



שם טוב  
**SHEM TOV**

JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA (TORONTO)

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## Toronto's Tombstones An Old Cemetery Reveals Interesting History

The following article, by N. Shemen, has been translated from the Yiddish and edited by Ben Kayfetz, editor of *The Jewish Standard*, where it appeared on Oct. 1, 1959. It is reprinted here with the kind permission of *The Jewish Standard*.

**T**oronto's historic Jewish graveyard, the *beth olam* of the Holy Blossom Temple on Pape Avenue, purchased by Abraham Nordheimer from John Beverley Robinson in 1849, has about 200 tombstones lined up on each side of a centre path. Among the oldest stones is one of a child, Alexander (inscribed in Hebrew), a one-year-old son of Rachel Miller, who died in 1863.

The language of the stones reflects the various stages of acculturation of a community as mixed and divergent in its origins as was the Holy Blossom membership of the nineteenth century. Some inscriptions disdain the vernacular and proudly cling to Hebrew only. Others, equally purist, may be all in English, and a few all in German with appropriate quotations from Schiller's verses. The majority, however, are bilingual with varying amounts of both English and Hebrew.

The cemetery is a good source to study the geographic origin of Toronto's Jewish pioneers of the last century. In most headstones today it is not usual to identify the place of birth of the person buried. Many of the earlier settlers of Toronto and their families must have had some consciousness of the future historical interest of their burial place, as often - though by no means in all cases - the country and even village of birth is clearly shown. The largest numbers of birthplaces shown among the earlier settlers are from England, with the Midland centres of Birmingham, Hull and Sheffield figuring strongly. Germany is the second source, with such centres as Bernkastel, Sulzbach in Bavaria, Munstermaifeld, and Biblis in the Moselle. Two graves contain natives of Amsterdam, Bohemia and Hungary, those regions which in Jewish life are midway points between the Eastern and Western Jewish "ways of life" are represented by one "birthplace" each. The great mass of East European Jewry, the reservoir which was to supply the Americas with the bulk of their present Jewish communities, are represented by three natives of Austro-Galicia (from Cracow, Brody and Jaworow), and to balance out the remainder,

Vilna - the Jerusalem of Lithuania - is represented by one tombstone. Three stones mark the graves of natives of the United States (all from New York state) and two Torontonians by birth.

And now to take a look at the inscriptions of some of these stones to see the stories they tell.

The headstone of the wife of Edmund Scheuer, Toronto Jewry's first grand old man, placed by her husband in 1903, bears considerable Hebrew lettering. Forty years later, however, Scheuer's own monument was left entirely in English.

The epitaph on a Robinson grave in 1899 bears (in English) the words of the Psalmist: "Who will go unto the hill of the Lord and who will come into His holy place?"

Sigmund Samuel's Bavarian born mother - Kate Samuel - is called *ha -Isha* (the woman) *Gittel bat Reb Ya'akov*, and is described with classic simplicity as *Eym be-Yisrael* - a mother in Israel. A stone for the Hooper-Driscoll family, all of whom, incidentally, had names essentially of Anglo-Saxon origin or usage, nevertheless contains four lines of Hebrew quotation. The names are Elizabeth Catherine, wife of Edward Hooper, Amelia Driscoll and Priscilla Driscoll, with dates of death ranging between 1886 and 1898. There would seem to be a case of intermarriage or a family conversion here, one might assume. It would be interesting to know the story behind this - how this

(continued on page 4)

### In This Issue

- 1 Toronto's Tombstones
- 2 New Members
- 3 Upcoming Events
- 4 "About Emigration"
- 5 IAJGS Ethics for Jewish Genealogists
- 6 JEWISHGEN
- 8 Records of Hatred and Efficiency
- 9 Reviews
- 10 "Nu? What's New?"
- 11 Spotlight on Members and Friends
- 12 Yale Reisner to Speak in Toronto

***We Welcome These New  
Members to Our Society***

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Rhonda Ber	Viviane Ship
Adam Froehlich	Anita Singer
Murray Greening	Michele Skehill
Judy Kasman	Judi Wagman

***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**

**ADVERTISING RATES**

SHEM TOV is now accepting display advertising for publication. Advertisers are requested to supply camera-ready art and payment by May 2004 for the Summer 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.

	One Issue	Four Issues (one year)
Full Page	\$60	\$200
Half Page	\$30	\$100
Quarter Page	\$18	\$ 60
Eighth Page	\$10	\$ 32

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.

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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](http://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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## UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Doors open at 7:30, program begins at 8 p.m.

All members will receive further details either by email or by telephone.

### **Wednesday, April 28, 2004**

*Topic: Geographical Resources for Genealogists*  
*Speaker: Sandra Gornall, Special Collections, Genealogy & Maps Centre, Toronto Reference Library*

*Sandra will speak about the role of maps and gazetteers in establishing jurisdictions, solving the riddle of mystery place names, researching land records, and gaining insights into the daily lives of our ancestors. She will include a description of the extensive resources at the Toronto Reference Library*

### **Thursday, May 13, 2004**

*Topic: Raising Atlantis: Restoring Jewish Memory in Poland*  
*Speaker: Yale J. Reisner, Ronald S. Lauder Foundation Genealogy Project at the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland*  
*Fee for Non-Members: TBA*

*Yale will describe some of the many, sometimes surprising, ways in which Jewish memory is being sought out and, to some degree, restored in Poland today. He will speak of the work of the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation, as well as of a growing network of institutions, initiatives and individuals that are gradually discovering, protecting and restoring many Jewish elements to Poland's historical and cultural landscape. This recovery process is sure to benefit Jewish genealogists, but it is also having an impact on Poland's understanding of its past and its vision of its future as it enters the European Union on May 1, 2004.*

### **Sunday, May 30, 2004**

**Note: This program will start at 10:00 a.m. There will be a fee of \$10 per participant, which will be donated to the Ontario Jewish Archives**

