



VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

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

Volume 6, Issue 2

November, 2010

President's Letter:

We had 85 attendees at our 5th anniversary program...it was a great evening, with Vincent Brook, speaking on "Öst Meets West: Immigrant Film Moguls, Émigré Directors, and the Rise of Film Noir". Vincent's father was a gardener to directors and studio moguls in the San Fernando Valley that may have inspired his interest in teaching media studies at UCLA, USC and several local colleges. The program reviewed the famous directors who fled to the US and the immigrant moguls who headed up many of the Hollywood movie studios and the film "noir" from the "black novels" of the 1930's such as *Double Indemnity*, *Maltese Falcon* and *Phantom Lady*. His book, "Driven to Darkness: Jewish Émigré Directors and the Rise of Film Noir" has been added to JGSCV's traveling library.

Diane Wainwood gave the book report on *The Thirteenth Tribe* by Arthur Koestler. While Diane found the book ponderous due to the "excruciating details" of various Turkic tribes she concluded "it remains for a really good historical fiction book in the Khazar Empire to be written, and for the DNA specialists to use their talents in macro-genealogy and immigration patterns to authenticate or debunk Koestler's theories."

We started our 2011 membership drive at the meeting-and we are off to a great start. A renewal/new membership form is on page 8. Your dues pay for our library, speaker travel costs, honorariums when required, and more... We need your dues to continue providing outstanding programs and services! As in past years, those who join or renew between October and our December 6 meeting **and** attend our December 6 meeting are eligible to have their name drawn for great genealogical gifts. We have gifts donated from Ancestry.com, Family Tree Magazine, Footnote, Legacy, Roots Magic and more!

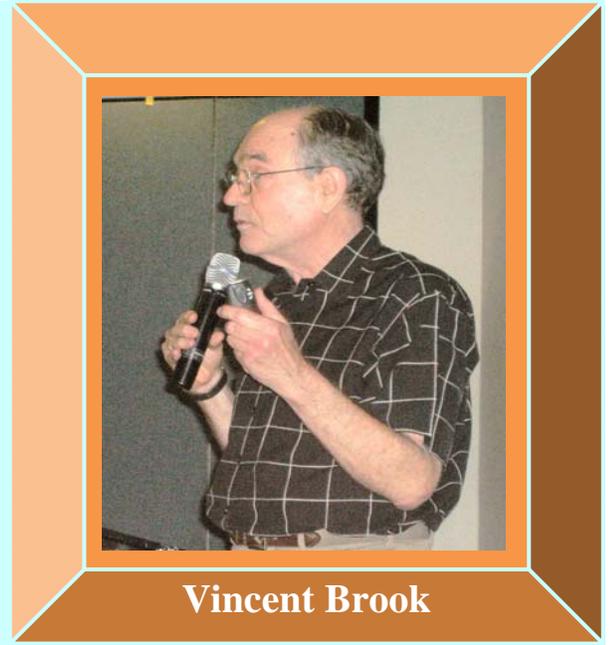
Looking for a Chanukah gift? JGSCV will provide a lovely Chanukah certificate made out to the person of your choice when you purchase a gift JGSCV membership.

Remember to sign up for the Ralphs Community Contribution Program. Ralphs requires annual registration on their website www.ralphs.com. Sign in and scroll down to community contribution...JGSCV is number 84732 which you insert where it says charity of choice. Even as an occasional Ralphs shopper it helps JGSCV with no cost to you!

At our November 8 meeting Warren Blatt, Managing Director, JewishGen.org and JGSCV board member will speak on "Polish-Jewish Genealogy". "Preserving Heirlooms For Future Generations", a compelling story by JGSCV founding member Phoebe Frank will replace the book report this month. Phoebe will explain how she reproduced a hundred year-old challah cover for her family members to use on Shabbat. With Chanukah coming up soon, this is a technique that other's may wish to use for family gifts.

Looking forward to seeing you on Monday, November 8th—remember different day-Monday and time 7:00 p.m.

Jan Meisels Allen



Vincent Brook

FUTURE MEETINGS NOTICES PAGES 5, 7

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.

2011 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 by selecting the membership button.

