

# VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

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



# JGSCV

April 2024

Volume 19 Issue 7

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## NEXT MEETING

Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
2:30 PM – 4:30 PM

**Online meeting**

**“BOY ON THE RUN”**



*A special movie event*

*Info on page 8*

## MAY MEETING

TBA

**2024 JGSCV BOARD  
OF DIRECTORS**

**Israel Perel, President and Librarian**  
[president@jgscv.org](mailto:president@jgscv.org)

**Vice President of Programming**  
[program@jgscv.org](mailto:program@jgscv.org)

**Steven Feldman, DVM,  
VP Membership**  
[stevef@jgscv.org](mailto:stevef@jgscv.org)

**Janet Fishman, Treasurer**  
[treasurer@jgscv.org](mailto:treasurer@jgscv.org)

**Debra Wenkart, Secretary**  
[secretary@jgscv.org](mailto:secretary@jgscv.org)

**Barbara Finsten, Member at Large**  
[Barbaraf@jgscv.org](mailto:Barbaraf@jgscv.org)

**Diane Goldin,  
Member at Large  
& Newsletter Editor**  
[newslettereditor@jgscv.org](mailto:newslettereditor@jgscv.org)

**Andrea Massion, Member at Large**  
[Andrea@jgscv.org](mailto:Andrea@jgscv.org)

**Helene Rosen, Zoom Coordinator**  
[membership@jgscv.org](mailto:membership@jgscv.org)

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**Nancy Goldberg, temp FSL**  
[Nancy@jgscv.org](mailto:Nancy@jgscv.org)

**Pat Fuller, Publicity**  
[publicity@jgscv.org](mailto:publicity@jgscv.org)

**David Oseas, Webmaster**  
[webmaster@jgscv.org](mailto:webmaster@jgscv.org)

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**PRESIDENT'S LETTER**

Greetings Jewish Genealogy enthusiasts,

We have set up a committee to develop and discuss new initiatives for JGSCV. We, as genealogists, tend to look backwards in history. Conversely, our board of directors is looking toward the future. We are interested in continuing the fine programming that has been available in the past while recognizing that the internet now offers access to Jewish Genealogy presentations from all over the globe. We want our membership to take advantages of these opportunities as well as coordinating local presentations geared to all of you. We are also discussing offering more hands-on assistance for people's personal research. I have received feedback on topics and activities that would benefit our members. Please submit any of your suggestions to me at [president@jgscv.org](mailto:president@jgscv.org)

The 44th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy will be held in Philadelphia from Sunday, August 18 through Thursday, August 22, 2024, at the Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown Hotel. There are six themes proposed for the conference:

**Tools and Technology:** This provides practical guidance on the use of third-party DNA tools, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging apps and software, including those specifically designed for genealogy or those that can be applied to genealogical research.

**Shoah Rescuers and Holocaust Research:** There are stories of Holocaust survivors rescued by diplomats, righteous gentiles, and fellow Jews. Survivor and rescuer testimonies provide valuable background for genealogical searches.

**Disappearing Empires of the 19th and 20th Centuries:** Russian, Prussian, Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, British Mandate, etc.: This theme is about understanding the administration of records during this time and where those records now reside.

**The Sephardi, Mizrahi, and Persian Experience:** Topics may include records, repositories, new technology and techniques for researching Jews from Mediterranean, Middle East, and North African countries.

**Building Blocks of Genealogy:** New and innovative methods for finding and documenting sources of information, organizational techniques, presenting family histories and the basics of incorporating DNA results into your genealogy.

**Genealogical Research in Philadelphia and Eastern US:** This theme recognizes the host city's central location along the U.S. Eastern Seaboard and its historic role as a gateway for Jewish immigration. Topics will include cities from Maine to Florida, including the port cities of early American Jewish settlement.

The submissions for the conference are currently being evaluated. The final program will be released later. The conference will allow you to interact with presenters, learn new ideas and network with fellow genealogy researchers.

Stay healthy. Happy Purim and Am Yisrael Chai.

