In this article I would like to present a genealogy of the Mayer family that is based upon information found in a variety of useful genealogical source materials. There are two useful books written about the Mayer family. The first is by Louis B. Mayer’s daughter, Irene Mayer Selznick, entitled An Affectionate View (New York: Knopf Random House, 1983). The second is by Charles Higham, entitled Merchant of Dreams: Louis B. Mayer and the Secret Hollywood (New York: Random House, 1993). Other useful sources are the 1901 Census of St. John, New Brunswick; St. John, New Brunswick City Directories; the online New Brunswick Vital Statistics Index; the online United States Social Security Death Benefit Index; the California Death Index; the Find-A-Grave database; and the Historical New York Times database, that is available at McMaster University Library and the University of Guelph Library.

The original family surname in Russia was Meir. It became Meyers when the family immigrated to England, then the United States, and finally St. John, New Brunswick. In St. John it evolved into Mayer, and that was the name used when family members left Canada for the United States.

Jacob Mayer was born in 1854 in Russia. He married Sarah Wexler in 1874 in Russia. The exact place of origin of the family is unclear. Some sources say Minsk, Byelorussia while others say Dymer/Dumier in the Ukraine. Some sources say Louis B. Mayer was born on July 4, 1885 in Minsk, but this was apparently a date he chose for patriotism and a place that apparently sounded better than a small town in the Ukraine. Charles Higham in his book says that the Ukraine was his actual birthplace.


Jacob Mayer and his family immigrated from Russia to England around 1887-1892. He joined the family in New York or St. John. The family eventually went to St. John somewhere between 1887-1892. Charles Higham in his book, however, says they arrived in St. John somewhere between 1887-1892, making frequent trips back to New York. Jacob Mayer became a Canadian citizen on June 26, 1895 in Fredericton.

The year of immigration for the Mayer family in the 1901 Census of St. John is listed as 1890. This listing is questionable as sons Rubin and Jeremiah were born in the United States in 1888 and 1891 respectively. The family is also not listed in the 1891 Census of St. John. It is possible, however, that the family was out of the country when their two sons were born and when the 1891 census was conducted.

Jacob ran a scrap metal business in St. John and stayed in the city until 1918, when he went to live in Los Angeles, where he died on April 18, 1930. He is buried in Beth Israel Cemetery in Los Angeles. Sarah Mayer died on October 4, 1913 in St. John and is buried in Beth Israel Cemetery in St. John.

The Mayers’ eldest daughter Yetta did not stay in St. John. She went to New York where she met and married Abraham Cont’d on Page 3
UPCOMING EVENTS

Programs organized by the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto)

Unless otherwise noted, programs take place at the Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue - 470 Glencairn Avenue
Doors open at 7:30, program begins at 8 p.m.
Non-member fee: $5.00 per meeting

Here is our tentative meeting schedule for 2006-2007:

Wednesday, September 27, 2006
T.B.A.

Monday, November 6, 2006
Speaker: Henry Wellisch
Topic: Thereisenstadt

Wednesday, November 29, 2006
Speaker: Michael Goldstein
Topic: Finding and Connecting with Your Israeli Relatives

Wednesday, December 20, 2006
T.B.A.

Wednesday, January 31, 2007
T.B.A.

Wednesday, February 28, 2007
T.B.A.

Wednesday, March 28, 2007
T.B.A.

Wednesday, April 25, 2007
T.B.A.

Wednesday, May 30, 2007
T.B.A.

Wednesday June 27, 2007
T.B.A.

For further information visit our website at www.jgstoronto.ca or watch the “What's New” column in the Canadian Jewish News.
A Genealogy of the Mayer Family  Cont’d from page 1


Daughter Ida married Louis Komiensky on Sept. 2, 1902 in St. John at the Carlton Street Synagogue. They divorced in 1913. Louis Komiensky was born on August 18, 1876 in Russia and died on Dec. 13, 1933 in St. John. They had three children. The first, Ruth, b. June 8, 1903 St. John d. July 13, 1997 Orange County, California, married Roy Rowland b. Dec. 31, 1902 New York d. June 29, 1995 Orange County, California. He was a producer for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, first working as a script clerk and then as a director of short subjects and feature films. The Rowlands had one child, a son, Steve Rowland, who was a movie actor during the 1950’s and 1960’s. The second, Jacob Spencer, b. Feb. 16, 1905 St. John d. April 28, 1989 Los Angeles, changed his name to Jack Spencer Cummings and was a producer for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, first working in the property department when he was 17 and then becoming a producer of short subjects and then full-length pictures. He married twice, first to Marjorie Strauss, whom he later divorced and with whom he had three children: Julie, Kathy, and Carla. On May 27, 1947, in Las Vegas, he married his second wife, Elizabeth Jane Kern, daughter of composer Jerome Kern. They had one child, Linda. The third, Minnie Gertrude or Mitzie, b. Sept. 6, 1907 St. John d. Sept. 7, 1998 Los Angeles, married Sol Baer Fielding, b. October 15, 1908 New York d. Sept. 1, 1992 Los Angeles, a producer for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

