

שם טוב
SHEM TOV

JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA (TORONTO)

VOLUME XXIII No. 4

December 2007 Kislev 5768

“TORONTO’S FIRST SYNAGOGUES” - A “VIRTUAL” TREASURE TROVE

By Dr. Ellen Scheinberg, Director, Ontario Jewish Archives

This October the Ontario Jewish Archives (OJA) launched a photographic exhibit as part of Phase II of the virtual exhibit “Toronto’s First Synagogues.” The original project was launched in 2005 and was coordinated by myself and Robert Burley, professor and artist from the Image Arts Faculty of Ryerson University. We relied on five energetic young students and graduates to undertake the technical and curatorial work. They included Donna Bernardo-Ceriz, Aviva Heller, Carrie Limkilde, Justin Broadbent and Dan Ehrenworth. The display that was produced featured three synagogues – the First Narayever, The Maria Street Synagogue and the Kiever. This project was funded by a small grant from the Canada Digital Collections (CDC) Program. Unfortunately, this federal program was cancelled in 2005 and we had to look elsewhere for funding to support the expansion of this exhibit.

The virtual display includes historic texts as well as digitized images of artifacts, photographs, documents, maps and artwork. All of the contemporary artistic photographs included in the display were created by Bob Burley. He also produced oversized, numbered prints of the synagogue images that were sold to Joey Tanenbaum, who donated them to the OJA. They are now on display on the second and third floors of the Miles Nadal JCC.

Phase II of the virtual synagogue project began in January of 2006. We relied on funds from our own budget to undertake this work and hired Aviva Heller again and Eliana Busheikin to produce the text and images for the site. The two shuls that were selected were the Beach Hebrew Institute and Anshei Minsk, which were established in 1919 and 1912 respectively. Like the three original shuls that were included in this project, these two are still active today and occupy the original or early buildings that were constructed almost eighty to ninety years ago.

What distinguished these two synagogues from the other three is that the Beach Hebrew Institute is situated in the East end of town, which was far away from the main community centre during the 1920s and 1930s that was situated in the Kensington Market area. This neighbourhood had a small but committed Jewish community. Some of the important figures associated with that area include Ida Siegel (community leader), Benjamin Brown (the first Jewish architect in Toronto) and the

Wolfe family. A number of the members worked downtown but lived in the Beach area, which was a very nice area to live outside of the city. Occasionally, however, they were confronted with anti-Semitism, which was fairly prevalent in that area during the early years of that synagogue. Today the congregation is thriving and has adopted a more egalitarian structure for its services.

Cont'd on Page 3



Ontario Jewish Archives, Robert Burley Fonds.
Beach Shul, exterior view

In This Issue

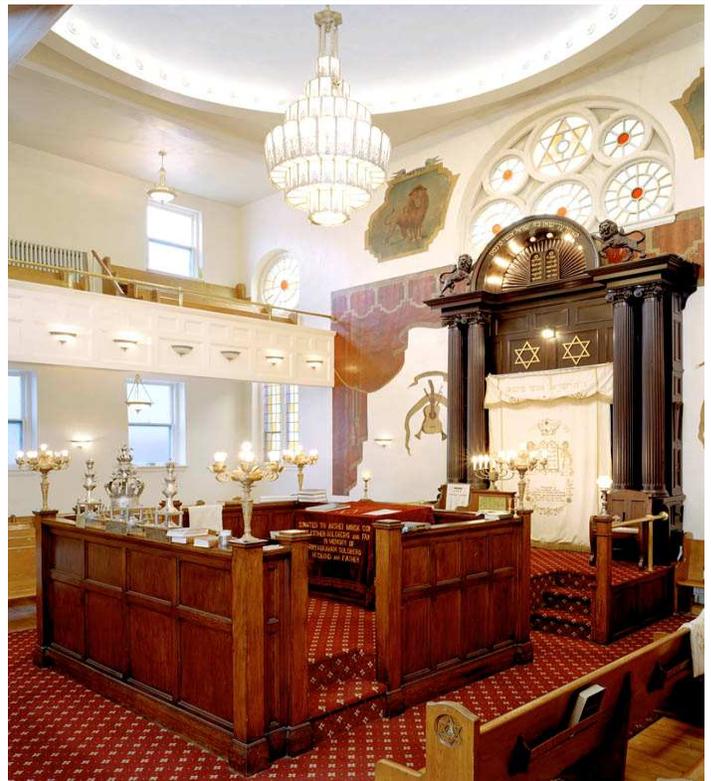
- 1 “Toronto’s First Synagogues”
- 3 *Upcoming Events and New Members*
- 4 *@jgstoronto.ca*
- 4 *Time to Renew*
- 5 *Spotlight on Members & Friends*
- 6 *JEWISHGEN Plus*
- 8 *IAJGS News*
- 8 *Finding Burials on JEWISHGEN: How to “JOWBR”*
- 9 *Eastman’s Rules of Posting Genealogy Information Online*
- 9 *New Book*
- 10 *Finding Georges: How to Discover Unknown Relatives with the Aid of the Yad Vaseem Web Site*
- 12 *Volunteers Needed!*
- 12 *Branching Out at the JGS of Canada (Toronto) Library*

ADVERTISING RATES

SHEM TOV is now accepting display advertising for publication. Advertisers are requested to supply camera-ready art and payment by February 2008 for the Spring 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.



