

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE CONEJO VALLEY AND VENTURA COUNTY



JGSCV

March 2021

Volume 16 Issue 6

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

We hope you are well and safe and practicing safe distancing and wearing a mask when appropriate.

JGSCV was privileged to have Marian Smith, retired historian of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) speak to us at our February 14 Zoom meeting. Marian last spoke to us in 2013. The program was a review of records over three different eras of immigration to the United States. It was most informative and helpful for those of us who are researching our ancestors' immigration to the U.S. during those time periods. The highlights of her presentation is on page 5.

The premeeting 'Ask the Experts' was facilitated by Hal Bookbinder. This part of the meeting allows members to ask questions on any topic before the meeting begins, which is facilitated by a senior JGSCV member.

While we completed our commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II, we would like to continue to include articles if members submit them. We also want to continue the Family Stories that we began last July after our June speaker Joan Adler suggested we write anything as a memory. We have not received any World War II or Family Stories for this newsletter so please send your articles for the future to Allan Linderman, editor of *Venturing into Our Past* (newslettereditor@jgscv.org) and to me at president@jgscv.org. This is your society's newsletter and we want as many of you as possible to write something to share in the newsletter. If you need assistance, Allan is eager to help you.

(Cont'd next page)



Marian Smith, JGSCV's February Zoom speaker on Researching the USCIS

NEXT MEETING

Sunday March 7th 1:30-3:30 PM

Members only ZOOM!

Our Eastern European Roots: We Are What Our Ancestors Ate



Amy Wachs is past president of Cleveland's JGS and served on the board of LitvakSIG. She has lived and worked in Latvia and Moldova and is recognized for her knowledge and understanding of Eastern European life and Jewish genealogy.

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Mission Statement:

JGSCV is a non-profit organization run by enthusiastic volunteers dedicated to the sharing of genealogical information, techniques and research tools with those interested in Jewish genealogy and family history. Members who include beginners and experienced genealogists share with each other.

JGSCV is a membership organization and we cherish every member. We are delighted that we have 130 dues-paid members for 2021 so far—80 percent renewal! According to our bylaws (Membership Article II Section 6) dues are payable January 1st of each year. Any member whose dues are in arrears for three months or more, after due notice from the Society, shall be dropped from membership in the society. Those who have not renewed by the end of the third month (that's March) will be dropped from membership after notice. This is my most unfavorable job. I will be calling all who have not renewed and sending them a notice that if we do not receive your dues this month you will be dropped. While the pandemic has prevented us from meeting face-to-face for a year, we do hold monthly Zoom programs, provide an excellent and resourceful newsletter, and several members-only emails each month about genealogy updates including when there are free opportunities with the various genealogy organizations. A membership renewal form is on page 19.

While we rely on your dues to operate, we also need additional revenue to keep up with what we do. There are two opportunities further to assist your society. First, by shopping at Ralph's or Food for Less and listing JGSCV as your charity of choice. And second, when shopping at Amazon please do so through the Amazon Smile program. Neither of these opportunities cost you any additional money and both result in contributions to JGSCV. See "noteworthy" on our website <https://www.jgscv.org/noteworthy.html> for more information.

Hal Bookbinder continues with his *Practicing Safe Computing Series*, "Private Browsing" on page 13.

Hal has also contributed the *Successful Genealogical Interviewing* article on page 17 in response to questions asked by JGSCV member Jill Meyer during an *ask the experts* session.

The IAJGS 41st International Conference on Jewish Genealogy will be held on August 2-5, 2021 in Philadelphia, PA. While the IAJGS has made arrangements for the face-face conference they are also preparing for a virtual conference if the pandemic situation requires. Early Bird Registration will open on March 1, 2021 and will continue being offered until May 31, 2021. To read more see: <https://s4.goeshow.com/iajgs/annual/2021/index.cfm>

JGSCV is still operating on the COVID-19 restrictions and our March 7 meeting will be by Zoom with our speaker Amy Wachs on the subject of *Our Eastern European Roots: We Are What Our Ancestors Ate*. We have never had a program about foods, and Amy is an excellent speaker on Eastern Europe having lived and traveled there.

Stay well and safe!

Jan Meisels Allen



When an elder dies, it is as if an entire library has burned down. — Amadou Hampâté Bâ in a speech at UNESCO in 1960

Ellis Island Origins

A concise history of American immigration stations including staff interviews of early employees, daily operations and procedures, and descriptions of many of the job tasks is covered in the video, *Legacy of Ellis Island* available on the website of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. The 30- minute film dispels misconceptions like name changes, includes photos and documents, and explains how immigration was transferred from states' control to federal overview. Beautifully scored and filmed, the video is at <https://tinyurl.com/r81nphyp> or on the USCIS site at <https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/our-history/history-office-and-library> on its history page.