Louis B. Mayer worked with his father in the scrap metal business in St. John. He often made business trips to Boston, where he met and married in 1904 Margaret Shenberg, b. Oct. 3, 1883 Pennsylvania d. May 21, 1955 Los Angeles. They married on June 4, 1904 in Boston in the First Orthodox Synagogue. Louis B.’s movie career began in Boston, where he acquired a burlesque house and converted it into a nickelodeon. He became a U.S. citizen in 1908. He gradually acquired more theaters and eventually started distributing and producing the movies themselves, moving to Hollywood in 1916 where he stated his own production company. In 1924 he formed Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.


The second daughter, Irene, b. April 2, 1907 Brooklyn d. October 10, 1990 New York, was married on April 29, 1930 in Santa Monica to David Oliver Selznick, b. May 10, 1902 Pittsburgh d. June 22, 1965 Los Angeles. He was a producer with Paramount, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and RKO. He was most noted as the producer of “Gone With the Wind.” They were divorced on January 10, 1948 in Los Angeles. Irene Mayer Selznick after her divorce became a Broadway producer and author.

They had two sons. The first, Louis Jeffrey, b. August 4, 1932 Los Angeles d. May 12, 1997 Los Angeles, was married to Barbara Smalley and had no children. He was a film and television producer and president of the Louis B. Mayer Foundation. The second son was Daniel Mayer, b. May 18, 1936. He married Susan Dryfoos on Oct. 8, 1989 in Stamford, Connecticut. He is a television and theater producer and freelance journalist. She is involved in New York Times history projects and is an author. Her family, then Sulzbergers, have been directors and publishers of the New York Times since 1896.

Louis B. Mayer separated from his wife Margaret in 1944 and divorced her on January 10, 1948 in Los Angeles. She received a cash settlement of $3,250,000. He then married Lorena Danker on December 4, 1948 in Yuma, Arizona. He adopted her 12-year-old daughter Suzanne on October 7, 1949 in Los Angeles.

His brother Rubin never married and had no children. He was a realtor.

His brother Jerry married Rheba Gilinsky and had a son, Gerald, who was born on June 5, 1919 in Montreal and died on September 21, 2001 in Santa Monica. Gerald married a woman whose first name was Irene. Jerry Mayer was a manager at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios. Gerald Mayer was a communications major at Stanford University. During World War II he served in the Navy. He joined Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in 1945 to direct screen tests and shorts. He soon began to direct feature films and television series. He had three children: Jillian Richman Silva, Alison Nesti, and Jeremy Mayer.

Louis B. Mayer’s will was probated on November 8, 1957 in the Superior Court of Los Angeles. In this document, dated May 10, 1955, he left $750,000, the family home in Bel Air and all personal effects to his second wife Lorena Danker Mayer. He left $500,000 for two daughters, Mrs. Irene Selznick, 50 years old, and Miss Suzanne Danker Mayer, 20 years old, whom he adopted after his marriage to Mrs. Danker, her mother. No money was left to his daughter Mrs. Edith Goetz. He said in the will that he had given her substantial assistance during her lifetime.

The Find-A-Grave database had listings for many members of the Mayer family. Jacob Mayer was listed as being buried in Beth Israel Cemetery, East Los Angeles. Ida Cummings is listed as being buried in Home of Peace Memorial Park, East Los Angeles, Los Angeles County. Ruth Rowland is buried in Pacific View Memorial Park, Newport Beach, Orange County, California. There was no listing in the database for Roy Rowland. Sol Baer Fielding is buried in Hollywood Forever, Hollywood, Los Angeles, California, Plot: Garden of Moses. There was no listing for Mitzi Fielding in the database. Louis B. Mayer is buried in Home of Peace Memorial Park, East Los Angeles, Los Angeles County. William Goetz is buried in Hillside Memorial Park, Culver City, Los Angeles county, Plot: Devotion, Sarcophagus (at the entrance). There was no listing for Edith Goetz in the database. Irene Mayer Selznick is buried in Hillside Memorial Park, Culver City, Los Angeles County, Plot: Mausoleum, Hall of Graciousness. David Oliver Selznick is buried in Forest Lawn Memorial Park, Glendale, Los Angeles county, Plot: Great Mausoleum, Sanctuary of Truth. Rubin Mayer is buried in Home of Peace Memorial Park, East Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, Plot: Mausoleum, Corridor of Solice, Crypt 403 NW. Jerry Mayer is buried in Home of Peace Memorial Park, East Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, Plot: Mausoleum, Corridor of Truth, Crypt 420 NW.