Ontario Jewish Archives, Robert Burley Fonds.
Anshei Minsk, sanctuary

vol. XXIII No. 4

SHEM TOV is published quarterly by the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto) and is distributed free to members. Current and back issues are available for \$4 per issue.

Contributions are invited. Submit material c/o Shem Tov Editor, P.O. Box 91006, 2901 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, ON M2K 2Y6.

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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“Toronto’s First Synagogues” Cont’d from page 1

The Minsk (facing page), in contrast, was located in the heart of Kensington Market, and was at the centre of the old Jewish community. Despite the rapid movement of Jews away from the Market after the war, it continued to operate and hold Shabbat services, as well as morning services for businessmen who worked downtown. It is, in fact, one of the few downtown shuls to remain Orthodox and retain a full-time rabbi, Rabbi Shmuel Spero.

Of particular interest to genealogists is the fact that the exhibit includes audio and video clips along with many photos, artifacts and documents. This is a treasure trove of information for those whose ancestors were involved in these early shuls.

In regards to the future, we are currently working on Phase III of this project. Simon Rogers has been hired to do the curatorial work. He is now finishing the text for two new additions – the Markham and Palmerston Street Synagogues. The former is still operating today in its original building, while the latter closed in 1978. It will take some time to complete the digitization and design work, but I am hopeful that we will be able to launch this phase by the fall of 2008.

Any future additions will likely require funding from the synagogues involved. I tried to secure grant money or internal funding to support the inclusion of the early small shuls, who were not in a position to finance this type of initiative on their own. Larger synagogues like Holy Blossom, Beth Tzedec and Shomrai Shabbos would be good candidates to include in the future, since they are the oldest synagogues in Toronto. But due to their long history and size, these initiatives would require far greater resources. We would therefore need to secure funding from them or engage in a partnership arrangement in order to tackle these shuls.

If any Shem Tov readers have a connection to one of the early shuls that has not yet been included in the exhibit and are interested in assisting with this project, please feel free to contact me and get involved. This is truly a community project that depends on strong partnerships to succeed. I can be reached at the following coordinates: escheinberg@ujafed.org or 416-635-2883 ext. 187.

Please visit the current exhibit by going to www.ontariojewisharchives.org and then clicking on the “Exhibits” button at the top of the page.

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

Zena Andrea Ezechiels Elaine Labendz

B. Carolyn Peters Robert Ruskin

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 Ave.

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

*Non-member fee: \$5.00 per meeting
(exception: spouses accompanying members)*

Wednesday, January 30, 2008

Speaker: Jane McNamara

Topic: What's in the Archives of Ontario...and How to Find It?

Wednesday, February 27, 2008

Speaker: A panel of speakers will provide introductory comments, followed by a question and answer period

Topic: A session on the issues of "Privacy, Confidentiality and Ethics in Genealogy"

SUNDAY, March 30, 2008

Speaker: Alan Greenberg, Montreal Jewish Genealogical Society

Topic: The Naturalization Database Project

Wednesday, April 30, 2008

Speaker: Hubert Huebscher

Topic: DNA and Classic Genealogy Join to Solve a Genealogical Puzzle

The application of DNA to genealogy has made great strides since its beginnings in 2000. The benefits of combining DNA and classical paper-trail methodologies are becoming evident. The presentation is about an advanced genealogy project currently underway that had its beginnings in a conventional Y-DNA surname project. One of the earliest applications of DNA to genealogy has been surname projects, in which DNA testing is used to determine if persons with the same or similar surnames share a recent paternal ancestor. Basic 12-marker Y-DNA tests often are sufficient to prove or disprove, with a high degree of certainty, the hypothesis of a common ancestor when surnames match.

Wednesday, May 28, 2008

Speaker: Jill Culliner

Topic: Finding Home: In the Footsteps of the Jewish fugeyers

THURSDAY, June 5, 2008

Speaker: Ron Arons

Topic: The Internet Beyond JewishGen and Steve Morse's Website

Wednesday, June 25, 2008

Topic: Breakthroughs and Year -End Meeting

Cemetery Project Status

On October 25th, 2007, the Cemetery Committee submitted 4,420 burial records to JOWBR for Beth Tzedec Cemetery. This project began about a year ago in the fall of 2006 when Shelley Stillman and David Trost met with Tom Laufer at Beth Tzedec and received permission to index the cemetery records. This proved to be a very large project, with 15 volunteers from our society participating at various times to transfer index card information to a computer spreadsheet. Shelley Stillman and Bev Lokash then spent many hours reviewing every entry against the cemetery journal records to ensure that all the information was accurate. Thanks to the efforts of many volunteers, this JOWBR submission was an intensely researched and completely compiled set of cemetery records in Toronto.

