



# VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

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

Volume 5, Issue 11

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## President's Letter:

Daniel Horowitz gave two exceptional presentations at our "extra" meeting on June 27<sup>th</sup>. Daniel described genealogical resources in Latin America where many of us have family. Daniel also talked about MyHeritage, the Genealogy Super Search Engine for which Daniel works. All meeting participants were given free MyHeritage software. Daniel's handout on resources for researching in Latin America is on our website: [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org) Click on meetings/prior/June 27, 2010.

Marion Werle gave the book report on *My Future is in America: Autobiographies of Eastern European Jewish Immigrants* New York University Press—a collection of essays written for a YIVO contest in the 30's. Marion has graciously loaned JGSCV her copy of the book for members

to borrow—if you are interested please see Jan.

JGSCV member Sonia Hoffman conducted the Schmoozing Corner.

The 30<sup>th</sup> IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy (July 11-16) was sponsored by our sister JGS, JGSLA. JGSCV was well represented. During the conference the IAJGS, of which JGSCV is a member, conducted its bi-annual election for directors (the directors are elected in the even years and the officer positions elected in the odd years). The candidates who were elected to the board are Jan Meisels Allen (Agoura Hills, CA); Nolan Altman (Oceanside, NY), Daniel Horowitz (Kfar Saba, Israel), Kahlile Mehr (Salt Lake City, UT), Jay Sage (Newtown Center, MA) and Jackye Sullins (Carlsbad, CA).

For more on the conference, including the IAJGS award winners see pages 6 and 8.

In June, when Tom and I visited family and friends in New York City, we spent time at the Tenement Museum on the Lower East Side. We walked to the sites where my four grandparents first lived when they immigrated to the US in late 1880's-90's. One is now a public school, another is a parking lot, but the other two still stand: a Chinese bakery (previously a Jewish bakery for my grandmother when she lived with her aunt); the other building looks as if it never changed. For information on The Tenement Museum's excellent photograph collection see page 2.

Our August 1 meeting is special treat with Erwin Joos, curator of the Eugeen Van Mieghem Museum in Antwerp talking about the Red Star Line and the Van Mieghem Museum. Over 2.5 million immigrants traveled to the US from Europe on the Red Star Line of which 50% are estimated to have been Jewish. Van Mieghem immortalized their Red Star Line experience with paintings. Joos will be selling his "One Foot in America, Eugeen Van Mieghem (1875-1930) and the Jewish Emigrants of the Red Star Line" and a DVD with a 30 minutes movie about the life and work of Van Mieghem each for \$20. Cash only- no credit cards or checks.

Looking forward to seeing you August 1<sup>st</sup>!

*Jan Meisels Allen*



Daniel Horowitz

**FUTURE MEETINGS NOTICES PAGES 4, 5**

## ABOUT JGSCV.....

The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County meets once a month, usually on a Sunday. Meetings are oriented to the needs of the novice as well as the more experienced genealogist. Members share materials, research methods and ideas, as well as research success or failures. Members have access to the JGSCV library located on special shelves at the Agoura Hills Public Library. Members also receive our monthly newsletter which is circulated by email.

2010 dues are \$25.00 for a single membership and \$30.00 for a household unit. To join, please send appropriate amount in check made out to JGSCV and addressed to Helene Rosen at 28912 Fountainwood St., Agoura Hills, CA 91301. Obtain the new/renewal membership form on our website at [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org) by selecting the membership button.

## FREE FAMILY TREE MAGAZINE WEBINAR

*Family Tree Magazine* is offering its first-ever free webinar on Wednesday, August 11 from 4-5 PM Pacific. Go to <http://tinyurl.com/2b9t2v8> to register for 'Ask The Editors: *Family Tree Magazine* Answers Your Questions'. Participants are invited to ask the hosting editors any questions about genealogy.

## NEW STEVE MORSE ONE-STEP FEATURE

There is a new feature in Steve Morse's 'One-Step' website that will make it easier to find New York City records. If you go to <http://stevemorse.org> and hover over the "Vital Records" heading at the upper left, you will see several tools for New York vital records. Now, when using the birth, marriage and death indexes as prepared by the Italian Genealogical Group, the results will include the Family History Library roll number where you may find the actual record eliminating the old 'back and forth' process previously necessary.

