are several places in France where you can ask for information about the Resistance and the Deportation during WWII. Even if all their sites are not in English, you can write in English and they certainly will answer. Below are some of them:

Memorial de Caen (English version):
http://www.memorial.fr/indexgb.shtml
For further information: contact@memorial-caen.fr

Fondation pour la Memoire de la Deportation:
http://www.fmd.asso.fr/
For further information: contactfmd@fmd.asso.fr

Musee de la Resistance et de la Deportation:
For further information: elizabeth.pastwa@besancon.com

Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine
http://www.memorial-cdjc.org/
For further information: contact@memorial-cdjc.org

DIRP http://www.fndirp.asso.fr
For further information: fndirp@fndirp.asso.fr

Julian to Gregorian Calendar
Jacob D. Goldstein

The Gregorian calendar was first instituted by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 to replace the Julian calendar. The change became necessary, because the Julian calendar's simple formula that made all years the same length except that every fourth year was a leap year needed some adjustment to better fit the average length of the astronomical year.

The two calendars differ in that the year's that end in two zeros but are not multiples of 400 are leap years in the Julian Calendar but not in the Gregorian Calendar (e.g., the year 1700 was a leap year only according to the Julian calendar, but the year 2000 was a leap year according to both calendars).

In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII decreed that Oct. 5 would become Oct. 15 and that leap years would be reckoned according to the modified rule. (The change from Oct. 5 to Oct. 15 made the vernal equinox fall on March 21.) The decree was effective in the Papal States, but many European kingdoms and principalities (Spain, Italy, Portugal, France...) followed suit almost immediately.

As time went by, in those countries that did not adopt the Gregorian calendar, the gap increased by one day on Feb. 29 of the years 1700, 1800 and 1900.

Romania adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1924. Oct. 1 became Oct. 14. (See http://www.ortelius.de/kalender/greg_en.php for adoption dates in other places.) Records dated prior to that date in the 20th Century (beginning with Feb. 29, 1900) need to have 13 days added to them to yield the date in the Gregorian calendar. Records from the 19th Century (beginning with Feb. 29, 1800) need to have 12 days added to them, and so on.

Kindertransport
Alice Josephs, UK

Contact L S Montague of the Jewish Refugees Committee, part of World Jewish Relief, at:
The Forum
74/80 Camden Street
London NW1 0EG
U.K.
Tel +44 (0) 7691 1781
Fax +44 (0) 7691 1780
E-mail: WJR1@WJR.ORG.UK
http://www.tolife.info/main.asp

They hold the records of Kindertransport children arriving in England. You have to be persistent. I sent two emails and then finally rang up and convinced them I was genuine. They then sent me information which allowed me to trace an elderly cousin a few times removed and we are now happily in touch.

Also the following will no doubt help you:
The British Kindertransport Group at:
http://www.ajr.org.uk/kindertransport.htm
US Kindertransport Group at: http://www.kindertransport.org/

Simultaneous Search Engine of Property Owners Lists from the Holocaust Period
Moishe Steinberg

The Information Center for Holocaust Survivors in Israel offers persons seeking their names or those of family members on lists of Holocaust-era asset owners, the opportunity to simultaneously search the following lists that include the names of more than 200,000 people:
1. Insurance policy owners (ICHEIC)
2. Austrian property owners
3. Austrian policy owners
4. Austrian bank account holders
5. Dutch policy owners
6. Dutch bank accounts holders
7. Dutch Puttkammer List
8. British bank accounts holders
9. Polish bank accounts holders
10. Swedish bank accounts holders
11. JCT (Jewish Colonial Trust) stockholders
12. Keren Kayemet LeIsrael List

The website address is: http://www.claimsinfo.org/searchdb.asp
To find out at what stage reparation discussions are at for a particular country go to: http://www.claimsinfo.org/default.asp
JOWBR - Launched at 23rd International Conference on Jewish Genealogy
Susan E. King, Managing Director JewishGen Inc.

As part of the presentation last night at this important annual conference, JewishGen launched the JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry database (JOWBR), a compilation of burial records, photographs and information about the individual cemeteries. To help accumulate data, JewishGen initiated an "adopt a cemetery" program to encourage local genealogy societies, synagogue youth groups, Jewish federations, and other interested parties worldwide to index cemetery or landsmanshaft plot records for submission to the JOWBR project.

The JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry database is one of the largest and most sophisticated efforts undertaken by JewishGen to date. Jewish cemeteries throughout the world are threatened with vandalism and even extinction. It is vitally important to preserve information on existing Jewish cemeteries so future generations will have the benefit of this aspect of cultural heritage.

The database features 643 cemeteries, 314,778 burial records, and 11,461 tombstone photographs representing cemeteries in 25 countries. In the coming year, JewishGen intends to include information for an additional 242 cemeteries, 150,461 burial records and 22,400 tombstone images from 36 cemeteries in Eastern Europe.

We expect to see the database grow quickly as those researching their family history contribute information about the cemeteries of their ancestral towns and also through our partnerships with cemetery associations throughout the world to include the Jewish Cemetery Association of Massachusetts, the Johannesburg Jewish Helping Hand & Burial Society (Chevra Kadisha), and the Texas Jewish Historical Society have already provided thousands of records.

The database is now live and located at the following URL: http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/jowbr

Canadian Genealogy Centre hosts Canadian Naturalization database
Dinberg Donna

The Canadian Genealogy Centre, the Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal, and the Jewish Genealogical Society of Ottawa announce the release of a new database on the Canadian Genealogy Centre Web site. Of interest to a wide number of Canadians, this database contains the names of thousands of immigrants to Canada who became naturalised in the early 20th century.

This new genealogical resource was created by the Jewish Genealogical Societies of Ottawa and of Montreal. A partnership concluded with the Canadian Genealogy Centre allows the Societies to give the widest possible access to this resource through the Centre's Web site. This kind of partnership is an example of how the Canadian Genealogy Centre is working in co-operation with genealogical and other societies to develop new content online. Visit the Canadian Genealogy Centre Web site at: www.genealogy.gc.ca and use the genealogical research section.

For more information, please contact: Louisa Coates, Media Relations Library and Archives of Canada. Tel. (613) 992-9361 / cell: (613) 295-5516 lcoates@archives.ca

ADVERTISING RATES

SHEM TOV is now accepting display advertising for publication. Advertisers are requested to supply camera-ready art and payment by November 2003 for the Winter 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: JGS of Canada (Toronto), P.O. Box 446, Station A, Toronto, Ontario M2N 5T1.

MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF SHEM TOV

We are interested in relevant material for Shem Tov. If you have something to report, don’t hesitate to contact us at: shemtov@jgstoronto.ca

8 September 2003 Shem Tov
ACADEMIC GUIDE TO JEWISH HISTORY
Major Print & Internet Scholarly Resources

With contributions from a team of subject experts from eleven University and Research Libraries, the Academic Guide to Jewish History (AGJH) http://eir.library.utoronto.ca/jewishhistory/ is an international project to produce a high quality well-maintained subject portal for purposes of scholarly endeavour.

Jenny Mendelsohn of the University of Toronto Libraries has assembled a team of subject experts from eleven University and Research Libraries to continue the ongoing development of the guide and ensure that over time the AGJH would evolve to remain a current, vital resource that would be seen as an asset to researchers and students in the field of History. The chair of the Editorial Board is from U of T, together with Princeton and Yale Universities. Other subject experts are from libraries at The Jewish Theological Seminary, New York Public Library, Universities of Indiana, Maryland, Pittsburgh, Yeshiva U and YIVO.

Sections in the AGJH include subject guides to the Holocaust, Jewish Communities, Jewish Women’s History and a section on Israel and Zionism compiled by Barry Walfish, the Judaica expert from U of T Libraries.

The guide also lists important encyclopaedias and dictionaries, indexes and bibliographies, sources of full text reproductions of primary documents, major journals, libraries and museums with important collections and other useful information gateways.

This is an excerpt from an article in the University of Toronto Libraries Newsletter, Spring 2003.

An interesting new website: www.centropa.org

CENTROPA is the signature project of the Central Europe Center for Research and Documentation, a US-based non-profit corporation (Federal Tax ID 58-1970-134) with its headquarters in Vienna, Austria.