Early this year Merle Levine was successful in obtaining the records for Lambton Cemetery and about 3,270 records were published.

In October we also submitted over 9,000 burial records for Bathurst Lawn. These records are fairly complete for those burials after 1980. Before this time most of the records were not computerized and therefore were not yet available for submission.

Elaine Slavens and David Trost have just initiated a project to photograph the early cemeteries of Toronto and publish these digital photographs through JOWBR. They began with Jones Avenue, which was established in 1883 and has about 1,000 burials. Thanks to timely assistance from Harvey Glasner and Nora Freund this photography project should be completed this year. The next project Elaine plans to undertake is to photograph the Pape Avenue cemetery, which was established in 1849. Many of the early stones are badly eroded and these digital images will help to preserve Toronto's pioneer Jewish heritage.

We have now submitted records for 11 cemeteries, which make up almost all the available burials in the GTA. The recently submitted records should become available online before year-end. We thank all the volunteers for their past assistance and hope they will continue to work with us as we add new information and continue to update our extensive burial database:

Photocopying: Judi Ghert, Beverly Lokash, Jan Page
Data Entry: Sarah Faerman, Ala Gamulka, Claudia Kugelmass, Linda Offman, Gert Rogers, Penny Rubinoff, Elaine Singer, Sandy Stern, David Trost

It's time to renew your membership for 2008. Membership is valid on a yearly basis from January to December. Our membership renewal period will be January to March. Membership dues remain at \$36 (\$18 for high school and university students - proof of status required).

To renew, please do the following:

- 1) Download a membership form from our web site, make sure your contact information is up to date, and include this form with your cheque. The form can be found at <http://www.jgstoronto.ca/Membership.html>
- 2) Make your cheque out to "Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto)" with a January 2008 date.

Mail the cheque and form to:

Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto)
P.O. Box 91006
2901 Bayview Avenue
Toronto, ON M2K 2Y6
Canada

or

Hand in the cheque and form at the next membership meeting to the person at the front desk.

If you want to pay your membership before December 31, 2007, please date your cheque January 1, 2008.

In early 2008 you will receive your tax receipt for 2007 (if you haven't already received it). We will issue 2008 tax receipts in early 2009.

If you have any questions about your membership, please contact info@jgstoronto.ca.

Thank you!

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.

I am very pleased to spotlight in this issue someone whose work is hidden behind the scenes, and yet whose efforts are so important for *Shem Tov* and for the prestige of the Society in general. **Dulcey Hoffman** is our layout artist, the person responsible for the attractive and professional look of each issue of *Shem Tov* you receive.

In case you weren't aware, Dulcey has been involved with *Shem Tov* for a considerable period of time: "My mother-in-law, **Gert Solnik Rogers**, said they needed someone to do the layout of *Shem Tov*. I have always been interested in this area and told the JGS that I would be interested in helping on *Shem Tov*...that was a long time ago...probably 12 years or more!"

I find it amazing that Dulcey manages to take in the jumble of materials I send her, often at the last minute, correct my mistakes, and put everything out in such a well-organized and professional format. In her modest way she states: "I use Publisher to lay out the design, which I had never used before. It is a lot of fun to set up the articles and you feel a real sense of accomplishment when it is all done. Publisher has really been the only software I use except desk pdf which I use to send to the printer and *Shem Tov* editor."

Most amazing is the fact that Dulcey must balance this volunteer work with full-time jobs inside and outside the home. She brings an interesting insight into how to manage so much work - a liking of variety: "I make the time, which is hard since I have 3 teenagers and a full time job. I like variety in my work and always welcome a change."

And how does this gracious lady respond to being in the spotlight? By insisting on sharing it: "I want to thank Diane Kriger for all her help. She is amazing with all of the juggling of getting the articles and editing them, then checking my work even though I swore I caught everything."

Thank *you*, Dulcey, for all your great work.

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



Peter Lande recently spoke at a Society monthly meeting. You may be interested in checking out his article "Did Cousin Rabinowitz Die in the Holocaust?" at www.jewishgen.org/Belarus (right column).

JEWISHGEN PLUS

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

FAMILLION Introduces Family Tree Merging Technology

FAMILLION™ (<http://www.famillion.com>) announces that with its new merging family tree technology, family trees no longer grow in isolation. FAMILLION™ provides a central place for users to connect to family members and relatives beyond their knowledge. With little information inserted, overlapping family trees from all around the world automatically merge, gradually forming a global family forest. Based in Israel, FAMILLION plans to add one million family trees to its database by the end of 2007.