Cursive Handwriting Forever!

It's been said that with the advent of computers, there will be NO reason to learn cursive writing in school. This seems incredulous as the study of cursive handwriting provides the practice of discipline, meditative qualities, personalized communication and for the genealogy buff? A world full of documents to decipher and read. There are tons of resources on every major genealogy website. Just Google *cursive handwriting and genealogy*. Among the suggestions is to always look at the unreadable word in context in order to compare and match like-letters and words. The same goes for Hebrew and Russian cursive. To read about why cursive writing is important in education go to <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/importance-teaching-handwriting>

Free Genealogy Websites Rated for 2021

Writer Simon Chandler has an article on the website, *LifeWire* where he created his list of what were *The 8 Best Free Genealogy Websites of 2021*. Included among them is Jewishgen.org. All the Honor!

FamilySearch and the U.S. Archives were also part of the list. Find it at:

<https://www.lifewire.com/best-free-genealogy-websites-4163831>

NGS 2021 Live!

The *National Genealogical Society Family History Conference* will be online May 19 & 20, 2021.

NGS 2021 Live! offers the opportunity to learn new strategies, resources, and techniques to sharpen your family history skills. Speakers include both past guests of JGSCV like Crista Cowan and Judy Russell, as well as sessions on writing about your family DNA, secrets, and researching women. A *Virtual Exhibit Hall* will be open online. This is the first conference after the merger of FGS and NGS.



The On-Demand Lecture Series Packages of 20 or 40 Lectures will be available for viewing in Mid-June and include NGS 2021 Live! **plus** 40 On-Demand Lectures (mid-June) Cost: Early Bird (by 15 March 2021) enrollment is \$375 (member) and \$425. (non-member) Go to <https://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/ngs-2021-live/> for info.

The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV) will hold a **Zoom Meeting:
Sunday, March 7, 2021 1:30-3:30 p.m.**



Open only to JGSCV members (*see below for membership application link)
Zoom link will be emailed to members a few days before the meeting.

THE PROGRAM

Our Eastern European Roots: We Are What Our Ancestors Ate

What can family recipes reveal about your ancestors' places of origin and life in the shtetls of Eastern Europe? The foods our ancestors ate in their shtetls can offer clues to help you learn more about your family history. Amy's presentation will focus on the Russian Pale and Galicia. She will include examples from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine, and Moldova, based on her personal experiences there.

About Speaker Amy Wachs:

Amy Wachs has been involved in Jewish genealogy for over 30 years. She is Past President of the Jewish Genealogy Society of Cleveland and served on the Board of LitvakSIG, Inc. from 2014 through 2020. Amy is a retired attorney and university instructor. She taught law in Latvia as a Fulbright Scholar and in Moldova as a Fulbright Senior Specialist. Amy often speaks about Eastern Europe and Jewish genealogy topics at conferences and to local audiences.



There is no charge for members of JGSCV to attend this Zoom meeting. Anyone may join JGSCV from our website: <https://www.jgscv.org/pdf/membership%20application.pdf>. Annual dues are \$30 for an individual and \$35 for a family. We welcome new members!

Highlights from *Researching the United States Citizenship and Information Service (USCIS)*

By Jan Meisels Allen

JGSCV members were privileged to have a Zoom presentation by Marian Smith, retired historian of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) about the USCIS records. The presentation was an overview of three historical eras of U.S. immigration and naturalization records, illustrated with documents of Jewish immigrants. Using a timeline tool, Marian demonstrated how plotting an immigrant's life events can identify what records may exist for that particular immigrant and where these records can be found.

Prior to the presentation there was an ask the experts session facilitated by Hal Bookbinder. Hal provided a tip for a resource called NewsBank.com, which is a subscription service but is available at the following local libraries: Ventura County Library System, Los Angeles City Library and the Thousand Oaks Library. Ed note: Family History Centers also has this subscription. NewsBank.com is called by different names in the three different libraries: In the

Ventura County Library System: Access World News; LA City Library: America's Newspapers, and in the Thousand Oaks Library: America's News. You need a library card from the specific library to access them remotely. Newspapers.com is pretty good on obituaries and weddings, but not as strong on births. It has specific tabs for the first two. The unique resource at the Ventura County system consists of a good selection of California newspapers. All three aforementioned libraries have library access to Ancestry Library edition and to referenceUSA.com which has an excellent phone and address lookup. He mentioned that the Ventura County Library System has resources that the cited sources do not. Therefore, it is best to check all three library systems for the different resources. There are links to all the libraries on the JGSCV website <https://www.jgscv.org/resources.html#Libraries>. In response to a question, Hal gave another suggestion to search Ancestry by address only in their public records to see whom else lives at a particular address.