*Walk In Old Jewish Toronto*

*Join us for a guided walking tour to discover the roots of the Toronto Jewish Community. Details TBA.*

### **Wednesday, June 30, 2004**

*Topics: Breakthroughs, and Annual Meeting*  
*Speakers: Members of the Society*

*For further information visit our website at [www.jgstoronto.ca](http://www.jgstoronto.ca) or watch the "What's New" column in the Canadian Jewish News.*

#### **Breakthroughs Wanted**

**If you are interested in presenting your research results at the June meeting, please contact [program@jgstoronto.ca](mailto:program@jgstoronto.ca)**

#### **SEARCH AD**

#### **WARSHAWSKY IN TORONTO**

I am looking for information on two daughters of Max (Markus) Tumpowsky, Rose and Lena, who immigrated to Canada around 1900 from the U.S. Rose Tumpowsky was born about 1873 in Neustadt, Poland and married Abe Warshawsky (Warshausky) August 1895 in Elmira, New York. Abe was born about 1872 in Russia and his parents were Hyman Warshawsky and Ida Hendlesman. In 1925 Rose and Abe resided at 753 Queen Street W., Toronto. Lena Tumpowsky was born about 1875. In 1925 she was known as Lena Cohen and resided at 51 Hemlock Street, Toronto. Anyone with information please contact:

Stuart Stahl  
2 Tudor City Place  
Apt 8A North  
New York, NY 10017  
USA  
[stahl@jaisaninc.com](mailto:stahl@jaisaninc.com)

family, ostensibly of Gentile origin, came to be buried in this Jewish graveyard.

The Danson stone placed in 1913 mentions with a certain pride of *yihus*, almost, the birthplace of the family's founder – *me-Ir Vilna* – “from the city of Vilna.”

The prominently placed stone of Solomon Jacobs, who served the congregation as rabbi for 19 important years (1901-1920) is all in English - except for the traditional Hebraic formula attached to a man of saintliness and learning, *zeher tzaddik livrakhah*. The stone of Alexander Lazarus, one of his predecessors in the pulpit, does not bear the title of rabbi.

The Nordheimer family, who established the cemetery, is, paradoxically enough, not represented in it. Abraham, a bachelor, died while on a trip in Germany and was buried there, his brother Samuel left the Jewish fold and married into the ruling Family Compact of upper crust Toronto society. It is noteworthy, however, that in all blue books and Who's Who etc., Samuel Nordheimer and his present-day Anglican descendants have always taken pains to refer to their Jewish origin.

Many names on the stones have some special significance in Toronto's Jewish history. Here is the grave of Etta Birkenthal, born in Albany, N.Y., who was the first Jewish woman to be assistant principal of a public school. Here is the stone of Lewis Samuel (Eliezer ben Menahem) born in Hull, Yorkshire, who was the man most directly responsible for the creation of the congregation and who died in 1887 at 59. His son, Sigmund, is hale and hearty today at 91.

Here is the gravestone - its inscription clearly readable - of Isaac Davis (Itzhak ben David), a native of Russia, the first East European Jew to settle in Toronto. Was his surname Davis an English approximation to his Hebrew patronymic - *ben David*? He came to Toronto in 1854 and lived to the age of 82, dying in 1888,

The Holy Blossom cemetery on Pape Avenue is not a large one and cannot be compared in antiquity with any of its European counterparts, but it does give an absorbing picture of the background, the attitudes and the horizons of those men and women who started Toronto's Jewish community. The inscriptions often give a clue to the character and the life of the person buried beneath the stone. The traditional phrases inscribed in Hebrew, “A man upright and just,” or “A woman of valour,” “Mother in Israel,” and the unchanging Hebrew patronymics indicate the frame of reference of the community's Weltanschauung. It reflects a community which had brought over its aggregate of Jewish values from the townships and cities of England and Western Europe, with admixtures of East European flavour from the Russian Pale and the Galician shtetl. The observer bent on supplementing these impressions would be well advised to undertake his own private visit in one of Toronto's very few historic spots of Jewish interest.

## Zur Auswanderung (“About Emigration”)

translated by Henry Wellisch

*In December 1883 the Viennese liberal Jewish weekly paper “Die Neuzeit” (The New Times) published a series of articles on emigration to North America. Most of the content deals with emigration to the US, but a portion focuses on Canada. Here is this portion, translated from the German.*

When emigration to America, as has been reported, has now reached huge dimensions, never seen before, it is no wonder that the Jewish population is contributing a substantial contingent. Even at the time of the Russian emigration, attention was directed at Canada, and several Jewish Russian families settled there. Let us now hear what is being reported about emigration to that country

The Marquis of Lorne gave a very interesting lecture about Canada on the evening of December 4 at the city hall of Birmingham. He described this country as an excellent emigration area for small farmers, day labourers, female servants and tradesmen. **Commercial employees, bookkeepers and governesses** should, however, be warned most urgently not to try their luck in Canada, since the supply in these types of profession by far exceeds the demand, and the expectation of obtaining a position is **extraordinarily small**.

For those who wish to settle, there is excellent land available near the railway at 1–2 pounds sterling per acre (50–100 marks per hectare). The necessary capital for settlement for single men is 1000 to 2000 marks, for heads of families 4000 to 5000 marks. The climate is very healthy, although there is a severe 4-5 month long winter; however, the cold is dry and less biting than in the coastal districts with their damp air. Moreover, in Canada there is such a surplus of fuel that nobody has to freeze.

Huge forests offer a nearly inexhaustible supply of firewood and lumber, accessible for everyone. Furthermore, there are the magnificent coal deposits that are located under a large part of the prairies, and the exploitation of which is being done only locally.

