Hundres of Jews from more than 25 countries around the globe gathered in Jerusalem earlier this month for the first international conference on Jewish Genealogy to take place in Israel in more than a decade.

With some 900 delegates in attendance, the 35th International Conference on Jewish Genealogy featured hundreds of talks, workshops, SIG (special interest group) gatherings, birds-of-a-feather meetings, family reunions and excursions to Yad Vashem, the Central Archives of the History of the Jewish People and other institutions over the course of five days from July 6 to 10. Topics included resources in scores of countries across the Jewish Diaspora from Belarus to Zimbabwe, as well as more generic discussions of DNA research, writing family histories, Jewish surnames, the history of Yiddish, and dozens of other subjects.

Former Chief Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, who gave the keynote address, told the assembly that the Mishna tells us to “know where you came from, and where you’re heading and to whom you will have to be accountable…It is the duty of every one of us to know our roots.”

Other headliners included Randol Schoenberg, the L.A.-based specialist in the recovery of looted Holocaust art whose success with Gustav Klimt’s “Woman in Gold” painting was de-
FROM THE PRESIDENT

This year the Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto celebrates its 30th anniversary. In 1985 a group of people with an interest in Jewish genealogy and Jewish history decided to create a framework for learning and exchanging ideas. The goal was, and remains today, to provide members with the tools and the knowledge to expand their own family tree research. At our programme this December we will recognize and honour the achievements of our Society.

I was one of the lucky ones who travelled to Jerusalem in July to participate in the conference of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS). (see Bill Gladstone’s article on p. 1) There were about 900 participants, half from Israel and half from outside Israel. A number of speakers spoke about the initiatives underway for collecting, scanning, and translating East European vital records. The goal is to create data sets which will help us all with our family tree research. The work of JRI-Poland has led the way in demonstrating how much can be done.

The archives in East European cities are not nearly as paper-friendly as the archives of North America and Western Europe. So there is considerable concern regarding the legibility of these records. Eventually without proper care, paper will disintegrate and be unreadable and unscanable. There are many lost records about which there is nothing we can do. So when there are records available for your town or shtetl, I encourage you to see if there is any way you can get involved and help to accelerate the collection, scanning, and translation process before it is too late.

Les Kelman
President, JGS Toronto

DIRECTORS OF JGS TORONTO

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www.jgstoronto.ca

VOLUME XXXI No. 3

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The Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto), now known as Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto, was founded in 1985 and serves the Greater Toronto Area. It is volunteer-run and is registered as a non-profit charitable organization. Membership is $40 per calendar year, $18 for students. Programmes are held monthly from September to June. Programme details, including topic, speaker and location, can be found in Shem Tov and on our website.

The goal of JGS Toronto is to provide a forum for the exchange of knowledge and information through programmes, workshop and guest speakers, thereby promoting an awareness of genealogy within the Jewish community. JGS Toronto is a member of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (www.iajgs.org) and is affiliated with the Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto.

New members are always welcome.

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Strong Canadian Showing at Jerusalem Conference

continued from page 1

Nancy C. Levin, Certified Genealogist, will be giving a course on “Jewish Family History Research I” on four consecutive Thursday evenings, from October 1 through October 22. It is one of the fee-for-service courses offered by the Virtual Institute of Genealogical Research.

This course will focus on Ashkenazic Jewish family history research through ca. 1924. Specific topics include (but are not limited to) orthography and its effect on research; names and naming patterns; religious documents; gravestone inscriptions and landsmanshaftn burial societies; on-line research tools; JewishGen; SIGs (Special Interest Groups); and more. Some examples of early 20th-century and 19th-century overseas records will be provided. Levin is a full-time professional American genealogist specializing in Jewish family history research. She has lectured internationally on topics pertaining to Jewish genealogy, immigration, and

other topics. Past venues have included the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) annual conferences where she led the Beginner’s Workshops in Jewish Genealogy for nine years. She has written for AVOTAYNU and is the author of two chapters in the Avotaynu Guide to Jewish Genealogy. She has been certified by the Board for Certification of Genealogists (BCG) with a specialty in Jewish genealogy.

Additional information, including how to register, is at http://vigrgenealogy.com/2015/08/27/levin-open.

Toronto-born Stephen Glazer, who has been living in Israel for 36 years, is involved in a project called Giving A Face to the Fallen, which is trying to learn more about 660 servicemen about whom little is known beyond the fact that they gave their lives in defense of the nascent Jewish state. “These people deserve some attention,” he said. “Who were they, where did they come from? Unlike the rest of the soldiers in the military cemeteries, we know very little about them. Nothing appears on their tombstones.”

Pnina Zilberman, former director of the Toronto Holocaust Museum and now a resident of Israel, gave a talk about the town of Sighet in the Transylvanian region of Romania. Earlier this year, Zilberman staged the second Holocaust memorial in Sighet for about 150 people, most of whom trace their roots back to the town.

Ex-pat Paul King lives in Jerusalem, where he has been compiling a biography of his great-grandfather, the notable 19th-century businessman Charles King of Whitby Ontario, as well as of Edmund Scheurer, the famed pillar of Toronto’s Holy Blossom Congregation and pioneer of Reform Judaism in Canada.

Other Canadians in attendance included Lorne Hanick, ritual director of Toronto’s Beth Tzedec Congregation; Alia Gamulka, a Toronto who gave a talk on her Bessarabian research; Les Kellman, president of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto; Dr. Rolf Lederer, a former president of the Toronto society who has attended about 30 previous conferences; and the present writer, who was president of the Toronto society when it hosted the international conference in 1993.

This article and photograph, which appeared in The Canadian Jewish News, are reprinted with the kind permission of the author, a Past President of JGS Toronto

Strong Canadian Showing at Jerusalem Conference

continued from page 1

picted in the recent film of the same name; and Gilad Japhet, Israeli founder of the hugely successful My Heritage family history website, which was a two-person startup when the conference was last in Israel in 2004, and which now employs some 210 people, boasts 80 million registered members worldwide, and was the leading sponsor of the current conference.

“We’re simply delighted by the outstanding number of international participants,” said conference chair Michael Goldstein, an ex-president of the IAJGS (International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies) which organized the gathering. A former Montrealer who made aliyah in 1989, Goldstein told The CJN that members of the organizing committee were somewhat nervous last summer when registration opened amidst the tumult of the Israel-Gaza conflict.

But instead of the worst-case scenarios that were being envisioned, Jewish genealogists turned out in droves, Goldstein said. Israelis comprised about 40 per cent of the attendees, with another 35 to 40 per cent from North America, and the remaining 20 per cent from Europe and the rest of the world. There were about 20 delegates from Australia, he said, and representation was also good from the United States, Canada, England, France, Belgium, Africa and New Zealand.

Goldstein expressed amazement at the high number of Canadians and Canadian ex-pats at the conference -- perhaps as many as 30 -- which he said exceeded the number at last year’s gathering in Salt Lake City as well as the 2013 conference in Boston.

