



שם טוב
SHEM TOV

JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA (TORONTO)

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THE NANAIMO FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY'S PASSENGER LISTS INDEXING PROJECT

JGS Toronto, as part of its mandate as a registered charity, has made a contribution to the Nanaimo Family History Society's Passenger Lists Indexing Project. This significant project will eventually produce an alphabetical index of all ship passengers arriving at the ports of Halifax and Quebec (including Montreal) from 1900 to about 1921. Our contribution will enable the Nanaimo Society to purchase the remaining Quebec microfilms it needs from Library and Archives Canada.

The Nanaimo Society has so far transcribed manifests from Quebec ports for the periods November 10, 1907 to October 13, 1910; you can find the alphabetical index of passenger names from these lists at <http://members.shaw.ca/nanaimo.fhs/>. By selecting the starting letters of the surname you are researching, you will get a pdf file of passengers in alphabetical order that shows Surname, Given Name, Ship Arrival Date, Name of Ship, Age, Country of Birth, Page Number, Port of Arrival, and Reel Number (i.e. of the microfilm). The web site gives detailed information on how various transcribing difficulties were handled, including "problem" ships, where the information was hard to read.

Passenger lists (RG 76) were the official immigration documents in Canada from 1865 to 1935. The lists have been microfilmed, and genealogists were able to search copies of the microfilms at Library and Archives Canada, as well as at certain public libraries (including the North York Canadiana Room). Recently, certain of the microfilms have been put on-line at the Library and Archives Canada web site at <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet/passenger/index-e.html>

The difficulty with searching the microfilms, whether in person or on-line, is that there is no index to passenger names. Unless you know the specific ship name, arrival date and port of entry for your ancestor, you would have to proceed by way of guesswork and search through pages and pages of manifests. Hence the great significance of the Nanaimo indexing project.

Once you have found a name on the Nanaimo index, you may wish to look at the original microfilm, which may also contain data on the passenger's occupation and destination, and the port and date of departure. To search the on-line microfilms at Library and Archives Canada, for instance, you can simply enter the ship name, port and arrival date that you have taken

from the Nanaimo index. A word of caution: Nanaimo is using a different page-numbering system than is found on the manifests. Full details about the numbering are given on the project web site.

The index has been received very enthusiastically by researchers. Margaret Mann, Project Co-ordinator for the Nanaimo Family History Society, states: "About 90% of the e-mails are congratulatory and most of the people who have sent them have found relatives or ancestors on our database. We have had several e-mails advising us of an incorrect name on an index; with these we go back to the microfilm and check. If we are incorrect we will alter the entry but usually our transcript is correct as it was written on the manifest and so it is left as transcribed.

"We are very pleased with the help that we see people getting from our database, and our contacts at Library and Archives Canada are also pleased since it makes their on-line images much more readily searchable for the period that our index covers."

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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 (exception: spouses accompanying members)

Sunday, April 15, 2007

Details T.B.A.

Members: Free Non-members: \$15.00 at the door

Pre-registration: contact president@jgstoronto.ca

Speaker: Marian Press, Librarian, OISE

Workshop: Building a Family Web Site (Beginners' Workshop)

One of the best ways to disseminate family information is to build a web site. It can vary from a simple, single page with relevant surnames and places of interest to a full-fledged site containing detailed information, photographs and GEDCOM files. At this 3-hour, "non hands-on" workshop you will learn free or low-cost and low-tech ways of building and finding a place to mount your family web site. It will also cover issues such as good versus bad web design, privacy and copyright of information, and advertising your web site. Handouts will be provided.

In 2005, Marian gave an excellent presentation to our Society on "Using Internet Search Engines Effectively." She is a librarian at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), and has co-taught a series of courses on "Designing

and Maintaining Web Sites" for the Professional Learning Centre at the Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto. She teaches a six-week on-line course for the Ontario Library Association on "Using the Internet for Genealogy," as well as a variety of courses on the Internet and genealogy for the Toronto Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society.

Wednesday, April 18, 2007

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE

Tour of Robarts Library at University of Toronto, northwest corner of St. George at Harbord

Times: 2:30 pm or 6:30 pm

Join us for a tour of the huge Judaica Section, which holds over 500 Yizkor books and a large collection of historic papers and periodicals, as well as the map library, reference and micro-film areas.

Book early as spaces are limited. Sign-up at the February and March meetings or e-mail linda.offman@utoronto.ca and indicate your preference for the 2:30 afternoon or the 6:30 evening tour.

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Contributions are invited. Submit material c/o Shem Tov Editor, P.O. Box 91006, 2901 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, ON M2K 1H0.

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada was founded in 1985 and currently has over 200 members. Membership costs \$36 per calendar year, \$18 for students. (Please note that the out of town reduction has been deleted). Meetings are held September to June, usually on the last Wednesday of each month at 8:00 p.m. (doors open at 7:30) at Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue, 470 Glencairn Avenue, Toronto (unless announced otherwise). Guests are always welcome. Details are usually printed in the *Canadian Jewish News* and on our website at: www.jgstoronto.ca.

The goals of the Society are to provide a forum for the exchange of knowledge and information through meetings, outings, workshops and guest lecturers, and thereby to promote an awareness of genealogy within the Jewish community of Canada. The Society is affiliated with the Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto and is registered as a non-profit charitable organization.