Jacob and Sarah Mayer, their surname listed as Myers, and their family can be found in the 1901 Census of St. John, New Brunswick, Dufferin Ward, 11, p. 17, Family or Household 117, Dwelling House 83, Lines 3-8, 27 Acadia, microfilm reel T-6443. Jacob Meyers is listed as a merchant by occupation. Ida Meyers and Louis B. Myers are listed as clerks by occupation. No occupation is listed for Rubin or Jerry Meyers. Yetta Myers is not listed in the census. The family’s year of immigration to Canada is listed as 1890.

Editor’s note: the following are several database addresses related to the sources mentioned in Glen’s article:

Find A-Grave database: http://www.findagrave.com/
New Brunswick online vital statistics: http://archives.gnb.ca/Archives/
California vital statistics search portal: http://www.vitalsearch-ca.com/

Glen Eker is one of our veteran members who has published numerous articles.

IAGJS Annual Conference News

The 2006 Annual International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in New York is fast approaching (New York Marriott Marquis Hotel, August 13-18). Please register now if you haven’t already done so. You may register on-line at the conference web site: http://www.jgsny2006.org, and find answers to frequently-asked questions on the FAQs page linked to the menu bar on the left side of the home page. The schedule of events (lectures, special interest group meetings, birds-of-a-feather get-togethers, tours, workshops etc.) can be found at http://www.jgsny2006.org/conference_program.cfm.

The Montreal JGS is organizing a special Breakfast Meeting for Canadian conference attendees. This will provide an opportunity to discuss issues specific to Canadian genealogical research. It will be held on Wednesday August 16 from 7 a.m. to 8 a.m. If you want to attend the Breakfast Meeting please e-mail <info@jgstoronto.ca>.

Special evening programming includes noted pianist and conductor Zalmen Mlotek, Folksbiene Yiddish Theater executive director, who will perform European and American songs on Jewish life, including folk songs, immigration, the Yiddish theater, and vaudeville.

The dates for next year’s conference, in Salt Lake City, are: 15-19 July. And the IAJGS Board is very pleased to announce that the 2008 conference will be held in Chicago.

Minsk and Beaches Shuls Added to Web Site

The “Toronto First Synagogues” web site is expanding their exhibit to include the Minsk and Beaches shuls. This new data is expected to be on-line by the end of June. You can find this excellent site, which currently includes the First Narayever, Knesseth Israel and Kiever Synagogues, at http://collections.ic.gc.ca/TorontoSynagogues/.

Most of the early members of the Minsk Shul came from Russia at the turn of the last century. Some of the family names include Stern, Meslin, Zeldin, Bloom, Slutsky, Cohen and Layefsky.

If you have comments, or would like more information, please contact Ellen Scheinberg at <EScheinberg@ujafed.org>.

GET YOUR COPY OF SHEM TOV EARLY IN PDF FORMAT

Remember, Shem Tov is now available to members on-line. To subscribe to this format, simply send us your request with a valid e-mail address.
The Enduring Myth: My Town Was Destroyed
By Carolynne Veffer

You’ve all heard the myths of Jewish genealogy, especially: all the records were destroyed, my town was destroyed.

Over the years, I thought I had bored all of my friends with the debunking of those myths. So I was pretty surprised when my friend Helen, in response to my mentioning the destruction of the Jewish cemetery in my grandmother’s town (Ilsa aka Drildz), replied that her father said his whole town was destroyed. I tried to suggest it might be otherwise, but she was sure her father had said the entire town was gone. Rather than argue, I decided to see if I could prove her wrong. I could. In very little time.

Here’s how:

I sent Helen an e-mail asking her what her father’s town was called. This was her response: “My dad comes from Shhebijyashin (pronounced Sh-Ch-EB-J-Yashin), which the Jews referred to as Shebershin. It’s near Zomotsch.”

I wasn’t familiar with those towns so I decided to try JRI-Poland’s Town Index (under Your Town) rather than Shtetlfinder. There are SO many towns in Poland with similar names I expected Shtetlfinder would come up with a ton of possibilities. As luck would have it, I found a town on JRI that looked like it would be “Sh-Ch-EB-J-Yashin”. It was Szcebrzeszyn (really).

The clincher was when I clicked on “Click for Map”; it was near a town called Zamosc (i.e. Zomotsch).