**Issie Perel  
JGSCV President**

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM:

### **“Clued-In: More Cases from Sherlock Cohn, The Photo Genealogist”**

Ava Cohn follows-up with new and Fascinating Cases at our March 2024 Meeting

By Andrea Massion

Just like her literary idol, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Ava Cohn of *Sherlock Cohn, The Photo Genealogist* solves genealogical puzzles by analyzing family photos for the clues and stories concealed within them. She brought her latest and amazing cases to JGSCV by Zoom on a Sunday in March 2024. Ava gave us a lesson in how she pieces together photographic subjects, genealogical evidence, and historical research to substantiate her findings. The handout for this presentation can be found here: <https://www.jgscv.org/pdf/handouts/Clued-In-More%20Cases.pdf>

Ava’s work is not just about identifying eras by clothing styles, although that is a factor in many cases. Ava uses deductive reasoning and applies every tool available to get to the rich details of a family’s saga. Ava presented both the “facts of the case” and “the mystery to be solved” to reach her conclusions.

Here’s an example: The client had found a locket in her late mother’s jewelry box. This family locket held an old photo that needed



dating to name the sitter. Identifying the design of that locket via a Sears Catalog contributed to dating the piece. (See photos below) While both the grandmother and great grandmother could be identified in known photographs, there had been no photos of the great-great grandmother. Was she pictured in this locket? And how would “Sherlock Cohn” prove that? By enlarging the photo, Ava deduced that the cut of the sleeves high on the shoulder was a fashion trend of the late 1890’s. Dating the design of the locket to the same years was another factor. Estimating the

age of the sitter to her early 20’s based on age markers contributed to solving this mystery. By comparing possible birth years and adding on the perceived 20 years, Ava could return to the client’s family tree and look for potential matches. One woman did match! The lesson? Don’t



A display from a Sears Roebuck catalog suggested the timeframe of the locket design.

jump to conclusions without fully researching all possibilities in the family tree.

Another fascinating case of Sherlock Cohn was a postcard taken on a ship. There was a tiny X marking a young woman on the crowded deck and a long missive in Russian on the back, but no postage or address. Applying her “who-what-when-where” methodology, Ava shared her process. Translating the handwritten note provided who wrote it. A second translation cleared up the misinformation from the first translation and clarified the dates of both the image and the inscription. Costume recognition added to the time of year, which was confirmed by the passenger index found, thus giving the ship’s name. Even the *type* of postcard



was identified, owing to the layout lines. Two additional cases were shared by Ava. One involved a young girl’s photo at a Displaced Persons’ (DP) camp after WWII. She is standing at a plaque that honors Lt. Irving J. Smith (U.S.) who was identified as the director of Feldafing Camp in Bavaria. It opened in May 1945. Previously, Feldafing had been a Hitler Youth Camp. By July, it served as an all-Jewish DP camp. Ava was able to date and clarify the events of the girl’s post-war experience, her aunts who survived WWII, and the beloved

American family who adopted and raised her. It is an example of bringing a survivor’s lost and untold story to light.

Each case Ava Cohn shared was a contribution to the truth of a family’s treasured story. It’s research like this that make us love genealogy.

### Ava Reminds Us:

- ◇ Dates Matter: you don’t want to lose an entire generation.
- ◇ Photocards can be dated based on the paper, construction, and design.
- ◇ Researching the photo studio may provide clues.
- ◇ Enhancing/enlarging a photo may alter the person a bit.
- ◇ When possible, obtain more than one translation, particularly if the handwriting on an inscription is difficult to read.

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### Contact

[Sherlock.cohn@comcast.net](mailto:Sherlock.cohn@comcast.net)  
<https://www.facebook.com/SherlockCohn>  
[SherlockCohn.com](http://SherlockCohn.com)



# JGSCV Updates



## MISSION STATEMENT

JGSCV is a non-profit organization run by enthusiastic volunteers and dedicated to sharing genealogical information, techniques, and research tools with those interested in Jewish genealogy and family history.

Members include beginners and experienced researchers.

## We have added seven new books to our reference section at the Agoura library

- \*Kinderlarger: An Oral History of Young Holocaust Survivors
- \*Nothing Makes You Free
- \*The Hidden Life of Otto Frank
- \*The Number on My Grandfather's Arm
- \*The Precious Legacy
- \*Tracing Immigrants through the Port of New York: Early National Period to 1924
- \*Webster's New World Hebrew Dictionary

Note: The author's names and call numbers of these books can be found at our website under the *Library* tab or by clicking here:

<https://www.jgscv.org/library-permanent.html>



## Ventura County Fair: Genealogy Table Sign-ups

There is a genealogy table every year at the fair in the Hobby Building. Volunteers are needed for 3-4 shifts using computers supplied by LDS. You do not need to be an expert, just know how to search the census and vital records for people that come up to the booth. Parking is on your own, but you will receive a free pass into the fair that day. Please note that they'd very much like members of our society to volunteer. Last year there was no one on site to respond to questions about Jewish genealogy.