Three Eras of US Immigration and Nationality Records

EARLY 18 th & 19 th Century							GREAT WAVE Early 20 th Century						RECENT Late 20 th Century			
1820	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980
Customs Lists, 1820-1892							Immigration Lists, 1892-1954									
							Border Arrival Manifests, 1895-1954									
							Chinese Exclusion Act Files, 1882-1944									
							Immigration Correspondence, 1893-1944									
										Visa Files, 1924-44						
											Registry Files, 1929-44					
											AR-2					
												A-Files, 1944 - present				
Court Naturalization Records, 1790-1992																
											Certificate Files, 1906-1956			A-Files, 1944-		
										Natz Corresp., 1906-1944						
NON-INS Records							INS Records at NARA						INS Records at USCIS			

Marian shared a timeline slide of major record sets: early era, great wave (early 20th century) and recent era since 1950s. Not all the records cover all the eras see below. The chart also shows where to find the records today.

Marian used examples of Jewish immigrants. She also demonstrated that the records may have conflicting information. The Solomon Hirsh record showed in the 1900 census that he arrived in 1854 and his 1889 naturalization was found in a naturalization list—the latter being exact information. Solomon applied for a passport in 1889 which helped in the search. (U.S. Passport records are available from the U.S. March 2021

Department of State not the USCIS. Passport records are online through 1925 on Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org.) Marian showed Solomon’s U.S. Passport application which showed the same ship’s name and date of entry which helped verify she was looking at the correct Solomon Hirsch passenger list. What other records does he have? The above time-line helps to show what you have and what you may be looking for.

The later-era records may only have one file but that file would be full of records. The great wave era has many different records and Marian was helping us by focusing

where we should look for the documents and correspondence in the files.

Dates to Remember

Laws of certain times is very important to remember. While laws may change over time, for the time period you are researching one must know what is relevant for that time period. For example, naturalization records are found only in the courts for naturalizations granted prior to September 27, 1906, but after that date each naturalization is also documented in a USCIS Certificate File (C-File).

Using a Moses Goldsmith, in his 1920 U.S. Census record he stated he arrived in 1867. And Marian found him arriving in Baltimore in 1867. His naturalization card said he was naturalized in 1937, but his voting record found him voting in 1890. This asks what records might be available to prove when he became a citizen. In federal court records she found a petition not the actual declaration. By 1937, there would be a “C- - file” (citizenship record) filed with the USCIS/INS. His petition was found both in court records and in the USCIS C-file, along with an affidavit record revealing Moses had been confused about his citizenship, wrongly believing he was a citizen since 1880.

USCIS/INS

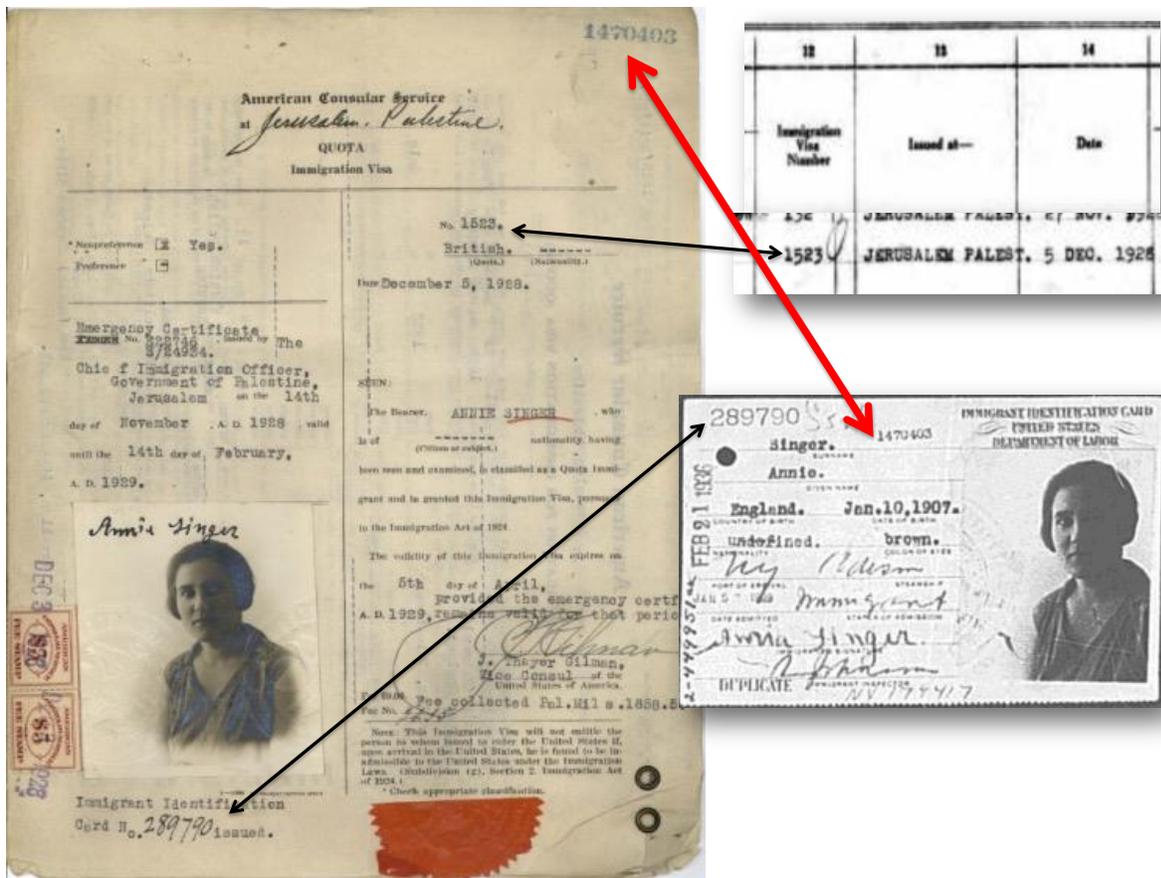
The year 1906 is important because June 29, 1906 is the date of the Naturalization Act of