I could also see that a number of LDS records were completed so I went to “Search Database” and looked for the surname Kohl in Szcebrzeszyn. There were lots (I discovered the name was usually spelled Kojl).

I also googled the town name and quickly found some fabulous information.

Within about a half hour of beginning my search I could send Helen the following message (knowing she was totally unfamiliar with Jewish genealogy web sites, I was pretty detailed in my instructions):

“His town is Szcebrzeszyn (not surprising you had no idea how to spell it). It is near Zamosc.

It is listed on the web site that has Polish genealogy information: http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/town/szcebrzeszyn.htm

If you click on the top where it says “Click for Map” it will show you where it is.

Then if you want to find the names of people named Kohl from that town try “Search Database”: http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/jriplweb.htm

Scroll down and you’ll see a table of four rows. Select:

Surname sounds like Kohl
Town is exactly Szcebrzeszyn

Then Geographical Region (just below) - select Lublin Gubernia

At the bottom click “Start Search.”

What you’ll get is a listing of records of Birth (B), Marriage (M) and Death (D) that are either on Mormon microfilm (the earlier records that have a film number as the last column) or in the Polish Archives (PSA - the ones that have “Order?” in the first column).

I don’t know what your father’s father’s name was - but it may be in the list.

Plus there’s lots of information about the town (I just googled the town name): http://www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/pinkas_poland/pol7_00577c.html

More info - this site is great - including old and new pictures: http://www.geocities.com/shebreshin/

One of the sections of Geocities is the 1929 business directory. There are 3 people named Kojl: http://www.geocities.com/shebreshin/1929.html

There are lots more but I found these sites quite quickly and they seemed to have lots of info.

Anyway, this is likely more than you want to know. But if you have any questions e-mail or call. I’ll be happy to help.”

Three minutes later I got this response: “This is amazing... I was actually named after my father’s father -- his name was Chaim and mine is the female form, Chaya.”

JRI-Poland listed a birth record for Chaim Gersz Kojl, born in 1894 in Szcebrzeszyn - Helen’s grandfather.

While she hadn’t had a chance to show her father the information yet, she did send me this note the next day:

“I found my dad’s uncle on the business list -- he was the shoemaker. Two other Kojls are also on the list -- one in fabrics, the other in leather.

My dad is really looking forward to going through all the names; he says that there were several generations of Kojls in his hometown.”

After this Helen did get together with her father and he could identify the other family members in the business directory. From the Geocities web site of old photos he recognized the Market Square, many of the buildings and other landmarks. They were both amazed.

Once I knew Helen and her father were interested, I did one more quick search for them, on Yad Vashem: http://www.yadvashem.org/

First I tried: last name “Kohl” with town “Szcebrzeszyn,” both as “synonyms”. The database came up with 24 responses. One Page of Testimony was for Chaim.

After reading it I sent another note to Helen asking her if her grandfather had died during the war, but her grandmother survived. She said “yes, yes”.

It turned out her grandmother had submitted a Page of Testimony for her grandfather (actually she submitted two with slightly contradictory information). The information included

Cont’d on Page 6
his parents’ names: Yosef and Rakhel. He had died in 1942 at the age of 47 (which tied in closely enough to the birth record), and his profession was merchant.

Because of this fabulous “new” database, you can now also search by the name of the submitter. So I put in Feiga Kohl, and came up with another page she had submitted for Chaim’s younger brother, Shmuel.

When I sent Helen the link to Yad Vashem and this information she replied “My father is going to plutz.”

Needless to say, this is just a beginning. I don’t know whether Helen will start ordering microfilm and PSA records. But I do know that in a very short time, I was able to debunk the myth that her father’s town had been destroyed, and was able to provide her with a bunch of information and sources for more.

So I encourage all of you to continue to share the information with friends and family that towns were not destroyed and records do exist. And if you have a little time - perhaps help them get started.

**Page of Testimony for Chaim Kojl**

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**Yearend Review @ JGS Toronto**

by Carolynne Veffer

Our Society has had another great year. Our programming committee (Catherine Adam, Les Kelman, Linda Offman, Stan Zeidenberg and Carolynne Veffer) organized another excellent series of programs. These included: Vlad Soshnikov, “Travelling Through Eastern Europe to Discover Your Roots” and “Current Status of Genealogical Research in the Archives of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine”; Paula Draper, Lisa Newman and Myrna Riback, “Interviewing Holocaust Survivors from Three Different Perspectives”; Rabbi Yaakov Kleiman, “Discovery of the Cohen Gene: Its Meaning and Importance for Genealogy”; Mike Dunk, “Digital Imagery and Genealogy”; Mila Voihanski. “The Jewish Immigrant Aid Service”; Geni and Eli Bahar, “A Visit to Ostrowiec Swietokrzyski”; Karol Zenwirt, “Jews of Tar- now”; a Birds-of-a-Feather meeting; and a lecture on “Our Ahkenazi Roots.” We also organized a tour of the North York Central Reference Library, including our Society’s collection that is housed on the 6th floor.