The spring, summer and autumn, which last together 6–7 months, promote the growth of an incomparably rich vegetation, and this, combined with the natural beauty of the country of which the Marquis gave a delightful description, makes Canada one of the most beautiful countries of the world, and this will make a second homeland for everyone.\*

**\*Although announcements by agencies are to be looked at with caution, we want to draw your attention to the Canadian Agency at 15 Watern in Liverpool, which recommends the International Government Railway of Canada as the best and shortest for passengers to Canada, Manitoba, the Canadian North West, and western and northeastern United States, since the ocean voyage is 500 miles shorter than via New York and the fare is cheaper than other railways. The other recommended steamship line for Canada (Allen Royal Mail Line) has its agency in Hamburg near Spiroh, at 7 Bahnhofstrasse.**

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## *IAJGS Ethics for Jewish Genealogists*

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Ethics statement approved by the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies' Board of Directors, November 2, 2002

### **Preamble**

All human endeavors are capable of corruption and it is therefore appropriate to institute mechanisms to safeguard against behavior that is inimical to the common good. It is felt that the IAJGS (International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies) should give the lead in setting standards of behavior as applied to the world of Jewish genealogy. It is at least arguable that the study of genealogy itself, if not an "ethical" activity as such, is a mitzvah in accordance with the Torah principle of teaching knowledge of the people, their tribes, and "remembering the days of old." This document is intended to set out guidelines for such standards. It is also offered as a code of "good practice" which may inform readers. Finally, it includes an updated version (in more modern English) of the late Rabbi Malcolm Stern's "Ten Commandments in Genealogy," which remain as relevant today as when they were penned years ago.

### **Code of Conduct:**

Information acquired should be factual and where doubt exists as to the accuracy of a purported pedigree, the questionability and limitations of the data should be expressed.

All original sources should be stated to allow other enquirers the opportunity of verification of the data. The examination of all documentation should be undertaken with sensitivity for the quality of the source used. Records in the public domain should be replaced, after examination and any annotation required, in the condition and order that they were found. They should never be retained or handled carelessly.

If data presented relies on work already previously undertaken, the credit for such work should be given to the originator, which also acts as a disclaimer in the event that it may encompass error(s).

Should there be financial implications of working in genealogy, the purveyor of services should state the likely costs involved to the client and should only charge the agreed quantum for the research undertaken.

If data is acquired that seems to contain the potential for harming the interests of other people, great caution should be applied to the treatment of any such data and wide consultation may be appropriate as to how such data is used. A confidential discussion with an ethical authority (e.g. a respected Rabbinic Beth Din) or reference to ethical principles already placed in the public domain (e.g. by a regulating body such as the British Association of Genealogists and Record Agents) may be helpful in such circumstances.

Regarding the "right to privacy" versus the "freedom of information" area of potential conflict:

- Data more than seventy-five years old should be regarded as sufficiently historical to be available, without restriction.
- More recent data should be evaluated in the light of sensitivities of the living versus the importance of disseminating information.
- Generally, a request from an individual that certain information about themselves or close relatives be kept private should be respected.
- If it is decided not to publish any particular piece of information, there should be a clear statement to that effect so that the reader is not misled by the omission.

### **Adaptation of the late Malcolm Stern's "Ten Commandments in Genealogy"**

- I wish only to obtain true knowledge about any family I am researching.
- Family traditions must be interpreted with caution and only used as clues.
- All information must be assessed and not given automatic credibility.
- Claims to exalt a family for increased status must be verified.
- Unverifiable data must be labeled as such (see commandment 1).
- All records must be handled with care and replaced for the next user.
- Attribution of sources is essential and permission obtained for use of other researchers' work.
- If verifying data involves costs to others these should be reimbursed.
- The sensitivities of living people must be respected and the memory of the deceased likewise, but for the latter it is permitted to record the objective facts about them.
- You should not claim expertise or become a genealogical teacher without appropriate training and accreditation. [In this context, "accreditation" should not imply holding a formal qualification, although such is an asset, but simply, as it says, sufficient training and experience to confer expertise.]

### **New - Jewish Genealogical Society of Hamilton and District**

The founding meeting of the JGS of Hamilton and District is to take place on April 27th, 2004, 7 p.m., at the Dundas Public Library. For further details, please contact Barry Spinner at [bspinner@sympatico.ca](mailto:bspinner@sympatico.ca), or call (905) 528-3776

## How to Locate Polish Records

Mark Halpern, JRI-Poland Order Processing Coordinator

For those people not familiar with the Jewish Records Indexing web site, here are a few hints to help you determine how to locate if records for your Polish town exist and how to find out if Poland has a project to index those records.

First step is to determine if vital records exist. Here, the best resource is Miriam Weiner's Routes to Roots Foundation web site at <http://www.rtrfoundation.org/>. Click on Archive Database and then Search Database and then search for your town. If records are to be found at the Polish State Archives the search results will identify where to find the records.

Now go to the JRI-Poland homepage at <http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/>. JRI-Poland is an independent organization and its web site and database are hosted by JewishGen. From the homepage, click on "Your Town" and use the alphabetical index to locate your town. This will identify if vital records for your town are part of a JRI-Poland indexing project. Shtetl CO-OP projects [ <http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/shtetl/status.htm> ] are the ones where researchers with a common interest in a town join forces to index available vital records contained in LDS (Mormon) microfilms. JRI-Poland / PSA Projects [ <http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/psa/psastat.htm> ] are the ones where JRI-Poland works directly with the Polish State Archives Branch to index vital records not previously indexed by the LDS Church. Please note that the vast majority of records indexed by JRI-Poland are vital records - birth, marriage and death records.

The Routes to Roots database includes an inventory of all Jewish records housed at the Polish State Archives and other Archives in Poland and four other East European countries. The Polish State Archives has an English language web site at <http://www.archiwa.gov.pl/index.eng.html>, which lists all the branches and other important information. Some of the Archive branches have English language information about their research capabilities and fees. The JRI-Poland Shopping Basket order system applies only to records indexed under a JRI-Poland / PSA Archive project (records not microfilmed by the LDS Church). Currently 19 Archives and branches are included in this system.

See <http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/psa/neworder.htm> for more information.