## RALPHS COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS

The Ralphs Community Contribution program helps JGSCV with making contributions to us every quarter, based on the purchases made by participants in the program. Please visit our website under "notices" for the easy step-by-step instructions to register and have JGSCV benefit from your Ralphs purchases.

## GETTING STARTED IN JEWISH GENEALOGY: 2020 EDITION

*Avotaynu* has rewritten the popular *Getting Started in Jewish Genealogy*. Originally published in 1999, (and then co-authored by JGSCV board member Warren Blatt) this is an excellent resource to help beginners get started. Major updates from the original edition include a greater emphasis on online research as well as individual chapters for JewishGen and Steve Morse's 'One-Step' website. The cost is \$14.50 (plus shipping and handling) and may be ordered at <http://tinyurl.com/2452g8n>

## TENEMENT MUSEUM PHOTOGRAPHS

As noted in the President's Letter on page 1, New York's Tenement Museum has made its photograph collection available online. Pictures of immigrants, street scenes and more may be viewed or downloaded from <http://tinyurl.com/2bswrjl> If you click on an image in your search results, you can enlarge it or save it to your favorites (which requires a free account).

## A DIRECTORY FOR LOCATING DIRECTORIES

Google's online Historical Directories website has organized directories from the U.S., Canada, U.K, Ireland and Thailand in one place. It is a work in progress but already includes some directories dating back to the 1600's. The U.S. link allows you to search by state although not all states are available: <http://tinyurl.com/njmnvx>

## COUNTDOWN TO THE 1940 CENSUS

When the JGSCV August 1<sup>st</sup> meeting takes place there will remain 1 year, 8 months and 1 day to the release of the 1940 U.S. Census on April 2, 2012 (according to *One-Step Web Pages* by Steve Morse). Federal law requires individual records remain confidential for 72 years and the 1940 Census was listed as completed as of April 1, 1940. Since April 1, 2012 is a Sunday, genealogists are wondering if the data will be available that weekend. No word yet on how that will be resolved. For anyone born after April 1, 1930 but *before* April 1, 1940, this will be the first census where you will see your own name and census data listed.



# Researching Your Civil War Ancestors Family Stories

By Rev. Dr. Gary Alan Dickey, M.Div., Ph.D., C.G., Dip. English History (Oxford)

Researching one's Civil War ancestors is both interesting and historical. Interesting because they are our ancestors; historical because we learn so much more from history when we study the context in which they were involved in such a conflict as the Civil War.

Where do we start? The first place is to get a good history on the Civil War and read about it. Knowing the history helps us to know where to look when we begin researching our ancestors. After a few basics of the scope of the conflict is understood, it will get us excited about our ancestors to understand that they were part of such a pivotal moment in the history of our country.

The second place to start is with our ancestors. No, not the one you think was in the Civil War. Rather, to start with yourself and work backwards. Don't make the mistake of making conclusions based on assumptions or you may end up in the wrong place with the wrong person. Most of us start with a family story told by a parent or grandparent: "Did you know that great-grandpa was in the Civil War?" True or not, family stories are the place to start. I was always told that my great-grandfather, William G. Dickey, was a Major in the Union Army and that he led his troops at the Battle of Gettysburg where he was wounded in the charge of his men. Well, yes and no. After I looked his Civil War record up, I discovered he was a Sgt. Major, was never at Gettysburg, and was wounded the last day of the war retreating from the enemy position when a cannon ball burst near him giving him life-long injuries from which he would die about 23 years after the war had ceased.



So, family stories are the beginning but not the ending for finding out the truth of your ancestor in the Civil War. Fading memories, a desire to "polish up" the story a little bit, and just plain confusion of facts can send one on a wild goose chase, but the family stories are a vital part of beginning the search. Most families have heard, "Grandpa was in the 121<sup>st</sup> Pennsylvania Volunteers and served for three years." Knowing that tells you two important things — a unit number and a place. That is the start for looking for records. Grandpa may have actually been in the 118<sup>th</sup> Volunteers but now you know to not look in New York records to start.