We are an international team of historians, filmmakers, web designers, journalists, educators, photographers and Jewish community activists. Our goal is to create a window into Jewish history, and current events, in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. By marrying together the newest technologies and serious research methods, we want to take Jewish history off the shelf, and bring it into your homes, classrooms, synagogues, libraries, book clubs and organizations. Whether you are Jewish or not, from North America, Europe or the Middle East, we are confident that you will find our site interesting and stimulating.

Our largest project is Witness to a Jewish Century, a searchable online library of Jewish family pictures, and the memories that go with them. Right now, more than forty Centropa interviewers are visiting elderly Jews living in Central and Eastern Europe, and asking them to share with us their precious family photographs, and their stories about the people in those photographs.

THE JGS OF CANADA (TORONTO) FAMILY FINDER

We are creating a Family Finder for the members of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto). Having information on the ancestral towns of our members should provide at least two major benefits:

1. Allow us to put members who are researching the same towns and countries in touch with each other.
2. Provide input to our planning for programs and workshops

We haven't yet determined exactly how this information will be made available to members. But before we can distribute it, we have to collect it. We would like to thank all the members who have already submitted their information (approximately 25% of our membership).

Those of you who have not sent in your information, please submit all your ancestral towns (and country) e.g.:

Ilza, Poland
Wierzbnik, Poland
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

your name
your e-mail address or phone number (if you don't have e-mail).

That is all we need. Please e-mail it to info@jgstoronto.ca.

If you do not have e-mail, please leave the information on our Society phone at 905-882-2259.
When vital (metrical) records are missing for the towns you are researching in Poland, other sources may give you at least some of the information you seek. Listed below are several examples of such sources, what they are likely to contain, and where they can be found.

**Books of Residents/Residents Lists (Ksiegi Ludnosci, Spis Mieszkancow).** These records, usually bound in huge volumes, are to be found in Polish regional state archives. If they have survived for the towns you are researching, you can get an enormous amount of information from them. Unlike a census, Books of Residents are ongoing registrations, spanning a number of years, recording the comings and goings of the permanent residents of a community. Some or all of the following information may be found in them for each household: name, sex, names of parents (including maiden name of mother), place and date of birth, marital status (single, married, widowed), social status (peasant, town dweller, nobility), religion, occupation, and previous residence.

Under certain circumstances, a name may have been crossed out at a later date. If so, the reason is given in a "Notes" column. For example, if a daughter had married and moved out, the date and place of her marriage and the name of her husband would be listed. If a person had died, the date and place of death would be shown. If the person had moved, the new city or address or house number might be noted. A man's military status may be given - in the army, in the reserves, etc. One cannot ask for much more!

From the mid-1800's until 1931, all communities in the Kingdom of Poland were required to maintain Books of Residents. In Krakow, they started in the late 1700's. Rather than being continually updated, books from Krakow contain data recorded every ten years or so, like a census; maiden names and names of parents were not included. [Books of Residents in Krakow sometimes include the Jewish section of Kazimierz and/or the suburb of Podgorze; sometimes books for these areas are separate.]

Until now, it has been difficult to find out whether books of Residents have been preserved for particular towns and what dates are covered by them. However, a new CD-ROM recently released by the Polish State Archives supplied this information (see below). It is hoped that this information will also be entered systematically into the Polish State Archives Web site, in the section called SEZAM.

**Registration Books (Ksiegi Meldunkowe/Ksiegi Rejestrzu) or Books for Population Mobility Control (Ksiegi Kontroli Ruchu Ludnosci):** These books replaced the *Ksiegi Ludnosci* beginning in 1932. They contain information similar to the Books of Residents except that they are organized by surnames rather than by address or house number and include all residents of a community, not just those who have their permanent legal residence there. These volumes are housed in regional state archives.

**Survivor Lists.** Located in the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw (Zydowski Instytut Historyczny - ZIH), these lists contain the names of thousands of survivors who were registered after the war all over Poland plus many lists of Polish Jews registered elsewhere, e.g., in DP camps or in Swedish rehabilitation centers. Name, birth date, names of parents, address before the war, and address when registered are noted. This information is not always complete or accurate.

