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# שם טוב SHEM TOV

JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA (TORONTO)

*Celebrating 25 Years: 1985 - 2010*

VOLUME XXVI No. 2

June 2010 Tamuz 5770

## ALL ABOUT TORONTO

*by Judy Kasman*

### HISTORIC PLAQUES

In the March, 2008 issue of *Shem Tov*, there appeared an article by Dr. Cyril Gryfe, our Society member, about the old Oz-trovzer *Shul* on Cecil Street. (Please note that archived issues of *Shem Tov* can be found on our website.) In 1966, this building became the Chinese Catholic Centre, replete with the carved Yiddish plaques bearing the names of the original Jewish founders and donors; in 1976, the building became the Cecil Street Community Centre, its Yiddish plaques intact.

Last year it was reported in *Shem Tov* that historic plaques were erected by Heritage Toronto, the organization that works for the preservation of historic sites in Toronto, in front of the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre (originally the Bloor YM & YWHA), at Kensington Market's Kiever Shul (see p. 8), and at Christie Pits to commemorate the riots that took place in 1933. On Monday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Heritage Toronto presented a plaque to honour the Cecil Street Centre. You can go to [www.heritagetoronto.org](http://www.heritagetoronto.org) to find out more about these plaques and other historic sites in Toronto. You can even do an audio-visual tour at this website, since there are iTours. For example, there is a Spadina iTour with commentary by Councillor Adam Vaughan and writer Rick Salutin.

### HERITAGE PROPERTIES

In the last edition of *Shem Tov*, I wrote about how one could search Toronto without venturing out. This time, with the help of a City of Toronto website, you can get outside and explore. Go to [www.toronto.ca/heritage-preservation/to\\_downtown\\_heritage.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/heritage-preservation/to_downtown_heritage.htm). There you can click on the name of a downtown Toronto district, e.g. Queen Street West or Yonge Street. In so doing, you will get a map of that area, with marked sites accompanied by descriptions. It's then up to you, at your leisure, to do a tour guided by the annotated map that you printed out. There are nine Toronto walking tours on the website.

In 1973, the City of Toronto started an inventory of heritage properties; there are now about 7,000 such properties listed (meaning that they have been recommended by City Council). Properties that have been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act are included in the inventory. At [www.toronto.ca/heritage-preservation/heritage\\_properties\\_inventory.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/heritage-preservation/heritage_properties_inventory.htm) you can search

the database of heritage properties.

### DOORS OPEN TORONTO

This year two historic Toronto shuls were open to the public as part of Doors Open Toronto on Sunday, May 30: Congregation

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Knesseth Israel (The Junction Shul), 55 Maria Street, Toronto and First Narayever Congregation, 187 Brunswick Avenue, Toronto. In the past, Holy Blossom Temple and Beach Hebrew Institute were part of Doors Open Toronto.

To see more about this annual event, including archives of the past few years' programmes, go to [www.toronto.ca/doorsopen](http://www.toronto.ca/doorsopen)

**AL GILBERT PHOTOS AT ST. LAWRENCE MARKET GALLERY AND AT BETH TZEDEC SYNAGOGUE**

*Facets of Fame: The Portraits of Toronto Photographer Al Gilbert*, an exhibit of about 75 photographs, went on display this past April 24th and will be shown until September 11, 2010. In addition to the portraits on display are photographs taken by Al Gilbert and his father which reveal Toronto's Jewish history over the past eighty years as well as the history of Gilbert Studio.

In 1922, Nathan Gittelmacher (later Gilbert) opened his studio at 615 Queen Street West in downtown Toronto. His son, Albert, who assisted his father, took over the business in the 1940s. The studio subsequently moved further north to Eglington Avenue West and now is located at 170 Davenport Road.

Albert (Al) Gilbert became a pre-eminent portrait photographer, having many famous people as his subjects. Among those in the local Jewish community were Ed Mirvish (Honest Ed), former Mayor Mel Lastman and businessmen, Paul

Reichmann and Murray Koffler. World figures such as former Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion and Martin Luther King also were photographed by Gilbert.

To read more about this exhibit, go to <http://www.stlawrencemarket.com/gallery/ex2010.html>

On June 25, 2010 at 7 pm at Beth Tzedec Synagogue, the Ontario Jewish Archives (OJA) of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto will hold the opening reception of *A Glimpse of Greatness: The Portraiture of Al Gilbert*. About 40 portraits will be on view at this exhibit which runs for about one month.

Al Gilbert is the recipient of both the Order of Canada and the Order of Ontario. He has donated about 1,400 of his images to the OJA.



If you have found something of value to Jewish Toronto research when you have done an iTour or a heritage walking tour, if you have found a special heritage property in the City of Toronto database, or if you know of an exhibit of Jewish genealogists, please share your experience or knowledge with your fellow Society members. Write to [shemtov@jgstoronto.ca](mailto:shemtov@jgstoronto.ca).

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Contributions are invited. Please submit material to [shemtov@jgstoronto.ca](mailto:shemtov@jgstoronto.ca) or to Shem Tov Editors, P.O. Box 91006, 2901 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, ON M2K 2Y6. Publication is at the Editors' discretion.