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Wednesday, May 30, 2007

Speaker: Stanley Diamond

Topic: JRI-Poland: What's New

Jewish Records Indexing - Poland (JRI-Poland) is a vital resource to any Jewish genealogists with roots in Poland. It is continuing to expand its online searchable database to the indices of available Jewish records from current and former territories of Poland. The presentation, by the founder of JRI-Poland, will outline the new developments in the project as well as the many other initiatives being launched and planned by JRI-Poland. It will include examples of the family connections that have resulted from using the JRI-Poland database. It will also introduce recent developments in the JRI-Poland Order Processing System. This point-and-click "shopping basket system" enables researchers to order records from the Polish State Archives via JRI-Poland's Order Processing Center and credit card facilities. Handouts will be available and will detail up-to-date database contents, existing and newly formed Shtetl CO-OPs, and step-by-step instructions for Shtetl CO-OPs.

Stanley M. Diamond, winner of the 2002 IAJGS Lifetime Achievement Award, is founding president of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal and Executive Director of Jewish Records Indexing-Poland. His interest in genealogical research related to genetics ultimately led to the creation of JRI-Poland. He is the genealogist for the international team doing research related to his family's novel mutation of the beta-thalassemia genetic trait, and is co-author of a scientific paper related to the project. Stanley's journey in the world of family history research was featured in an episode of the documentary series "Past Lives" on Canadian television in 2004.

Sunday, June 10, 2007, 2 - 5 PM

Temple Anshe Sholom,

215 Cline Ave. N., Hamilton

Speaker: Stephen P. Morse

Topic: One-Step Searching for the Genealogist

Stephen Morse is the developer of the "one-step" search tool that has made it so much easier to use many on-line databases, including Ellis Island lists, Hamburg passenger lists and Canadian, U.S. and British census records. He is also a frequent speaker at genealogy conferences.

At this joint meeting with JGS Hamilton and JGS Buffalo, you will hear a presentation by Stephen, as well have a chance to meet members of the other societies.

We are investigating transportation options to and from Hamilton. More information will be available closer to the date.

Wednesday, June 27, 2007

Annual General Meeting and Member Breakthroughs

Given the painstaking nature of the work it is difficult to predict when the project will be finished. The next update is planned for this spring, and it is hoped that 1900-1907 will be completed in two to three years. For the 1910 period to the start of World War 1 in 1914, there are 40 microfilms to transcribe.

As to earlier periods, Margaret has more good news: A group called "Friends of Dave Howard" has indexed the Quebec arrivals from 1874 to 1883, and has asked the Nanaimo Family History Society to put this index into database format. Margaret notes: "We are going to put this on-line as a parallel index, searchable separately, and again hope it will be available in the spring."

For more information on passenger arrivals into Canada, see the government web site at <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/genealogy/022-908.003-e.html>

And if you would like to volunteer to do some transcribing, please send an e-mail to the Nanaimo project at <nanaimo.fhs@shaw.ca> with "Passenger List Transcribing" in the subject line.

**Register Now for 2007 IAJGS Conference
in Salt Lake City**

Registration is now open for the 2007 IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy, to take place July 15-20, 2007 at the Hilton Salt Lake City Center. You can visit the conference web site at <http://www.slc2007.org> to register, submit speaking proposals, book rooms at the Hilton, plan your travel and learn more about what the conference and Salt Lake City have to offer. Remember to keep checking the conference web site for updates, including scheduled speakers, computer workshops and SIG luncheons.

The Salt Lake City Center Hilton is located at 255 South West Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84101, telephone 1-801-328-2000, fax +1-801-238-4888. Hotel rooms are available for a limited number of days before and after the conference, based on availability. It is best to book rooms early. For on-line reservations, click on the left hand button "Travel and Hotel" at the conference web site, then click on "Hotel" and follow the instructions. (When accessing the hotel site be sure to scroll down to start your reservation and do not click on the Hilton banner at the top of the page.)

The conference will include a special showing of "Lives Remembered: A Shtetl Through A Photographer's Eye." This photographic museum exhibit has been displayed internationally. It depicts a vibrant and modern life in an Eastern European shtetl from 1898-1939.

Taking Holocaust Survivors' Testimonies

by Beni Broniscer Fisch

Beni is a Grade 10 student at York Memorial Collegiate; originally from Brazil, he is currently studying in Canada. We received a request from Beni regarding his history project, an analysis of Canada's immigration policies towards Jewish war refugees, 1933-1948. As part of his research, Beni sought to interview holocaust survivors who had come to Canada. He met with two such survivors, and taped their answers. Beni and his teacher, Daniel Gerecht, have kindly let us print Beni's description of this experience, including his list of questions.

You will see in this issue a notice with an urgent request for volunteers to record survivors' testimonies for Yad Vashem. Beni's article constitutes a timely and most eloquent prologue to this request.

As a Jewish boy, perfectly aware that I have myself many direct blood relatives who died in the Holocaust, I have always yearned to meet someone who survived such events, and understand a little more about their thoughts, experiences, reactions, and lives as a result of that. Their lives, after all, reflect an entire aspect of the evolution of the concept of "Jewish" and our people, shaping me and my life the way I know it today.

This whole journey started when, sealing the World War II history unit at York Memorial CI, our class was given an assignment called the Jackdaw. Despite the list of twelve topics from which to choose, I opted for a completely different one, one I thought would be far more interesting and challenging to me: Jewish immigration into Canada during the War, roughly from 1933 to 1948. With the okay and encouragement from my teacher, Mr. Gerecht, I got to work, realizing from the very beginning that the proportions to which the topic went were far greater than I ever expected.

One of the many aspects of this assignment was an interview, real or fictitious, with an individual pertinent to the topic. I always knew the Holocaust survivors were out there, eager to share their experience, waiting for attentive ears to listen to what they had to tell and share. This assignment proved itself to be the greatest opportunity for me to do so. Yet, when I would tell people my intentions of personally seeing one, I was laughed at. "It happened over 60 years ago, Beni, most are dead anyway, how would you find one here in Toronto close to us willing to talk?"