Our Newsletter Committee (Diane Kriger, Henry Wellisch and Dulcey Hoffman) published four very informative issues of *Shem Tov*. Peter Jassem wrote up his research on the Jews of Galitzian Lancut (September 05), Ruth Chernia summarized her research on the Hooper-Driscoll family (March 06) and Glen Eker submitted his findings about the Louis B. Mayer family (June 06), to name but a few of the excellent articles sent in by our contributors. A series on Toronto *landsmanshaft*en was also begun.

Cont’d on Page 7
Elaine Cheskes took over the role of Librarian from David Price. Elaine comes to the position with extensive experience and with great enthusiasm. Our thanks to David Price who did such a wonderful job. Terri Rothman, our web master, kept our web site up-to-date at www.jgstoronto.ca.

Most exciting this year was the progress of two major Society projects: the Cemetery Project and the Rotenberg Ledger Project.

The Cemetery Committee (chaired by Shelley Stillman, with many committee volunteers) submitted the burial data from Dawes Road and Pardes Shalom cemeteries to the Jewish Online Worldwide Burial Registry (JOWBR) at JewishGen last year. This year we submitted close to 12,000 more records, from Pape Avenue, Lambton Mills, Jones Avenue and Roselawn, and we are pleased to report that the Roselawn and Jones Avenue data are now available on-line. Special thanks go to Sandy Stern, who transcribed the Pape Avenue records, David Trost, who acquired the Lambton Mills records, Neil Richler, who formatted the records for submission to JOWBR, and everyone who worked on the Roselawn Cemetery over the years.

The Rotenberg Ledger, prepared by Rotenberg’s Ltd. (Toronto bankers and steamship agents), is a handwritten record of passenger information from 1911 to 1917. It is available at the Ontario Jewish Archives, but is very fragile and can only be accessed at the Archives. Two of our members (Harvey and Adena Glasner) took digital photos of its 800-plus pages, and created an index by transcribing the handwritten information into an Excel spreadsheet. Thanks to their dedication and effort these records are now available on our web site 24/7, from anywhere in the world.

Last year, one of our projects was to implement a process for issuing Canadian tax receipts for donations to JewishGen and JRI-Poland. This year, thanks to Stan Zeidenberg, Sid Disenhouse and Neil Richler, we sent out our first tax receipts for 2005 donations. (A description of the process is available from the home page of our web site.)

As you can see from this summary, the success of our Society is totally dependent on volunteers working on our executive, programming, newsletter and library committees and on our various projects. If you are interested in volunteering, please send an e-mail to <info@jgstoronto.ca>.

Carolynne Veffer is our current President.
Roots and Remembrance: Explorations in Jewish Genealogy.
By Bill Gladstone (writing as Ze’ev Glicenstein); foreword by Gary Mokotoff
Published by The Ontario Genealogical Society, Toronto, 2006.

The volume has recently been added to the library collection of our Society

Roots and Remembrance: Explorations in Jewish Genealogy by Bill Gladstone (Ze’ev Glicenstein) is a compilation of Gladstone’s best columns, with a foreword by Gary Mokotoff. I have only glowing accolades for this work.

The book is divided into three broad topics: Personal Stories, Research Topics, and Resources. Each section is filled with a wealth of information. For example, there is information on libraries, web sites, archival sources, yizkor books, museums, and numerous other resources that will benefit both the novice and the experienced researcher in the exploration of family histories.

As Gladstone relates personal stories that are both heart-wrenching and celebratory, we journey on an emotional roller coaster. His beautiful, sensitive and poetic quotes from Abraham Chan’s novel, The Rise of David Levinsky, cause us to empathize with the desperation of the immigrant as he crosses the vast abyss and to rejoice with him as he falls to his knees and sings a hymn of thanksgiving when America comes into view.

Information is presented clearly and accurately with detailed explanations. For example, when I examined the naturalization document of a relative, and discovered a Police File I was able to walk the puzzles of genealogical research. Perchance there were resources that I had overlooked.

This fascinating book combines touching and emotional personal experiences together with factual Canadian and international resources for the researcher. We are privileged and honoured to have the author, Bill Gladstone (Ze’ev Glicenstein), as a current member and one of the past presidents of JGS of Canada (Toronto) and to add this most valuable research tool to our collection.