**Ghetto Lists:**

a) **Lodz Ghetto:** A list of Lodz Ghetto inhabitants, originally kept by the Germans, can be found in the Polish State Archives in Lodz, the University of Warsaw Library, the headquarters of Former Lodz Residents in Tel Aviv, Yad Vashem, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the University of Toronto Robarts Library (call number DS135 P62L6424 1994X ROBA 1-5). The list shows name, birth date, place of residence, and all changes of place of residence. It also shows date of death if it occurred in the ghetto and sometimes date of deportation. By comparing addresses of people with the same last name, it may be possible to reconstruct family living units. Yad Vashem is planning to make this list available on its Web site.

b) **Other ghettos:** The Polish State Archives in Krakow have copies of applications for *Kennkarten* (wartime identity cards). Information about the inhabitants of ghettos in Bialystok, Lodz, Krakow, and Warsaw are located in the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. At this Institute, there are also cards documenting deaths of Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto.

**Records of Jewish Communities (Kahal or Gmina Zydowska).** Jewish community records for many towns are located in the Polish State Archives in Warsaw (Archiwum Głowne Akt Dawnych-AGAD) at ul. Dluga 7, in the collection called "CWW." The time frame for most of these records is mid to late nineteenth century.

Jewish communities had their own form of self-government within the Polish state. These *gmina* (community) records are mostly concerned with building and maintaining synagogues, assessing and collection contributions, and electing rabbis - sometimes with resolving disputes. For the genealogist, the records may be useful simply in placing someone in a given community at a given time. When there was an election for the rabbi, all the adult male synagogue members (female members, if widows) were usually listed with how they voted.

**Synagogue Records.** These 20th century records, found in the Jewish Historical Institute, are for a limited number of communities (see useful Reference #2 below). A list of members shows not only the names and how much they contributed to the synagogue each year but may also show the address where they lived. By looking at a series of addresses, one can often see who is related to whom. It does not give ages, however, and women
were often not mentioned.

**Notary Records.** These records have been deposited in the various regional state archives. Each notary kept his own books, so there may be many for a given community. These books contain prenuptial agreements, wills, distribution of property, summonses (e.g., for non payment of rent), documentation of loans, validation of matriculation, etc. - any kind of a situation in which one might need to have an official certification that something took place.

**Cemetery Records.** These exist for a very limited number of communities. Krakow, Lodz and Warsaw are known to have partial lists of people buried there, maintained by the present day Jewish community in each of these cities. There is also a book published in Lodz in 1938, *Stary Cmentarz Żydowski w Łodzi* (Old Jewish Cemetery in Lodz), that contains information about individuals buried there. A copy of this book can be found in YIVO in New York. The Jagiellonian University in Krakow has put out a book, published in 1995 in Krakow by the Judaica Foundation, on the Jewish cemetery in Pilica, documenting each grave and what is written on the tombstone.

**Księgi adresowe** (Address Books/Business Directories): *Księgi adresowe,* found in regional archives, are similar to city directories. Each volume may be somewhat different but in general contains 1) lists of individuals by profession and 2) lists of heads of household within the city, noting address and profession. Sections in newer volumes of *Księgi adresowe* may have telephone numbers, addresses of city offices, schools, institutions, and sanatoriums, as well as house owners, listed by street. What volumes are available and where they can be found is absolutely hit or miss. For example, the Krakow Archives contain i) Krakow, some volumes including the suburb of Podgorze [1892, 1905, 1908, 1909 (1908 & 1909 include Lwow), 1926, 1929-30, 1932, 1933-34]; ii) Lwow (1898, 1901, 1902); and iii) Warsaw (1937-38).

The 1929 *Księga Adresowa* (Business Directory) for all of Poland has been digitized and can be seen on JRI-Poland: http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/bizdir/start.html.

**Kalendarze** (Calendars). Bound in normal-size books and found in regional state archives, a *kalendarz* is a business directory that was published every year or so in cities like Lodz. Much like our Yellow Pages, they contained a list of businesses, organized by trade and also by location.