How surprised were they when I not only spoke to one of them, but two in fact? Thanks to the Holocaust Centre of Toronto, where everyone was extremely supportive and helpful towards me, I was able to not only see a lecture by one of the survivors, whose eloquence when relating such horrific experiences impressed me deeply, but at the end, he was also kind enough to concede me some time to speak to him in private and ask various questions. The original twenty minutes that it was supposed to last quickly turned into over two hours, in the middle of which I had the pleasure to have yet another survivor, who was also lecturing that day, come in and give me an insight into her experiences. It was a remarkable experience, which I was delighted to record on tape. I did not get a video, however, for the sake of the survivors' privacy and personal identity, as

well as to not divert focus from the actual content of the testimony. Because of the long length of some of the answers and explanations, however, which often diverted into different matters on various subjects, it became impossible for me to go through with my original goal of typing everything. Maybe one day, eventually.... Instead, I summarize here my list of questions and some of the answers.

Before I start ... I would like to add two things. First, I want to say that I do not consider this tape part of an assignment, a compulsory service I had to do; I consider it a historical document, a living part of history; for I know that I am the last generation of my family who will ever have this opportunity to speak to those who experienced first hand the atrocities committed by the Nazis. I owe this to my kids and grandkids, to pass on their legacy.

Second, why am I calling these "Testimonies," not "interviews" at any point? Simple enough. An interviewer is a reporter who is doing a job of getting a story, reporting it, and then moving on to more breaking news; an interview is what we see on TV with Hollywood stars and professional athletes. When it comes to the Holocaust, all we can get are testimonies; as in a court, their voices stand tall as a witness against inhumanity and cruelty, their stories are passed to the world just as the truth is given to a jury by a witness who testifies on what they have seen.

It was truly a tremendous experience, which is impossible to accurately describe in words here; in my opinion, it's something that every young Jewish person should do, if given the opportunity, as my generation is still lucky enough to be in the presence of these great people. The texts and information contained here were never meant to be published originally, and I was initially slightly uncomfortable about the quality of this article. I finally realized, nonetheless, that no matter what I had done initially, there is no way that the essence of this subject can be captured on paper, but rather the importance of it is to spark interest in the minds of young people on events that happened long before our generation, making sure that the legacy of the Holocaust will live on long after we are gone.

The Witnesses

Mr. A.F. was born in 1929 in a small village called Rakosin, in an area near the border of Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Austria, I believe. Throughout his childhood, the official language of his country changed three times, as the region acquired new owners. The village was primitive, and citizens lived in peace with each other, Jews and Christians alike. Very little news came from outside, and Mr. F.'s dad, serving in the military for his country, was one of the first to report the atrocities that were starting to take place against Jews by the Nazis. By 1942, his dad had been deported to a concentration camp, and was never seen again. Mr. F., not even fourteen years of age, was then taken to a ghetto in Poland, from which, in May 1944, he was deported to the concentration camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau. There, he personally saw the infamous Dr. Mengele,

and witnessed some of his most horrendous experiments. His father, also at the camp, was murdered in front of him, and taken to a crematorium to be burned. According to Mr. F., by October 1944, trains had stopped coming (he describes how they would previously come many times a day bringing “dispatch,” but never arriving at the same time.) There were no more Jews to be found, and those who were found were killed on the spot. Eight months later, in January 1945, he was sent on a Death March as Soviet soldiers approached; he survived, however, and within a few days was sent back to Czechoslovakia. After the war was over, he attempted to immigrate to Palestine, like many other Jews, but the British had closed Palestine’s borders. Canada was the alternative. He came as part of the War Orphans Program in 1948, aboard the luxury liner S.S. Aquitania, and wishing to stay as close as possible to the U.S. border, he finally arrived in Toronto.

Mrs. H.Y. is originally from Lithuania, and about the same age as Mr. F. In 1942, at a ghetto in Poland, her father was sent to Dachau, where he was soon murdered. Her mom was killed as well. She held on to her little brother, the only close relative she had left, until Nazi soldiers personally took him from her own hands, and she never saw him again. She was later sent to a concentration camp herself, but she did not mention the name of the camp. After the war, her experiences were similar to Mr. F.’s. She lived in a DP camp, until she came to Canada in 1948, at about the same time as Mr. F. She was too part of the War Orphans Project.

My Questions

- 1) How old were you when the War started, and what were the first effects you noticed on your family and the Jewish community around you?
- 2) What was the general sentiment towards Hitler and the Nazis before the war? Were they taken seriously with their threats, or mainly ignored?
- 3) What was your reaction to the news of Kristallnacht?
- 4) Did your family attempt to come to Canada, or any other country, as refugees during the War?
- 5) What was your perception of Canada at the time?
- 6) If Canada had such a terrible record in admitting Jewish refugees, being marked by extremely Anti-Semitic leaders, why did you choose to come here after the War?
- 7) How was your reception by Canadian society when you first arrived here from Europe? Did you feel welcomed/accepted?
- 8) Did you get support from the Canadian Jewish community? Was it well organized?
- 9) When did the first signs of change in government policy towards immigration of Jews come along?
- 10) When did the first signs of change in government policy towards immigration of Jews come along?
- 11) What was it like for you, as a 14-year-old, to witness such terrifying scenes of genocide?

12) What were your thoughts and personal reactions when you saw Dr. Mengele, often described as “the personification of Evil”?

13) As a survivor and living witness to the Holocaust, what are your thoughts on the so-called “Holocaust Conference” held in Iran, which aims at denying the occurrence of such events?

14) Regarding the Holocaust, what is your personal message to the future generations of Jewish as well as non-Jewish kids alike? What is the main lesson learned?

A Part of the Testimonies

I would like to set out a number of points that made an especially deep impression on me.