The company was founded by Danny Rolls, whose aim is quite simply to “map the whole world, create a GPS [global positioning system] for humanity.” Rolls has conducted a pilot project in Israeli schools for pupils to map their family trees. He states that his company’s software differs from other genealogy web sites because its patented technology can merge and connect different family trees based on the barest of information. Even if names are spelled differently, it can recognize and link different families. All social network options are incorporated - features such as sharing photos, stories, and adding events to an inherent calendar. There are also strict privacy features and rules. Users are completely on top of their content and are able to decide exactly who can and can’t see the information they enter. In addition, FAMILLION™ merges users’ trees only upon getting their consent, and allows them to add in or exclude tree members at any stage.

FAMILLION™ is free of charge and available to anyone.

New Family History Web Site in Salt Lake City

Joan Parker of IAJGS reports that The Family History Department in Salt Lake City has developed a new research support tool, www.FamilySearchWiki.org. This resource has been developed to help make family history research advice easier to find and share. There are two ways to search the site; keyword search or browse by country. This site includes all research outlines published by the Family History Library and many other articles never published such as the wiki material for Japan, China and India.

Joan states that “there are other countries of interest to JewishGenners, including Belarus, Poland and Russia, Hungary and so on with great links to stories, archives, research topics, etc. in those countries. The United States, England, Canada and Wales are included also.”

Ancestry.Com Introduces Digital Scrapbooking Application

Ancestry.com announces that it has launched AncestryPress, a tool that aids users in creating professionally printed, custom family history books, family recipe books and more. Ancestry.com states that this new state-of-the-art publishing tool offers users a one-stop solution to build their family tree, discover historical documents about their ancestors, collaborate with their family members and create high-quality family history books.

AncestryPress exports profiles, historical documents and photographs from a user’s online Ancestry.com family tree directly into automatically generated page layouts – such as illustrated family tree charts, biographical timelines and document pages. Users can easily customize the look and feel of each page by adding family photographs, changing backgrounds both plain and themed, using drag-and-drop page embellishments, writing text and more.

Beyond family history books, Ancestry.com notes that users can also use AncestryPress to create heirloom recipe books, complete with photos and memories of the family members who handed down the recipes, as well as photo pages, suitable for framing, that showcase important moments in their family’s history.

Once a user has finished adding personal touches to the book, they can choose from two simple printing options: they can print individual pages immediately to a home printer, or they can have Ancestry.com professionally print and bind a full-color, hand-stitched, hardcover book. The site is located at <http://www.ancestrypress.com>. Prices are listed at the site.

New One-Step Search Engine for Canadian Data

Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ) announces a new web site dedicated to genealogical research at www.thatsmyfamily.info, also available in French at www.voicimafamille.info. Launched by BANQ in partnership with Library and Archives Canada (LAC), this site provides the public with a user-friendly and innovative federated search engine free of charge.

Maintained by BANQ, the new search engine allows genealogists to conduct searches against several databases at once. Most of the interface-compatible databases brought together here are hosted by federal, provincial or territorial Canadian libraries or archives centres.

U.S. Geographic Site May Aid in Finding Cemeteries

Dick Eastman reports that the U.S. Government's Geographic Names Information System, usually referred to as "GNIS," contains information about almost 2 million physical and cultural geographic features in the United States. Such features include not only every village, mountain, river, airport, bay, beach, bridge, etc. in the United States, but also many cemeteries. The GNIS provides references to each feature's state, county, latitude and longitude, and also provides links to various map sites, including MapQuest. The site is also useful in helping to find locations mentioned in old documents. The database is located <http://geonames.usgs.gov>, and is available to all, free of charge.

More Information on Preserving Family Documents

The Library of Congress has a web page offering simple instructions and links to more in-depth information regarding preserving family documents. The web page is titled, "Preparing, Protecting and Preserving Family Treasures." The site is at: www.locweb.loc.gov/preserv/familytreasures/index.html.

A Newsletter of Interest to Canadian Genealogists

The latest issue of *Gordon Watts Reports* is now online at <http://globalgenealogy.com/globalgazette/gazgw/gazgw-0103.htm>

Watts writes articles containing news, tips, and other information aimed at assisting those who have an interest in genealogy and/or history. The latest issue includes an article on the "informed consent" provision in the Canada Statistics Act, which purports to give the right to choose whether one's census information will be made public in 92 years.

Two New Search Tools from Stephen Morse

Joy Rich of IAJGS reports that Steve Morse has created two new search tools, both listed in the "Births, Deaths, and Other Vital Records" section at www.stevemorse.org:

- Social Security Numbers: Decoding Social Security Numbers in One Step
- Credit Card Numbers: Validating Credit Card Numbers in One Step.