**Almanacs.** These are most likely to be found in libraries. An *Almanach Żydowski* edited by Herman Stachel, was published in Lwow in 1937, a Jewish *Who's Who* of Lwow. There are copies of it at the Biblioteka Narodowa (National Library) in Warsaw and at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. YIVO in New York has a photocopy. This book lists information about Jews living in and around Lwow who were prominent and active in literature, art, music, sports, business, finance, political and religious life, institutions of culture or charity, etc. There are short biographies, sometimes accompanied by photographs. How many such books exist for other communities is difficult to determine, but it is worth inquiring for the area you are researching.

**Identity Cards** (Zasiwiaiczenia o toszamosci) and **Passports** (Paszporty): Copies of applications for the issuance of identity cards and passports can be found in regional state archives and municipal archives from the period between the world wars.

**Physician Records,** found in Central Library of Physicians, Warsaw (see address below).

**Military Records,** found in Military Archives in Warsaw: The Military Archives in Vienna have records of those who served in the Austrian Army, and the Ministry of Defence in Great Britain has records of those who served with the British during World War II (see addresses below).

**Some Useful References**


2. Bussgang, Fay, "Archives of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw," *Avotaynu* 10, No. 1 (Spring 1994). List of main archival holdings, including names of communities for which there are records.


Fay and her husband Julian Bussgang presented this talk at the 22nd IJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in Toronto. They have made ten trips to Poland and have done extensive research on both their families. Their works include a translated collection of wartime accounts of child survivors still living in Poland: *The Last Eyewitnesses: Children of the Holocaust Speak* and the newsletter of the American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies which they edit.

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Congress on a previous trip and found information on my ancestral towns. But simply the experience of being in the Reading Room of the Library of Congress and doing research there was enough, had I found nothing. On this trip I did research in the Archives of the Holocaust Museum where I was able to discover a number of useful pieces of information for my family tree. The staff were extremely helpful and prepared for the added stress on their resources during the conference.

2. The syllabus was offered in CD-ROM format (saving many trees) and making the information easily accessible and searchable. It contains speaker bios, abstracts and the speaker handout material. In addition to the search engine it includes pictures, maps and sample documents, many in colour – and numerous hotlinks to web sites – all of which would be either too expensive or impossible in hardcopy.

3. While having the Cyber Classroom was not unique, in addition to many useful web sites and databases, it included the Names database of the US Holocaust Museum, never before released outside the museum. They also offered hands-on tutorials including one on “Using the Internet for Beginning Jewish Genealogy” and one by Stephen Morse “Creating Your Own One-Step Search Application”.

4. The Cyber Café was new – a bank of PCs which was centrally located and allowed you to check your e-mail. This satisfied the need to “be connected” even if you didn’t bring a laptop.

5. There was a great supply of translators who were available in both the conference resource room and in several reading rooms at the Library of Congress.

Each conference seems to add new innovations and improvements, and take advantage of the lessons learned at previous conferences.

The annual conference is also an opportunity for “announcements” and special presentations: Jewishgen announced two “all-country” databases (Poland and Romania) which let you enter a word and it will search all databases for those countries not just one database at a time. It also announced its new online Burial Registry (JOWBR) which lets you search cemetery and burial records (there is an inventory specifying which cemeteries are included in this initial launch). It also includes information about Jewish cemeteries throughout the world. If you haven’t yet found these sections on Jewishgen I encourage you to check them out.

All in all, it was a very good conference, providing the expected (speakers, resources etc.) and enhancing it with new ideas. I encourage any of you who have never attended an annual conference to consider it in the future. It’s a great combination of learning, researching and schmoozing.

To see photos of the 23rd IAJGS conference, go to the following web site www.cmscomm.com. CMS Communications has placed them online. (8 x 10 prints & jpeg’s are for sale).

Also you don’t have to miss out on any of the speakers - there are more than 100 audio taped lectures for sale through Repeat Performances at www.audiotapes.com.

Next Year the 24th IAJGS Conference will be in Jerusalem from July 11 to 16, a very special location for a convention of Jewish genealogists. It’s never too early to start thinking about it. They already have a website at www.ortra.com/jgen2004. And I know they are working very hard to make it a conference to remember. ♦

Carolynne Veffer is the current Vice President of the JGS of Canada (Toronto).

Canadians at the Washington conference

Please note: the pdf version of this issue has some more pictures from the Washington Conference