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto) was founded in 1985. Membership is \$40 per calendar year, \$18 for students. Meetings are held September to June, usually on the last Wednesday of each month at 8:00 p.m. (doors open at 7:30) at Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue, 470 Glencairn Avenue, Toronto (unless announced otherwise). Guests are always welcome. Details are usually printed in the *Canadian Jewish News* and on our website at: [www.jgstoronto.ca](http://www.jgstoronto.ca).

The goal of the Society is 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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**Center for Jewish History in  
New York City  
to Open on Sundays**

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**B**eginning on Sunday, June 6, 2010, the Lillian Goldman Reading Room and the Ackman & Ziff Family Genealogy Institute at this facility, located at 15 W. 16<sup>th</sup> St., New York City, will be open every Sunday from 11am–4 pm in addition to its Monday through Friday hours.

This is a major resource centre since it houses important collections of the American Jewish Historical Society, American Sephardi Federation, Leo Baeck Institute, Yeshiva University Museum and the library of YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. All requests for Sunday usage must be received by 5pm on the preceding Thursday.

You can call reference services at 917-606-8217 or write to [publicservices@cjh.org](mailto:publicservices@cjh.org).

See [www.cjh.org](http://www.cjh.org) to read about the current exhibitions on display.

The website for the Jewish Genealogical Society of New York, located at the same address, is [www.jgsny.com](http://www.jgsny.com) where you can view the resources of that Society.

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**The Ancient Jews of China**

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During the course of history, Jews have been dispersed throughout the world. A very interesting community is located in Haifeng, China, where 500 individuals are attempting to resume the faith and practices of their ancestors (who arrived from Persia in the 11<sup>th</sup> century).

To learn more, go to <http://www.jewishchinatours.com/communities/kaifeng.php>

**GET *SHEM TOV* BY EMAIL!!**

There are several advantages to receiving *Shem Tov* as a pdf:

- you will get speedy delivery right to your computer
- you will help the environment-- less paper and envelopes
- you will save the Society money otherwise spent on postage and printing
- you will see the photos in colour
- you can click right on the links (or cut & paste them into your browser) to be connected to important websites

Simply send your request to have *Shem Tov* emailed to you to [shemtov@jgstoronto.ca](mailto:shemtov@jgstoronto.ca).

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**FROM NU? WHAT'S NEW?  
The E-zine of Jewish Genealogy  
From Avotaynu  
Editor, Gary Mokotoff**

**USEFUL DATABASES**

**From Volume 11, Number 7, April 18, 2010**

[http://etat.geneve.ch/dt/archives/a\\_votre\\_service-liste\\_refugies-1700.html](http://etat.geneve.ch/dt/archives/a_votre_service-liste_refugies-1700.html)

This database is composed of the names and information of those who fled to Switzerland during WWII; the refugees were from such countries as France, Germany, Austria, Poland, Italy, Spain, Belgium and Russia. There are more than 25,000 names, listed in alphabetical order. You can translate from the French by using Google's translation tool.

<http://www.sephardicgen.com/databases/BeirutCemeterySrchFrm.html>

A Lebanese Christian created this database to memorialize the nearly-extinct Lebanese Jewish community which numbered 24,000 in 1948; at that time, many Ashkenzim lived in Beirut. In 1958, many Jews began to emigrate, mainly to France, North America and Israel.

The database has 3,184 tombstone inscriptions.

**From Volume 11, Number 10, May 19, 2010**

<http://www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/researchers.htm>

This site offers a list of professional genealogists who do research in Central and Eastern Europe.

<http://apgen.org>.

This site of the Association of Professional Genealogists offers a list of more than 2,000 professionals by research or geographic specialty. In addition to locating a genealogist to assist you, you can apply to become a member of this organization.

<http://www.balticgen.com>

This is the website of Alexandrs Feigmanis, a professional genealogist in Latvia—and AVOTAYNU Contributing Editor for Latvia where there are names of people buried in selected Latvian and Lithuanian Jewish cemeteries. The site also includes an index of more than 9,000 Lithuanian Jews extracted from Lithuanian newspapers from the years 1850 to 1910, mostly from the State of Douma in Kaunas province.

**CHECK THE WEBSITE OFTEN!**

Remember to visit [www.jgstoronto.ca](http://www.jgstoronto.ca)  
frequently to see news and updates.

Check the *Announcements* and  
the *What's New* sections!

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## Seeking Answer To Newfoundland Request

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A woman living in Newfoundland wrote to *Shem Tov* with the following question:

*My mother and father-in-law have said they were married by a rabbi (they think) in Goose Bay, Labrador (Happy Valley) on February 27, 1959. They are not Jewish. They are German and spoke little English at the time. Would there have been a rabbi there at that time, or has there ever been one serving in that location? I am attempting to find a copy of their marriage certificate, as their copy was destroyed in a house fire. If you have any suggestions, I would very much welcome them.*

KW

If you have any ideas for KW, please send them to [shemtov@jgstoronto.ca](mailto:shemtov@jgstoronto.ca).