1906. It became effective on September 27, 1906. That law remained until replaced first by the Nationality Act of 1940 and later by the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952.

In another example, Annie Singer, was naturalized in 1936 in New York City. While other records may be online, her “C- file” will only be available through USCIS. The certificate number will be on the back of the petition which can be found in court records. If you can obtain the number off the petition that will save you the fee to research the number—there will still be a fee for receiving the actual record. If you skip the index search at USCIS since you have the certificate number, you save the fee but may miss other records found in the file.

If an immigrant arrived before July 1, 1924 the official arrival record is the passenger list. If the immigrant arrives July 1, 1924 or later, we know the official arrival record is the visa.

Visas were required by the 1924 Immigration Act. The visa files contain visas for arrivals between 1924 and 1944. Three new columns were added to the ships’ manifests as a result of the Act. These included the immigration visa number, place of issuance and date of issuance. Not everyone has a visa number. Some are visitors or non-immigrants. Most importantly, the visa number shown on the passenger list is NOT the file number needed to request a visa from USCIS.



Annie Singer's immigration and immigrant identification card number 1470403 matches as does immigration visa number on ship's manifest, immigrant ID, and visa.

To obtain the number requires a USCIS index search. If USCIS returns a Visa File number, then you can request that Visa file. The application for the visa has genealogically relevant information such as parents' names, their current address, port of embarkation, where they are going, where they intend to go (address) and person. The documents that support the application are a treasure trove of information: a certified copy of a birth certificate, government records check, medical certificate, medical and/or military records. Currently, the cost of the search is \$65.00 and a copy of the record is an additional \$65.00. The USCIS finalized a substantial increase in fees which March 2021

the current Administration has on hold for 90-days while they review the entire regulation, not just the fees (See: <https://www.federalregister.gov/document/2021/02/05/2021-02563/restoring-faith-in-our-legal-immigration-systems-and-strengthening-integration-and-inclusion-efforts>)

To go to the USCIS site to request records go to:

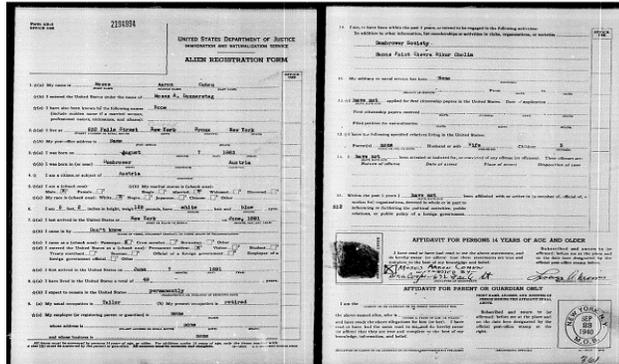
<https://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy/genealogy/requesting-records>

There you will find information on what is available. The forms are available at:

<https://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy/genealogy/requesting-records> and scroll down to G-1041 for the search form and G-1041A for the records request form.

Later immigrants have different information in their file than earlier arriving immigrants.

The Alien Registration program of 1940 was supposed to have included every alien, non-U.S. citizen between August 1940 and



March 1944. The form asked the name the person used when they entered the United States which may be a different name than is on the records so far found. That name will help in searching passenger lists.

The records we find in the public domain (online) for immigrants' who came after World War II do not have as much information as earlier documents. Nevertheless, court naturalization petitions will include the name, and date and place of birth, arrival date, and the A number (alien registration number). The A-number can be key to requesting a post-war immigrant's file which will contain a variety of additional records.