*(Dr. Dickey is a Certified Genealogist through the Board of Certification for Genealogists in Washington, D.C. in the area of English Research and a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists. He is Senior Pastor of the United Methodist Church of Westlake Village, California and serves as Chaplain of the Gen. W. S. Rosecrans Camp No. 2, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. Besides genealogy and research he enjoys travelling and playing the bagpipes.)*

**FAMILY TREE MAGAZINE's 101 Best Genealogy Websites for 2010 <http://tinyurl.com/3585bbn> can now be viewed. Included are sites for state vital records, censuses, historical books and immigration data. And, they are all free.**

## JGSCV UPDATES . . .

JGSCV's Sonia Hoffman (right) who helped JGSCV members overcome genealogical brick walls led **THE SCHMOOZING CORNER**. Remember, you can find The

Schmoozing Corner on the right as you enter the meeting room at Temple Adat Elohim; near the front of the room. The Schmoozing Corner is open for 15 minutes immediately prior to the start of the meeting. Look for the sign up front. The August 1<sup>st</sup> Schmoozing Corner will be led by Werner Frank.



Traveling Library Books classification A and C will be at the August 1 meeting. Visit our website at [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org) under library traveling for the list of books in these categories. And, see page 7 for new additions to the Traveling Library.

More, The Los Angeles Regional Family History Center has been re-named The Los Angeles Family History Library (LAFHL) – one of only three such designations in the US outside of Salt Lake City. The LAFHL closed for renovations in May, 2009 with an expected re-opening that November. Plans now call for the re-opening late August, 2010 with a grand re-opening in September. The new LAFHL will have all new computers, electronics and bookcases. However, periodicals will be available only through the internet. There will also be fewer microfilms on hand at the Library as FamilySearch has been digitizing many including US census'. You may access this census data on their free pilot site: <http://tinyurl.com/dzlf1l>. Click on browse records and then on the country of choice or "browse collections" to see what is available.



### 2010-11 JGSCV Meeting Dates All Meetings are held at Temple Adat Elohim 2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks

**2010** *No September meeting due to the Jewish Holidays*

October, 4 – MONDAY, 7-9 PM, Vincent Brook, Öst Meets West: Immigrant Film Moguls, Émigré Directors, and the Rise of Film Noir., Celebrating JGSCV'S 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

November, 7 – SUNDAY 1-5 PM, Annual exclusive afternoon at the LA Family History Center.

FOR JGSCV MEMBERS ONLY. One-to-One help from JGSCV members and FHC staff.

December, 6 – MONDAY, 7-9 PM, Elise Friedman, Genetic Genealogy Demystified: Understanding and Interpreting Your DNA Results. AND, Annual Chanukah Party and Membership Renewal Party.

#### **2011**

January, 9 – SUNDAY, 1:30-3:30 PM, Authors! Authors! Authors! Four JGSCV members speak about books they have written: **Warren Blatt, Werner Frank, Erica Miller (including signing) and Mark Abbott Stern**

February, 13 – SUNDAY, 1:30-3:30 PM, Hal Bookbinder, Why Did Our Ancestors Leave A Nice Place Like the Pale?

Future Programs TBD (ALL SUNDAY 1:30-3:30 PM): March 6, April 3, May 1, June 5, July 10

NOTE: No meeting August 2011 as 31<sup>st</sup> IAJGS Conference will be hosted by JGS Greater Washington August 14-19 in Washington, DC



# Come to the Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County\*

(\* and surrounding areas)

Sunday, August 1, 2010 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.  
at Temple Adat Elohim  
2420 E.Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks

## One Foot in America: Eugeen Van Mieghem (1875-1930) and the Jewish Emigrants of the Red Star Line



The Red-Star Line transported 2.7 million people emigrating from Eastern-Europe from Antwerp to American ports (Philadelphia, New York and Boston) between 1873 and 1934. It is estimated that 50 percent were Jewish. The greatest number came over after the pogroms, between 1900 and 1914. Special attention will also be paid to the Jewish writers who described their emigration experience from Antwerp. The estimate is that between 30-40 percent of Jewish Americans

have ancestors who sailed with the Red Star Line, which was one of the most important American shipping lines. The Antwerp artist Eugeen Van Mieghem is probably the only artist in Europe who made a cycle of works of art about these Jewish emigrants. He lived in his parents tavern in the Montevideostreet just in front of the warehouse of the Red Star Line.