## US Holocaust Memorial Museum's Database

It is now possible to search for records in the US Holocaust Memorial Museum's database using a person's name. Although this improvement has not been officially launched, it is already accessible at: <http://www.ushmm.org/namesearch>

## The Central Zionist Archives

Sharon Visser-CZA

As promised I will give you the new e-mail address of the Search Bureau for Information about Immigrants (The Central Zionist Archives). From now [Sept. 2003] you can send your requests to Ruth and Tamara, they are now in charge of the Search Bureau (please note that at this moment it is very busy and we would like to ask you not to send any requests right now, in about a month it will be less hectic and we will be able to take care of your requests).

E-mail: [familyresearch@jazo.org.il](mailto:familyresearch@jazo.org.il)

[Editor's note: for more information on CZA, see the "Nu? What's New?" section.]

## Istanbul Marriage Records

Daniel Kazez

I am pleased to announce that the Chief Rabbinate's Office of Istanbul has finished microfilming Subject: Istanbul Marriage Records, covering the years 1886 to 2003. This is one of the most complete and easily accessible collections of genealogical records available in the Sephardic world. This project was arranged through the American Sephardi Federation in New York, where interested persons may view these seven reels of microfilm:

American Sephardi Federation  
15 West 16th Street  
New York, New York 10011 USA  
1-212-294-8350

## Records in New York

Jerome Seligsohn, volunteer archivist

Records of landsmanshaften kept by YIVO are listed at [www.jgsny.org](http://www.jgsny.org). If they are available they are given an RG number and may be examined at the library of the Center for Jewish History, 3rd floor, on west 16th St. in Manhattan. Defunct landsmanshaften which were organized under the rules of NY State must undergo a liquidation procedure and hand over their records to the NY State Dept. of Insurance. These records are transferred to YIVO where, of late, I organize the records for the YIVO library. Some records may be warehoused in our building awaiting volunteers and librarians who will prepare them for the library. A telephone call to YIVO Archives might be helpful.

## Database Update

1. JewishGen is pleased to announce two new major American-Jewish databases: The Boston HIAS arrival records, and the Bank Passage Order Records for the Port of Philadelphia.

### Boston HIAS Arrival Records:

Millions of immigrants to the US came through the ports of Philadelphia or Boston rather than New York, and many immediately left from the port of arrival to other cities and towns. The HIAS assisted Jewish immigrants at many ports of arrival. The records of the Boston HIAS are held by the American Jewish Historical Society. Among these records are 24,000 arrival cards for 1854-1956. The LDS Family History Library micro-filmed these cards in 2002. JewishGen's new Boston HIAS database is an index to these nine microfilm reels. The database indexes both immigrant passengers and the persons and places where the immigrants were headed. The database can be searched at:

<http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/USA/BostonHIAS.htm>

### Blitzstein Bank Passage Order Books, Port of Philadelphia:

In the port cities on the east coast of the U.S. in the late 19th and early 20th century, there were "ethnic" or "immigrant" banks -- commercial enterprises where recent immigrants could save money and arrange to purchase steamship tickets to bring their families to the U.S. Today, the record books of the Blitzstein Bank are housed at the Philadelphia Jewish Archives Center (PJAC). In addition to information about the immigrant, these records often contain the name and address of the person who paid for the tickets, port of entry (usually, but not always, the port of Philadelphia), and intended final destination (again, not necessarily Philadelphia). Through the collaboration of PJAC, the JGS of Greater Philadelphia and JewishGen, the Blitzstein Bank records have been indexed - approximately 18,000 cards with information on 30,912 passengers. The Order Books can be searched at: <http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/USA/PhilaBlitzstein.htm>.

2. Additional entries have been added to the JewishGen Yizkor Book Necrology Database, at <http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Yizkor>

3. Over 40,000 AGAD record indices have been added to the JRI-Poland database at: <http://www.jri-poland.org/jriplweb.htm>.

4. There is a new index of life-cycle events from the "Jewish Herald-Voice" newspaper of Houston, Texas, which can be found at: <http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/USA/HoustonHeraldVoice.htm>.

5. JewishGen has also updated several of its American-Jewish newspaper index databases: the Boston "Jewish Advocate"

weddings and obituaries databases, and the "Cleveland Jewish News" obituary database have each been updated with events through the end of year 2003. These updated databases can be found under <http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/#America>.

## Holocaust survivor records

Dan Kazez

The Czestochowa-Radomsko Area Research Group

Over the past year, I have told you of our efforts to type over 16 thousand Holocaust survivor records. We finished our typing and proofing in the fall of 2003, but never found a way of getting our records online and searchable! I am pleased to announce that an organization called Shoreshim has helped us to share these Holocaust records with researchers. In all, our typing included over 20 thousand surnames, which are listed here: <http://www.kazez.com/~dan/crarg/HoloSurn.html>

If you find any surnames of interest above, please search for complete details here:

<http://www.shoreshim.org/CRARG/CrSearchDb.asp>

Please note that this is a new and experimental system. I hope it works! And we very much thank [www.shoreshim.org](http://www.shoreshim.org) for their help!

## How to Subscribe to and Use City Directories

JGS Montreal

You can obtain some great help, by going into: <http://userdb.rootsweb.com/citydir/> - there is no charge for subscription and you can unsubscribe at any time.

Then, post a message on: [CITY-DIRECTORIES-L@rootsweb.com](mailto:CITY-DIRECTORIES-L@rootsweb.com) and ask for the help you need - put the name of the city in cap's, at the beginning of your subject line, and then outline the rest of the subject - such as: "NEW YORK CITY - GOLDBERG - 1960's lookup request"

Make your subject heading clear & concise, to get more responses. Put city, year(s) you want & surname. Many people won't open messages that don't state what people are looking for.

### Tip Tov

Remember to document all your sources.