The Canadians included Montrealer Stanley Diamond, founder of the award-winning website JRI Poland (Jewish Records Indexing Poland), whose team of more than 200 volunteers and paid transcribers have indexed some 5.5 million 19th- and 20th-century records from about 550 towns across Poland. Diamond gave a talk to a capacity crowd in a large hall on the first day of the conference.

Strong Canadian Showing at Jerusalem Conference

continued from page 1
UPCOMING EVENTS
At Temple Sinai, 210 Wilson Avenue, Toronto, unless otherwise stated.
Doors open 30 minutes prior to events

Wednesday, September 30th, 8 p.m.
*My Trip to Lithuania and Latvia*
Speaker: Jo Ann Goldwater
Jo Ann Goldwater is a retired physiotherapist who will in this talk, will share her travel tips and information that she found when researching her family roots while visiting her ancestral towns.

Wednesday, October 21st, 8 p.m.
*Using Yizkor Books in Researching Your Family History*
Speaker: Myrna Levy, Member of JGS Toronto and author of *Shattered Stones, Scattered Seeds*

Sunday, November 8th – Two Holocaust Education Week Programmes
1. Speaker: Henry Wellisch at Vaughan Public Library (Clark Avenue West & Bathurst) at 11 a.m.
2. Speaker: Anna Przybyszewska-Drozd, Associate Director of The Jewish Genealogy & Family Heritage Center of Warsaw, at Lodzer Centre at 5 p.m., presented jointly with Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada

Wednesday, November 25th, 8 p.m.
*Truth, Does It Matter? Rhea Clyman’s News Stories About the Soviet Union from 1928 to Her Expulsion in 1932*
Speaker: Jars Balan of the University of Alberta

Wednesday, December 9th, 8 p.m.
*Pictorial History of JGS Toronto (on the occasion of its 30th anniversary)*
Speaker: Elaine Cheskes, Librarian, JGS Toronto

Sherlock Holmes: The Jewish Connection
Speakers: Hartley Nathan and Clifford Goldfarb, lawyers and Sherlock Holmes experts

Sunday, January 24th, 2016, 10:30 a.m.
*The Archives of Ontario: What’s In It For Me?*
Speaker: Jane MacNamara, instructor, Ontario Genealogical Society

Sunday, February 21st, 10:30 a.m.
*Uncovering the Human Stories*
Speaker: Lorne Miller, Member of JGS Toronto

Wednesday, March 30th, 8 p.m.
*Remembered Voices*
Speaker: Jeff Gorney

Sunday, April 10th, 1:30 pm
North York Central Library, 5210 Yonge Street
*My Heritage (www.myheritage.com)*
Speaker: Daniel Horowitz, Chief Genealogist and Translation Manager, Manager of My Heritage

Wednesday, May 30th, 8 p.m.
*Unexpected Discoveries in the Quest to Find My Roots*
Speaker: Hymie Reichstein, JGS Ottawa

Wednesday, June 15th, 8 p.m.
*Brick Walls and Breakthroughs*
Presentations by JGS Toronto members

Visit www.jgstoronto.ca for updates.

KEEP SHEM TOV RELEVANT!
Submit a personal story (up to 1,500 words) for On A Personal Note. And send in:

- helpful tips
- useful websites
- interesting anecdotes
- news of discoveries
- photographs
- travel information

Please email your submissions to shemtov@jgstoronto.ca.
The next deadline is November 18th.
**MISSING LINKS**

**IN SEARCH OF NOVAKOWSKYS**
*by Ron Graner*

I recently received a Facebook inquiry from A. Bruce McDonald living in the Boston area who was trying to find his extended family descended from Russian-Jewish composer David Nowakowsky (1848-1921). We exchanged hand-drawn family trees and written notes. I forwarded same to other Nowakowsky relatives, who are also trying to find each other.

Bruce’s letter to me was triggered by another Facebook notice by musicologist Stephen Muir of Leeds, England, who had discovered a cache of Nowakowsky manuscripts that had made their way to South Africa. Professor Muir had put together a concert of Jewish music that included one of the Nowakowsky works. I had answered Muir’s request for information on David Nowakowsky’s life by sending him a chronology of Jewish life in Odessa focusing on my research on Nowakowsky’s life, and that of his grand-daughter, concert pianist Sofie Seltsmann.

Two years ago, I gave a presentation to JGS Toronto on David Nowakowsky. On the day of my presentation, a computer glitch (since corrected) prevented me from showing census records of my family and charts. If you go to my site, [www.musicalpawns.com](http://www.musicalpawns.com), you can download Nowakowsky’s story and hear some of his music. Please click on the words, WATCH & LISTEN, at the top right of the page to open the menus. There is a 5-minute film I made for BRAVO! TV and a 15-minute CBC radio documentary called *Music of a Forgotten Master*.

My next talk, *1921 – The War Against Music*, will be given to the Oakville Historical Society at on October 21st at St. John’s United Church in Oakville at 7 p.m.

**EXHIBITION: MEMORIES OF MUIZENBERG**

Remembering South Africa’s ‘Jewish Golden Age’ and the families that settled there, this exhibition hones in on the Cape Town beach of Muizenberg and the 200,000 Jews who visited the seaside suburb come summer from about 1935 to 1975. Personal photos, accounts of the summertime Jewish community that developed and archive material will all capture the spirit of the period.

Many people have nostalgic memories of summer holidays at Muizenberg – pavilions, beach huts, warm beaches, ice lollies and watermelon. At its peak, there were 600 Jewish families in Muizenberg.

Join us as we walk down memory lane and become part of the exhibition by bringing your photos.

At the Schwartz/Reisman Centre
9600 Bathurst Street, Vaughan
Monday, November 16th to Sunday, November 29th
Grand opening on November 16th at 7 p.m.
All are welcome and refreshments will be served

Let your South African friends know about this exhibit and have them share their photos!

Please email pictures to Richard Stern at memoriesofmuizenberg-toronto@bell.net or bring them with you.

For more information, please visit [www.srcentre.ca](http://www.srcentre.ca) or call 905.303.1821 x3029

This photograph was taken in Miedzyrzec Podlaski (aka Mezritch) in Poland on the 25 of September, 1939.

I am trying to identify the men in it. My uncles from that shetl went to the Russian Army and perhaps these men were also joining that army. It’s also possible that my uncles are among the men in this picture. Poland is not cold in September - the climate is very similar to Canada’s - and maybe they were wearing their coats and hats because of where they were going. To me it looks like a good-bye picture.

Please let me know if you or someone who know can identify any of the men in this photo.

- Gert Solnik Rogers,
JGS Toronto Past President

If you have any responses for Ron or Gert, please send an email to shemtov@jgstoronto.ca
THE LODZ GHETTO PHOTOGRAPHS
OF HENRYK ROSS
A Collection of Holocaust Photographs

As reported in the March issue of Shem Tov, this past spring, the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) organized an exhibit, Memory Unearthed, which featured about 200 of the images taken by Henryk Ross from 1940 to 1944 in the Lodz Ghetto. Ross, a Polish Jewish resident of the ghetto, was one of the official ghetto photographers. He had buried a box of his negatives while the last remaining ghetto residents were being sent to their death at Auschwitz. Ross and his wife were among the very few who survived the war; after the ghetto’s liberation, he was able to excavate his negatives. Half of the original 6,000 survived.