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## LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES OF CANADA Microform Digitization of Records

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Microform Digitization is new to the Library and Archives of Canada. This process enables people to essentially use their computers to do a search of certain records in a manner much like a microfilm search, only less cumbersome! Specifically of interest to Society members would be the digitized records of Form 30A (Border Entry Records, 1919-1924) and Form 30 (Ocean Arrivals, 1919-1924).

Please visit <http://tinyurl.com/2wdjhlx/> where on that webpage, you can click on Help to learn to best navigate these records online.

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## JewishGen's Success! Stories Webzine

On the JewishGen website, you can read six new stories written by individuals who made major breakthroughs in their family research via JewishGen. The discoveries were each made in different ways, including the assistance of an old photo on Viewmate, of JOWBR, and of a JewishGen Discussion group.

Follow this link to read the stories:

<http://www.jewishgen.org/JewishGen/Testimonials/>.

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## London Jewish Museum

by *Judy Kasman*

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This past March 16th, after a two-year \$15 million dollar renovation and expansion tripling its size, the London Jewish Museum reopened, as reported in a March 16, 2010 story by Jill Lawless of the Associated Press. The Museum was initially in a Victorian house but now is next door in a former piano factory.

The Jewish community in England goes back to 1066 and so the Museum covers all of the notable British historical events over the past 1,000 years, and displays artifacts from all aspects and ages of the Jewish community. Presently, there are about 300,000 Jews living in England. About 65,000 people visit this Museum annually.

To see more about this grand Museum, go to [www.jewishmuseum.org.uk](http://www.jewishmuseum.org.uk).



## Grant For Digitizing Its Collection

Upon visiting the London Jewish Museum website, I learned that this past February, the European Commission awarded Judaica Europeana a major grant with which twelve Jewish institutions, i.e. libraries, museums and archives, will digitize their collections. This is a three million Euro project, the goal of which is to provide open access to Jewish culture collections in Europe. The partners to share in this grant are the London Jewish Museum and institutions in Frankfurt, Athens, Bologna, Budapest, Jerusalem, Paris, Rome and Warsaw. It is hoped that these digital collections will be widely used, especially by students, teachers, family researchers, historians, cultural heritage professionals and tourists. See [www.judaica-europeana.eu](http://www.judaica-europeana.eu).

Europeana is the European cultural digital library project of the European Commission under the eContentPlus programme. See more about this on its prototype site, [www.europeana.eu](http://www.europeana.eu).

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## Memories of JGS Toronto

As most of you know, 2010 marks the **25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year** of the founding of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto). As such, we would like to devote a section of a forthcoming issue of *Shem Tov* to the history of our Society. Perhaps you have special memories, reminiscences, experiences or photographs you would like to share with your fellow JGS Toronto members. If so, let us know by email to [shemtov@jgstoronto.ca](mailto:shemtov@jgstoronto.ca) or by mail to JGS Toronto, PO Box 91006, 2901 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, ON M2K 2Y5.

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## United States Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad

by Judy Kasman

The mission of this U.S. government agency (established in 1985) is to preserve central and eastern European monuments, buildings and cemeteries that were destroyed or neglected after the Holocaust and/or years of Communist rule. This is especially significant for Jewish burial grounds in locales where there were no Jewish survivors left to tend to those grounds.

The U.S. Government acknowledges that these sites are important to the culture heritage of many of its citizens; therefore, it has signed agreements with 28 countries to preserve and protect them. Some of the countries are Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine. When visiting the Commission website and clicking on a given country, you can see the projects undertaken by that county as well as the agreement, maps and photographs.

Please go to <http://www.heritageabroad.gov/index.html>.

### ADVERTISING RATES

SHEM TOV is now accepting display advertising for publication. Advertisers are requested to supply camera-ready art and payment by August 2010 for the Fall issue. Please indicate how many insertions you would like. As the chart indicates our basic rate is discounted for advertisements placed in four consecutive issues (one year) instead of a single issue only. By placing an ad in SHEM TOV, you are reaching a growing number of readers in Toronto, across Canada and internationally, and helping to support 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.

## Galicia Jewish Museum

The Galicia Jewish Museum is housed in an old mill that has been thoroughly modernized; it is located in Kazimierz, the old Jewish quarter of Krakow, Poland to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust and to celebrate the Jewish culture of Galicia, presenting a contemporary look at Jewish history. It offers many cultural and educational programmes.

On its website, <http://www.galiciajewishmuseum.org/>, under Exhibitions you will find *Traces of Memory: A Contemporary Look at the Jewish Past in Poland*, a permanent photographic exhibit. This exhibit is also available as a travelling exhibit; it is currently on display at the Museum of Jewish Heritage - A Living Memorial to the Holocaust, 36 Battery Park, New York City until August 2010. The exhibit will then travel to The Florence and Chafetz Hillel House at Boston University from September-November 2010. See <http://www.bu.edu/hillel/>

The Galicia Jewish Museum website describes two recent exhibitions that have a Toronto connection:

*They Called Me Mayer July: Painted Memories of a Jewish Childhood in Poland Before the Holocaust*, featuring the paintings of Mayer Kirshenblatt, a Torontonian born in Apt, Poland in 1916 who died in November, 2009. The exhibit is curated by his daughter, Prof. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, of New York. This reproduction artwork exhibition is managed by the Galicia Jewish Museum where it was on display from June 2009 to January 2010. The exhibit is presently at the National Yiddish Book Center, Amherst MA to September, 2010.