Late 20th century passenger lists, after 1947, contain even less information: name, address, age, address where destined. But the immigrants listed will have complete A-Files or C-files full of records and documentation on file with USCIS. Except for a relatively small number of A-files transferred to the National Archives, USCIS retains all the rich records of immigrants since WW II.

Annotations on the manifest:

- 1949 date means they have an A file
- PL-774 is law they are entering under The Displaced Persons Act
- State Dept Visa Number

Derivative citizenship occurs when a person became a citizen under their father's citizenship -or before 1922— a spouse's naturalization. They may have also lost citizenship by marriage. The derivation records are unique to USCIS and are **not** court records. One may presume the child obtained his/her citizenship under their father's naturalization or a spouse gained or lost citizenship through their spouse's

citizenship. For example, a woman alien who marries a citizen before September 22, 1922 would gain citizenship through marriage. Likewise, a female citizen may lose their citizenship by marriage to an alien husband prior to 1922. Before 1906, petitions did not list children or spouses. There is a wealth of information from different documents in USCIS derivative C-files.

Derivative certificates issued BEFORE April 1, 1956 are C files, while those issued AFTER March 31, 1956 are A files (Alien files).

C files-certificate files from September 27, 1906 to April 1, 1956.

Correspondence Files

Marian also addressed INS correspondence files at the National Archives. She presented an example where the ship's manifest indicated the person was held for special inquiry and the notes indicate there was an appeal. This case from 1903 could be searched in a newly-available name index covering ca. 1898-1912 (NAID 4709010). Currently, about one-half of this new index is searchable online in the NARA catalog. The index provides the file number, which can then be requested by number. Marian also showed how one could search the INS Subject Index on Ancestry for correspondence file numbers. The example used showed a child had to go back due to a medical condition-favus (a skin condition of the scalp). Correspondence also discussed who would go back with him. In the next census it showed the child had returned to the U.S.

Ancestry is a subscription service but Ancestry (via ProQuest) is permitting remote access to their website by some libraries that have Ancestry subscriptions. One must have a library card for that library.

Not all correspondence went into the correspondence file. The example used was the Name Index to Bureau of Naturalization Correspondence (NARA microfilm publication A3388) covering ca. 1906-1946. The name index will be of assistance in finding possible correspondence and provides a certificate number which may indicate the correspondence is in the certificate file. An example shown was a letter by immigrant Applebaum who gave his history in Russia and why and how he came to the United States and why he wanted to be a U.S. citizen.

If the immigrant arrived after 1956, they only have the "A- file". For those who arrived during the great wave there is a potential trove of documents.

The United States required passports starting in 1917-18 --World War 1 time period and required visas starting in 1924. Prior to that time period, the U.S. did not require any identity documents. Some countries in Europe required passports or intra-country passports.

Marian then entertained questions for 45 minutes

A question was asked about declarations of intent and required residence for naturalization. Marian explained the declaration of intention requirement was added to the law in the 1790's to facilitate proving residence. Prior to 1906 declarations never expired and could be used to support a petition for naturalization even decades later. The 1906 naturalization law declared that all declarations filed under the new law would be good for only seven years, then expire. There was no standard in the early years for the declaration of intent. In 1903, a law suggested, not required, that the courts add information into the naturalization record such as date of arrival, but no one really followed the suggestion. The 1906 law standardized what had to be included. If someone filed a declaration but never filed their second papers the INS/USCIS copy of the declaration would have been destroyed (but the court copy should still survive).

A question was is it common for husband and wife to get their citizenship together if they did not arrive together? Marian did not find that usual. By the 1930s and especially after World War II we see lots of couples who immigrated as couples being naturalized together.

The Basic Naturalization Act of 1906 also established the Certificate of Arrival requirement, which ONLY applied to immigrants admitted after June 29, 1906. Immigrants who arrived before that date, but who applied for naturalization after, could prove their five years' residence through a variety of documents and did not have to accurately name their port, date, or ship of arrival. Immigrants who arrived after the 1906 date had to have a Certificate of Arrival certifying their passenger arrival record was checked and verified.

JGSCV webmaster David Oseas also shared that on FamilySearch they have many petitions for naturalization from 1906-1929. They are not indexed but can be navigated by date and petition number. <https://www.familysearch.org/en/> It's a free site but one must register to access it.

Marian reviewed the fire at Ellis Island in June 1897 where all the immigration records were destroyed. However, as the Customs House had their own customs lists records not all was lost. To see the difference in the information on the two forms pull-up an immigration list from New York dated ca. 1894 to May 1897, then compare it to another list of the same date at another port such as Boston or Philadelphia. The New York list will be a Customs List, the other port list will be an Immigration List.