The AGO has developed a digital archive of over 4,000 images from its Henryk Ross Collection of Lodz Ghetto Photographs. This digital archive’s sponsorship includes the AGO, Facing History and Ourselves* and the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre. The launch of the digital archive in May marked the 70th anniversary of Mr. Ross’s unearthing of the original negatives.

When you visit the website, www.agolodzghetto.com, and choose Explore the Collection, you will see that there are three main categories to investigate: The Artist, The Chronicle and The Legacy. Contemporary Connections is a facet of the site that links the horrors of the past to the present with the aim of teaching about human rights.

*Facing History and Ourselves is an international educational and professional development organization whose mission is to engage students of diverse backgrounds in an examination of racism, prejudice, and antisemitism in order to promote the development of a more humane and informed citizenry.

By studying the historical development of the Holocaust and other examples of genocide, students make the essential connection between history and the moral choices they confront in their own lives. From its website: www.facinghistory.org

JOSEPH BERGER’S RETURN TO POLAND

Joseph Berger is an author who was a reporter for The New York Times for thirty years. He was born in Russia in 1945 and lived with his parents in a displaced persons camp before emigrating to New York. He and his sister recently travelled to Poland and Ukraine to visit Poland, and especially their parents’ ancestral towns: Warsaw & neighbouring Otwock, Poland on their maternal side, and Borynya, now in Ukraine, on their paternal side.

Berger’s account of their trip, “A Return to Poland”, appeared in The New York Times. He writes: “Our parents’ hometowns had receded into a dim past. Nevertheless, we, like many others now making this particular kind of roots journey, were enriched by the trip because we discovered a new Poland. Jews, some of them impassioned American expatriates, have planted the seeds of a reviving community in Warsaw and Krakow, and an astonishing cops of Polish gentiles have made it their mission to rediscover a people that had been so entwined with their own.”

The full article and photos can be viewed at: www.nytimes.com/2015/08/02/travel/poland-jewish-heritage.html
BRANCHING OUT
by Elaine Cheskes, JGS Toronto Librarian

The JGS Toronto Library Collection is located at the Gladys Allison Canadana Room, North York Central Library, 5120 Yonge Street, 6th floor, Toronto

“NEWSIES” AND GENEALOGY
by Elaine Cheskes

How is the Mirvish Production of Newsies “related” to the subject of genealogy? My father, Irwin (Irv, Itzik) Sacks, was a newsboy in the early 1900s. Since four of my grandchildren, ranging in age from seven to eighteen, saw the performance of Newsies, I thought: “What a wonderful opportunity for them to identify with their great-grandfather Irv, and to learn about life in Toronto during this period of history.” I conducted a brief tour of the neighbourhoods where great-grandpa Irv lived and worked. My grandchildren asked many questions about their great-grandfather Irv’s experiences as a newsie. However, I realized that unfortunately, I did not have all the answers, and that I had missed many opportunities to learn relevant information about my father.

The question and answer format that I devised created an open dialogue that stimulated an interest in my grandchildren to learn about their heritage and their great-grandfather, Irv. Questions formulated by great-grandfather Irv’s inquisitive and thought-provoking great-grandchildren, followed by answers formulated from oral histories and genealogical documents researched by me, my father Irv’s loving daughter

Q: Where was great-grandpa Irv born?

A: Your great-grandfather Irv was born in Russia in 1901. He came to Toronto at nine years of age, with six of his eleven siblings and his parents, Louis and Edith (Strokowsky) Sax. They arrived at the port of Halifax on the R.M.S. Royal George in December 1910.

Q: Was great-grandpa Irv’s family poor?

A: Yes, the family was poor. Most Jewish immigrants struggled to provide the necessities of life for their children. The Sax family lived in The Ward, a densely overcrowded slum area in downtown Toronto, at 101 Chestnut Street where all of the children shared one bedroom. By 1913, they moved to 181 Augusta Avenue, in Kensington, known as the Jewish market.

Q: What was the main reason that great-grandpa Irv became a newsie?

A: He helped to support the Sax family. His meager earnings from hawking papers were given directly to his parents to put bread and butter on the table.

Q: What were great-grandpa Irv’s parents’ occupations?

A: His father, Louis, was a peddler who sold dry goods from a horse and wagon. His mother, Edith, was a homemaker with the overwhelming task of caring for her large family.

Q: If great-grandpa Irv needed to earn money for the family, why did the parents not earn enough to sustain the family?

A: When his parents arrived in Toronto, they were virtually penniless, and they did not speak English. There was little prospect for their employment. However, great-grandpa Irv’s older brothers, who were master carpenters in Russia, were hired to carve the Aron Kodesh (Holy Ark) at the Beth Sholom Synagogue in Toronto.

Q: What school did great-grandpa Irv attend? Did he drop out of school in order to work full time as a newsie? What grade did he complete?

A: In 1911, he was enrolled at Hester How Public School on Elizabeth Street. He attended classes during the day and sold newspapers after school. Some teachers allowed the newsboys to leave from school earlier than the other students. Upon registration, great-grandpa Irv’s surname was spelled Sacks, unlike the other members of the Sax family.

When the family moved to Augusta Avenue, great-grandpa Irv attended Ryerson Public School that was located south of Dundas Street and west of Spadina Avenue. He completed grade eight.

Q: Why were there newsies?

A: Home deliveries of newspapers did not exist. The corner newsboys were the main source of daily news. The newsies shouted out the headlines of the day with the sole purpose of attracting customers to buy their papers.

Q: How old was great-grandpa Irv when he sold newspapers, and until what age did he sell papers?

A: He was probably ten or eleven years of age when he sold papers, but I am unsure of the length of time that he continued to sell.

Q: Did great-grandpa Irv’s siblings also sell papers?

A: He was the second youngest of twelve children, and had the closest relationship with the youngest child, his brother Harry. They worked together selling newspapers.

Q: In what part of Toronto was great-grandpa Irv a newsie?

A: Great-grandpa Irv sold The Toronto Evening Telegram, (The Tely) at the corner of King Street and Spadina Avenue. Newsies were very protective of their territory. He bought the papers for one cent and sold them for two cents. Great-grandpa Irv spoke about the frostbite that he suffered in the severe cold temperatures of winter.

continued on page 8
Q: Did the appearance of King and Spadina in the 1900s differ from today?

A: Yes, in the 1900s, the area was both commercial and residential. The small businesses occupied the lower floors while the upper floors were rented as flats. Although many buildings in the area are deemed heritage buildings, the original establishments such as the Power House Hotel, Warwick Bros. postcard factory, and textile and woollen factories no longer exist. However, the Spadina Hotel, built in 1902, stands completely renovated. The horse and carriage, the Ford Model T and streetcars were the main forms of transportation whereas the T. Eaton Company used the horse and wagon for its deliveries. Ladies in the 1900s wore floor-length dresses with long sleeves, high-necked collars and large brimmed hats while the gentlemen wore suits, long coats and top hats for formal wear.