*Pictures of Resistance: The Wartime Photography of Jewish Partisan Faye Schulman*

Photographer Faye Schulman is a Holocaust survivor living in Toronto.

From the Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation, curated by Jill Vexler, PhD

This Polish-language traveling exhibition was managed by the Galicia Jewish Museum and was on display from June 2009 to March 2010.

### NEW MEMBERS

JGS Toronto is very pleased to welcome  
as new members:

Jack Freeman	John Jakobson
Margie Kenedy	Heather Rosen
Gella Rothstein	Maxwell Rotstein

Jonathan Samson

New Acquisitions to the JGS of Canada (Toronto) Library Collection  
at the North York Central Library, 6<sup>th</sup> floor Gladys Allison Canadiana Room

I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the following highly acclaimed Jewish authors for donating a copy of their most recent works to the JGS of Canada (Toronto) Library.

Diamant, Anita. *Day After Night: a Novel*. New York: Scribner, 2009.

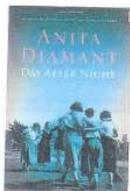
Forman, Frieda Johles. *Jewish Refugees in Switzerland During the Holocaust*. London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2009.

Jacob, D.H. *Dorbyan: A Lithuanian Jewish S[h]tetl*. Victoria, B.C.: Trafford, 2009.

Miller, Lily Poritz. *In a Pale Blue Light: a Novel*. Toronto: Sumach Press, 2009.

**Anita Diamant**

Anita Diamant grew up in Newark, New Jersey, but studied for her Master's degree at the State University of New York. She moved to Boston in 1975, where she wrote as a freelance journalist for the *Boston Phoenix* and *The Boston Globe*, and had articles in *Self Parenting*, *McCalls*, and *Ms.* Presently she resides in Boston with her husband, Jim Ball, and their daughter, Emilia.

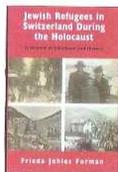


Diamant's first work of fiction, *The Red Tent*, published in 1997, became a bestseller, and gave her prominence in the literary world.

Her new novel, *Day After Night*, published in 2009, is based on the true story of the October 1945 rescue of more than two hundred prisoners from the Atlit internment camp run by the British near the Mediterranean coast south of Haifa. Diamant vividly portrays the horrifying experiences of four young Jewish women who survived the Holocaust. Although interned in the refugee camp, their lives are intertwined in friendship as they await with hope and uncertainty their future in the land of Israel.

**Frieda Johles Forman**

Frieda Johles Forman, born in 1937 in Vienna, was a child refugee in Switzerland during the Second World War. She emigrated to the United States, then Canada, where she taught Jewish Studies, Women's Studies and Philosophy. As a political activist, she participated in the peace movement, the women's movement and Jewish liberation projects. She is the mother of two and grandmother of four.

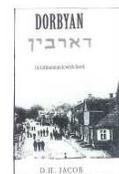


Her publications include *Taking Our Time: Feminist Perspectives on Temporality* and *Found Treasures: Stories by Yiddish Women Writers*. Forman is Visiting Scholar at the Centre for Women's Studies at the University of Toronto.

*Jewish Refugees in Switzerland During the Holocaust* is Forman's memoir, narrated from a participant's perspective. It explores the rarely told story of Jewish refugees in "neutral" Switzerland. Translated primary sources have revealed details of social organization, educational, cultural, and religious complexities of Jewish life previously unavailable in English. Remembrances of the years 1942-1946, when the author and her family were interned in Swiss refugee camps, form the connecting thread of this emotional and powerful narrative.

**D.H. Jacob**

D.H. Jacob was raised in Halifax and achieved a university degree in Commerce at Dalhousie University of Halifax, Nova Scotia. He is a researcher, scholar, and linguist with a strong interest in travel and genealogy. Jacob resides on the New South Wales Central Coast of Australia with his wife and son.



*Dorbyan* is an historical fiction based on true-life stories. Since Jacob's family roots originate in Dorbyan, he passionately traces the development and history of the town and describes the way of life of many of its Jewish inhabitants. However, daily routines take an abrupt change when a terrifying event occurs and the horrors of the Nazi regime become a reality. On the eve of Rosh Hashanah, the Jews are rounded up and locked in the synagogue. When it is set ablaze, their screams and cries become soft moans as they can no longer endure the unbearable anguish. According to the official version, the synagogue "had suffered a direct hit during the war and had burned to the ground". No mention is made of the fate of the occupants. *Dorbyan* is an accurate representation of the growth and fate, not only of this particular *shtetl*, but of many Eastern European Jewish communities that were exterminated by the Nazis.