FORTHCOMING JGSCV ELECTIONS

As per the By-Laws of JGSCV a duly appointed Nominating Committee, chaired by Hal Bookbinder (with members Sonia Hoffman and Werner Frank) has prepared the following slate of individuals to fill the four two-year terms on the Board of Directors that will become vacant as of January 2011:

Debra Kay-Blatt
Sara Hyman
Helene Rosen
Marion Werle

Debra and Helene currently serve on the board. According to the By-Laws, anyone else wishing to be nominated to the Board can do so during the course of the November 8, 2010 meeting of the Society. Any person that is nominated from the floor must both be present and orally agree to serve on the Board if elected, or have signed a written willingness to serve if elected, which is available for inspection at this meeting. After this solicitation all nominations for the positions are closed. The names of all nominees with brief biographies will be published in the December issue of this newsletter. Elections will be voted on at the December 6, 2010 meeting.

2010's BEST STATE WEBSITES

State by state listings of the best genealogy websites as compiled by Family Tree Magazine:
<http://tinyurl.com/28nlqcn>

MUSEUM OF FAMILY HISTORY BEGINS FREE BOOK SERIES

The first in the Museum of Family History's 'Read-A-Book' Collection is now available to be downloaded at <http://tinyurl.com/2c4nzeg> At the website you may see a short video, read a synopsis and/or download the book – for free. "Jacob's Courage" by Charles S. Weinblatt is a coming of age historical novel that takes place in Salzburg as the Nazi's enter Austria.

ONLINE DATABASE OF LOOTED ARTWORK

Beginning Monday November 18 holocaust survivors and their relatives, art collectors and museums can go on-line to search a free historical database of more than 20,000 art objects stolen in Germany, occupied France and Belgium from 1940-1944. The database is a joint project of the NY-based Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. The Claims Conference says about 650,000 art objects were taken, and thousands of items are still lost. The database combines records from the U.S. National Archives in College Park, MD.; the German Bundesarchiv, the federal archive in Koblenz; and repatriation and restitution records held by the French government. To search the database go to: <http://www.errproject.org/jeudepaume/>

FAMILY TREE MAKER 2011 FOR MAC AVAILABLE FOR PRE-ORDER

Ancestry.com is accepting pre-orders until Oct. 31 for Family Tree Maker 2011 for Apple's Macintosh. Sale price is \$55.96. The company expects to ship the software in November.

ANCESTRY.COM COMPLETES ACQUISITION OF FOOTNOTE

After announcing the new business arrangement months ago, the purchase of footnote.com by ancestry.com is now complete. Users of databases of each website are expected to see no change in the near future.

JOIN/RENEW JGSCV YOUR MEMBERSHIP

See page 8 and follow directions for joining JGSCV or renewing your membership. *You can also give a membership as a Chanukah gift with a beautiful JGSCV certificate!*

"Preserving Heirlooms For Future Generations"

By Phoebe Frank



Hedwig Gutmann

We have used a handmade, embroidered challah cover in our home on Shabbat since Werner and I married some 55 years ago. His mother passed this heirloom on to us from her mother Hedwig Gutmann, who was born 1876 in Wuerttemberg, Germany; no doubt, she stitched this ritual object as part of her dowry when she married Lehmann Weingartner from Bretten in 1899.

Why does the challah have to be covered? Although folklore suggests the challah is covered so as not to "shame" it while the wine is being blessed, we understand that a piece of dough has no feelings, and it cannot become embarrassed. Therefore, the ritual really tries to sensitize us to the feelings of human beings. In this way, the challah cover has a story to tell, as do other Judaic ritual items that enrich our family story: they are a chronicle of our lives just as much as written records are.

Ever since I started researching my challah cover, I wondered whether or not great-grandmother Weingartner had actually designed it herself. I recently received a letter from the Curator of Judaica at the Berlin Jewish Museum, who sent a photograph of a similar design. Apparently, there was a market in Germany for needlework patterns at the turn of the century and that is the design that Grandmother used.

The more I researched how this cover was made, the more I began to appreciate its beauty, simplicity and technique. The Hebrew on the top reads "Lichvod Shabbat and YT," (Honor the Sabbath and Yom Tov). A six pointed oil burning Shabbos Lamp that burned in the home during the Sabbath is in the center. The design of this lamp is typical of the southern part of Germany.

As you look at the cover, on your right are twin loaves of "berches," German style challot distinguished by a braid across the top. To the left is the Kiddush cup. On the middle-bottom is an open prayer book. A grape vine is on the left, symbolizing wine, while poppy flowers on your right show that poppy seeds were sprinkled on the challot.