Speaker: Erwin Joos is the curator of the Eugeen Van Mieghem Museum ([www.vanmieghemmuseum.com](http://www.vanmieghemmuseum.com)) and President of the Eugeen Van Mieghem Foundation, a not-for-profit organization with more than 1,100 members. He has given some 100 lectures in Dutch, English and French in Antwerp, Amsterdam, Paris, New York, Philadelphia. Joos has written 5 art books and 12 albums and organized 15 major exhibitions. Opportunity to purchase k "One Foot in America, Eugeen Van Mieghem (1875-1930) and the Jewish Emigrants of the Red Star Line" and a DVD about the life and work of Van Mieghem- each \$20. Cash only!



# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE IAJGS CONFERENCE

There were over 1,050 registrants for the 2010 IAJGS conference hosted by JGS of Los Angeles. There were representatives from 15 countries plus 31 states and the District of Columbia in the United States. Five hundred and fifteen attendees were from California. Over 40 percent of attendees were first timers! JGSCV was well represented with 35 attendees! Congratulations to our sister JGS, JGSLA and the three conference co-chairs: Sandra Malek, Lois Rosen and Pamela Weisberger for an excellent conference!

The annual IAJGS awards were presented at the closing banquet:

**IAJGS Lifetime Achievement:** Hal Bookbinder, past president of IAJGS, past president of JGSLA, a founding member of JGSCV and active in genealogy for over 22 years. JGSCV was one of many JGSs that nominated Hal for this award.

**IAJGS Outstanding Contribution to Jewish Genealogy via the Internet, Print, Electronic Product:** Judith R. Frazin for her book “A Translation Guide of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Polish-Language Civil Registration Documents” (which is in JGSCV’s traveling library).

**IAJGS Outstanding Programming or Project that Advanced the Objectives of Jewish Genealogy:** JGS of Greater Philadelphia for a project: *The Philadelphia Area- Jewish Genealogical Resource Guide*. Fred Blum, president of JGSGP, accepted the award.

**IAJGS Outstanding Publication by a Member Organization of IAJGS:** JGSLA for their quarterly journal *Roots Key*. Accepting the award were David and Sonia Hoffman, editors of Roots Key. Sonia and David are members of JGSCV.

**Malcolm Stern Grant:**

The Stern Grant provides funding to encourage institutions to pursue projects, activities and acquisitions that provide new or enhanced resources to benefit Jewish genealogists. The voluntary \$1.00 contribution individual JGS members contribute when paying their annual JGS dues funds this award. JGSCV members generously contribute to the fund every year.

The 2010 Stern Grant of \$2,500 was awarded to ISRAGEN (the Israel Genealogy Society) for work on databases in both English and Hebrew in preparation for the IAJGS 2014 conference. The ISRAGEN work included: (1) recreating missing parts of the British Mandate Census; (2) scanning resources and professionally translating the Osmanli documents into Hebrew or English— [the period prior to the British Mandate, when Israel was governed by the Ottoman Empire]; and (3) locating and scanning books of residents and/or directories of citizens thereby making them accessible to researchers both in Israel and abroad.



Hal Bookbinder (right) Michael Goldstein (left) and Anne Feder Lee



Fred Blum (right), Michael Goldstein



Judith Frazin (right), Michael Goldstein



David (front)and Sonia Hoffman (second from right), Michael Goldstein , Anne Feder Lee



**NEW IAJGS BOARD:** Bottom Row L-R Nolan Altman, Michael Brenner, Jay Sage, Kahlile Mehr; Top Row L-R Joel Spector, Michael Goldstein (President), Jan Meisels Allen (JGSCV President), Daniel Horowitz, Jackye Sullins, Paul Silverstone. Anne Feder Lee