First, there is the fact that Mr. F. would choose to immigrate to Canada, and come to embrace the country, in spite of its horrible record in admitting Jews when they needed it most; he claims that you can’t blame the country for the narrow-minded leaders of the time, who defined Canadian policy, and that, all taken into account, Canada still looked far better than the Eastern European countries that did nothing to prevent their deaths.

Another part that was very admirable was his account of his first experiences here in Canada. As a young man recently arrived, he wished to be as close as possible to the U.S. border, and managed to find employment in a factory in Southern Ontario (I’m not sure what city), where he faced a lot of discrimination for being Jewish, mainly because the people he worked with did not understand his faith and beliefs. When his boss, the owner of the factory, I think, asked him why he didn’t believe in Christ, as he thought he should, he simply replied: “If your daughter came home one day pregnant, and said it was an angel that got her pregnant, would you believe her?” The man understood the situation, and slowly and gradually people in general became more aware of it; all the Jewish war orphans, whom people so deeply feared could be dangerous, or would not fit in, never caused any trouble, and soon became an important part of the city’s and country’s economy.

Obviously his experiences during the eight months spent in Auschwitz were also shocking, seeing his dad murdered in the gas chambers, witnessing some of Mengele’s worst experiments, and especially the part when they went on one of the Death Marches, just before the Soviets liberated them.

Mrs. Y too impressed me in many ways, in spite of the shorter time spent speaking with her. It still seems surreal to me that that perfectly normal, friendly person, sitting in front of me and recounting what many would regard as their worst nightmares, could do it all in such a controlled, eloquent manner.

Both Mr. F and Mrs. Y were incredibly calm throughout, even through the most horrendous parts, and glad to be sharing their stories, which was a relief to me, initially not sure how sensitive they might be in answering my questions.

Finally, there is Mr. F.’s answer to question 14, which I would like to quote verbatim:

To the world – set aside politics, people always come first. Even great people can be misled by madmen in power, and these are the most dangerous. To all Jews – be an educated, identifiable Jew, because Hitler has made you one and in various ways, shaped who you are today.

Yad Vashem Needs Volunteers

Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Israel, is seeking to expand its Shoah Victims Database. Volunteers are needed to encourage submissions of Pages of Testimony, which are the principal documents of this database.

Volunteers should be willing to contact local institutions and individuals. With the aid of promotional materials Yad Vashem has developed, volunteers will reach out to survivors and their families and assist them in registering the names of Jews whom they know were murdered in the Shoah. This will be done through synagogues, Holocaust centres, Jewish Community centres, Jewish student organizations, seniors centres and social service agencies.

The Shoah Victims Names Database currently identifies about three million Jews murdered in the Holocaust, but millions of victims remain unidentified. As the Yad Vashem web site states: "Unless we assume collective responsibility for completing this vital mission, some of [these names] may be lost forever. **This is a race against time**, before those who remember them are no longer with us."

To volunteer, send your name, address, phone number and e-mail address to names.outreach@yadvashem.org.il with the subject heading "Names Volunteer." You can also find information on the Yad Vashem web site at http://www1.yadvashem.org/names/whyCollect.htm?WT.mc_id=yvscommunityguide

ADVERTISING RATES

SHEM TOV is now accepting display advertising for publication. Advertisers are requested to supply camera-ready art and payment by May 2007 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 91006, 2901 Bayview Ave., Toronto, Ontario M2K 1H0.

JGS Toronto Elections

Here are the results of our Society elections held at the December 13th meeting:

Shelley Stillman was elected as the new President.

Merle Levine-Langbord was elected as a Member-at Large.

Re-elected to their current positions were: Penny Gross as Vice President, Sid Disenhouse as Treasurer, Lucy Sadowski as Secretary, Gord Meslin as Member-at-Large, Neil Richler as Member-at-Large, David Trost as Member-at-Large.

Congratulations to all!

Carolynne Veffler becomes Immediate Past-President.

Many thanks to Carolynne for her superb commitment to JGS during her term as President. We wish her well during her career posting to Hong Kong (she will still be in touch via e-mail).

Our new President, Shelley Stillman, comes to us from the field of education. After being involved in her community and local schools, she served for twelve years as a school trustee. She was Chair of the North York Board of Education, and vice-chair of the Metropolitan Toronto School Board. Shelley became a member of JGS in June 2003. She took on the task of chairing the Cemetery Committee. To date, burial records from 10 of 13 Toronto area cemeteries have been submitted to JOWBR. Shelley looks forward to the completion of the cemetery project, including digitally photographing tombstones in the older cemeteries. Working with board and committee members, she intends to continue to deliver exceptional programs and to provide expanded opportunities for members to learn from each other.

JOWBR Update

The Cemetery Committee is pleased to report some upcoming Toronto-area additions to the Jewish On-Line Worldwide Burial Registry at JewishGen. These will include data from Brantford, Holy Blossom Memorial Park (on Brimley), and the following sections of Mount Sinai:

Canadian Hebrew Benevolent Society

Independent Friendly Workers

Jewish Canadian War Veterans

Kiever

Ozrower Mutual Benefit Society

Palmerston

Radomer (Beth Radom Congregation)/New Radomer

Shaarei Shomayim/New Shaarei Shomayim

Sunnyside

Toronto Independent Benevolent Association

YMHA

This data should be available on-line in the near future.

The Committee is continuing to prepare data from Beth Tzedec for submission to JOWBR. **If you are able to volunteer for data entry or proofreading, the Committee would love to hear from you. Please contact <info@jgstoronto.ca>.**

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 many of us have discovered in our genealogical searches, historical records about women often contain, at best, limited information. Married women in particular were subsumed under their husband's names in census lists and city directories; a woman's tombstone might lack her own name, referring to her only as "wife of..." Reconstructing a woman's life thus means being creative: reading between the lines of traditional sources, and looking to material that is often considered "soft" from the historian's viewpoint - recipes, songs and poems, remembered stories about a favourite object.