Q: To whom did great-grandpa Irv sell newspapers?

A: If I had to make an educated guess, I would say that he sold papers to the workers in the nearby sweatshops of the garment district, and to the guests of the many hotels in the area. Some Jewish immigrants who were illiterate bought English language newspapers with the intention of creating the impression that they were educated. Other Jewish immigrants only bought Yiddish papers, such as The Forverts (The Forward).

Q: Did the newsies strike? Did great-grandpa Irv participate in the strike? Was there a union in Toronto in the early 1900’s? Was great-grandpa Irv part of the unionizing movement that swept through the newsie community at that time?

A: Since great-grandpa Irv arrived in Toronto in 1910, he would not have participated in the newsies’ strike. It commenced in 1908 when the Sunday World raised its wholesale prices and undercut the newsboys’ profits. The Newsboys’ Union was formed in 1909 in Toronto. The main purpose was to offer guidance and protection to the newsboys and establish a centre for the newsies. In 1911, the first clubhouse was opened but due to the high cost of maintenance, the property was sold.

Q: Was the play Newsies an accurate representation of great-grandpa Irv’s life?

A: The newsboys in the play Newsies represented desperately poor working kids who fought the establishment to reform the child labour laws by striking and forming a union. I do not think that great-grandpa Irv, as a young boy, was a political activist. He worked as a young newsboy simply to earn money to supplement his family’s income.

Q: What were great-grandpa Irv’s goals and ambitions in life?

A: Although he did not verbalize his goals and ambitions, he strove for success in all his endeavours. My father Irv was extremely hard working, and perhaps his experience as a newsboy gave him the entrepreneurial skills to run a successful linen supply business. In the 1960s he sold his company to a large American corporation, the American Linen Supply Company, based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The Toronto firm that continues to function is known as the Canadian Linen and Uniform Service.

He and his wife Jean, whom he adored, had a marriage filled with warmth and affection. He discouraged her from entering the work force since he was so proud that he could offer her complete financial security.

Since I was an only child, he doted upon me, and provided all the opportunities that he was unable to experience in his youth. It was most important to him that I received a university education, and upon my graduation from the University of Toronto, he was fulfilled. The newsie succeeded!

From the many photos of great-grandpa Irv, my grandchildren viewed a handsome and distinguished gentleman, six feet in height with an erect stature. As an older man, he had a full head of silver white hair. However, I would be remiss if I did not describe great-grandpa Irv’s character. He was highly intelligent, a man of few words, with a gentle, giving and kind nature. He passed away in 1981. I know that he would have been so proud of you, his great-grandchildren.
We delve into our past, we bring back old memories, we try to place ourselves in a historical context. We want future generations to have this information. We write it down. Sometimes a book emerges. We’d like it to be shared, hoping that our story resonates with others. I know I did.

In 2007, *The New York Times* referred to the Jewish Book Council (JBC) Network Meet the Author events as “a combination of *The Gong Show* and speed-dating.” To me, in 2015, it was a combination of speed-dating and Twitter! And my book and I were involved in the process.

The JBC Network, started in 1999, is designed to benefit communities across North America that offer Jewish book programs. It is a program of the New York-based Jewish Book Council whose mandate is to promote the reading, writing, publication, distribution and public awareness of books that reflect the breadth of the Jewish experience. The JBC Network includes approximately 100 member organizations, including JCCs, synagogues, Hillels, Jewish Federations, and cultural centres.

Every spring the JBC Network’s Meet the Author event in New York City gives over 250 authors a platform to present current books of Jewish interest to the Network members, to give them the opportunity to be invited to appear at community events around North America, all expenses paid.

It is an event that has grown in popularity and the number of participating authors has quintupled over the past decade or so from approximately 50 authors to over 250 each year.

Authors have to pay a registration fee, which allows them to make a two-minute pitch to the audience of JBC members. Included in the fee is a personal pitch advisor who assists the author by phone to hone down the presentation to time, and to make it as effective as possible.

I registered my memoir *White Schooldays: Coming of Age in Apartheid South Africa*, and followed the application procedures. Not having a stopwatch, I used my microwave to time my pitch.

*Meet the Author* takes place over three days, in five sessions, with approximately 50 authors presenting per session. I was scheduled to present between 5-7pm. My group of authors, a random selection I believe, was seated in alphabetical order, and we presented that way. The moderator held up time cards to keep our deliveries on track. Because my surname begins with a “B” I was up at the microphone early, but by 6.00 p.m. we had barely reached the “E”s and I thought, I will be here until midnight! So I left during a stretch break and missed the after meet-and-greet.

I am not sure it mattered. I analysed the catalogue. I had imagined we would all be aspiring first-time authors, trying to make our mark, but some best-seller names were also pitching, including Alan Dershowitz, Tess Gerritsen and Alice Hoffman. There were two books with a South African connection—mine and Roger Cohen’s *The House on Human Street*. His carries more weight than mine and his provenance as a *New York Times* journalist is way greater than mine. Would my memoir count? There were over thirty books, fiction and non-fiction, about the Holocaust. There were fifteen cookbooks; there were self-help books on a wide range of topics from parenting to divorce. Books on being Jewish; on aspects of religion; sci-fi and thrillers set against a Jewish background. Twenty-four books for children.

The author’s speaking ability and presentation skill are important. Ultimately, though, what really appeals to these communities across North America? The JBC Network members had until mid-June to make their choices. They are not made public. I am delighted to be able to tell you that I have been invited to give presentations in Scottsdale, Arizona (I unfortunately cannot make it) and in Toronto: I will be speaking on Sunday, November 22nd at 11 a.m. at the Prosserman JCC, 4588 Bathurst Street. See you there!
SOME OF MY EXPERIENCES IN GENEALOGY
by David Price, Member of JGS Toronto

My parents never told me anything about their ancestors. (I did not ask until their health was too poor to answer). When I was 18, five people came up to me at the YMHA (Toronto) and said they were all related to the Prices. I had no idea how. In 1976 I was invited to Buffalo to a KUSHNER of Grodno family reunion on my mother’s side. I had no idea she even had living relatives other than my aunt. There were a few hundred people there and as it turned out, I did not talk to any of them! Fortunately we did receive a family tree. Turns out my great-grandfather was one of ten brothers and sisters, nine of whom came to the USA pre-war; one sibling’s child, my maternal grandmother, and her family, came to Canada. Another time I found, in the cutlery drawer in my parents’ kitchen, all the delicate 1930 immigration papers of my mother’s family from the trip from Grodno to Canada, including passport, passenger list, and rabbi’s verification of good standing!