To sign up go to: <https://signup.com/go/ffmSHLb>

## Even a Missing Entry Can Inform

By Hal Bookbinder

Revizskie Skazki (Revision Lists) can be a valuable source of information about family that lived in Russia's Pale of Jewish Settlement. In the early 1990s, an amazing professional genealogist, Miriam Weiner, located pages on my Buchbinder family in the Zhytomyr Regional Archives. Some Revizskie Skazki, including those shown here, can now be found on JewishGen, along with English translations.

In last month's article, "My 5th Great Grandfather's Name", I focused on the male Buchbinders in Dubno, Volhynia, Russia (currently, Ukraine). Based on the 1850 Russian Revizskie Skazki\*, I hypothesized his name and his approximate birth and death dates. This article focuses on what I was able to learn and infer about the female members of the family from the 1850 and 1858 Revizskie Skazki.

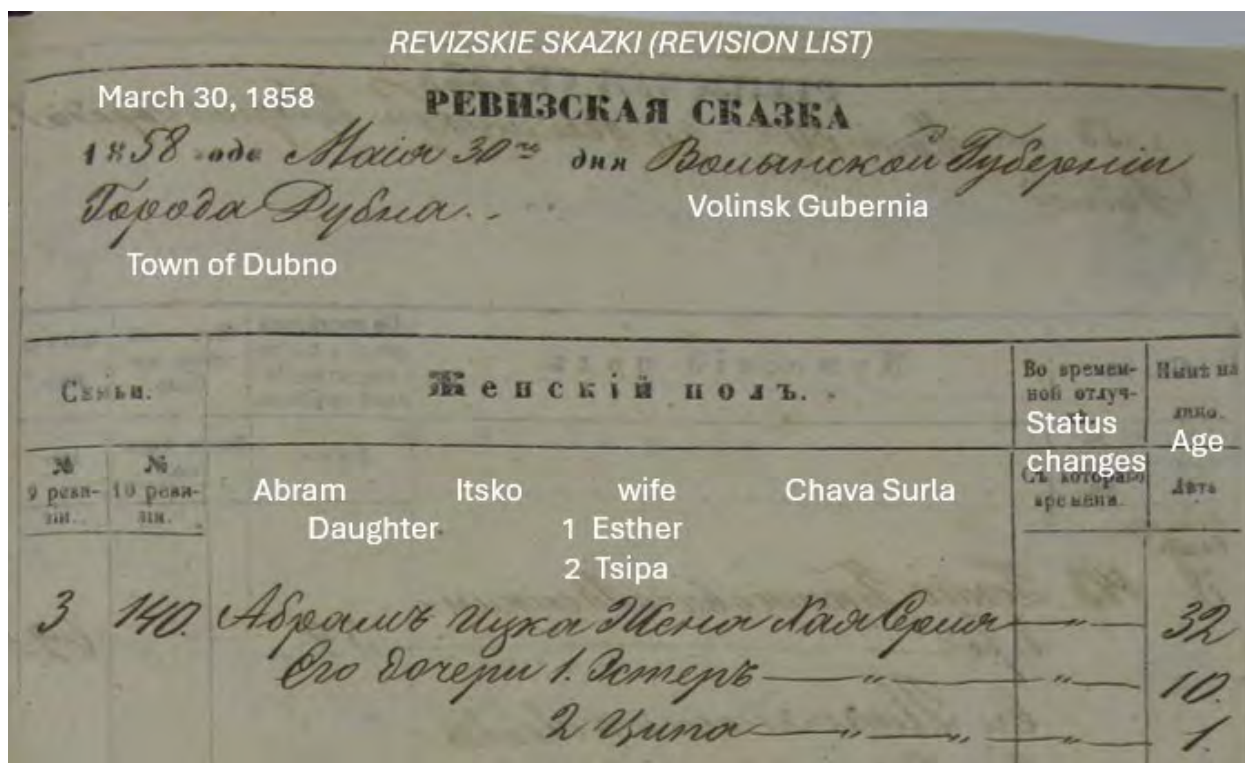
REVIZSKIE SKAZKI (REVISION LIST)				
РЕВИЗСКАЯ СКАЗКА.				
1850 года Октября 30 дня, Волынской Губернии Городъ October 30, 1850 Volinsk Gubernia Town of Dubno -				
Семья.	Dubno	ЖЕНСКИЙ ПОЛЪ.	Во прежней статусъ. Status changes	Въ какомъ прежнѣи. Age
№	Еврейки Female Jew			Лѣтъ.
3	Abram Itsko Buchbinder	wife Chava Surla		24
	Абрамъ Ицко Бухбиндера	Жена Хавы Сурла		24
	Его Дочь	Естеръ		2
	Daughter	Esther		
2	Chiam Buchbinder	wife Hinda		29
	Чамъ Бухбиндера	Жена Хинда		29