**Lily Poritz Miller**

Lily Poritz Miller was born in Cape Town, South Africa and moved to Massachusetts with her family when she was fifteen. She taught creative writing at the City University of New York and subsequently became an editor at Macmillan in New York. In 1972, she moved to Toronto and worked as a senior editor for eighteen years at McClelland and Stewart. Presently, she lives in both New York and Toronto where she is a member of JGS Toronto.



She has written many plays, such as, *My Star of Hope*, *The Proud One*, and *A Greater Love*. In addition, she co-edited an

English language translation of *A Thousand Threads: a Story Told Through Yiddish Letters*.

*In a Pale Blue Light*, published in 2009, relates the story of Jewish life in South Africa with the outbreak of World War II. Her debut novel is based on her own childhood experiences in Cape Town with Lithuanian Jewish parents. The protagonist, Libka, faces cruel and harsh anti-semitism from her classmates and her frustrations cause her to react towards her family with anger and strife. She has escaped the pogroms of Europe, only to be caught up in the racial conflicts of South Africa.

### From The Israel Genealogical Society

*A Jewish Gen SIG posting reprinted with permission of Daniel Horowitz, IAJGS Webmaster*

The Israel Genealogical Society (IGS) is pleased to invite presentations from potential speakers in English and/or Hebrew for the Sixth Annual One Day Seminar on Jewish Genealogy. The seminar will be held on Tuesday, 2 Kislev 5771 - November 9, 2010 at Beit Hatfutsot, Tel Aviv University, Israel. Our topic this year is: *Jewish Families Migration Split - Some Went East (Eretz Israel) and Some Went Elsewhere* Deadline to submit a presentation proposal: 30 June 2010 <http://tinyurl.com/39svn55>

If you are planning a trip to Israel and would like to spare some time lecturing at one of our branches, please contact our officers. We love to have international lecturers. <http://www.isragen.org.il/siteFiles/1/157/4567.asp>

You can also be a member of the IGS. Membership benefits include:

- Free entrance to all the lectures and events organized by the branches
  - Discount to IGS seminars, training classes, and special events
  - Access to IGS on-loan specialized genealogy libraries
  - Free e-mail subscription to IGS monthly newsletter
  - A subscription to *Sharsheret Hadorot* bi-lingual journal
- For more information visit: <http://tinyurl.com/34q9q3y>

The latest issue of the IGS bi-lingual journal *Sharsheret Hadorot* is already available.

A single copy costs \$15, payable by check. Anyone interested should contact Lea Gedalia ([leahgedalia@gmail.com](mailto:leahgedalia@gmail.com)).

Daniel Horowitz  
IAJGS Board Member/Webmaster  
<http://www.iajgs.org> [daniel@iajgs.org](mailto:daniel@iajgs.org)

N.B. Follow the IGS on <http://www.twitter.com/isragen>

## New To the Anne Frank Museum & Website

On April 28, 2010, to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 50 years since Anne Frank's diary was found, Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands opened a new exhibition at the Anne Frank House Museum in Amsterdam. This is the first time that nearly all of Anne Frank's writings have been exhibited. Joining the red plaid diary that had been there previously are the three parts of the diary, a notebook of Anne's favourite quotations, and *Tales from the Secret Annex*, a book of her short stories. On rotation as well are 360 pages of diary revisions which Anne had written on paper. Due to their fragile state, they are being displayed 40 pages at a time.

Launched on the Museum website on the same day was *Secret Annex Online*, an audio-visual experience where visitors to the site can tour places in the Annex that they cannot even see when visiting the Museum in person. Please visit [www.annefrank.org/en/Subsites/Home/More-Info/](http://www.annefrank.org/en/Subsites/Home/More-Info/)

## BEIT HATFUTSOT The Nahum Goldmann Museum of the Jewish Diaspora *by Judy Kasman*

This Museum, located in on the campus of Tel Aviv University, is a valuable stop for genealogists: you can see The New Core Exhibition which displays "the unique and ongoing history of the Jewish people" and the Douglas E. Goldman Jewish Genealogy Center where you can search the databases in person. (Searches can also be done by mail.) Also, if you have an interest in music, there is the Feher Jewish Music Center which records, promotes and preserves Jewish music, including that of communities destroyed in the Holocaust and the traditional music of India, Spain, Morocco and Yemen.

However, if plans to visit Israel do not figure in your immediate future, you can certainly visit the Museum on the internet at [www.bh.org.il](http://www.bh.org.il). There, under Research & Tools, you can find On-line Exhibitions which currently are The Jews of Hungary, The Jews of Romania and The Jews of Mexico.

The Israel Genealogical Society One Day Seminar on Jewish Genealogy will take place at Beit Hatfutsot on November 9, 2010. Please read more about this seminar in the column about the Israel Genealogical Society on this page.

## 1928 Berlin Salon Recreated At Kiever Shul

Article & photos by Judy Kasman

**A**uguststrasse 25 is an installation that, from mid-April to the end of May, 2010, was held in a corner of the men's section of the sanctuary of the Kiever Shul (built in 1917), 25 Bellevue Avenue, in downtown Toronto. Artist Eric Woodley recreated a Berlin salon filled with period furniture pieces and music of that era playing from a radio, all to evoke the feel of the year 1928. A costumed actress inhabited this space during the exhibit.