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## Records of Hatred and Efficiency: Collecting German Archival Records

by Ralf Oberndörfer, manager of the Yad Vashem research project in Germany

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The Yad Vashem Archives are currently carrying out a new, large-scale project that much resembles a complex puzzle. Aimed at researching and reproducing records on anti-Jewish policy and anti-semitism from 1933-1945, the project is being conducted in close cooperation with Germany's Federal Archive (Bundesarchiv), the Archives of the Länder, and various other German archives housing Holocaust-era records.

Trying to find even minimal biographical details about Jewish victims, locate some of the more remote official documents outlining anti-Jewish policy, and piece together the various strains of information is no simple task. Very rarely does one archive or institution contain only files pertaining to the specific time period and topic matter being investigated. Thus skilled archivists - adept at locating and assembling the necessary information - are invaluable to the project's proper execution.

Two main archival collections evidencing anti-Jewish policy and anti-semitism are being reproduced within this framework: files from the office of the editor of *Der Stürmer* magazine and the *Vermögensverwertungsstelle* of the *Oberfinanzpräsident* Berlin-Brandenburg (declarations of property turned in by Jews to a branch of the Higher Tax Bureau of the Province of Brandenburg). Both sources will enable researchers to carefully scrutinize the appalling details of two of the cornerstones of German policy against the Jews: hatred and efficiency.

Owned and managed by Julius Streicher, who was hanged in his hometown of Nuremberg in 1946 on charges of crimes against humanity, *Der Stürmer* magazine had little journalistic integrity. Streicher's publication gave the vitriolic flavor to the work conducted by German bureaucrats who were proud of their indifference towards their Jewish victims. Characteristic displays of anti-semitism including the wild and senseless amalgam of stereotypes, false accusations, hate speeches, and endless series of "Jewish" caricatures were the staple of *Der Stürmer*.

When WW II began, the number of anti-Jewish items in the office of the editor's archive increased, as soldiers and Germans living in occupied countries submitted anti-Jewish propaganda to *Der Stürmer*. Photographs were mailed to the magazine depicting raided houses or desecrated synagogues with a note on the back: "We taught them!"

The *Der Stürmer* collection contains items such as: photographs of Polish *shetls* illustrating "Jewish types," newspaper clippings, posters, amateur "poetry," leaflets, caricatures, "scientific papers" on the Jewish world conspiracies, maps, postcards, etc.

Trying to reproduce the *Der Stürmer* files - currently held by the Municipal Archive of Nuremberg - proved problematic. This was due to the diversity of the materials and the large percentage of photographs contained in the collection. Ultimately the collection was scanned to CD-ROM, guaranteeing high-

resolution photographs and allowing researchers to jump back and forth between the vast array of materials. In most instances, the background details of the photographs remain unknown. The malignant intent behind the pictures, though, is extremely clear even when viewed on the computer screen more than half a century later.

The second archival collection is comprised of declarations of property Jews were required to submit to the Higher Tax Bureau of the Province of Brandenburg before leaving Berlin for emigration or for deportations to their deaths. Until recently the archival files were housed in the State Archive in Berlin; currently, they are contained at the Brandenburg State Archive in Potsdam. The folders in this record group relating to emigrants are blue; the vast majority of folders, though, are brown, submitted by Jews who were deported to their deaths.

The Higher Tax Bureau branch - *Vermögensverwertungsstelle* - began operating in 1941, shortly before the deportations of Jews started, despite the fact that little remained to steal from the Jews at that point; the privately conducted appropriation of Jewish property before Kristallnacht together with the state-sponsored confiscation of Jewish property after 1938 had already claimed the better part of Jewish goods and assets.

Still, the German authorities wanted precise details about what they could expect from the people they were about to murder. The government's scrupulous calculations and greed are clear from the lengthy eight-page form each Jew was forced to complete. The forms called for information on every conceivable item of value: from bank accounts to underwear, from works of art to kitchen equipment. Those who had children were required to complete a second form detailing their possessions, down to their last pair of socks and only blouse. Most of the forms' questions were returned unanswered, since many Jews in 1941 were already poverty-stricken. The forms were often completed when the Jews were already at one of the assembly points in Berlin awaiting deportation: "You can tell because they were filled out with a pencil. After completing the form the deportee had to give it back. These pencil scribbles are his last sign of life," explains Anja Metzienten, who has been working on the project from the start.

This collection of documents is not only moving - hinting at the tragic stories of many lives destroyed - but also invaluable, containing the last-known living addresses, dates, and places of birth of over 60,000 Jews. In an effort to preserve this unique collection - whose documents are literally falling apart - Yad Vashem, the State Archive of Berlin, and the Brandenburg State Archive in Potsdam are building a database containing the documents' most important information: names, addresses, birth dates, birthplaces, and information about Jewish shops and companies.

Presently after nine months of work on the project, Yad Vashem's database team has compiled data from almost 30,000 files, adding to those that have already been computer-

ized by Berlin archivists. Once the filming and archival filing are completed, 1.5 million pages will have been saved on more than 1,400 microfilms, providing future generations with a basis for research and learning.

*This article appeared in the Winter 2002 issue of Yad Vashem Quarterly Magazine and is reproduced with their consent.*

**Review: The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life Before and During the Holocaust**

Editor in Chief: Shmuel Spector.

Consulting Editor: Geoffrey Wigoder.

Foreword by Elie Wiesel. First published in the U.S.A. by New York University Press, 2001.

*Reviewed by Henry Wellisch*

Our library has recently acquired this magnificent three-volume encyclopedia, which is an abridgement of the multi-volume *Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities* published in Hebrew by Yad Vashem. This is a great resource if one is looking for information on Jewish communities in Central and Eastern Europe. A certain number of places in Holland, Belgium, France, Italy, Greece, Libya, and Tunisia are also included.

The book lists over 6500 place names, and in many cases contemporary and historic photographs of personalities and of views of towns and buildings are included. A typical entry describes the history of the Jewish community in that place, from its origins to the end of World War II. In the case of larger communities such as Lodz or Budapest the entries are quite detailed and are several pages long.