Castle Garden, which predated Ellis Island, records also burned in the Ellis Island fire as they were transferred to Ellis Island when it took over as the immigration site. Those were New York State records and not protected via the Customs records, therefore, they did not survive.

We thanked Marian for an outstanding presentation and question and answer period.

Marian Smith retired in 2018 after thirty years as an Historian for the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), later U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). She now speaks to groups on U.S. immigration and nationality records and leads the I&N Records Fortnightly study group. Marian last spoke with JGSCV in 2013.

The Hidden Personal Cost of Genealogy Websites

A recent article published on [psychologytoday.com](https://www.psychologytoday.com), authored by Elaine Kasket, Psy.D identifies some of the personal pitfalls that may result from sharing DNA with genealogy websites. Dr. Kasket, an Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society and Honorary Professor of Psychology at the University of Wolverhampton (UK) notes that along with your DNA, you may also be revealing family secrets.

She also notes that while the EU protects genetic data as personal information, that is not the case in the U.S. where only DNA submitted to doctors is universally protected. Protections are typically noted in the 'terms and conditions' and other similar pages on the genealogy websites that must be agreed to before they will accept your DNA.

Noting that 'genetic data' can incriminate through law enforcement, Dr. Kasket reminds the reader that the Golden State Killer was captured after identifying a relative – not the actual killer – and tracking the killer from there. She notes, "Paradoxically, DNA is specific to you and *never* just about you." Read the entire article:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-online-mind/202102/the-hidden-personal-cost-genealogy-websites>

Elaine Kasket, Psy.D



**JGSCV Welcomes New Member
Ann Harris**



Practicing Safe Computing #64: “Private Browsing”

By Hal Bookbinder (Number 64 in a series)



You purchase a product and almost immediately see pop-up ads for similar products. “If the product is free, you are the product.” You are certainly aware that free Internet browsers monetize your use by selling information about your online habits. Per Statista, Google Chrome has 48% U.S. market share, Apple Safari has 35%, Microsoft IE and Edge have 7% and Mozilla Firefox has 4%. All are free



because your information is a valuable commodity.

This article from the Electronic Frontier Foundation explains how Google monetizes your browsing habits while being able to legally assert that it is not selling your information, <https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2020/03/google-says-it-doesnt-sell-your-data-heres-how-company-shares-monetizes-and>

There are things that you can do to reduce your exposure while browsing. First, always use the “private” mode when on a shared or public computer and close the browser window or session when done. Otherwise, the computer may retain information that others might be able to access. Generally, you would not want to use private mode on your own computer. This will clear your cookies and cache removing preferred Internet settings and may even slow future access.

Second, if available, turn on the “Do Not Track” option in your browser. This simply requests websites not to gather data on you. It is voluntary and ignored by many websites. However, as some websites still respect it, it affords some protection.

Third, choose the most secure browser that you can. RestorePrivacy rates FireFox number one, calling it “a great all-around browser for privacy and security.” But don’t get too comfortable. You need to configure its security settings. They advise, “Be sure to disable telemetry in Firefox, which collects ‘technical and interaction data’ and also ‘install and run studies’ within your browser.” Here is their step-by-step configuration guide: <https://restoreprivacy.com/firefox-privacy/>

Fourth, run your browser within a Virtual Private Network (VPN). This will make it more difficult for others to track your online activities by masking your Internet ID and location.

Additionally, if your browser has a pop-up blocker turn it on. If it does not, consider installing one. This will not stop browsers from tracking you and using your information but it will suppress at least some of the annoying ads that are displayed as you browse.

Browsers must pay the bills. They do this by providing advertisers with access to you for a fee, a multibillion-dollar business. Additionally, when you use a search engine (like Google or Bing), a social network (like Facebook or YouTube) or any other application on the Internet, they may, and likely do, collect information on you, your activities at their site and potentially even well beyond their site.

Too invested in Chrome? Consider adding Firefox, configuring it for security, and using it when you do not want Google tracking your every move. No browser can guarantee 100 percent privacy protection. But you can take steps to reduce your exposure. Read the security policies, choose wisely, configure privacy settings on whatever browser you use, and do consider installing a VPN and a pop-up blocker

This is the sixty fourth in a series of articles by JGSCV founding member Hal Bookbinder. Hal is also a Past President of JGSLA and IAJGS. He is the 2010 recipient of the IAJGS Lifetime Achievement Award and his online skills are well documented. All the Safe Computing articles by Hal Bookbinder are available on the JGSCV website www.jgscv.org under Noteworthy.