At age 40 I decided to do a PRICE family tree by interviewing my four aunts and the five relatives I had discovered at the ‘Y’. My aunts knew a little and had some old photos but I hit gold when I interviewed an 85-year-old relative with a photographic mind who had written out a rough copy of the PRICE family tree. Turns out there were four PRICE branches and all had members in Toronto! With this opportunity to be seized, I spoke to members of each branch and produced a handmade tree of about 500 people, giving out copies to all my relatives.

One fateful day in 1998, my wife Marilyn spotted an ad in The CJN for JGS Toronto. I joined, and as a consequence, she has almost never seen me since! I learned about LDS (Mormon) microfilms of the Jewish records of Poland, which were in Polish and Cyrillic and ordered the town of Kielce (my father’s father’s side) and Chmielnik (my father’s mother’s side). Luckily the Toronto Reference Library is a world-class library where one can order LDS films. Polish was not a problem, but learning Cyrillic was an experience. I had a few things going for me in that I was a math teacher and already knew the Greek alphabet. It turns out that one thousand years ago, St. Cyril came from Greece to Russia and saw that there was no written alphabet in Russia. I guess he must have said “Why not use the Greek alphabet?” Being a teacher, I also had the necessary skill of reading any handwriting. As for motivation, Gert Rogers, then president of JGS Toronto, often complained that Cyrillic was the “brick-wall” in her research. I took this as a challenge, being a naturally obsessive-compulsive type. Nothing was going to stop me! All I had to do was obtain a copy of the cursive Cyrillic alphabet from the Mormons, which I got online.

Using the LDS films, I had little luck with the PRICE tree but the information available on the films for GORLICKI of Chmielnik was a goldmine. The GORLICKI tree has since grown from one bubby to 2,500 names! I found out that my paternal bubby had 10 brothers and sisters, with a few who survived WWII. Soon I decided: why not extract all the birth, marriage and death records from the LDS films for Chmielnik and send the lot in to the Kielce-Radom Special Interest Group (KR-SIG) Journal. Warren Blatt, now head of the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York, was editor then. After Chmielnik, I extracted a few more towns for the Journal. When I took a break from extracting records and submitting them to KR-SIG Journal, the Journal went out of business crying that there were not enough contributors!

There used to be a website, Russian Records Indexing, I think, which later became JRI-Poland. I still wanted to index and extract so I volunteered for Stanley Diamond’s newly formed organization. I was asked to be the photocopier for Toronto Copy Centre for Stan, i.e. photocopy the index lists of hundreds of towns from the 2,300 LDS films of Jewish records of Polish towns. The library had a meeting about me at one point for overusing their expensive microfilm photocopiers. When the library had their twenty microfilm readers removed to be replaced by internet ones I was still using the twentieth one and they let me finish while they took the other nineteen away!

I am a terrible public speaker. My first talk ever was with the Linitzer Benefit Society. My parents were among the oldest members. It was a great honour to talk with my father watching. These were a lot of seniors who did not believe a young person like me could get records about their families from Poland so the week before the meeting I went on JRI-Poland and printed records for some of them. Unbelievably, I forgot to hand them out. There was no such thing as PowerPoint yet. Although I did bring text references, the crowd was reluctant to catch the genealogy bug. Some time later I was asked to do a talk on Jewish genealogy to a Russian Jewish organization. A rabbi introduced me, but in Russian. He seemed to talk about me for longer than I expected. Afterwards I asked him what he said. To my shock he told me that he spoke about my parents who happened to both be born and died on Purim. I guess that was worth kudos among the religious Jews. As for my talk… imagine a speaker in a room in which most people

continued on page 11
Some of my Experiences in Genealogy
continued from page 10

are ESL in English and where most are engaging in private conversations in Russian while you talk. I could not even hear myself speak. You would think I would never do a talk again. Well, the compulsive side of me took over again: I did two more. One was after I met Reuben Cipin. I asked him why the geriatric building that we were in was named after him. He said that his son was a builder and built it because there was a need for senior facilities for him and many others. He asked me to do a talk on genealogy. Again, without an eye-catching PowerPoint presentation, I did not impress anyone.

Then there was the talk I did at the June meeting of JGS Toronto devoted to breakthroughs. You would think that I had learned my lesson after the previous failures. I was super careful to get it right. I prepared visuals on my computer. I edited the talk three or four times, adding humour when I could. One could not have been more organized. I was not talking about my family tree breakthroughs but about two incredible Jewish genealogy breakthroughs that will help the world of Polish Jewry. The first is the recently created National Digital Archives (NDA) website in cooperation with JRI-Poland that has promised to index all the Jewish Birth-Marriage-Death (BMD) records of Poland as they are digitized. I pointed out that BMD records as a rule are in Cyrillic for the years 1868 to 1914 and Polish otherwise. One needs ViewMate, a professional translator or a volunteer translator like me to read them. The second breakthrough is that the editor of Avotaynu, the top journal in Jewish genealogy, had asked permission to reprint my article from last November’s Shim Tov about how to use the NDA website to find one’s records. What could go wrong? You guessed it: it was a disaster in the making. I thought the whole audience was comprised of advanced genealogists since they were members. Not true. Some complained that they did not know the difference between an index and an extraction. Next problem was my sense of humour. I am not allowed to reveal everything I do until a project is completed and approved. I joked about this and people got frustrated. Then the biggest goof-up of all: instead of using PowerPoint, which I forgot about, I put my visuals into Word. I never said I was computer literate. Overall, at least, I was preaching to the converted and got my message across.

There are a few things I have experienced, or did not experience, that I thought should be mentioned:

Unbelievably, there were two 100-year-old PRICE relatives living within a block of me that I did NOT know about. They both died by the time I found out! One was my grandfather’s “favourite” cousin. Apparently he was in Baycrest Centre for years. I thought he had died fifty years earlier! The other was from a PRICE family branch no one from mine had talked to in fifty years.

Mayer Kirshenblatt (folk artist and co-author of They Called my Mayer July) was my aunt’s brother-in-law. I gave him KIRSZENBLATT records from Opatov. He gave me as a thank you a print of one of his well-known paintings of the shtetl. His talk years ago for JGS Toronto about the culture of the shtetl included some of the funniest comments I have ever heard. Too bad he did not talk into the microphone properly - the audience missed half of it. I got a hold of his book and caught the rest of the story. By the way, his daughter, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, is the curator of the Core Exhibit of POLIN, the new Jewish Museum in Warsaw.

An LDS box containing microfilm of Jewish records warns of criminal prosecution if one extracts or indexes the records on the microfilm. I have been doing this for fifteen years. I guess I won’t ever set foot in Salt Lake City! Just joking -- JRI-Poland got permission for me.

After I just joined JGS Toronto in 1998, I went to my first meeting but they would not let me in because their list of new members had not been updated. I had just come from work on a hot day without changing clothes. Since I have a skin condition, I was extremely uncomfortable and started arguing with the two poor people greeting members at the front desk. It took long-standing member Henry Wellisch to calm me down, bless him.