Here is a typical profile of a smaller community:

**OLESZYCE** (Yiddish. Halshitz) Lwow district, Poland, today Ukraine.

Jews are recorded from the founding of the town in 1576, coming under the protection of its proprietor. Until the mid- 18th century the Jews earned their livelihood as leaseholders under the *arend*a system, as innkeepers, and as traders in wines and spices, but afterwards they engaged mainly in petty trade and the crafts. Their number reached 1,514 (total population 2,917) in 1900 but declined after WW I. The community was always strongly hasidic under the influence of the Belz dynasty, which retarded Zionist activity until after WW I. The Russian occupation of 1914-15 was for the Jews a time of plunder and rape. The German occupation of the town in June 1941 brought with it severe anti-Jewish measures: fines, confiscations and forced labor. In November the Jews were expelled, mostly to the Lobaczow ghetto. No more than 50 survived the war.

Volume three includes the following:

Extensive series of photographs of events during the Holocaust period

17 useful maps

Glossary

Chronological table surveying the history of the Jews in Europe

Selected bibliography (The entry for Poland alone lists 53 items)

Index of communities, including alternate spellings and pronunciations

Index of personalities

**Review: Family Tree Guide Book to Europe**

The Editors of Family Tree Magazine. Betterway Publications, November 2003. 288 pages.

I don't see many tourist guide books aimed at genealogists. However, this week I had a chance to read the "Family Tree Guide Book to Europe" published by Betterway Books. The book is a "group effort" with many authors, including some of the best writers in the genealogy field: Maureen Taylor, Sharon Carmack, Paul Milner, Linda Jonas, Rhonda McClure, Ernest Thode, Dwight Radford, S. Chris Anderson, Kyle Betit, David Fryxell, Melanie Rigney, Allison Stacy, Susan Jackson, Dena Eben, and the editors of Family Tree Magazine.

Of course, guide books to Europe and the British Isles can be found in any bookstore. This one is different in that it focuses on the in-country resources available for genealogy research. For instance, the chapter on Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, written by Rhonda McClure, starts with a few pages of geography. It then gives a very brief history of the region, after which it quickly switches to records available. McClure describes how to prepare for a research trip before leaving home, primarily by using online resources. She goes on to describe civil registration records available, church records, census records, notarial records, and the major repositories in each country. This is followed by three pages of resources available in the region: organizations, archives, books, periodicals, and Web sites.

The other chapters are loosely similar to the chapter on Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, but with some obvious differences, depending upon the history and resources available for each. The book's chapters include: Ireland, England and Wales, Scotland, Scandinavia, France, Benelux (Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands), Germanic Region (Austria, Germany, Lichtenstein and Switzerland), Poland, Eastern Europe (including Albania, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Carpathian Russia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Romania, Slovenia and Croatia), Russia and the Baltic region, Italy, Greece and the Mediterranean (Cyprus and Malta), Spain and Portugal and European Jewish Ancestors

If you are contemplating a trip back to "the old country," this book can help make your trip much more productive! The information contained will help you walk in the footsteps of your ancestors. I would suggest that you not wait until the last minute to purchase this publication. The information presented will help you prepare for the trip months in advance, thereby maximizing your experience in-country.

The "Family Tree Guide Book to Europe" sells for US \$22.99 plus postage. You can order it safely and securely from the publisher's secure Web site at: <http://www.familytreemagazine.com/store/display.asp?id=70625>

*This review is from Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter and is copyright 2003 by Richard W. Eastman. It is re-published here with the permission of the author. Information about the newsletter is available at <http://www.eogn.com>*

# "Nu? What's New?"

News about Jewish Genealogy from Avotaynu  
Gary Mokotoff, Editor

## Hamburg Database Now Includes Nearly 2 Million Emigrants

The Hamburg Emigrant Lists on the Internet were updated through 1905 this past week. They include nearly 2 million entries from 1890-1905. The site is located at [http://www.hamburg.de/fhh/behoerden/staatsarchiv/link\\_to\\_your\\_roots/english/index.htm](http://www.hamburg.de/fhh/behoerden/staatsarchiv/link_to_your_roots/english/index.htm). The index provides basic information about the emigrant: name, country/state of origin, approximate age, and destination. The search engine does not allow soundex searches. Use the wildcard feature which is explained on the search page to find name variants. I found at least six variants of Tartaski searching for any person whose name started with "Tart" or "Tarat." For a fee, you can receive an abstract of the entire entry from the ship's manifest. The cost for an abstract is \$20 for 1-3 persons, \$30 for 4-10 persons, \$40 for 11-20 persons, \$50 for 21-30 persons. Because it is an abstract rather than the actual manifest, each member of a family of three on a specific page would have his/her own abstract. Therefore, they would count as three persons if you requested information about all three. Funds are used to support the Internet site.

Avoteynu sells a picture-filled book about the Hamburg emigration; it can be a valuable addition to your genealogical book collection. Portions of the book can be found at [http://www.hamburg.de/fhh/behoerden/senatskanzlei/internetausstellungen/emigration/englisch/emigration\\_index.htm](http://www.hamburg.de/fhh/behoerden/senatskanzlei/internetausstellungen/emigration/englisch/emigration_index.htm). The book can be ordered at: <http://www.avotaynu.com/books/hamburg.htm>.

## Central Zionist Archives and Search Bureau for Missing Relatives

In the September 14, 2003, issue of "Nu? What's New?" (Vol. 4, No. 16), I reported the Central Zionist Archives has taken over the function of the Search Bureau for Missing Relatives of the Jewish Agency. Apparently they have taken over only part of the function. The new agency, called Search Bureau for Information about Immigrants, will merely determine whether the person ever immigrated to Israel. They have informed me that they are unable to trace the current whereabouts of a person. They suggested (1) use the online Israel phone book at <http://www.144.bezek.com> or (2) contact the Israeli Interior Ministry <http://www.tofes.gov.il/tfasim/homepage.aspx> (in Hebrew only) where there is an online form, or (3) contact the Israeli radio program "Search for Missing Family Members" whose e-mail address is <[bet@iba.org](mailto:bet@iba.org)>. Previously the Search Bureau for Missing Relatives, when it was run by Batya Unterschatz, would make an effort to locate the individuals or their descendants.