This approach is what JGS member **Cheryl Tallan** has followed, both in her genealogical researches and as co-author (with Emily Taitz and Sondra Henry) of a book entitled *The JPS Guide to Jewish Women, 600 B.C.E. to 1900 C.E.*, published in 2003. The book, which was called "a jewel" by *Publishers' Weekly*, was written to address the lack of knowledge about the history of Jewish women. It features essays on women in nine different historical periods, and includes a wealth of source material in its endnotes. The work has received rave reviews, and Cheryl and her colleagues were honoured as finalists at the National Jewish Book Awards. In the words of the *Midwest Book Review*, "No personal, professional, or academic Judaic Studies collections can be considered complete without the inclusion of *The JPS Guide to Jewish Women*."

Cheryl also follows this creative approach in her own genealogy research, looking for information that goes outside the usual birth/marriage/death data. "One of my ancestors had her first child at 17 and her last one at 43 or so, and lost several of the ones in between. Childbearing must have been a great burden. I was also thinking about the trips over by the women with children, coming to meet their husbands in North America. One of my cousins is, perhaps, going to write about his grandmother and grandfather. There is an article about the problems faced by the women with children on the boats in the most recent issue of *Jewish Social Sciences*, and I thought I might copy it and send it to him."

The names Cheryl is researching include BOSSIN and SHLYAPOCHNIK in the Ukraine (near Zhitomir), and LAPIDES, ELSTER, AJZNER, MITELMAN in Poland (near Czestochowa). This generous lady obviously loves research, and loves to share information with others: "One nice discovery is that we are related through the Lapidés line to [JGS member] **Alex Korn**, and we can share information on that branch of the family (most of the sharing has been done by Alex, since he has gone through the earliest records). I also know that I had an uncle or great uncles in Argentina, and through one of the

Packer family I found out that Todros Shlaposcuik immigrated to Argentina in 1909. We haven't found out any more about him, but I'm sure that we will in the future."

In addition to being a busy grandmother, Cheryl has taught at York University, and also completed her M.A. there in interdisciplinary studies, researching the status of Jewish widows in the mediaeval period for her thesis. She has written several scholarly articles on this subject, as well as a bibliography, "Medieval Jewish Women in History, Literature, Law and Art," for the Hadassah Brandeis Institute (web site www.brandeis.edu/hbi/pubs/working_papers.html). And she found time to attend the IAJGS conference in New York last summer, and take full advantage of its many highlights:

"I saw three of the films on Jewish topics. They all were interesting, but 'Watermarks,' the story of champion women swimmers in pre-war Austria, was great. I also enjoyed the panel discussion, 'Visual Storytelling: The Genealogical Document,' which included presentations by the writers and film makers, and discussions between the film makers and between them and members of the audience.

"There was only one concert but it was great! One of the presentations was 'Midnight Prayer (Tikkun Hatzot): Rare Klezmer and Hasidic Music from Russia,' played by Joel E. Rubin, clarinet, and Pete Rushefsky, tsimbl (hammered dulcimer). Some of the pieces these two men played were compiled by the Russian-Jewish ethnomusicologist, Moshe Beregovski (1892-1961). Rubin has given some of the melodies the names of towns from which Beregovski collected them. One was called after Brusilov, my mother's home town. It was very exciting to me to hear the name of the town my mother left in 1904 at a concert in the middle of New York City in 2006.

"I went to lectures and seminars on a mixture of topics. Some dealt with the history of the Ukraine and Poland, the homes of my ancestors. Two of the best seminars focused on using the Internet: David Kleiman, 'Genealogical Software: What's Right for Me?' and Gary Palgon, 'Using Internet Resources to Find Living Descendants.' Some seminars that I went to were given by people whom I had corresponded with or used their materials, like Dan Kazez and Steve Morse, and I wanted to see what they looked like.

"I had a good time at the 2006 conference and learned a lot. I doubt that I'll get to Salt Lake City but I may make the Chicago conference. And if the conference ever gets to Warsaw, I'll be there if I'm able."

Coming Soon on Our Web Site:
A Family Finder Spreadsheet for our Society.

Finding Uncle George

by Carolynne Veffer

Time to share another inquiry to our Society e-mail box. I hope it will be both educational and inspirational. And, this time, I even have a summary from the inquirer's viewpoint.

My Viewpoint

I received the following e-mail to info@jgstoronto.ca from Marla Cohen, who I subsequently discovered lives in Hartford Connecticut:

"I am trying to find information about **George Sorblum** who died 7/7/1919 and is buried in Pape Avenue Cemetery. I have reason to believe that he is a 'missing' family member, who supposedly went north to find his fortune and was never heard from again.

"Is there any way to find out if his father's name is on the stone or any way I can find out any more information to determine if he is indeed my great-grandmother's missing brother (b. in KUTNO, Poland.)"

My first response was "Yeah!" I was pretty sure she'd found this from the burial information our Cemetery Committee has put on JOWBR. And I was right. All that work by our Committee is "paying off".

But I knew we didn't have any additional information. So I thought I could just provide her with the contact information for Pape Avenue Cemetery. But because it seemed like an unusual name. I googled "George Sorblum." Eureka! I found an amazing reference to him. So I wrote this e-mail back to her:

"Hi Marla. I received your note to the Toronto Jewish Genealogy Society.