Genealogy Odds and Ends

Don't forget to register for RootsTech Connect. It's a free, virtual online event held on 25-27 February 2021. To register and read more about it go



to: <https://www.rootstech.org/?lang=eng> RootsTech has released its 18-page list of more than 600 English-language classes that may be found at: <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/bc/content/RootsTech/2021/RootsTech-Connect-2021-Sessions-eng.pdf>. To view its livestream schedule of keynote presentations, be sure to click here: <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/bc/content/RootsTech/2021/Main-Stage-Schedule-eng.pdf>. There are over 300,000 people already registered!



For up-to-date information about the upcoming IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy (August 2-5) in Philadelphia, you can

visit the website www.iaigs.org or the IAJGS Facebook page <https://tinyurl.com/d279ai0y> or tweet @IAJGSConf.

Some **New** Records at Ancestry.com:

- Pennsylvania Obituary and Marriage Records 1947-2010
- Pittsburgh, PA U. S. Deaths 1870-1905
- Mississippi State Archives, Various Records 1820-1951
- U.S. WW II Army Deserters Pay Cards, 1943-1945
- U.S. Boston Arrivals of Jewish Immigrants from HIAS Records, 1882-1929
- Hungary, Death Records collected by Rabbis in Various Counties 1827-1940
- U.S. Newspapers.com Marriage Index, 1880's-1999
- The Boston Jewish Advocate Wedding Announcements, 1905-2007
- U.S. Newspapers.com Obituary Index 1800's-current



Some **Updated** Records at Ancestry.com:

- Boston, MA U.S. Marriages, 1700-1809
- Texas, U.S. Select County Marriage Records 1837-1965
- California, U.S. Wills and Probate Records 1850-1953

Welcome to 1925!

by [Judy G. Russell](#) *The Legal Genealogist* and past JGSCV speaker | Jan 2, 2021 Blog | [Copyright](#)
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The copyright clock keeps ticking

For many Americans, this is the first Saturday and second day of 2021.

For *The Legal Genealogist*, it's the second day of 1925.

No, that's not a typo. I really do mean **1925**.

The year that books like Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* and F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and Franz Kafka's *The Trial* and Agatha Christie's *The Secret of Chimneys* were published.¹

The year that *Sweet Georgia Brown* and "Yes Sir, That's My Baby" were first available as sheet music.²



The year that films like "The Merry Widow" and "Stella Dallas" and Buster Keaton's "Go West" were first released.³

And because that's the year they all were released to the public, they are now all — without exception — free of copyright restrictions. On 1 January 2021, along with thousands and thousands of other books, sheet music, films, photos and more, they entered the public domain in the United States.

A whole year's worth of materials, wonderfully free for all of us to use in our research, our blogs, our presentations, our publications without having to try to find the copyright owner and secure permission. Remember, that's what public domain means: when copyright expires and a work goes into the public domain, we're allowed to use it freely, any way we want, for any purpose (with some limits⁴), without needing permission from or payment to the creator of the work.⁵

This really is a Big Deal — and it really *shouldn't* have been one.

Because of the way the copyright law works, providing protection only for a set number of years, copyrights should have expired every year and we should have been getting a whole year's worth of materials released into the public domain every year. But that copyright clock stopped ticking in 1998.

There's a whole long backstory as to why it stopped ticking, and it was basically because the Disney people didn't want the film where Mickey Mouse made his debut, *Steamboat Willie*, to become public domain. The copyright statute was changed to add 20 years of protection to all then-copyrighted works — and it provided that the copyright clock would stop, dead, on anything then-copyrighted and wouldn't start to run again until 12:00.01 a.m. 1 January 2019.⁶

At that point, the statute said, after those additional 20 years, for most things, the clock would start moving again and, as it ticked over into 2019, the law said we should get an entire year's worth of published works — everything legally published in the United States during 1923 — transferred into the public domain.⁷

Of course, since copyright law is a matter of statute, and any statute can always be amended, at any time up until midnight on 31 December 2018 — “the end of the calendar year in which (copyrights) would otherwise expire” — Congress could still have bollixed this up. So, as 2018 drew to a close, all of us who watch copyright issues held our collective breath.

And — may miracles never cease — Congress didn't manage to foul it up. On 1 January 2019, thousands and thousands of items passed from copyright-protected status into the public domain. And we could all then say that anything published before 1924 was in the public domain.⁸

So we started saying that the public domain included “everything legally published in the United States before 1924” (instead of the “before 1923” we'd been saying for 20 years), and started looking forward to 1 January 2020, when we'd get another year's worth of goodies.

But then we started worrying. Because, of course, since copyright law is a matter of statute, and any statute can always be amended...⁹ And — amazingly enough — the clock kept right on ticking and, as of 1 January 2020, we began saying that copyright had expired for works published before 1925.