# NEW ADDITIONS TO THE JGSCV TRAVELING LIBRARY

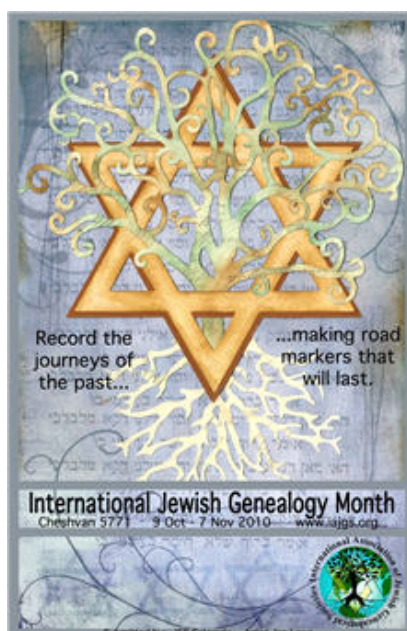
Since we reported in March 2010's newsletter the following books have been added to the JGSCV traveling library. If you have genealogically relevant books that you would like to donate, please contact Jan Meisels Allen at [president@JGSCV.org](mailto:president@JGSCV.org). The books in the traveling library are categorized A, B, or C determining which come to which monthly meeting. All A books come to every meeting. Categories B and C alternate which month they are brought to the meeting. A full list of all of our permanent and traveling library holdings may be found on the website: [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org).

- A History of the Jewish People Max Margolis and Alexander Marx The Jewish Publication Society of America Philadelphia 1945 (Category B)
- A History of the Jews Abram Leon Sachar 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Revised and enlarged to 1953 Knopf 1958 printing. (Category B)
- A History of the Jews [From the Babylonian Exile to the end of WWII] Solomon Grayzel Philadelphia Jewish Publication Society of America 1947
- After the Holocaust Howard Greenfeld Schoolastic Inc. New York 2001 (Category B)
- Babi Yar Anatoly Kuznetsov Dell Publishing 1966 (Category B)
- Born to Kvetch Yiddish Language and Culture in All of Its Moods Michael Wex St. Martin's Press New York 2005 (Category B)
- Coming to America: Jewish Americans Robert Stein 2002 Barron's Educational Series Hauppauge, NY (Category C)
- Genealogical Gazetter of Galicia- Expanded Data Edition Third Second Printing. Brian J. Lenius. Feb. 1999 (Category B)
- Image Before My Eyes A Photographic History of Jewish Life In Poland, 1864-1939 Lucjan Dobroszycki and Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett Schocken Books 1977 (category B)
- Łódź Ghetto: Inside a Community Under Siege Ed. Alan Adelson and Robert Lapidus 1989 Viking Press New York (Category B)
- Marrano Martin H. Ross Brandon Press Boston 1976 (Category C)
- Our Crowd: The Great Jewish Families of New York. Stephen Birmingham 1967 Harper Row New York (Category C)
- The Downtown Jews: Portrait of An Immigrant Generation Ronald Sanders. Harper & Row New York 1969. (Category C)
- The Grandees: America's Sephardic Elite Stephen Birmingham 1971 Harper Row & Assoc. N.Y. (Category C)

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- **The Immigrant Jew in America.** Ed. James, Oscar Flynn, J.R. Paulding, Mrs.Simon Patton B.F. Buck & Co New York 1906 (Category C)
- **The Jewish American Family Album** Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler Oxford University Press 1995 (Category C)
- **The Jewish Woman in America** Charlotte Baum, Paul Hyman, Sonya Michel Times Mirror 1976 (Category C)
- **The Jews in the Renaissance** Cecil Roth Harper Torchbooks 1959 (Category B)
- **The Jews of Frankfurt** Eugen Mayer 1990 Verlag Waldemar Kramer Frankfurt am Main (Category C)
- **The Jews of Spain and the Expulsion of 1492** Ed by Moshe Lazar an Stephen Haliczer Labyrinthos 1997 (Category C)
- **The Jews of Spain and Portugal and the Inquisition** Frederic D. Mocatta- David Bortin New York George Dobsevaige 1928 (Category C)
- **The Prague Golem: Jewish Stories of the Ghetto** 2005 Vitalis (Category C)
- **The Seventy-First Came..to Gunskirchen Lager** Maj. General Willard G. Wyman Emory University 1979 (Category B)
- **Who Do You Think You Are** ( 1911 UK Census, Zoe Wannamaker) BBC March 2009 (Category C)
- **Who Do You Think You Are: The Essential Guide to Tracing Your Family History-Companion to the NBC Series.** Megan Smolenyak Viking Press NY 2009 (Category B)



The International Jewish Genealogy Month Poster Contest was won by The JGS of Colorado. The winning design (left) was created by Jen Lowe, a member of the board of directors of The JGS of Colorado.