Because Hedwig's hand-embroidered design has been used and cherished for three generations, I wanted to reproduce it to give to our children and grandchildren as a way of connecting them with their past.

First, I took a high quality photograph of the art piece, edited it in Adobe Photoshop, and then printed a test copy (in black and white) at Fed Ex Kinko's Office and Print store in Calabasas. Staples would be a good printer source, too. Next, I selected "Spoonflower.com (www.Spoonflower.com) to print my design on fabric. After seeing a test print on a fabric swatch, I printed 10 Challah Covers on 3 yards of cotton sateen fabric.

As a finishing touch, I employed a professional to embroider the Hebrew name, and hired a local seamstress to hem the covers. I then mounted the work on a mat in a cellophane bag so that it could be used as wall hanging or a Shabbat challah cover. As a way of honoring my husband's grandmother, his history, and our Jewish heritage, I will give 10 family members the reproduced challah covers.

If you are interested, I will send you this challah cover design by email and share my photography resources, printing, framing, and other connections. Phoebestar04@yahoo.com.



**Berlin Jewish Museum
Challah Cover Photograph**



Hedwig's Challah Cover



3-Yards of Cotton

JGSCV
UPDATES . . .



Look for the SCHMOOZING CORNER sign (left) where you will find a JGSCV expert who can help you overcome a genealogical brick wall or maybe just answer a question. Werner



Frank helps JGSCV member Sheldon Winston (left in photo) prior to the Oct. 4th meeting (right). The Schmoozing Corner is open for 15 minutes immediately prior to the start of the meeting. Hal Bookbinder will be the facilitator on Nov. 8th.



Traveling Library Books classification A and C (plus Polish books from Category B) will be at the November 8 meeting. Visit our website at www.jgscv.org under library traveling for the list of books in these categories.

The October issue of *Venturing Into Your Past* included an article on Achille Levy and the request to JGSCV by the Museum of Ventura County to help with translating inscribed pages in A. Levy's prayer book. The exhibit, "*History UNEXPECTED: Surprises, Insights and Revelations from the Research Library Collections*" will run from September 18-November 28, 2010. Jan Meisels Allen attended an open house on September 19. If you have not visited this museum, you-should it is a gem in our own back yard!



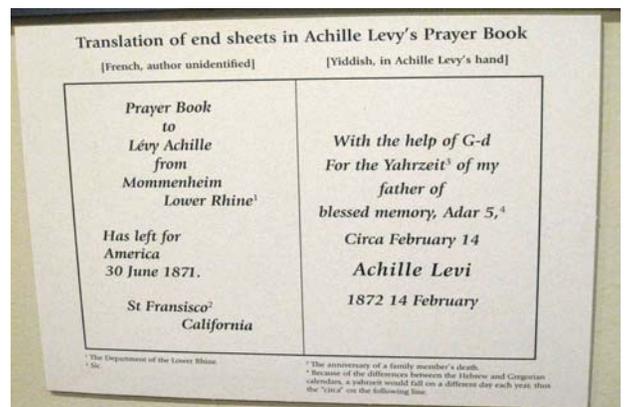
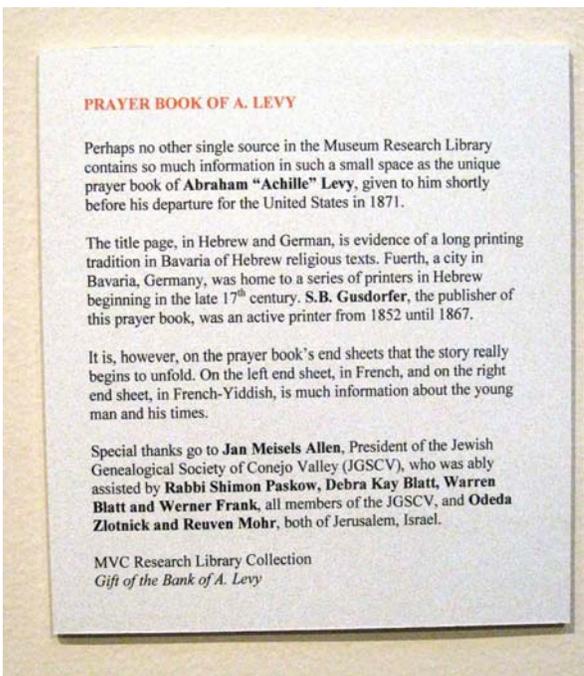
Here are photos taken during the open house from the exhibit part relating to Achille Levy, pioneer Jew from Ventura County. The Museum has other collections of other pioneer Jews from Ventura County and JGSCV may be called upon to help the Museum again. If you are a native to the area and may have had ancestors living on Ventura County, please contact Jan, as you may be able to help identify some photographs of the earliest Jewish pioneers in Ventura County.