"I assume you got the burial information on George Sorblum from the data we put on JOWBR. That is all the information we received from Pape Cemetery. You can contact Pape Cemetery at 416-789-3291 for more information, if they have any. (When a name comes up on JOWBR there are two options under 'More Information': 'View Full Burial Record' and below that the name of the cemetery. If you click the name of the cemetery it provides information...location, contact information etc.).

"I also googled George Sorblum and came up with the amazing URL below. It shows a picture of the headstone and provides some very interesting information about George (I don't know how the person found all that out). At the bottom of the headstone it has the name of who erected the stone, but I can't read it. Perhaps you can. If not, someone at the cemetery might be willing to look for you (maybe not today - it's FREEZING in Toronto today). Also, if you can find out who posted the photo he/she might be able to help and let you know where he/she got that info. If you think he could be a relative the information provides various options for further research: NYC death records, his military service etc. http://www.fotolog.com/all_photos.html?user=geogblog&year=2005&month=06&day=17&view=day

"If there's anything else you think we can help with, just e-mail again. Good luck."

You can see the copy of the tombstone picture at the end of the article (page 9). (it is amazing isn't it?):

Before the end of the day I received this quick reply from Marla:

"Eureka! Thank you for the lead!! George Sorblum is the missing relative. I just went to the Canadian Archives web site and went to the data base for W.W.I vets. I have the confirmation that he is who I suspected!

"Thank you, thank you!!!

"This is just another testament to the power of Jewish-Gen!!"

The web site Marla is referring to is part of Library and Archives Canada (Archivianet). They have a database you can search for W.W.I Soldiers (Archivianet is also where you can do Canadian census searches, immigration records for 1925-35 etc.). Here's the link for the Soldiers of W.W.I database: http://www.collectionscanada.ca/02/02010602_e.html If you enter "Sorblum" you'll find the same information Marla did. But I couldn't read it, so I e-mailed again asking how this confirmed it was her George Sorblum. Here's her response:

"I know this is my great-great uncle because in his enlistment records in the Canadian W.W.I database he lists his brother as next of kin in New York and I happen to know that he was living with this brother Henry (Uncle Chunie) when the 1910 census was taken. I also found out that he was living in Timmins, Ontario, a place I found out is full of mines of all kinds. (The family story was that he went to Alaska to find gold.) Canada isn't exactly Alaska, but it is far enough north and there were gold mines in Timmins!

"My next puzzle is going to be 1) why he was buried in Toronto when according to the information under the picture he died in New York, and why did his stone say he was 'an unknown soldier.' 2) If he did die in New York, why no-one got in touch with his parents or siblings who were still living at the time. 3) Could he have been badly wounded or died in the flu epidemic? 4) I need to contact Pape Avenue cemetery because the only thing I can make out at the bottom of the stone is 'erected by Mrs...' and that's it.

"If I am successful, I will look for another needle in the Sorblum haystack and that is the missing sister Bessie, who went to Brazil."

This entire exchange happened over just 2 days!

A week or so later I received the following summary from Marla (who agreed we could publish it).

Marla's Viewpoint

How many of us have family stories that are precisely that...stories, bubba messiahs, with no kernel of truth in them. I was beginning to believe my case was not so unique.

My grandmother and her siblings related to me early on

that they had an uncle, George, a younger brother, who (I assumed) came from the same town in Poland as my great-grandparents. The story was that George simply disappeared when he left New York to go to Alaska to mine for gold. Now between you and me, that is a really good story! Really, how many Jewish boys went off to Alaska in pre-W.W.I America?

I had my doubts that he really existed. But fast-forward many years. Uncle George is a real person. He appears on both the 1900 and 1910 census records, living first with one brother and then another one. After that, no more record of Uncle George.

The mystery of Uncle George remained unsolved. But it began to bother me. Why couldn't I find any trace of him? I checked the Alaskan census records, but nothing - until last week that is.

Through the miracle of the internet, the databases of JewishGen and JRI-Poland, and the JGS of Toronto I actually found out what happened to Uncle George.

George's family came from the town of KUTNO, Poland. They arrived in the US some time in the late 1880's. Almost all of his siblings came to the US as well as his parents. Since the family name is unusual I always check and recheck the databases to see what new information appears. Funny thing, George Sorblum turned up on JOWBR, the Jewish Online Worldwide Burial Registry database, buried in Toronto, Canada, on July 7, 1919.

Suddenly, the mystery intensifies. He was supposed to have gone to Alaska, why was he in Canada? An S.O.S. to the JGS in Toronto brought an astonishing answer to the mystery.

Carolynne Veffler graciously offered her expertise and forwarded a link to the actual tombstone. George Sorblum was a soldier in the W.W.I Canadian Expeditionary Forces!

An e-mail to the Canadian National Archives led me to an on-line data base of W.W.I soldiers, which has the actual "enlistment" papers available for no charge. George is the only Sorblum on the data base. Apart from yelling "Oh my G-d, it's him" at my computer, I had my find confirmed by the next of kin listed. Furthermore, the "Alaska gold theory" was not so far off. The last known place of residence on the enlistment papers was a town called Timmins in Northern Ontario, known for its gold mines!

The more I think about all of this, it is truly serendipitous. All the elements came together miraculously in a matter of a few days. For me, it is just another confirmation of the power of Jewish genealogy, and how far we have come in such a short time.

It is truly sad that my great-great uncle died alone in Canada, without his family knowing what had happened to him. But at the same time, I am proud to be a descendant of a W.W.I veteran, who just happened to come from KUTNO, POLAND.