Book Review
by Elaine Cheskes

Roots and Remembrance:

Roots and Remembrance includes many local and international sources of information. For example, Gladstone cites the obvious, easily accessible and readable resources such as The Toronto Star, together with resources that are difficult to obtain and decipher, such as Berl Kagan’s Hebrew Subscription List. We are encouraged to strive with great energy and determination to a higher level of research.

We are given a glimpse of life in Toronto in the early 1900’s, and subsequently we are whisked across the continents to obscure communities in the Canary Islands, Kaifeng in China, and Peru. Who would have thought that Jews lived in these remote places?

Since the publication of Roots and Remembrance, the 1911 Census has been made available online. The site address is: http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet/1911/index-e.html

The text concludes with an extensive bibliography and index.

An exciting novel could not have been more captivating. I read voraciously in the hope of discovering another clue to unravel the puzzles of genealogical research. Perchance there were resources that I had overlooked.

This novel is a unique and vital journal.

Roots and Remembrance is a compilation of Gladstone’s best columns, with a foreword by Gary Mokotoff. It has only glowing accolades for this work.

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Information is presented clearly and accurately with detailed explanations. For example, when I examined the naturalization document of a relative, and discovered a Police File number, my initial reaction was to assume that he was an unsavoury character. Gladstone explains, however, that this file is a “standard police report on the applicant.” Some of my suspicions were alleviated.

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Holocaust Survivors’ Stories Wanted

Emily Taitz is compiling a biographical dictionary of Holocaust survivors, to be used primarily as a textbook for high school and college courses. The publisher (Greenwood Press) would like to include brief biographies of 600 survivors in what is planned as a two-volume work. The entries will be in alphabetical order and will be cross-indexed by country and area, and again by experience of the survivor (i.e. those who were in the partisans, those who hid with gentiles, those who were in the camps, etc.)

Emily has about 300 biographies so far. If you are interested in sharing your own (or a relative's or friend's) story with her, please contact her by e-mail at isaacem@optonline.net or by telephone at (516) 466-5494.

The deadline for completion is September 2006, so time is of the essence.

Emily Taitz, Sondra Henry and JGS Toronto member Cheryl Tallan are the authors of The JPS Guide to Jewish Women, 600 B.C.E. - 1900 C.E. (Jewish Publication Society, 2003).

ADVERTISING RATES

SHEM TOV is now accepting display advertising for publication. Advertisers are requested to supply camera-ready art and payment by August 2006 for the Fall issue. Please indicate how many insertions you would like. As the chart indicates our basic rate is discounted for advertisements placed in four consecutive issues (one year) instead of a single issue only. By placing an ad in SHEM TOV, you are reaching a growing number of readers in Toronto, across Canada and internationally, and helping to support the 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.

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8 June 2006 Shem Tov
Book Reviews
by Henry Wellisch

More reviews on new books in our library.


(English: German-Foreign Language/ Foreign Language-German Register of Place Names. Commissioned by the Practical Division of the German Academy in Munich. Compiled by Otto Kredel and Franz Thierfelder.)

Published originally in 1931, reprinted by Avotaynu in 2005.

This work is a gazetteer in the German language, but it is not difficult at all to get used to it. There are two volumes, in which thousands of cities, towns and villages throughout Europe are listed in various languages.

Volume I covers the following countries and areas: Italy, Switzerland, Alsace-Lorraine, Luxembourg, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Soviet-Union and Poland.

Volume II covers the following countries: Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Albania, Bulgaria, Finland, Greece, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Turkey.

For each country or area there are two alphabetical sections: Deutsch – Fremdsprachig (German - Foreign Language) and Fremdsprachig – Deutsch (Foreign Language - German).

Here are two examples. Let’s say you find an old document that states that your granduncle comes from KASCHAU, Czechoslovakia. Go to the Czechoslovak (Tschechoslowakei) part of the book in Volume I and you will find in Section 1: Deutsch – Fremdsprachig (German – Foreign Language, in this case Czech) the following entry for Kaschau: KASCHAU – KOSICE; U: KASSA – ABAUJ – TURNA. In this case the locality is listed in German, Czech and Hungarian, with the district at the end.

In Section 2: Fremdsprachig – Deutsch (Czech – German) you will find the following: KOSICE; U: KASSA – KAS-CHAU - ABAUJ – TURNA. This indicates that Kaschau (in German) is also known as Kosice (in Czech) and as Kassa (in Hungarian; the letter U refers to Ungarn/Hungary.