Peter Goddard, in his *Toronto Star* April 24, 2010 article, writes: "...Auguststrasse 25 –named after a real Berlin address but likewise a reference to nearby Augusta Ave. in the old Jewish quarter of Kensington Market – animates a moment all but entirely erased from history and from memory. The Nazis' compulsive thoroughness obliterated almost every trace of day-to-day Jewish life across Europe".

The installation was an off-site exhibition of Koffler Gallery, curated by Mona Filip. A visit to the Kiever Shul and the Woodley display became part of a Jane's Walk of early Jewish downtown Toronto held this past May 2<sup>nd</sup>.



**Kiever Shul**

Please note historic plaque in lower left corner.



**Salon, 25 Auguststrasse**

## A Report On Beider-Morse Phonetic Matching

by Shelley Stillman

**I** recently attended a lecture in Florida where Stephen Morse gave a history of the development of searching databases containing spelling variations.

The popular Daitch-Mokotoff Soundex system (D-M) (1985) uses a sequence of letters to determine pronunciation; it provides for multiple encoding. It is an improvement on the American Soundex system for pronunciation of Eastern European names. However, it generates a great many "sounds like" hits.

Stephen Morse PhD has a background in engineering and computers and linguist Alexander (Sacha) Beider has PhD s in applied mathematics and [Jewish studies](#). In 2008, the Beider-Morse Phonetic Matching (BMPM) system was released by the two mathematicians and genealogists. Their system identifies the language, uses pronunciation rules based on that language and considers the entire name. It produces fewer false positives than the widely-used D-M system; however, it may generate some false negatives.

The main objective of BMPM is to recognize that two words written in different ways can actually be phonetically equivalent, that is, they both can sound alike. But unlike soundex methods, the phonetic matching is based not only on the spelling, but also on linguistic properties of various languages.

Initially, the D-M system was concerned with matching surnames of Ashkenazi Jews, but the name matching also works for non-Jewish surnames from those countries of origin. The BMPM system also allows for Sephardic names as well as non-Jewish names from those countries of origin.

Example:

When using Morse's "One-Step" gold search page for Ellis Island, <http://stevemorse.org/ellis2/ellisgold.html>, you have the option to search using "is phonetically" in addition to the usual "starts with" or "sounds like".

Morse suggested **doing phonetic matching first** (BMPM), then using D-M Soundex. These are complementary search tools.

Similarly, on JewishGen ([www.jewishgen.org](http://www.jewishgen.org)), you now have the option to search using: "sounds like", "phonetically like", "starts with" or "is exactly".

Please visit Stephen Morse's vast website, [www.stevemorse.org/index/html](http://www.stevemorse.org/index/html). There, listed under Publications are two articles by Beider & Morse about their new phonetic system; the first article, which appeared in *Avotaynu* in the summer of 2008 is listed as Phonetic Matching (technical), and the other was just published in the *Association of Professional Genealogists Quarterly* in March 2010 and is listed as Phonetic Matching (descriptive).

## President's Message

As we come to the end of June and take a pause from Society activities for the summer, I would like to ask you, our members, to seriously consider sharing your skills with fellow members, perhaps by volunteering for one of our committees. At this time we are looking for a Treasurer to take over from Steve Gora after his term ends in December. We also wish to appeal for someone to undertake to act as Chair of a Publicity Committee, and we need members to serve on the following committees: Cemetery, Membership, Fund-raising and Programming.

To commemorate the 25th year since our founding, we have launched a very ambitious project to produce a book (yet to be named) of family stories. To date we have received 9 letters of intent to write an essay or a poem for our publication. The deadline for submitting your commitment to write is July 15th, 2010. Our goal is to draw stories from our members on topics such as, but not limited to, interesting characters in the family; journeys from oppression; building lives in difficult times; notable personalities; family traditions and activities; holidays; love stories; philanthropy; heroism etc. We are confident that we can produce an anthology of family stories/memoirs that will make us very proud.

For those who may be intimidated by the act of writing or are uncertain about the prospect of doing so, we have committee members who will provide help. So, please express your intent by the middle of July to me at [president@jgstoronto.ca](mailto:president@jgstoronto.ca). See p. 12 of this *Shem Tov* for a handy form.

Please check our website ([www.jgstoronto.ca](http://www.jgstoronto.ca)) over the course of the summer for announcements about our upcoming programs including the workshop we have planned for September.

Wishing you a restful and safe holiday. See you in September!

Warm regards,  
Harvey Glasner  
President, JGS Toronto

The Ontario Genealogical Society, Toronto Branch,  
& the Canadiana Department of  
North York Central Library present

***The Women in Our Past:  
Strategies and Resources for Researching  
Female Ancestors***

**This workshop is being held on  
Saturday, November 6, 2010  
at the North York Central Library Auditorium.**

Visit [www.torontofamilyhistory.org/  
womensworkshop.html](http://www.torontofamilyhistory.org/womensworkshop.html) for details.