Marla Cohen

JRI Poland, Town Coordinator, KUTNO



George Sorblum's Tombstone

Request from "Ancestors in the Attic" on Yad Vashem Reunions

Peter Gombos, a researcher for History Television's "Ancestors in the Attic" program, is developing a segment that examines the Yad Vashem on-line database. If you are aware of Canadians who were able to make connections with survivors by using Yad Vashem (or if you've personally had reunions), he would like you to contact him at:

Peter Gombos (Primitive Entertainment)
225 Brunswick Ave.
Toronto, ON, Canada M5S 2M6
Email: peter@primitive.net
Tel: (416) 531-8037 ext 230

JEWISHGEN PLUS

News from JewishGen and Jewish Genealogy Newsletters,
Compiled and Annotated by Henry Wellisch

Update on Jewish Records in the Family History Library

Nancy Goldberg Hilton, who compiled a list of 4500 Jewish records contained in the Family History Library Catalogue, has now updated that list on a new CD. Entitled "Nechama's List," the CD includes Jewish records added to the Catalogue from January 8, 2001 to November 8, 2006. A copy of the CD has been sent to our JGS library; please look for a review in an upcoming issue of *Shem Tov*.

Stephen Morse's New "Gold Form"

Morse's terrific one-step search site (<http://www.stevemorse.org>) has added a new feature for Ellis Island searches. The gold form can search through the entire twenty-five million passengers in the Ellis Island database, and it can search on every field. It allows searches for traveling companions. The user is able to specify which fields to display on the results page, and can specify how to sort the results.

The gold form now makes the blue and gray forms for Ellis Island searches obsolete. The white form is still available, as it uses a different search engine, and thus may give slightly different search results. The gold form, though, is recommended as the form of choice.

Please note that Stephen Morse will be giving a lecture in Hamilton in June - check the Upcoming Events section in this issue.

The Israeli "Family Roots" Forum

This is a non-profit genealogical organization, open for all Hebrew-enabled genealogists worldwide. The organization has both real world meetings and on-line Ask the Expert sessions. Among their various projects: GeneWiki - a collection of encyclopedia terms, articles, people, family pages, and guides; Computerizing Israeli Immigration Books; and a Family Recipes Collection. Co-chairs of the Israeli "Family Roots" Forum are Arnon Hershkovitz and Yehuda Dodo. You can find out more at their web site: <http://forums.tapuz.co.il/roots>

Web Site Design for Genealogists

Dick Eastman reports on a site designed by Patricia Geary that offers advice on how to put your genealogy information on-line. The site is at <http://www.genealogy-web-creations.com>, and offers tutorials and lists of software packages for web design, a discussion of style sheets, and links to other sites on the topic.

Do You Have Roots in Northern Ontario?

Peter Lebensold writes on JewishGen: "For anyone with family roots in Grey County (about 2 1/2 hours drive north of Toronto) - and Owen Sound, its main town (pop: 21,000) - the new web site for Beth Ezekiel ('the last example of the early small town synagogue that was once so common across Canada') will be of interest: <http://www.bethezekiel.org/> The synagogue was founded in 1904, and among the families celebrated in the building's stained-glass windows are SHUSTER, HERSHORAN, LEVINE, RICH, RABOVSKY, FROMSTEIN, ELIE, LANDY, GORBET, BELL, FISHMAN, GREEN and VAN WYCK."

More on Passenger Lists

A web site called "What Passenger Lists Are Online? Internet Sources for Transcribed Passenger Records & Indexes" contains links to many on-line passenger lists. The site is divided into US Arrivals, International Arrivals and Departures (including Canada), and General Sites (which includes a variety of records from particular ships). The site address is <http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/onlinelists.html>

If you don't find your ancestor's passenger list on-line, the site reminds you that you can still search off-line, and recommends starting at a site called "Finding Passenger Lists & Immigration Records: 1820-1940s arrivals at US ports from Europe," by Joe Beine. This site is at <http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/passengers.html>

New Ancestry Site for German Records

Ancestry.com has announced the addition of more than six million names from German records to its historical records collection. These records include passenger lists (including the Hamburg passenger lists), census and vital records, sailors' registry, ships crew lists and family and local histories. It has also created Ancestry.de, its first foreign-language, international site; other international sites include Ancestry.ca (Canada), Ancestry.co.uk (United Kingdom) and Ancestry.com.au (Australia). Note that all Ancestry sites require a subscription.

Canadian Jewish Casualties in the Canadian Armed Forces

The ACJS Bulletin reports on this new feature on the National Archives section of the Canadian Jewish Congress. It is a searchable table that provides the date of death and place of burial for Canadian Jewish servicemen who died serving in the Canadian Armed Forces in World War I, World War II and the Korean War. Some of the entries have links to photos or album pages. The site is at <http://www.cjc.ca/archives/casualties.php>

JEWISHGEN PLUS

News from JewishGen and Jewish
Genealogy Newsletters,
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Genealogy Videos and Newspaper Archives on Google

Dick Eastman notes that there are a number of genealogy-related videos that can be downloaded from www.google.com (click "Videos" on the Google toolbar, and enter "Genealogy" as your search criterion). Among the material available is "Tracing Your Family Roots," in which Sallyann Sack and Arline Sachs talk about methodology for beginning genealogical research.

Eastman also recommends Google's news archive as a way to get access to news articles that is in many cases free or low-cost. The site is at <http://news.google.com/archivesearch>. The material includes articles from *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* and *Washington Post*, as well as from other online collections such as LexisNexis, HighBeam and Thomson Gale.

Progress at Bad Arolsen

Gary Mokotoff at *Nu? What's New?* reports that the eleven-member body overseeing the International Tracing Service archives in Bad Arolsen, Germany, has set in motion the process to open the ITS records to the public before the end of 2007. This may occur even before all the nations approve the process. Four countries have already approved the plan: Israel, The Netherlands, Poland and the United States. Germany, Britain and Luxembourg have indicated they will give approval in the next two months. The remaining countries are Belgium, France, Greece and Italy.