The 1850 Revizskie Skazki above shows Chava Surla Bookbinder (my 2<sup>nd</sup> great grandmother) and her 2-year-old daughter, Esther. One can also infer from what is not shown. As I pointed out in last month's article, revizskie skazki have an advantage over censuses in that they include status changes since the prior revizskie skazki, and not just a snapshot of who is alive at the time of the current revizskie skazki.

The 1850 Revizskie Skazki did not list a wife for my 3<sup>rd</sup> great grandfather, Berko, who had died in 1848. Had she died or moved away after the 1833 Revizskie Skazki or had she been alive in 1850, she should have been shown. This implies that she had died by 1833. As the male 1850 Revizskie Skazki\* showed that she had a son, Shimon, in 1832, she died in either 1832 or 1833, possibly in childbirth.

The 1850 Revizskie Skazki also shows Hinda (or Ginda), age 29, as the wife of Chiam (the head of the other Buchbinder household). Chiam was 55 and had sons born around 1832, 1847, 1850, and 1854. The first child, Itsko Shmuel, died in 1835. The others were living in 1850. Hinda was a toddler herself in 1832. So, it appears that she was Chiam’s second wife and the mother of his three subsequent sons.

As Chiam’s first wife is not shown in the 1850 Revizskie Skazki, she, like my 3<sup>rd</sup> great grandmother, presumably died prior to 1833. As she also had a son in 1832, she may also have died in childbirth. Such were the dangers of childbirth in the Pale, in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.



The 1858 Revizskie Skazki above shows Abram-Itsko’s wife Chava Surla, their now 10-year-old daughter, Esther, and their 1-year-old daughter, Tsipa. I knew nothing of Tsipa until I saw her listed in this Revizskie Skazki and have no knowledge of what became of her. As I have heard no family stories of Tsipa (as I have for her three siblings, who lived to adulthood), I sadly assume that she died as a child.

While I do not know their names, I believe that my 3<sup>rd</sup> great-grandmother (the wife of Berko Buchbinder) and the 1<sup>st</sup> wife of Chiam Buchbinder both died around 1832, possibly in childbirth. Chiam then remarried and had three sons with his 2<sup>nd</sup> wife. Berko apparently did not remarry. If the 1833 Revizskie Skazki shows up some day, I may learn the names of my 3<sup>rd</sup> great-grandmother, and of Chiam’s 1<sup>st</sup> wife.

\* Please refer to the prior article, “My 5th Great Grandfather’s Name” in the March issue of “Venturing into our Past” for copies of the 1850 Revizskie Skazki for male Buchbinders in Dubno:

[https://www.jgscv.org/pdf/newsletters/Venturing\\_V19\\_N6.pdf](https://www.jgscv.org/pdf/newsletters/Venturing_V19_N6.pdf) (Page 8)

# Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County\* (JGSCV)

(\*and surrounding areas)

will hold **an Online Meeting**

**Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup> from 2:30-4:30PM**

*Link will be sent out the Friday before the meeting.*



## APRIL PROGRAM – MOVIE SCREENING

### ***“Boy on the Run: An Extraordinary Journey of Survival”***



Facing horrific circumstances – the invasion of Nazi Germany, separation from his family, and the traumatic impact of Antisemitism in 1940s Europe – Paul Galan recounts the unbelievable story of his survival of the Holocaust as a child.