May 19 - June 1, 2008 In Search of your Jewish Roots in Northern Poland, Lithuania and Latvia

*Join us for an unforgettable 14 day heritage
tour exploring what was the Litvak heartland*

Leaving from Toronto travel to Warsaw then to Treblinka, Ketrzyn, Suwalk, Kaunas, Memel, Vilnius, Sauliai and Riga. Learn about the rich Litvak cultural heritage, visit Holocaust sites, including Paneriai, the Ninth Fort and the ghettos of Warsaw, Kaunas & Vilnius.

Take the opportunity to arrange a roots tour to your ancestral shtetl or to research your ancestry in the archives of Vilnius & Kaunas.

Tour guides include Jacques Pauwels, World War II historian and Simon Davidovich, director of the Sugihara Museum in Kaunas.

Alternate departure points, 3-day add on in Prague, or land only option available on request. For more information and a detailed itinerary contact the tour hosts Maureen Price (mpprice@cogeco.ca) or Irwin Feuerstein (feuerst@mcmaster.ca) or go to the website of the Pauwels Travel Agency at www.pauwelstravel.com
To ensure your place, serious expression of interest required by January 31st/08.

IAJGS News

Digitizing Illinois Records

Just in time for the 2008 Chicago IAJGS conference, the Cook County (IL) Clerk has announced that newly digitized versions of county records such as birth and death certificates and marriage licenses will be available beginning in January on one searchable Web site. For more information, go to the following site (please note that the URL may spread over two lines): http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/digitize_websep07.1.531448.story?ctrack=1&cset=true

Free Registration for Poster Competition Winner

A reminder of the poster competition for Jewish Genealogy Month in Cheshvan (Oct-Nov) 2008. Please go to www.iajgs.org to find all the details about this competition (click Jewish Genealogy Month). Please send all submissions to the Chair, Marilyn Brenner at lvarteest@yahoo.com. The deadline for receipt of submissions is April 1, 2008. The winning poster will be unveiled at the Chicago 2008 conference (August 17-22, 2008 at the Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile); the winning artist wins a free registration to that conference.

2009 Conference Date Set

IAJGS is very pleased to announce that the 29th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy will be held in Philadelphia, PA from August 2 - 7, 2009 at the Sheraton Philadelphia City Center Hotel. This conference will be co-hosted by the IAJGS and the JGS of Greater Philadelphia

Tip *Tov*

With so many internet resources now being used by genealogists, it's a good idea to use some standard form of citation for your internet sources when you are writing out your family history. There are a number of books dealing with this subject, which show the correct way to identify online sources such as databases, census images, and digital books and articles, rules and models for common record types such as passenger lists, vital records, and newspapers, and rules for citing the author/creator/owner of a website, its title, address, and date posted. Two such book written by Elizabeth Shown Mills and recommended by Dick Eastman are *Evidence Explained* and *Evidence! Citation & Analysis for the Family Historian*.

Finding Burials on JEWISHGEN: How to "JOWBR"

by David Trost

The IAJGS International Jewish Cemetery Project has as its mission to catalogue every Jewish burial site throughout the world. General information about this project may be found at: <http://www.jewishgen.org/Cemetery/> This site identifies cemeteries and burial sites.

For details on specific burials, you must go to the **JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry** (JOWBR), which is the database of names and other identifying information from cemeteries and burial records worldwide, from the earliest records to the present. In Canada over 265 cemeteries listing 88,625 burials have already been indexed and more are being added every week.

The **Worldwide Burial Registry** may be accessed from <http://www.jewishgen.org/> Remember, this is a non-profit organization, so response time is relatively slow and frequently erratic. Have patience and if your request is delayed several minutes, just try again later in the day.

Starting from this point, a typical search of the JOWBR database to find cemetery, section and plot number for a particular individual is described below.

- When you first access JewishGen there is usually a request for your Login ID and password. Assuming you are already registered you may login and then continue. At this point a screen is displayed asking you to consider a donation to JewishGen and you may have to wait patiently for several minutes as this process completes in order to continue.
- Then, you can access JOWBR by clicking on the JOWBR button.
- Search on surname and geographical area by filling in the screens until you find the plot location for an individual you are researching.
- Then you click on [View Full Burial Record](#), which does not in fact give the full burial record.
- You will see Cemetery Name (for instance, [Roselawn](#)). The blue script on the cemetery name usually connotes a hyperlink.
- Then if you click on [Roselawn](#) the section name will be revealed.
- To see an overview of all cemeteries that have already been indexed and placed on JOWBR, you go to: <http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Cemetery/tree/CemList.htm>

In essence, using JOWBR requires training, and we hope to address this issue in the near future.