## Yad Vashem Yizkor Book List Now Online

One of the fringe benefits of the annual International Seminar on Jewish Genealogy is that the local society improves the quality of local archives and libraries to benefit the people attending the conference. These benefits are usually permanent. A consequence of having the conference in Jerusalem this year is that the Israel Genealogical Society has posted to the Internet an index to the yizkor book holdings at Yad Vashem. It can be found at the society's web site: <http://www.isragen.org.il/ROS/ARCHIVES/AppendixA.html> (the URL is case sensitive). Yizkor books are memorial books to the towns where Jews lived before the Holocaust. The Yad Vashem collection, considered the largest in the world, represents 4,540 towns in 1,233 books. Search the list to see if a yizkor book has been published for your ancestral towns. If so, copies may be available in your local area.

## More News About the Jerusalem Conference

You can get an overall view of the amenities at the conference hotel, the Renaissance Jerusalem Hotel, at: <http://marriott.com/property/propertyPage.mi?marshaCode=JRSRN>

I recall when I attended the last Jerusalem conference in 1994, the city is very "walkable." Distances to some Jerusalem landmarks (for miles, multiply by 6 and drop the last digit):

Yad Vashem (Holocaust Memorial) & Museum (3.0 km)  
Center of Town - Ben Yehuda Mall (3.0 km)  
Old City of Jerusalem -Western Wall (5.0 km)  
Knesset (Israeli Parliament)/Supreme Court of Justice (1.0 km)  
Biblical Zoo & Gardens (5.0 km)  
Canyon Shopping Mall (4.0 km)  
Israel & Bible Lands Museum (1.0 km)  
Jerusalem International Convention Center (1.0 km)  
Mount Herzl Museum and Gardens (3.0 km)

The conference will be held from July 4-9. Additional information can be found at <http://www.ortra.com/jgen2004>. You can keep abreast of the latest news about the conference by subscribing to the conference newsletter and discussion group. At the home page, click the link at the left that says "Jerusalem2004 Discussion Group."

## Ancestry.com Completes Pre-Ellis Island Index

Ancestry's every-name index to passengers arriving in the Port of New York prior to the creation of Ellis Island is now complete. It covers the years 1850-1891. The fee-for-service index is at <http://content.ancestry.com/iexec?htx=List&dbid=7488&r=0>

## “Nu? What’s New?”

### News about Jewish Genealogy from Avotaynu

#### **Pictures of Active Synagogues in the Former Soviet Union Now Online**

A number of months ago, Avotaynu was asked to help publish a book about Jewish synagogues that are still active in the former Soviet Union. The content was not sufficiently related to genealogy; therefore we turned it down. Much of the efforts of the author, Michael Beizer, is now online at <http://www.jafi.org.il/education/worldwide/synagogues/>. It is titled “Our Legacy: The CIS Synagogues, Past and Present.” There are numerous photographs of these synagogues. Cities represented in the photographs include Astrakhan, Chelyabinsk, Dnepropetrovsk, Elisavetgrad, Gomel, Irkutsk, Kamenets-Podolsk, Kazan, Kerch, Kharkov, Kherson, Kiev, Kirovograd, Kishinev, Khmelnytsky, Kostroma, Krasnoyarsk, Kuba, Lvov, Lutsk, Minsk, Mogilev, Moscow, Nalchik, Nikolaev, Nizhni Novgorod, Odessa, Omsk, Oni, Penza, Perm, Rovno, Rybinsk, Samara, St. Petersburg, Smolensk, Tbilisi, Tyumen, Ufa, Vinitsa, Vitebsk, Voronezh and Yaroslavl.

The site is sponsored by the Jewish Agency for Israel and also includes an interesting link site about Jews of the Diaspora at <http://www.jafi.org.il/education/diaspora/>. It contains links to Internet sites that describe the Jewish presence, past and present, in various countries and cities throughout the world.

#### **French Deportations Online**

I have not seen any posting to a Jewish genealogical discussion group about this online database, but while researching an unusual surname (Lederfarb), I stumbled on an Internet site in France that lists persons deported from France during the Holocaust. It is located at <http://www.mortsdanslescamps.com>. The database can be searched in three ways noted to the left of the screen: For those born in France, by birthplace in France; for those born elsewhere in the world, by country; and alphabetically. The site is in French only. The list does not appear to include all names in the book “Memorial to the Jews Deported from France,” by Serge Klarsfeld.

#### **Yiddish Book Center Yizkor Book Reprints to be Available Soon**

The Yiddish Book Center project to reprint 650 yizkor books is nearing completion. They expect the books to be available for sale in March. Prices have not been fixed but it is estimated it will be \$90.00 for Book Center members and \$120.00 for non-members. This is a strange structure since tax-deductible membership is only \$36 per year. YBC also stated they may sell duplicate originals but the prices have not been determined. The Center's web site is at: <http://www.nationalyiddishbookcenter.org>.

#### **Spotlight on Members and Friends**

*Are you interested in volunteering on a genealogy project? Would you like to get some ideas for a project of your own? In this column we will profile some members and friends of our Society, who, in addition to researching their own family trees, are undertaking projects of interest to the general community.*

As **Gert Rogers** explains, “I love being a part of this.” “A part” is a modest understatement from this Past President of the Society, Co-Organizer of the 2002 IAJGS conference in Toronto, Treasurer, Past Chair of the Roselawn Cemetery Project, and contributor to countless other projects. But the statement nicely expresses the passion one feels in helping to make accessible the wealth of Jewish genealogical data.

One of Gert’s most recent contributions is as a **Shtetl CO-OP Coordinator** for the **Jewish Records Indexing - Poland** project (JRI). The aim of this project is the creation of an on-line database of indices to Jewish records of Poland, which will greatly facilitate the searching of these indices.