This poignant and profoundly insightful film tells the gripping story of Paul Galan, who recounts the unbelievable story of his family’s survival in the Holocaust as a child. Amidst numerous close calls to death, he and his family eventually found themselves in a labor camp in Slovakia, where they were liberated during an uprising. Soon after, they embarked on a perilous journey across the Sudetes mountains, disguised as Lutherans with falsified documents, desperately seeking refuge from kind-hearted strangers. Boy on the Run vividly recounts this extraordinary journey, including a tense night when he and his family found themselves sharing quarters with Nazi soldiers.

There is no charge to attend the meeting. Anyone may join JGSCV. Annual dues are \$30 for an individual and \$35 for a family.

<https://www.jgscv.org/membership.html>



# Practicing Safe Computing Article #101: “Even if you do everything right...”

By Hal Bookbinder



You take reasonable precautions to protect your personal data. You avoid risky sites; you do not click on unknown links; you minimize the sharing of personal information; you have a password manager to support your use of complex and varied passwords; and you opt, wherever possible, for multi-factor authentication. Yet, with all your precautions, your personal data may still be at risk.

Even the largest and most respected organizations get hacked. With advances being made in hacking technology, with bad actors sponsored by hostile governments, and with the use of ever more sophisticated Artificial Intelligence (AI), this will assuredly get worse. Widely used behind-the-scenes software is sometimes compromised, simultaneously impacting multiple organizations.

Typical claims in tech journals include, “92% of Fortune 500 companies rely on ... software”. When one of these widely used products is hacked, the exposure can be enormous. Software companies are generally quick to respond and fix exposures. But, by the time they do so, substantial damage may have already occurred. This is referred to as a “Zero-day exploit”.

Thousands of organizations use Progress Software’s MOVEit Managed File Transfer Software to move data quickly, efficiently, and securely within the data center and across the World (*The illustration above is from the [progress.com/moveit](https://progress.com/moveit) website*). This includes a significant number of the most trusted healthcare, government, financial, corporate, and educational organizations.

In May 2023, the ransomware gang, Clop, found a Zero-day exploit in MOVEit. 2,000 organizations reported being attacked with data thefts affecting more than 62 million people across the U.S. If you are like me, you received at least one letter from an organization in November or December, letting you know that your data had been exposed by the MOVEit hack.

The letter may have offered free credit monitoring services for a year. It may have recommended that you change your password. It certainly reassured you that the organization takes your security seriously and that they had quickly remedied the exposure. These letters try their best not to unduly alarm. Notwithstanding their reassuring tone, it is important to act.

Consider updating your password for the site, even if this is not specifically recommended. If you are using the same password elsewhere, update them as well. Avoid sharing personal data which may later be exposed. I’ve seen user IDs containing names and birth year. A hacker can use this to obtain an enormous amount of personal information from publicly available databases.

The volume of notices that we get is often daunting. Follow-up notices that we think are simply duplicates may provide additional details and recommended actions. For example, the first alert that I received from 23andMe regarding its 2022 breach claimed that no client data was involved. Later alerts, as they learned more, acknowledged that client data had been extracted.

To reduce the impact of breaches, remain alert and, as needed, act promptly.

*This is article is number 101 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*

# Genealogy Odds and Ends



## ***"20 Years of Dreams and Innovation"***

A fascinating documentary about the founder and CEO of MyHeritage, Gilad Japhet.

The series shows the evolution of MyHeritage as it celebrates its 20th anniversary. From the dream of a 13-year-old boy passionate about genealogy to becoming a leading company in the industry, this story is a testament to turning dreams into reality.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWXZLL180z8&list=PLZt\\_Mk4\\_rOvOnzTrsrY70-](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWXZLL180z8&list=PLZt_Mk4_rOvOnzTrsrY70-)

## **JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY**

EST 1917

The New York Public Library's Jewish division digitized 800 years of Jewish history

<https://www.jta.org/2024/03/20/culture/the-new-york-public-librarys-jewish-division-digitized-800-years-of-jewish-history>

*Where We Lived*  
**44th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy**  
**Aug 18-22, 2024 Philadelphia**  
Save the date!  
[iajgs2024.org](http://iajgs2024.org)

IAJGS  
JGASGP  
JEWISH GENEALOGICAL AND ARCHIVAL SOCIETY OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA



# 2024 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](http://www.JGSCV.org)

**Dues paid now are good through December 2024**

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: Steven Feldman  
1535 Rugby Circle  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

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.)

\_\_\_\_\_