Eastman's Rules of Posting Genealogy Information Online

by Dick Eastman

Reprinted with permission from *Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter*

1. If you don't want everyone to know about something and use that something as they wish, don't post it online! There are no secrets after you post information online. You can claim copyrights or legal protection, but the fact remains that information placed on the web quickly becomes common knowledge. You may be correct in thinking that nobody else should ever reuse your information, but not everyone will agree with you. Regardless of your intentions, some people will re-use your data elsewhere. Getting the data removed later will be difficult and frustrating. Think before you post!
2. Keep in mind that all search engines will index your site (unless you take steps to do otherwise), and most of them will cache the information. One web site (www.archive.org which is not a true search engine) will cache your data more or less forever, even if you later change or remove your data.
3. A few specialty search sites will charge their subscribers a fee to search your site and millions of others. General-purpose search engines, such as Google, are usually free to the user. Specialty search engines that look only for financial data, legal data, real estate transactions, sports scores, etc. typically charge a fee. The more specialized the search engine, the higher the fee. Some charge very high prices. You and I don't hear much about the fee-based search engines, but they exist, nonetheless.
4. Facts are not copyrighted, at least not under U.S. law. If your web page contains only names and dates and locations of life events (birth, marriage, death, census entries, military service, etc.), you do not own that information. It is public domain.

If your page(s) contains additional descriptive information, interpretations, stories, or other information that you wrote, the original information you added might be copyrighted. However, the dividing line between copyrighted information and public domain information is often fuzzy. Even legal experts who specialize in intellectual property issues often disagree with each other. You should realize that not everyone is going to agree with your interpretation of the legal issues involved.

Actually, all of this is probably a moot point anyway. Whether legal or not, it is very difficult to force someone to remove copies of information you supplied.

Never assume. You may have strong opinions concerning what is right or wrong, but not everyone will agree with you. Ask yourself, "What will happen if I place this information online?" Be realistic!

New Book

Our Society has received a copy of *Abraham's Children. Race, Identity, and the DNA of the Chosen People* by Jon Entine. Its provocative contents are described in the publisher's blurb:

"Entine... tackles the thorny matter of Jewish identity. Some of his conclusions may be surprising.

"The author, a secular Jew and an adjunct fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, has been driven by family health crises to seek out the genetics of Judaism.DNA acts as a starting point for discussion of Jewish originsThe author disputes conventional wisdom, which cautious scientists have advanced recently, that genetic differences between individuals are minute and superficial. Instead, he embraces genetics as a method of discovering more about the diverse breadth of humanity. Nevertheless, Entine realizes that Jewish DNA does not necessarily make a Jew. To explore the question of Jewish origins, Entine takes the reader on a global tour, exploring both mythic and factual migrations of Jews across Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and finally into the Americas. DNA testing has allowed scientists to explore the validity of direct ancestry claims for far-flung Jewish communities in such places as South Africa and India, while it has also identified hidden enclaves of "crypto-Jews" in places such as the American Southwest. Entine goes on to discuss the touchy subject of race, and how Jewish identity has been perceived by both Jews and non-Jews through recent history and into the present. He also bluntly approaches modern (and historic) stereotypes of Jews and offers possible reasons for their formation, as well as their potential validity in certain cases. Because the author's approach is broad and inclusive, the book is sure to cause controversy, but it serves as an excellent catalyst for discussion as many continue to ask the question, 'What does it mean to be Jewish?'"

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Finding Georges: How to Discover Unknown Relatives with the Aid of the Yad Vashem Web Site

by Lucy Shiffman Sadowski

Based on a presentation to the JGS meeting in June 2007

Yad Vashem

In 2005, Yad Vashem officially opened its searchable Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names. I typed in my birth name "Szyfman" (spelled in the Polish way). Some "Pages of Testimony" documenting victims of the Holocaust came up on the computer screen. A few were my own submissions, and others were of people from towns unknown to me. But four submissions from someone in Paris caught my eye. And this is why.

Interview with Sheindel

Perhaps about ten years ago, in New York, I had interviewed Shaindel Shiffman, my (now deceased) great aunt by marriage and also a distant cousin. (She and her husband were cousins to each other.) She told me a little about some of my Polish relatives, including Hershel Szyfman, who lived in Radom, Sheindel's home town, and who was her mother's brother as well as a brother of my great grandfather Nachum Zachariah Szyfman of Ozarow. Shaindel said that Hershel had gone to France in the early part of the 20th century to be treated for cancer. She thought at least one of his three daughters had gone with him. And she believed one of them had eventually ended up in Australia. I actually tried to search for that daughter or her descendants through the JGS of Australia, but since the woman was married, her birth name Szyfman (the same as my birth name) would have been unknown to them. And in any event, I didn't know what city in Australia to look in. So the search did not go anywhere.