I was the JGS Toronto librarian for ten years. No one else wanted to be the librarian and I took it as an opportunity to get easy access to references that would help me do my trees. I knew nothing about being a librarian. It turned out to be a lot of paperwork when people donated books. Cataloguing is no picnic. One plus I can claim is that I got the idea of digitizing the entire JGS Toronto collection. When I wanted to quit I was asked to find a replacement. I did not know any librarians. Luckily someone told me about Elaine Cheskes, who was a retired librarian. She was perfect and agreed to do it. She has done a wonderful job since.

In the 2002 IAGS Conference in Toronto I was in charge of hosting the Toronto JGS library booth. We had on display Miriam Weiner’s book on the Jewish record holdings in the Polish State Archives. She came up to me and asked, “Is the book selling?” For a laugh, I put up a sign that said: “Free Polish and Russian translations”. That made me pretty popular with a lot of people.

continued on page 12
Some Unusual Names Encountered

- Tuna FISZ
- GITLER/CHITLER family of Kielce
- SZTUNKE/BABKIS/ROTSZYLD/MILLIONSCHIK/KNISH/KISZKA/FARFEL/SZMALTS/FLISZFISZ/SZTUK-MAJSTER
- Marriage of NAJNUDEL (new needle in Yiddish) to FUDEM (thread in Yiddish)

People I was told I am related to in family legends but I think is a bubbemayse (old wive’s tale):

Tony KUSHNER (my grandmother’s maiden name), Chaim WEITZMAN (my great grandmother’s maiden name), Tsipy LIVNA (relative of the same name also in Israel), Helena RUBINSTEIN of London, England, Bess MEYERSON (first and only Jewish Miss America, my grandmother was related to MEYERSON)

People I might be related to:

Sandy KOUFAX (his mother, LICHTENSTEIN of Grodno, my mother says was a relative); Rabbi PRICE, the Toronto Talmudist (knew my grandfather); BADASH, the former South African cantors who came from Grodno, as did BADASH, my grandfather; SHOPSOWITZ (Shopsy, of hot dog fame) on his wife’s side -- she helped my PRICE grandfather come to Toronto

Awards

- Mila Begin Volunteer Wall of Honour for typing 90,000 Kishinev extracts over ten years for Roumania-SIG
- Certificate for translating the most Cyrillic records on ViewMate for the year.
- Volunteer certificate - IAJGS 2002 Conference.

Projects

- Translated from Rashi Hebrew burial records of Istanbul Synagogue
- Translated from Cyrillic Chernovitz Cemetery, 20,000 records
- Translated from Cyrillic 10,000 shot in Stanislav, Ivano-Frankovsk Forest
- Translated from Hebrew some of Toronto’s Roselawn Cemetery
- Translated from Cyrillic for JRI-Poland town leaders

ONTOARIO GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS
BASIC GENEALOGY & FAMILY HISTORY COURSE

An 8-week course is being jointly sponsored by the Toronto Branch, Ontario Genealogical Society (OGS) and the Toronto Public Library. Jane MacNamara (who is speaking to our Society in January) is the lecturer for this series which will deal with the basics of research and archives and how to organize your results. The course is being offered in two time-slots:

- Tuesdays, 6 to 8 p.m., October 6th to November 24th at Toronto Public Library, Riverdale Branch, 370 Broadview Avenue
- Wednesdays, 2 to 4 p.m., October 7th to November 25th at North York Central Library, 5120 Yonge Street

Cost for course: $160 ($140 for OGS members) Registration is required: https://torontofamilyhistory.org/learn/courses

For information, please send email to courses@torontofamilyhistory.org
All practising Jews were expelled from Spain and Portugal in the 1490s. Sephardim found safe haven in more religiously-tolerant lands like the Ottoman Empire, Italy, and the Netherlands. Those whose families had nominally converted to Catholicism sometimes managed to escape from the lands of the Inquisition in the 1500s-1600s and openly return to Judaism. What still elicits surprise among genealogists is that some Sephardim later moved to central and eastern Europe and left Ashkenazicized descendants into modern times.

The towns discussed in this article were formerly in southern portions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and later were split between the Austrian and Russian empires but now are split between Poland and Ukraine.

Salomon Włochowicz, called “Szafrardi”, was born in Italy but in the early 1600s served as a court agent in Kraków, the Polish capital city in western Galitizia. The Sephardic physicians Salomon Calahora (from Italy) and Isaak Hispanus settled in Kazimierz, a town adjacent to Kraków, in the 1500s. Some descendants of Calahora, many maintaining forms of the surname, later lived in Kraków, including Aaron and Mendel Calahora in the 1700s, while others moved east to Kremenets in Volhynia in modern Ukraine. Izaak Aron Kolhory, a Calahora descendant, died in Kraków in 1833. Many members of the Sephardic Bondy family also resided in Kraków throughout the 1800s, such as Frimet Bondy, who moved to Brzesko after marrying Salamon Isaak Brandsdorfer, and Benjamin Bondy whose birth in Kraków was recorded in 1889.

Sephardic Jews from Turkey, many of them merchants, arrived in Galitizia beginning in 1567. Some of these Sephardim, including Abraham de Mosso (and his sons Moses and Mordechai), Chaim Kohen, Jakob Sydis, and David Passis (who had lived in Pera, Turkey), belonged to a business partnership to trade in wine in the large city of Lwów (today L’viv), free from transport taxes and from any restrictions normally imposed by local officials, thanks to a special deal granted by the Polish king Sigismund II to all agents of Joseph Nasi, a Sephardic statesman from the Ottoman Empire. Many of the ancestors of the partnership members had lived in Portugal, as had the ancestors of another L’viv trader, Jacob ben Raphael. Several Jews from Venice, Italy also began to trade in L’viv. Sephardim were also active in the spice trade in the area at this time.

Also settling in Galitizia around the late 1500s were the researcher Alexander Beider described as “dozens of Turkish-Jewish families,” some of whom belonged to professions other than trading and medicine. The Galitizian Jewish historian Moses Schorr (1874-1941) found evidence that some Sephardim permanently settled in L’viv and both he and the Russian Jewish historian Samuel Lozinski (1874-1945) found numerous references to specific Turkish Jews in that city until the mid-1600s. One of them, Samuel Czelebi from Constantinople, lived there from 1621 to 1635.

The Polish chancellor Jan Zamojski, who protected the Sephardic traders until his death in 1605, founded the city of Zamość in Poland in 1580 and invited Sephardim to settle there starting in 1588, some moving from L’viv. They had roots in Spain and Portugal and had lived in the Ottoman Empire (particularly Turkey), the Netherlands (at that time including both Holland and Flanders), Braunschweig, Germany, and Venice but all of them were arbitrarily called “Itilikus” by Polish officials. They built their first synagogue out of wood from 1590 to 1603 on Żydowska (now Zamenhofa) Street, replaced by a brick synagogue built from 1610 to 1618 on the same street that still stands and served as a public library from 1959 to 2005. The Sephardim were exempt from the Jewish tax Ashkenazim had to pay. Their surnames included Zacuto, Castiell, Marcus, and de Campos, among others. Some of them were traders of diamonds and fabrics while others were manufacturers and physicians. The families grew by natural increase, and Sephardic newcomers continued to arrive in Zamość into the 1630s, but others left, and Ashkenazim also began to arrive. Intermarriages between Zamość’s Sephardim and Ashkenazim started in the 1640s. Among them, Chana de Campos married the Ashkenazi Yaakov Bar, Samuel Manes’ daughter married the Ashkenazi Moshe ben Avraham, and a Sephardic woman married the Ashkenazi Lazer ben Nachman. Some Jews with names identifiable as Sephardic appear in the city’s records for decades more, a late example being Moshe Zacuto who was looking for a house to buy in 1691.