If your grandmother comes from NEUSATZ in Yugoslavia you will find the following entry in Section 1 (Deutsch-Fremdsprachig, German – Foreign Language) of Yugoslavia: NEUSATZ (A. D. DONAU) – NOVI SAD; U:ÚJVIDEK – BATSCHKA. In Section 2 for Yugoslavia the entry looks like this: NOVI SAD; U:ÚJVIDEK – NEUSATZ (A. D. DONAU) - BATSCHKA.

There are several places named Neusatz in Yugoslavia, but you are probably looking for Neusatz on the Danube, since there was and still is a sizable Jewish community there. The entry indicates that the place is also known as Újvidek in Hungarian and as Novi Sad in Serbian. Batschka is the name of the district.

Genealogical Gazetteer for the Kingdom of Hungary.
Compiled by Jordan Auslander. Published by Avotaynu 2004.

This book contains information about more than 12,000 towns within the 19th century borders of the Kingdom of Hungary that today comprise regions of Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovak Republic and Ukraine. For each community, information is provided for the population by religion. If there was no local church or synagogue, the town where each congregation worshiped is indicated. Additional information about each town includes alternate names and its current name if no longer in Hungary. Towns can be searched alphabetically by their current name, former name or alternate name(s).

The author spent more than five years compiling the information, which was based on the 1877 gazetteer, Magyarorszag Helysegnevtara (Hungarian Gazetteer), by Janos Dvorzsak.

A Dictionary of German-Jewish Surnames.
By Lars Menk. Published by Avotaynu 2005.

This dictionary identifies more than 13,000 German-Jewish surnames from the area that was pre-World War I Germany: from Baden-Württemberg in the south to Schleswig-Holstein in the north, and from Westfalen in the west to East Prussia in the east. In addition to providing the etymology and variants of each name, it identifies where in the region the name appeared, identifying the town and time period. More than 300 sources were used to compile the book. A chapter provides the Jewish population in many towns in the 19th century.

We Welcome This New Member to Our Society

Sidney Greenberg

June 2006 Shem Tov 9
Data from the burials at Roselawn Cemetery has now been entered on the Jewish Online Worldwide Burial Registry at JewishGen. When you do an on-line search for a burial, you will be provided with the section, the row, and the grave number in that row. Should you wish to visit the grave itself, the map opposite will give you a rough idea of its location.

For instance, if the burial you are researching is in the Adath Israel section (south-west portion of the cemetery, #15) in row J, grave 7, you would first count 10 rows from the westernmost row (to account for rows A to J in the B’nai Abraham section, #14), then count down from U to J in the Adath Israel section, then count 7 graves down in that row.

Some rows do not begin right at the street edge of the cemetery, but start further in.

Straight rows are rare. So be aware that the map is a rough guide only. We are also continuing to update the data, and if you have any questions or comments, please let us know at <info@jgstoronto.ca>.

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Combine Genealogy and Yiddishkeit on a Cruise

The Klezmer/Heritage cruise is described as “an immersion” in Yiddishkeit history and heritage aboard the chartered MS Dnieper Princess. It will take place from May 3 to 15, 2007, floating from Kiev to Zaporozhye, Yalta, and Odessa. In addition to klezmer concerts on board and in major ports, passengers will be offered lectures on Yiddish culture and language, Jewish literature and history, and the politics and history of old Russia and the new Ukraine, as well as dance instruction and a festival of special films. During the days spent in the major ports, tours will visit secular and Jewish heritage sites. Arrangements will also be made for those with family roots to rediscover ancestral towns and shtetls.

For additional information, go to their web site at www.magma.ca/~klezmercruise.

New Site Lists Thousands of Archival Holdings

“ArchiveGrid,” a site launched by The Research Libraries Group, allows you to search through lists of historical documents, personal papers, and family histories held in archives around the world. The site, at http://archivegrid.org/web.jsp/index.jsp, states that “thousands of libraries, museums, and archives have contributed nearly a million collection descriptions to ArchiveGrid. Researchers searching ArchiveGrid can learn about the many items in each of these collections, contact archives to arrange a visit to examine materials, and order copies.”

If you enter “census,” for instance, you get a list of census holdings in various archives that links to specific descriptions of the collections and to a contact for each archive.

The site is free until May 31st. It may remain free if additional funding is obtained; otherwise, subscriptions will be available.

Search U.K. Historical Books and Documents

The Original Record web site at http://www.theoriginalrecord.com allows a “deep search” of 1000 years of U.K. historical records. The site states that 2,500 historical books and documents containing more than 10 million entries relating to families in the British Isles and colonies have been hand-indexed by date/year. Searches are by surname, and will accept the wildcard * or ? to take into account variant spellings. There is a detailed page of “Search Tips.” The searches are free; however, there is a fee to obtain a scan of the actual page. The site states that new records continue to be added. An interesting feature allows you to place names on a “Wish List”; you will then be informed when new records of interest to you are added.