And — *may miracles never cease* — Congress didn't manage to foul it up last year either. In copyright terms, 1925 finally got here. As of 1 January 2021, we can now say that copyright has expired for works published **before 1926**. And on 1 January 2022, we can include works published before 1927. And so on.¹⁰

For now, at least, the copyright clock is still ticking...

Cite/link to this post: Judy G. Russell, “[Welcome to 1925!](#),” *The Legal Genealogist* (<https://www.legalgenealogist.com/blog> : posted 2 Jan 2021).

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Successful Genealogical Interviewing

By Hal Bookbinder

Most of us have had the situation of an uncooperative relative from whom you are trying to get genealogical information. Here are some ideas that you might try to improve your results:

Starting the conversation

- Briefly share details that you have, asking that they provide any corrections.
- Share a written family story including conflicting recollections, along with sources.
- Schedule time when convenient for the relative, giving them time to prepare.



Keeping it simple

- Ask for only a limited amount of information, even if you have a thousand questions.
- Come back for information in small increments unless they want to offer more.
- When sharing trees, indicate the specific items that you would like them to verify.

Keeping the conversation going



- Ask open-ended questions (“Please tell me about...”, “How did ... feel about...?”).
- Do not dominate the conversation. Let them do the talking. Don’t interrupt.
- At the end of the conversation ask if they could point you to other sources.

Being creative

- Share a picture or family treasure and ask what the relative can tell you about it.
- Ask if you can use your smartphone to capture images of pictures and documents.
- Ask if you can record the conversation on your smartphone. Don’t push.

Being respectful

- Let them know why you are asking. Recognize that they do not ‘owe’ you.
- Do not overstay your welcome. Be conscious of when they are getting weary.
- Do not correct them, argue or be dismissive. This will likely shut them down.
- Sincerely thank them at the end of the session and in a follow-up email



Future JGSCV Meeting Dates through November 2021



ALL MEETINGS WILL BE RESERVED FOR MEMBERS ONLY VIA ZOOM UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

NEXT MEETING: SUNDAY, March 7th 1:30-3:30PM via Zoom

Amy Wachs will present “Our Eastern European Roots: We Are What Our Ancestors Ate”

DATE	PRESENTER	PROGRAM
Mar. 7	Amy Wachs	Food of Eastern Europe Family
Apr. 11	Alexander Avram	Yad Vashem Central Database of Shoah Victims and Pages of Testimony
May 2	Stanley Diamond	Next JRI-Poland
June 6	TBA	TBA

DATE	PRESENTER	PROGRAM
Aug. 15	TBA	TBA
No meeting to observe High Holidays		
Oct. 3	TBA	TBA
Nov. 7	TBA	TBA

Until further notice, all future meetings will be held on Sundays from 1:30-3:30 PM

IAJGS Salute! Awards

According to Nolan Altman, the “IAJGS Salutes! Committee” is pleased to announce that Dorit Perry, Uri Sagi and “Giving a Face to the Fallen” have been awarded an IAJGS Salute! Award. IAJGS Salutes! are designed to provide recognition on an ongoing basis of noteworthy projects, activities and accomplishments relating to Jewish genealogy at any time during the year in addition to the annual IAJGS achievement awards.

Using their genealogical skills, Dorit Perry and Uri Sagi have taken it upon themselves to research, discover and write the family story of those fallen soldiers who had no surviving family in Israel to tell these soldiers’ stories. “Giving a Face to the Fallen” was initiated in 2012 and currently has over 25 volunteers.

At the beginning of the project, there were 861 names without biographical material and 500 without pictures. To date, Dorit, Uri and their team of volunteers have researched and succeed in finding information for 100 of these fallen. They have also succeeded in finding photographs for some of the 500 that had no picture on their page. Visit the website in English: <https://latetpanim.org.il/index.php/en>

2021 Membership/Renewal Form

Jewish Genealogical Society

of the

Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV)*

*Member of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS)

www.JGSCV.org

Dues paid now are good through December 2021

Date _____

Check one:

This is a New Membership _____ Renewal _____

Single \$ 30.00 _____ + \$1.00** Family* \$35.00 _____ + \$2.00**

*family defined as two people living in the same household

** \$1 per person is a voluntary donation to the IAJGS Stern Award, granted annually when it recognizes institutions for outstanding work in the creation and availability of resources for Jewish Genealogy.

Additional voluntary contributions:

Library Acquisition Fund \$ _____ Programs Fund \$ _____

Security Fee Fund \$ _____

(suggested minimum voluntary contribution for any fund \$5.00)

Make check out to: JGSCV Mail application to: Helene Rosen,
28912 Fountainwood St.
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

Name (Print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zipcode+4 _____

Home telephone _____ Mobile telephone _____

E-mail address _____

Talents that you have to share (accounting skills, language skills, computer skills, translation, etc.)