The city of Lublin lies 89 km northwest of Zamość. Moses Montalto, a Sephardic physician whose surname shows some origins from Italy and who had close relatives from Portugal, was instrumental in the construction of a Sephardic synagogue in Lublin in the first half of the 17th century.

Two Jewish immigrants from Spain built a synagogue in Przemyśl, a city in southeastern Poland close to Ukraine, 98 km west of L’viv, in the 1500s.

In Lesko, a town in southeastern Poland, the local Sephardim built a fortress synagogue from 1626 to 1654. In 1942 the Nazis destroyed some of the town’s buildings, including other synagogues, but the Sephardic synagogue remained standing, albeit with damage to its interior. It was later renovated and since 1995 has housed the Museum of Galician Jews.

Some Sephardic families settled in Łańcut, another town in southeastern Poland, in the 1600s.

In 1630, Krzysztof Goluchowski granted permission to Spanish Jews to settle and work in the town he owned, Chmielnik, 85 km northeast of Kraków, although they weren’t the first Jews to live there. The Sephardic synagogue in Chmielnik was built in 1638.

Sephardic migrations to Husiatyn, a town in easternmost Galitizia in today’s Ukraine, southeast of Tarnopol and southwest of Khmelnytskyi, occurred significantly later those to more western cities like L’viv and Zamość, but trading opportunities were again among the motivations. Jews from Turkey and Thessaloniki,
Sephardic Jews In Galitzian Poland And Environs
continued from page 13

Greece frequented Husiaytn’s markets and fairs. Some of these merchants decided to permanently settle in Husiatyn, and there exist references to Jewish merchants from Thessaloniki in documents after the Austrian Empire acquired Galitzia in 1772. Several of their surnames pepper the vital records of both Husiatyn and nearby towns. An example is Algazi, a surname among Jews in Turkey. Hersz Ber Algazi’s daughter Sura Algazi was born in 1869 in Khorostkiv (then called Chorostków), a small Ukrainian town 29 km northwest of Husiatyn. The name was spelled Algaze by families in the southwestern Ukrainian villages and towns of Hrymailiv, Kopychyns’t, Pidvolochys’k, Sadzhivka, Skalat, and Stavki, and it was spelled Algase in Semeniv.

The surnames Spanierman, Spanier, and Sfard have an obvious meaning. Jossel Spanierman and his wife Zelde, residents of Khorostkiv, welcomed their daughter Bassie Feige Spaniermann in that town in 1865. Bassie married Abraham Joel Fudim and, staying in town, had six children (Samuel Boruch, Moses, Wolf, Sara Beila, Kreine, and Benzion) between 1885-1892, at least some of whom took their father’s surname. Sura Spanierman from Khorostkiv married Hersch Kopel and their daughter Libe Spaniermann from Khorostkiv married Israel Friedman, producing the son Schulum Schachne Friedman (born in 1895 in Kopychyns’t, then called Kopyczynce). A son, Abram Judko Mitelman, was born to Malka Malia Szpanierman and her husband Mordko Mitelman in 1909 in Chelm, a Polish city 64 km southeast of Lublin. A girl named Cyprj Szpanierman was born in 1904 in the town Wlodawa in eastern Poland at what are nowadays the corners of the Ukrainian and Belarusian borders. In Lyubomyl’, a town in Volyn Oblast in western Ukraine east of Lublin, multiple Jewish families were surnamed Sfard and some of them perished in the Holocaust (Berko, Myoshe, and Yakov Sfard and their wives and children).

Another surname identified as Sephardic is Elion. Birth and death records from the 1840s-1890s reveal that Jews called Elion lived in the city of Rzeszów (in southeastern Poland, west of L’viv) as well as the village of Nosówka, 11 km to the west. Sephardic Jews with the corresponding surname Aelion lived in Thessaloniki in the 1800s-1900s.

Miriam Diniz was born in Zamość circa 1625, the granddaughter of Iacobo ben Gedaliah Dionis who was born in 1540 in Fatih, a district within Istanbul, Turkey. Miriam was a great-granddaughter of Ana Manrique de Lara Furtado who was born circa 1500 in Salamanca, Spain and a great-great-granddaughter of Iacob Tam ben David Ibn Yahya who was born in 1475 in Lisbon, Portugal. Although Miriam’s father was born in Slonim, Belarus, far from Sephardic cultural centers, he had the Judeo-Spanish first name Aloandro and bestowed his son (born in 1620 in Zamość) with the name Aloandro too, in keeping with a Sephardic (but not Ashkenazic) naming tradition that permitted children to be named after living relatives. Miriam married Perfet Charlap, a Sephardic Jew whose father had been born in Thessaloniki.

The historian and diplomat Szymon Askenazy, of mixed Sephardic-Ashkenazic heritage, was born in 1865 in the small town of Zawichost, southwest of Lublin.

Aaron Biteman’s ancestors lived in Hrubieszów, Poland, 46 km northeast of Zamość, near the Ukrainian border. His grandfather, Judah Lejb Biteman, a Hrubieszów native, informed his son that his ancestors had been expelled from Spain in 1492 and migrated to the Lublin region around 1550. Members of the Cymet family from Hrubieszów said the Cymets descended from three Sephardic brothers who left Spain and arrived in Hrubieszów in the 1500s.

Researcher Alexander Sharon says some Sephardim settled in the cities of Drohobych and Stryi in southwestern Ukraine. Nahum Waldinger Yaar’s father told him some of his ancestors moved from Spain to Poland in the 1500s-1600s. Nahum’s grandfather, Avraham Waldinger, resided in Stryi and owned a book listing all his male-line ancestors as far back as when they had been in Spain. Avraham smoked a nargila (water pipe), which Nahum thought was compatible with his non-Ashkenazic origins.

Genealogist Arthur Kurzev’s father was born and raised in Dobromil, a town presently in Ukraine, 5 km from Poland’s border that’s south of Przemyśl and southwest of L’viv. Kurzev’s father’s family passed down an oral tradition that they had Sephardic ancestors who had escaped from Spain’s Inquisition. The family of Jacob Dov Berman from Kornytysyin western Ukraine had an identical oral tradition. If researcher Perri Reeder is right, Kornytysya had several additional Sephardic families.