Gert undertook to collect the index records relating to Mordy, a Polish town in which she is interested. Together with 17 volunteers, she has created a computerized index to some 2000 records from this town, which was recently put on-line at the JRI web site. The project took 2 years. Thanks to Stan Zeidenberg of the Copy Centre, copies of the indices were obtained from the films kept at the Mormon library in Salt Lake City. The information from these copies was then entered into a computer database, and the details proofread. Gert states emphatically. “This project could not have been completed without the work of the volunteers.”

If you would like information on volunteering as a CO-OP Coordinator, check the JRI web site at <http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/jri-plin.htm>

If you are interested in volunteering on an existing JRI project, please note that our Society now has several people working as Coordinators for various towns, including **Henry Graupner**, **David Trost**, **Carolynne Veffner**, and **Stan Zeidenberg**. To volunteer on these, or any other, projects within our Society, please contact [president@jgstoronto.ca](mailto:president@jgstoronto.ca).

If you have a volunteer experience you’d like to share, please contact [shemtov@jgstoronto.ca](mailto:shemtov@jgstoronto.ca).

## *Yale Reisner of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland to Speak in Toronto*

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto) and the Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada are pleased to present a talk by Yale Reisner. This talk will take place on Thursday, May 13, 2004, at the Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue, 470 Glencairn Avenue, Toronto, at 8:00 pm (doors open at 7:30 pm).

Mr. Reisner will speak about the activities of the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation Genealogy Project at the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland.

The JHIP was established in Warsaw in 1947 as a successor to the monumental work of the Central Jewish Historical Commission that had been set up as early as 1944 in areas of Poland already taken by Soviet forces. JHIP is multi-functional, including a historical research institute, a museum, a library and reading room, archives on the history of Polish Jewry from 1700 to the present day and a number of specialized departments (Historical Sites, Righteous of the Nations, Holocaust Claims, etc.). Among its holdings are the communal archives of Cracow and Breslau, the underground archives of the Warsaw ghetto, a collection of some 7000 Holocaust testimonies and over 300 diaries, as well as unique manuscript collections.

The Ronald S. Lauder Foundation, founded in 1987, was established by Ambassador Lauder to support and develop Jewish educational opportunities in Central and Eastern Europe. For communities whose sources of information on Jews and Judaism over several generations were the Nazis, the Communists or the Church, the Foundation's goal is to provide authentic Jewish information for those who want it. Today, the Foundation has a network of 27 Jewish schools and kindergartens in sixteen countries from Germany to Russia, Estonia to Bulgaria, as well as roughly fifty other projects, including summer and winter camps, publications, youth and adult education programs, historical preservation projects and two genealogy research projects in Poland and Germany.

Under the auspices of the Foundation, Mr. Reisner founded The Ronald S. Lauder Foundation Genealogy Project at JHIP in 1994, with the aim of uncovering the history of specific families and individuals within the broader context of Polish Jewry's 800-year history.

Since the founding of the Project, Mr. Reisner and his colleague, Anna Przybyszewska-Drozd, have assisted individuals and families in uncovering their family histories. In view of the common misapprehension that "there are no Jews in Poland," the ongoing rediscovery of the living Jewish community of Poland is one of the most dramatic manifestations of "raising Atlantis" - restoring the memory of what was once the world's largest Jewish community. Like its mythical predecessor, this important civilization was swept away in the cataclysm of the Holocaust, and these losses are still acutely felt in Poland.

Each week, the Lauder Genealogy Project meets "new" Jews, i.e. individuals who have decided to explore their Jewish roots, often for the first time in generations. These are often the so-called "Hidden Children," those who, as infants or children during the Holocaust, were placed for their safety in convents, orphanages or Catholic families. While some of these children

returned to the Jewish community after the war, many others never did, either by choice or out of ignorance of their true backgrounds. With the passage of time, these "children" now have children and grandchildren of their own, some of whom are gradually taking an interest in their Jewish roots.

While the "Children of the Holocaust Association" in Poland has about 800 dues-paying members, the number of people who fit this description is actually far greater. Their stories of discovery and reunion are truly remarkable.

*Yale Reisner holds degrees in East Central European Studies from Columbia College and the Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy and has studied at Hebrew University, the Jewish Theological Seminary, Villanova University, the YIVO Institute and the U.S. National Archives. He has worked in libraries and archives in the US, Russia, Lithuania and Poland; helped organize the first European Judaica Archives Conference in Potsdam in 1999, and will take part in a panel on European Jewish archives at the "Future of Jewish Heritage in Europe" conference in Prague in April 2004. He has lectured and published articles in the USA, Canada, France and Poland.*

### **REMINDER: 2004 IAJGS CONFERENCE**

The 24th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy will be held in Jerusalem, July 4-9, 2004, at the Renaissance Jerusalem Hotel. Check the conference web site at <http://www.ortra.com/jgen2004/>

The Conference Organizing Committee notes:

We plan to organize visits to a number of Israeli archival repositories and sites of genealogical interest, including Yad Vashem, the Jewish National and University Library, the Central Zionist Archives, the 3,000 year old Cemetery on Mount of Olives, and more. Leading experts will present lectures on the cutting edge of Jewish genealogy. Plenary and parallel sessions will cover all relevant areas, including -but not limited to- genealogy and molecular genetics, computer software packages, mathematical methods and problems, family research in schools and educational programs, Aliya-related issues, and much more. The official language of the conference will be English, with partial simultaneous translation in Hebrew. Researchers will be able to enjoy special 'Breakfast with the Experts' sessions and small group tutorials designed to facilitate a productive interchange of research tips on a variety of topics.

[See also details about the Renaissance Hotel and visiting Jerusalem in the "Nu? What's New?" column]

### **AND FOR THOSE WHO REALLY LIKE TO PLAN AHEAD....**

The web site of the JGS of New York announces that the 2006 International Conference on Jewish genealogy will take place in New York City in the summer of that year.