Documents

The four Yad Vashem documents that came up on the screen were the actual forms, filled out in French by hand in 1992 and all submitted by the same person. The name and address of the submitter were difficult to read, but since there were four separate submissions, one for each of four victims of the Holocaust, I was able to figure out a name and address that I thought were reasonably correct. The name was Georges (Tchoubroutsky). One of the documents is for Georges' mother, Malka Szyfman Tchoubroutsky, born in Radom. The others were for Georges' father, Israel Tchoubroutsky; his grandmother, Perla Gutier Szyfman, born in Ozarow, the home town of my grandfather and of Georges' grandfather. The fourth and last Page was for Georges' aunt Dora Szyfman.

Finding Georges

My entire family became excited and everyone got into the search. One sister's friend in France looked in the Paris telephone books and those of other areas in France as well. She didn't find Georges in the phonebook, but found the name of

what we thought might be his daughter - and luckily, it was. She gave us Georges' e-mail address. We also "Googled" him, looked him up on the internet and discovered that both he and his wife Cathie were physicians in Paris, with Georges specializing in diabetes. Cathie was a professor of obstetrics. Even his daughters could be found on the internet. Claire is a teacher of mathematics and author of at least one textbook; and Anne is a world-class Scrabble player, so she showed up on the internet too.

I contacted Georges by e-mail. Georges responded to my message but he was very reserved, like your typical French bourgeois. (Am I being politically incorrect?) He explained that he was a gentleman of 75 years old and he seemed concerned that a horde of North American relatives might descend on him in Paris. I assured him that I would not give anyone his e-mail address and eventually he warmed up, responding especially to my telling him that my husband, Paul, was also a physician. When I told him that Paul was an academic and a scientist, it brought to mind for Georges the great Toronto scientists Frederic Banting and Charles Best, the discoverers of insulin, so important of course in his own field of diabetes. I sent Georges a family tree and a copy of his grandfather's birth certificate from Poland. Georges sent me a hand-drawn partial family tree and also gave me the e-mail addresses of his two cousins in Melbourne, Australia, the daughters of Lola, the one aunt who survived the Holocaust.

Aussies

Cousins Irene and Pauline in Melbourne were surprised to hear from us. They had no idea that any family members had gone to North America early in the 20th century, or even that they had any relatives other than the Australian branches of their family. However, they responded enthusiastically with lots of information and photos of their respective families, including grandchildren. It turns out we have a lot in common. Irene is around my age and a retired teacher as I am. Pauline is a lawyer in Melbourne and is around the same age as Heather, one of my two sisters.

Of course they invited us all to Australia. Most importantly, they filled in many pieces of the puzzle and they told us the tragic story of the family's experience during the Holocaust, a story we were anxious to hear, but about which I had been reluctant to push Georges.

The "Story"

Hershel Szyfman was born in Ozarow and lived in Radom in Poland. He came to France around the late 1920s with his eldest daughter Mania (Malka), to be treated for cancer at the Curie institute. Eventually the rest of his family came to France: his wife Perla Gutierc, and his other two daughters Lola (Leja)

and Dora. Unfortunately Hersz did not survive the disease. But the treatment had been very expensive and the family was very poor. The girls had to cut their education short. The two older girls married in France and by the beginning of WW2, each of them had one child.

Lola's husband Joseph Blicher was conscripted into the French army in 1939. After Petain capitulated to the Nazis in 1941, Joseph was decommissioned from the army, and the family fled Paris for Lyons with their little daughter Irene, using false papers. However, Lola's mother Perla and her sisters and their families did not want to leave Paris. To further protect their daughter during the war years Lola and Joseph put Irene in a convent and later with some farmers in the countryside who were paid to board her. But they later removed her from the farmers' care because they were not satisfied she was being fed properly.

Meanwhile, one day in Paris in 1942 when Georges was coming home after doing some errands, a non-Jewish neighbour took him in and told him not to go home. His parents Malka and Israel had been arrested by the Nazis. Although only 12, Georges made his way by himself to Lyons, about 1000 km away, where his aunt Lola now lived with her family.

After the war, they all returned to Paris to find that Georges' parents, Malka and Israel, as well as his grandmother Perla and his aunt Dora, had all been deported. Lola gave birth to a second daughter, Pauline, in August 1945 and was subsequently hospitalized with post partum depression and the shock of losing her whole family. In the early 1950s, Lola decided to move with her family to Australia where siblings of her husband Joseph had already gone. Aunt Lola wanted Georges to come to Australia as well, but he was then in medical school and had met Cathie, the woman who would become his wife, and therefore he remained in France.

Klarsfeld Memorial

I learned other details of the story from *Le Memorial de la deportation des Juifs de France* that was assembled by Serge and Beate Klarsfeld in 1978. This information is also on the Yad Vashem web site. The documents tell the exact dates of deportation and the number of the transport on which each of Georges' family members was sent to Auschwitz by train from the camp at Drancy, just outside Paris. (I shared this information with Irene and Pauline but I have not sent it to Georges, and I won't. I think it would be too painful.)