Genetic testing enables families with Sephardic surnames or Sephardic stories to get definitive answers about their heritage in many instances. It also reveals Sephardic connections for families whose ancestors lived in the 1800s-1900s in cities and towns that had once harbored identifiable Sephardim.

The PBS television series Finding Your Roots used 23andMe to discover that the Mexican-American actress Jessica Alba is autosomally related to the Jewish-American attorney Alan Dershowitz, whose ancestors were all Galitzianers from municipalities in southeastern Poland: Przemyśl, Cieszanów, and Pilzno. Their shared ancestor must have been Sephardic. Similarly, Family Tree DNA’s autosomal test matched a Spanish man who married into my family with a man whose ancestors were all Ashkenazim with German surnames, some of whom lived in Przemyśl.

Gary Wolinsky’s family elders had orally-preserved knowledge of partial ancestry from Turkish Jews. Genetic testing of a line from his Litvak paternal grandfather as well a line from his paternal grandmother revealed matches of Sephardic character. In the case of the latter, Gary’s grandmother, Freydel Sukenik, was born in 1890 in Ostroh in the Volhynia region in northwestern Ukraine and her mitochondrial DNA line closely ties her to a Catholic man from the town of Correntes in the state of Pernambuco in northeastern Brazil who didn’t have recent Jewish ancestors but appears to have had some from the 1600s.

At least some of the Maimon, Maiman, and Meiman families from eastern Europe are presumably authentic descendants of Sephardic Maimons, members of which lived in Thessaloniki and Turkey. This is apparently true for those who lived in Zamość and probably also those from L’viv. My mother descends from Marcus Maimon of Khorostkiv and other Jews from eastern Galitizia and eastern Poland. Inside Family Tree DNA and GEDmatch she...
continued from page 15
matches many descendants of Sephardic Conversos from north-eastern Mexico and Texas on triangulating identical-by-descent autosomal DNA blocks.

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Kevin Alan Brook is a historian in Connecticut, U.S.A. who has written on Eastern European Jewish themes, the Karaites, and the Khazar kingdom in books and journals and on his website Khazaria.com. His article, “The Chinese Lady Who Joined the Ashkenazi People”, appeared in the March 2015 issue of Jewish Times Asia.

NEW VIDEO WALL TO PRESERVE STORIES OF BAYCREST SENIORS FOR GENERATIONS TO COME

Some 10 years ago, Bernyce and Marvin Kalifer dedicated the beautiful stained glass dome in the Morris and Sally Justein Heritage Museum, in honour of Bernyce’s parents, Ben and Vera Walker, who gave their time and support to Baycrest throughout their lives.

But the family connection goes back even further. Bernyce’s grandmother, Raya Shendroff, supported the downtown Toronto Jewish Old Folks Home (founded in 1918 and which would eventually become Baycrest) and was a board member long before Baycrest was established on Bathurst Street.

So it was a special moment in spring 2015 when Marvin and Bernyce and their adult children and grandchildren gathered to launch a new chapter celebrating the family connection: the 10-year Kalifer Family Heritage and Legacy Project.

The project has begun with the family donating a giant touchscreen and a new “Museum on Wheels” cart fitted with audio-visual recording equipment.

“The main goal of the project is to use the audio-visual equipment to record the incredible stories of our seniors. With the help of Baycrest, we can make these amazing stories live on forever and ever,” said Ron Kalifer, son of Marvin and Bernyce.

Stories are now being archived and can be viewed on the screen next to the museum. They already include fascinating accounts by residents and former staff about life at Baycrest in an earlier era.

Eventually, a special exhibition of collected reminiscence will be displayed at the museum before travelling to other locations.

This excerpt of an article was reprinted with permission from Baycrest Health Sciences. To view the full article, go to www.baycrest.org/news/foundation/new-video-wall-to-preserve-stories-of-baycrest-seniors-for-generations-to-come/

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY!

It’s so nice to be able to enhance our meetings with refreshments but this only happens with some effort. We are seeking 2 or 3 people who can share the responsibility (3 or 4 meetings each) for bringing cookies, tea and coffee to our programmes. (Of course, the cost of the supplies is defrayed by JGS Toronto.) If you can volunteer to help, please contact Les Kelman at president@jgstoronto.ca.

15 September 2015 Shem Tov

www.jgstoronto.ca
**Save the Date!**

**August 7-12, 2016**

The 36th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy will take place in Seattle, Washington from August 7 to 12, 2016. The focus for the 2016 conference is *The Wandering Jew*.

Tracks will include:
- The Sephardic Experience in the United States
- European Migrations
- Australian and South African Branches
- Westward Ho! Jews in the Western US
- Coming Home to Israel

Requests for proposals are now open and registration will begin on January 4th, 2016, with early bird discounts applying until April 30th. See [www.iajgs2016.org](http://www.iajgs2016.org) for information.

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**JGS TORONTO DONATIONS & TRIBUTE CARDS**

Approaching his 80th birthday, Rolf Lederer, one of our past presidents, was asked by his friends and family, “Is there anything you would like as a gift?” In lieu of presents, Rolf requested that donations be made to our Jewish Genealogical Society in his honour. We wish to thank Rolf for his generous suggestion. If any other member of our Society would like to adopt this idea, please let us know.

Donations, big or small, are always appreciated by JGS Toronto. They can be made to mark a special occasion or for no occasion at all! Your contributions represent support for our Society and all that it stands for.

To make a donation, please email [president@jgstoronto.ca](mailto:president@jgstoronto.ca) or call 647-247-6414.

To have a tribute card sent to a friend or relative, write to [tribute@jgstoronto.ca](mailto:tribute@jgstoronto.ca). A personalized card will be sent out and you will receive a tax receipt for the amount donated.

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**LONDON JEWISH BOOK FAIR & FAMILY FESTIVAL**

**November 20th to 22nd**

at the London Jewish Community Centre

536 Huron Street, London, ON

Programs include:
- Lost & Found: Rediscovering My Family History in the Internet Age with Tammy Hepps

**Saturday, November 21st at 7:30 pm**

Dessert reception to follow

As a child eager to learn about her family’s origins, Tammy Hepps could have never imagined that as a grown-up she would be overflowing with family history ranging from the ridiculous to the inspiring -- and more surprising, that these stories would come from records that even then were publicly available. What made the difference was not years of perseverance, but technology advances she could have never imagined: content digitization, search, and crowd-sourcing. Come laugh and cry as she relates the highlights of her family history and marvel at the ways technology is reconnecting the generations.

Tammy Hepps, who lives in Pittsburgh, PA, is the founder of Treelines.com, a family story-sharing website, and a previous contributor to Shem Tov. (You can find her article, “How Stories Bridge Cultures and Families: The Treelines.com Story”, at [www.jgstoronto.ca](http://www.jgstoronto.ca). Look under Resources, Our Newsletter, Back Issues, March 2014.)

For more information about the London Jewish Book Fair & Family Festival, go to [www.jewishlondon.ca](http://www.jewishlondon.ca)

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**Best wishes for a sweet year!**