## 30<sup>th</sup> IAJGS International Conference



**The Annual Conference of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies will be taking place in Los Angeles from July 11-16, 2010 at the JW Marriott Hotel at L.A. Live, a downtown LA entertainment and cultural complex.**

Visit <http://www.jgsla2010.com> to see everything you need to know about the Conference.

To sign up for the Conference newsletter, go to <http://www.jgsla2010.com/about/sign-up-for-the-announcements-newsletter/>

For the Conference blog:  
<http://www.jgsla2010.com/blog/2009/10/conference-firsts-from-iajgs-2010-conference-central/>

You can view an 8-minute youtube videoclip about the Conference at  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTUnwzjp8YA>

**Are you planning to attend?  
If so, please send an email to [shemtov@jgstoronto.ca](mailto:shemtov@jgstoronto.ca)**

## The Latest From Steve Lasky's Museum of Family History

It is always worth your time to visit Steve Lasky's site since there is so much to peruse and because he frequently posts new material there.

Lasky has just announced a new exhibition, of *Synagogues of Europe: Past and Present* at [www.museumoffamilyhistory.com/s/mfh-syn-europe.htm](http://www.museumoffamilyhistory.com/s/mfh-syn-europe.htm).

There, you can view Lasky's collection of photographs of synagogues in 22 countries, such as Lithuania, Ukraine, Italy and Galicia.

Also, Lasky welcomes the public to submit photos of synagogues that are not in his online collection.

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## FROM THE WHITE HOUSE

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### President and First Lady Host White House Jewish Heritage Month Reception

Under the last Bush Administration, May was proclaimed Jewish American Heritage Month.

May 27, 2010 marked the first time that a White House reception was held in honour of this special month. To quote the May 10, 2010 White House Press Release:

The reception serves as an opportunity to highlight and celebrate the range and depth of Jewish American heritage and contributions to American culture, with guests representing the many walks of life that have helped weave the fabric of American history. Invitees include a range of community leaders and prominent Jewish Americans from Olympians and professional athletes to members of Congress, business leaders, scholars, military veterans, and astronauts.

President Obama said:

The Jewish American story is an essential chapter of the American narrative. It is one of refuge from persecution; of commitment to service, faith, democracy, and peace; and of tireless work to achieve success. As leaders in every facet of American life... Jewish Americans have shaped our Nation and helped steer the course of our history. We are a stronger and more hopeful country because so many Jews from around the world have made America their home.

About 200 notable guests from many facets of life attended this reception where the following items were on display in the entrance hall, on loan from the Library of Congress and National Archives (as indicated in the May 27, 2010 White House Press Release):

**Deed of Gift for the Statue of Liberty and Invitation to the Inauguration of the Statue of Liberty by President Cleveland.** *The New Colossus* was written by Jewish poet Emma Lazarus "in 1883 as part of a fundraising campaign for the construction of the pedestal for the Statue of Liberty"

**Irving Berlin's *God Bless America*** written in 1938, the U.S. "unofficial anthem" to some

**A set of Jewish baseball player cards** produced for the American Jewish Historical Society

**Letter for Moses Seixas to George Washington, August 17, 1790** Moses Seixas was the warden of the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, RI where about 300 Jews lived at that time.

**Statement by President Harry Truman, May 14, 1948**

The US was the first nation to recognize the state of Israel upon the declaration of its Statehood.

## Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act

On May 17, 2010, President Obama signed the *Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act* in the Oval Office of the White House in the presence of the family members of the late Daniel Pearl ז"ל, namely his parents, sisters, wife and son. The legislation upholds the legacy of Daniel Pearl who proclaimed his Jewish heritage before being slain by terrorists in 2002 while working in Pakistan as a writer for the *The Wall Street Journal*. It also sends a strong signal to the international community of the importance of freedom of the press, a vital human right.

### Lithuanian Jews on Postage Stamps

*With thanks to Ann Rabinowitz of Litvak SIG for the information.*

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You don't have to be a Lithuanian Jewish philatelist to enjoy the website of the Virtual Philatelic Collection of Lithuania on World Postage Stamps. On this site you can see postage stamps issued in diverse countries (such as USA, USSR, Brazil, Uruguay, Mali, Georgia, Poland) to honour Jews of Lithuanian Jewish origin who were prominent in such areas as scholarship, the rabbinate, the arts, writing, and freedom-fighting. Those honoured include the *Vilna Gaon* (Eliyahu ben Shlomo Zalman Kremer), Al Jolson and Chaim Soutine. Each individual's name is accompanied by a short biography as well as a photograph of the postage stamp(s) and first-day cover(s) -- in some cases, a person has been honoured by a stamp in more than one country, as in the case of Jolson.

Go to

[http://www.lituanicaonstamps.com/en/rinkiniai\\_zydai.php](http://www.lituanicaonstamps.com/en/rinkiniai_zydai.php).

### Old CJNs on Multicultural Canada Website

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In addition to finding issues of the *Canadian Jewish Review* on the Multicultural Canada website, there are now digitized back issues of *The Canadian Jewish News* there too, namely issues from January 1, 1960 to December 23, 1993. You can find them at <http://multiculturalcanada.ca/cjn2>.