Bad Arolsen Records to be Accessible

It has been announced that the Holocaust records held at Bad Arolsen will now be available to historians and survivors. Until now, these records had been open only to the International Red Cross. This archive includes some 30-50 million documents, referring to more than 17 million people.

It is not anticipated that the data will be put on-line.

Did Your Ancestors Live on New York’s Lower East Side?

Dr. Lawrence J. Epstein, an author and educator on Long Island, is working on a new book about Jewish immigrants on the Lower East Side of New York. The book will be edited by Arthur Kurzweil, and co-published by the Lower East Side Tenement Museum.

Dr. Epstein would welcome any stories, letters, documents, or photos that would be useful, and can be contacted at <LJE321@aol.com>.

New Ways of Storing and Presenting Photos

Dick Eastman reports on a new on-line service, “Amiglia,” at http://www.amiglia.com/intro/, that allows you to store photos and present them in a number of different ways. For instance, you can define the relationship between your photos, and have them presented as a family tree; or you can specify the locations in your photos and have them overlaid on a map. The site is still in “beta” format, so you may be interested in offering to test the software.

For more information, go to http://genlib.blogspot.com/2006/04/amiglia-social-photo-storage-for.html.

U.K. Port Embarkations to be On-line

More from Eastman’s newsletter: 1837online.com has signed an agreement to scan and place on-line the British National Archives’ entire database of passengers who embarked on sea voyages from Britain between 1890 and 1960. The estimated 30 million individual records include details of emigrations to Australia, North and South America, India, and Africa. The site aims to have the passenger records on-line towards the end of this year.

This database should be of particular interest to those whose ancestors travelled from Hamburg to North America via an English port.

1837online is a fee-based site that gives access to vital records of England and Wales, census data from 1861 and 1891, and military records.
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.

Lucy Sadowski, retired high school history teacher and administrator par excellence, is our Society’s Secretary, making sure that all runs smoothly behind the scenes. Lucy has held this position for “three or four years.” “For an historian,” she jokes, “I’m notoriously bad at remembering dates.”

It was her interest in history that naturally led her to pursue her own family history. Like many of us, she began with some interviews, and then discovered the lure of sharing one’s research, with both other researchers and one’s family:

“I interviewed my grandfather Sam Shiffman about 20 years ago but didn’t have time to do much more at the time. My retirement solved that problem. And joining JGS has gone a long way in helping me with other issues. In some ways, having grandchildren gave me a bit of momentum although one has spurts of activity and long periods of inertia or being busy doing other things in one’s life.”

Lucy’s particular areas of interest are Poland, Lithuania/ Belarus and the Ukraine. Here she describes her successes and the various difficulties she has faced in her research:

“I have had the greatest success with my father’s side of the family, the Polish side, specifically from the province of Kielce-Radom and the towns of Zawichost, Radom and particularly Ozarow. I have about ten generations fairly well documented - back, forward and now going sideways!

“I have recently had a minor breakthrough, discovering cousins in France and Australia. It began with some recently posted data from Yad Vashem. A lot of my family (especially my sisters) and even some friends got involved in nailing down the cousin from France. So now I say, I can document our family through ten generations and four continents.

“My mother’s family has been much more difficult, having originated in a part of Lithuania, now Belarus. It was made more difficult by the loss of my maternal grandmother in the flu epidemic of 1918. Therefore, most lines of research have quickly led to brick walls.

“This is also the case with attempting to research my husband’s family in Ukraine. One of the major problems here is that the original name is not known for certain, nor the town of origin. The paternal grandfather arrived in Canada in the 1880s and Canadian sources are not bad, except that many good early records don’t begin until after that date, so the beginnings are blurry.”

In addition to volunteering at JGS Toronto, Lucy has also volunteered with the Royal Ontario Museum. In particular, she was involved with the “Historic Jewish Toronto” day tour, a ROM bus project that gave patrons an insight into both the old and new Jewish communities of Toronto. It is the spirit of mutual benefit that she finds important and elo-

sequently expresses:

“I am constantly impressed with the competence and expertise of our [JGS] executive, committees and members and with the quality of programming and journalism that is presented. I really believe that we help each other considerably by improving research capabilities, finding and sharing resources, making more and more data accessible, discussing our problems and successes, enjoying conversation with people who share our interests and have different areas and levels of expertise.”

If you have a volunteer experience you’d like to share, please contact shemtov@jgstoronto.ca.

Bibliography of New Acquisitions to the JGS of Canada (Toronto) Collection at the North York Public Library

(Gladys Allison, Canadiana Room 6th floor)

by Elaine Cheskes


