



VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

NEWSLETTER OF THE JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
OF THE CONEJO VALLEY AND VENTURA COUNTY (JGSCV)

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Birth of a Newsletter; Venturing Into Our Past

Welcome to this first issue of the newsletter of the newly formed Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV). We invite residents of nearby communities to join our constituency and benefit from “*venturing into our past*” by researching our Jewish family histories. Indeed, this is what JGSCV is all about:

We are searching our Jewish roots;

We are devoted to our personal Genealogy;

We are a Society fostering interest in researching our mutual ancestry;

We are Conscious of our responsibility to share the results of our discoveries;

We are the Vanguard of the Conejo/Ventura Jewish community in recording our history.

Our organization’s beginning coincides with the advent of the Jewish New Year 5766. This gives us a unique opportunity to wish both you and our organization many fruitful years in the pursuit of our ancestors. October is also recognized in the U.S.A. as Family History Month. What better way for all of us to celebrate this event than by becoming members of JGSCV.

L’Shana Tovah! Werner L. Frank, Editor

NEXT MEETING OF JGSCV:

“AN INTRODUCTION TO JEWISHGEN DATABASES”, features Warren Blatt, VP and editor-in-chief of JewishGen, the primary Internet site for Jewish genealogy. He will discuss key resources on www.jewishgen.org including: Jewish Family Finder, ShtetlSeeker, Family Tree of the Jewish People and Discussion Group Archives.

Sunday, 23 October 2005 from 2:00 to 4:00 P.M. at
Temple Adat Elohim
2240 E. Hillcrest Drive in Thousand Oaks.

JGSCV Holds First Meeting Topic: Researching Relatives Who Immigrated Through Ellis Island

On September 25, 2005 the Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV) held its inaugural meeting at the site of its co-sponsor, Temple Adat Elohim in Thousand Oaks, California. An overwhelming attendance of 110 interested individuals launched the startup of this latest Jewish Genealogical Society.

Jan Meisels Allen, president of JGSCV, stated “this outpouring of interest in Jewish genealogy in the Conejo/Ventura region confirms our belief that there is a substantial untapped Jewish community which is eager to participate in an organized approach to researching their family history.”

Allen went on to say that “this launching of a new organization would not have been possible without the cooperation and support from Temple Adat Elohim. We are grateful and thank the congregation for providing us with a facility to hold our meeting at no charge.”

How to research immigrant arrivals at Ellis Island was the topic of the day. Presentations were given by a panel of three members of the Society: Hal Bookbinder, Debra Kay Blatt and Werner L. Frank. Hal provided an overview of the history of New York arrival points (Castle Garden, Barge Office and Ellis Island), Debra discussed the availability of various website tools for finding passenger manifests, and Werner offered strategies for name search by showing a specific example using the Steve Morse one-page portal into the Ellis Island data base available on www.jewishgen.org/databases/EIDB.

Thirty new members signed up during this meeting with many more individuals expressing interest in participation.

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT:

Welcome to the JGS of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County's premiere issue of *Venturing Into Our Past*. We are delighted that you have expressed interest in our nascent group and have joined the JGS—or are considering joining. Only with a strong membership base can we continue to hold educational and entertaining programs, help each other with our family history research, and provide the opportunity to locally network with others searching the same names, towns and countries.

Last May a group of interested area residents met to discuss the viability of creating a Jewish Genealogy Society in our geographic area. We were motivated in this objective upon observing the large Jewish population emerging in the Conejo Valley and Ventura County. A group of 12 people worked diligently for the past four months to put together the JGSCV. We formulated Bylaws for the organization and established an interim Board of Directors. I have the honor to serve as the interim President.

Temple Adat Elohim graciously agreed to co-sponsor our monthly meetings from September through December 2005. If it were not for this institution we would not be here. We are forever grateful for this gesture of community outreach to a new and untested organization.

Although there is no charge to attend the meetings, we need dues paying members for room rental, insurance, programs and purchases for our library — genealogy books, journals and maps. Dues are \$25 per annum for individuals and \$30 for a family. Membership dues paid before December 31, 2005 will cover the period through December 2006.

I am pleased to announce that our kickoff meeting on September 25 and subsequent follow-up has yielded 40 members. This reception by the community makes us a viable organization. If you would like to get more actively involved with the society contact me and we will put you to work!

On behalf of the entire JGSCV Board of Directors we look forward to your membership and active participation at all of our monthly meetings. We all wish you a happy, healthy and sweet New Year — L'Shanah Tovah.

Jan Meisels Allen, President, JGSCV

ELLIS ISLAND FOUNDATION INVITES PARTICIPATION

The Ellis Island Foundation invites additional registrations of immigrant family names to appear on The American Immigrant Wall of Honor located on Ellis Island. For further information: www.WallofHonor.com.

ADVANCE NOTICE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Sundays at Adat Elohim, 2-4 P.M.

November 13, 2005: “Jewish Life in China During the Past Thousand Years; an Overlooked Genealogical Connection” presented by Werner Frank

December 4, 2005: “Putting Flesh on the Bones” presented by Ron Arons

JGSCV IS MEMBER OF IAJGS

We are proud to announce the affiliation of JGSCV with the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS). This is an umbrella organization that unites 70 similar societies around the world. IAJGS holds annual international meetings, the next one in New York City on 13 to 18 August 2006.

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