## 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.

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

### Wednesday, June 23 at 8.00 pm

**\*NEW FEATURE: Doors open at 7:30 pm, meeting begins  
at 7:45 pm with a *Helping You Get Started* session!**  
**Member Break-Throughs: Brick Walls and Strong Founda-  
tions**

Details to follow at [www.jgstoronto.ca](http://www.jgstoronto.ca)

### Fall, 2010

A workshop is planned for this Fall.

Details will follow on the Society website; an email notification  
will also be sent.

### Wednesday, October 6

**7:45 pm: *Helping you Get Started* question & answer session**  
**8 pm: *How to Make a Family Video (Memories of Moshe,  
My Dad, My Hero)***

**Presenter: Barbara Borenstein**

### Wednesday, October. 27 at 8 pm

**7:45 pm: *Helping you Get Started* question & answer session**  
**8 pm: *The Power of Good*, a film by Matej Minac about Sir  
Nicholas Winton who rescued 669 Czech children from the  
Nazis. This film won an International Emmy award in 2002. It  
is narrated by CBC news correspondent Joe Schlesinger, who  
himself was one of "Nicky's Children", and it serves as an  
introduction to our November 3<sup>rd</sup> programme, described below.**

### Wednesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30 pm

**Holocaust Education Week Programme**

**Joe Schlesinger, CBC News Correspondent - Title TBA**

### Wednesday, November. 24<sup>th</sup> at 8 pm

**JGS of Canada (Toronto) 25th Anniversary Event**

Details TBA

### Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 8 pm

TBA

## Volunteers For Jewish Records Indexing - Poland (JRI-Poland)

JRI-Poland needs volunteers to do data entry  
from the comfort of their homes!

Contact Stanley Diamond, JRI Project Coordinator,  
Montreal  
at [smsdiamond@aol.com](mailto:smsdiamond@aol.com)

## Spotlight On Our Members

by Harvey Glasner

**Kevin Hanit and Alan Halberstadt** have become close friends after meeting online by way of GENI, the genealogical social network site. Both were pursuing an unusual hobby, researching cemetery records, in order to document and record relatives on their family trees.

In the summer of 2009 they travelled together to the IAJGS conference in Philadelphia. There, they encountered Nolan Altman, the guru of JOWBR (Jewish Online Worldwide Burial Registry at JewishGen). Nolan communicates with them regularly as they most certainly are his two biggest contributors to the project.

Alan alone has photographed and documented every *matzevah* at Bathurst Lawn Cemetery in north Toronto. Kevin assists by inputting data on to Excel spreadsheets in the concatenated format that JOWBR demands before releasing the information online.

Kevin is no slacker. He has been photographing Pardes Shalom Cemetery in York Region (just north of Toronto) and has completed the recording of more than 75% of their *matzevot*!

Kevin and Alan go beyond the basic requirements of JOWBR: they add the names of the decedent's parents to their Excel records and whether or not the individual was a Holocaust survivor.

Beyond the fact that they are contributing to a very worthwhile global project by ensuring that genealogists everywhere have easy access to data that would otherwise be onerous to obtain, they are also assisting cemetery officials in reducing the chance of making mistakes. Of the 11 Jewish cemeteries in the Greater Toronto Area, many have records that are incomplete, in bad physical shape, or, are in a form that can be confusing.

Recently, our Executive was contacted by Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto which wished to honour some deceased individuals who were buried at Roselawn Cemetery, an old cemetery in central Toronto. Federation was aware that our Society had been documenting that cemetery for the last 20 years, from before the inception of JOWBR, and wanted to know how to find the graves of these people. To the rescue came Kevin and Alan! They were in possession of that data and subsequently provided the much-needed information.

The remarkable efforts of these fine gentlemen should be celebrated, for they are performing the *mitzvah* of preserving the memories of our dearly departed.



(L) Alan Halberstadt & Kevin Hanit

## EXTRA, EXTRA, READ ALL ABOUT IT!

Record your personal story for posterity by contributing to JGS Toronto's soon-to-be-titled "Book".

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto) is pleased to announce that to commemorate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it will publish a book written by its members, to be launched in Fall, 2011.

To have a story included in our "Book", please indicate your intent below and submit prior to July 15, 2010 to [president@jgstoronto.ca](mailto:president@jgstoronto.ca) or by mail to JGS of Canada (Toronto)

P.O. Box 91006  
2901 Bayview Avenue  
Toronto, ON M2K 2Y6  
Canada

It's easy. Everyone has a family story, anecdotal or historical. Here are some ideas:

- See what falls when you shake your family tree
- A surprising breakthrough in your ancestral research
- Life in your parents' *shtetl*
- Hidden secrets from your family's past
- Stories you learned around the kitchen table
- A person from your past who was light-years ahead
- Characters in your family that Sholom Aleichem might have found interesting

Your submission can be up to 1,000 words. The Editorial Committee can provide writing assistance for you, and reserves the right to edit in consultation with you.

- I am interested in submitting a story for the book.
- I would like to discuss my contribution with a member of the Committee.
- I am interested in telling my story to someone who will record it on my behalf.

Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

N.B: All contributors must be current members of the JGS of Canada (Toronto).