Conclusion

Georges and Cathie in Paris have one grandchild, Thomas, the son of their daughter Claire and her husband, Alain. Furthermore, the Australian cousins told me when I last heard from them that Claire was pregnant with her second child.

To continue on the upbeat and end on a high note, we are continuing to put people in touch with each other. I have a photo of Pauline and her husband Robert Grodski with our cousins Helen and Eli Har Tal in Israel, that my sister and I put them in contact with. This brings us full circle, because Helen is the daughter of my aunt Shaindel who told me about this part of the family in the first place. Her relationship with Pauline and

Irene is about the same degree as is mine and that of my sisters with them.

I like to say that I can now document nine generations of the Shiffman family in four continents, and that I consider this a victory over Hitler and the Nazis and their attempts to wipe the Jews from the face of the earth.



Pauline in her law office with colleagues



Grodskis and Hartals

Coming Soon on Our Web Site:

A Family Finder Spreadsheet for our Society.

Volunteers Needed!

If you are interested in any of the following positions, please contact Shelley Stillman at <president@jgstoronto.ca>.

A) Shem Tov Editor

Work with Diane Kriger, to learn more about our newsletter. Diane will be relocating to Ottawa but will be available for assistance via the internet.

Required: Familiarity with Word, or Mac editing software. Access to scanner is ideal.

Tasks include:

1. Encourage people to submit articles, and assist them in editing their presentations.
2. Research and write some articles.
3. Write some of the columns, such as Spotlight, JewishGen (collate data from the various genealogy newsletters), and collect information on Society events such as executive changes, status of committee projects etc.
4. Proofread and check issue for overall consistency.
5. Work with the layout artist, to ensure the issues are available in time for the meetings.

B) Learn about our membership data base, being mentored by Neil Richler **Required:** Familiarity with Microsoft Word, Microsoft Access, World Merge

Tasks include:

1. Maintain membership database with up-to-date information re contact information, status of membership.
2. Send out notices for membership renewal.
3. Send out tax receipts for membership renewal (create letters, labels) – including tax receipts for Jewishgen & JRI contribution.
4. Coordinate membership renewals with treasurer to ensure information is correct.
5. Update Shem Tov Editor & Phoner Coordinator – they need to know paid-up members.
6. Notices to membership:
 - a) Send out all notices, including meetings notices & reminders
 - b) Send out notice about Shem Tov PDF version (coordinate with Shem Tov editor and webmaster)

C) Webmaster/Webmistress –

Required: Basic HTML programming, Microsoft FrontPage

Tasks include:

1. Update events, executive, and info as requested by the president and program chair.
2. Upload Shem Tov quarterly.
3. Administer the Black Sun management Web page for jgstoronto.ca, including: changing e-mail address forwarding when new people are elected to the Board.
4. Add speakers photos, workshops, committee members.
5. Provide links to syllabi of speakers when available.
6. Renew the account with BlackSun every two years - Password features need Apache Password File or FileMan programming knowledge.

Branching Out at the JGS of Canada (Toronto) Library

by Elaine Cheskes

Journals/Newsletters

Journals/newsletters are a most valuable resource for the genealogical researcher, and since many of them are published quarterly the information they contain is current. Newly available resources, techniques and research tools are included in their contents. In addition, the researcher is informed about national and international conferences, genealogical experts, and the latest updates on web sites. Although this list represents only a few of the numerous significant genealogical journals/newsletters in our collection, we display all the latest issues at our regular meetings and subsequently incorporate them into our library.

Avotaynu - The International Review of Jewish Genealogy

Dorot – Journal of the Jewish Genealogical Society (New York City)

Lineage – Journal of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Long Island

Mass-Pocha – Journal of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston

Mishpacha – Journal of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Washington

Sharsheret Hadorot – Journal of the Israel Genealogical Society

Shem Tov – Journal of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto)

Shemot – Journal of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain

Toledot – Newsletter of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain

ZichronNote – Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

Patrons Living Outside of Toronto

Patrons who live outside of Toronto can view the collection of the JGS Library, which is located at the North York Public Library, 6th floor of the Gladys Allison, Canadiana Room. There is no charge to request an item, but identification is required (e.g. driver's licence). Books cannot be borrowed since our collection is for reference use only.

Non-residents of Toronto are not able to borrow books from the Toronto Public Library system unless they purchase a non-residents' card, for the charge of \$25.00 per household for a 3-month period. However, they can borrow books through their local library without a charge. This process is called interloan. For example, the Markham or Thornhill Public Library can request a book on the patron's behalf from the Toronto Public Library. In this case the patron would need a library card from their local library. Since many of the titles in our collection are also in the Toronto Public Library system, patrons who live outside of Toronto may have access through interloan to books of genealogical interest.