According to Mokotoff, Reto Meister, head of the International Tracing Service located at Bad Arolsen, has stated that digitized copies of "core documents" would be ready within two months. These include incarceration records, death lists, camp registries and transportation lists. The archive is estimated to contain about 40 million documents, referring to some 17.5 million people — 16 miles of files containing the fullest records of Nazi persecutions in existence. There are plans to develop rules that would allow scholars to access the records directly at Bad Arolsen. However, there is as yet no indication of how or when copies of these records will be available to the public.

For more information, go to http://news.yahoo.com/ap/20070308/ap_on_re_eu/netherlands_nazi_archive_4

A story run on "60 Minutes" (CBS) on December 17, 2006, featured three Jewish survivors who were able for the first time to gain access at Bad Arolsen to their own Holocaust records. Please see a summary of this program at <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/12/14/60minutes/main2267927.shtml>.

New Acquisitions to the JGS of Canada (Toronto) Collection at the North York Public Library (Gladys Allison, Canadiana Room 6th floor)

by Elaine Cheskes

Eker, Glen. *Index of Jews Resident in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island According to the 1861 to 1901 Censuses of Canada*. Toronto: The Ontario Genealogical Society, 2004.

Eker, Glen. *Index of Jews Resident in Newfoundland According to the Censuses of 1921, 1935, and 1945*. Toronto: The Ontario Genealogical Society, 2005.

Eker, Glen. *Index of Jews Resident in the Province of Québec According to the 1861 to 1901 Censuses of Canada*. Toronto: The Ontario Genealogical Society, 2004.

Eker, Glen. *Index of Jews Resident in Western Canada According to the 1870 to 1901 Censuses of Canada*. Toronto: The Ontario Genealogical Society, 2006.

Lipsitz, Edmond Y., ed. *World Jewish Directory: Year 2004 Edition*. 4th edition, revised and updated. Toronto: J.E.S.L. Educational Products, 2003.

Oliver, Peter. *Unlikely Tory: the Life and Politics of Allan Grossman*. Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1985.

Snir, Jacob, ed. *Wierzbnik-Starachowice: the Jewish Cemetery and Commemoration Projects*. Jerusalem: Wierzbnik-Starachowice Society, 2005.

Weinfeld, Morton. *Like Everyone Else.. But Different: the Paradoxical Success of Canadian Jews*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2001.

We Welcome These New Members to Our Society

Josef Meshorer

Arthur Ryman

Karen Amato

Book Review

by Elaine Cheskes

World Jewish Directory: Year 2004 edition.

Edited by Edmond Y. Lipsitz. 4th ed., revised and updated. Toronto: J.E.S.L. Educational Products, 2003.

The *World Jewish Directory* is a collection of worldwide Jewish resources. It combines thirteen directories into one comprehensive volume, thus eliminating the task of searching through a multitude of directories. Names, addresses, phone and fax numbers, e-mail addresses, and web sites of libraries, holocaust museums, Jewish information services, archives, genealogical societies, and major Jewish organizations are included in the Directory.

The Directory is organized in a systematic and straightforward format. It is divided into sections that begin with an introduction and explanation of the roles and purposes of each resource. Within each section is an alphabetically arranged geographical list of countries where resources are located. This feature enables the researcher to contact Jewish organizations worldwide. Although the Directory includes resources predominantly from Canada and the United States, the countries of Poland, the Ukraine, Great Britain and Israel, together with other major world centres, are well represented with a multitude of Jewish contacts on a global scale.

The following example clearly demonstrates the usage of the Directory:

Poland Museums

The Jewish Historical Institute Museum Polish Jewish Historical Museum

ul Jelinka 48 PL-01-646 Warsaw 48-22 833-0021
Jerzy Halbersztadt, Project Dir Fax: 48-22 833-2043
Prof. Feliks Tych, Director
Ewa Junczyk-Ziomecka, Dir. of Development
e-mail: museum@jewishmuseum.org.pl
www.jewishmuseum.org.pl

Contains documents on the story of the Warsaw Ghetto and the Ghetto Uprising and manuscripts stolen by the Germans from all over Europe.

Although the *World Jewish Directory* was published in 2004, most of the information is current and up-to-date (the entry for the JGS Canada (Toronto) Library needs revision). Our library is fortunate to have the Directory in its collection as it is extremely difficult to obtain, and J.E.S.L. Educational Products is uncertain if a 2008 edition will be published.

The *World Jewish Directory* is a valuable and indispensable reference source that enables the researcher to locate and contact Jewish agencies throughout the global network.

Come Visit Our Library!

Our library collection is located at North York Central Library, 5120 Yonge Street, 6th floor (Canadiana Room), in Toronto (North York Central subway station). Look over our genealogy holdings, which include genealogical research guides, directories, gazetteers, holocaust reference material, archival resources, memorial books and census records, as well as the genealogy resources of the Canadiana room: passenger lists, census records, access to ancestry.com and much, much more.

From our web site at <http://www.jgstoronto.ca/Library.html>, you can download a catalogue of our holdings, check our new acquisitions and learn more about the Canadiana room. And feel free to contact our librarian, Elaine Cheskes, at library@jgstoronto.ca.

***Nisan* (March 20-April 18, 2007) is Jewish Genealogy Month**

Celebrate your family heritage during Jewish Genealogy Month and all year round!

For more information, check the IAJGS web site at www.iajgs.org

Please Share Your Breakthroughs!

If you have had an interesting find, discovered a new resource, developed a new research strategy or anything you think would be of interest to other members, we'd like to hear from you. To share your experience by giving a brief 5 - 10 minute talk on June 27, please contact Stan Zeidenberg at stan@firstport.com.

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