A. Levy's Top Hat and Cane



Jan Meisels Allen and Charles Johnson. Museum Librarian



Special thanks for help by JGSCV members and others

A. Levy's Prayer Book End Sheets



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

(* and surrounding areas)

Monday, November 8, 2010 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
at Temple Adat Elohim
2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks

"Polish-Jewish Genealogical Research"

The presentation will provide a general overview and introduction to researching your Polish-Jewish ancestry. The discussion will include: a history of Polish border changes, geography and place-name changes as well as direction on how to find and locate your ancestral shtetl and historical information. You will also learn about the vital records-keeping system in Poland including how to find and translate birth, marriage and death records. In addition, Polish-Jewish surnames and given names, language spelling and grammar issues will be addressed along with Yizkor books, landsmanschaftn, business directories, Polish Archives and Civil Registration Offices. Also, using Mormon microfilms, Internet sources, and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) for Jewish genealogical research in Poland will be discussed.



Speaker: Warren Blatt, Managing Director, JewishGen (www.Jewishgen.org) an affiliate of the Museum of Jewish Heritage and founding member and board member of JGSCV. He is the author of *Resources for Jewish Genealogy in the Boston Area*; and co-author (with Gary Mokotoff) of *Getting Started in Jewish Genealogy*.

Also: Preserving Heirlooms for Future Generations

Phoebe Frank, JGSCV founding member, will discuss how she reproduced a hundred year-old challah cover for her family members to use on Shabbat. See her story on page 3.

The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County is dedicated to sharing genealogical information, techniques and research tools with anyone interested in Jewish genealogy and family history.

Meeting co-sponsored with Temple Adat Elohim

There is no charge to attend the meeting. Anyone may join JGSCV.



The Los Angeles Family History Library will open on October 25, 2010

The new hours will be 9AM-5PM Monday, Friday and Saturday; 9AM-9PM Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.

The Library will host an Open House Saturday, November 6, 9AM-9PM and Sunday November 7, 3PM-9PM when a series of twenty minute Mini-classes will be taught. Visit the website for the schedule of classes: <http://www.larfhc.org/>

Richard D. McBride, Director of the Library will use the Open House to introduce some of the Library's new technological capabilities such as high speed internet access, virtual classrooms and video conferencing that are available only at larger family history centers such as this.

The Los Angeles Family History Library is located at 10741 Santa Monica Blvd. in West Los Angeles (310-474-9990)

31st IAJGS Conference Call For Papers



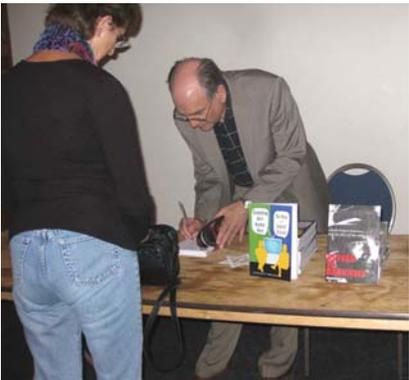
The 31st IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy hosted by JGSGW has opened the call for papers. The conference will be held August 14-19, 2011 in Washington DC at the Grand Hyatt Washington DC. The website is www.dc2011.org. Anyone interested in presenting a paper should select the "Call for Papers" tab on the left side of the conference website; read the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) before selecting "Submit a Proposal" to begin the process. Each person may submit up to 8 proposals. The conference committee suggests that the required bio and program description should be written on a word processor with spell-check, then copied and pasted into the submission software.

Riga Museum Opens

A Riga Ghetto Museum opened on September 21 in the city of Riga, Latvia. The site <http://shamir.lv> states that during the Holocaust more than 70,000 Latvian Jews and about 20,000 Jews deported to Riga were murdered. The museum has also opened a photo exhibition dedicated to anti-Semitism propaganda, the Holocaust in Latvia, and the Resistance and the Righteous Among the Nations. The Shamir site has much information about Latvian Jewry. There is a database of names of Jewish children who perished in the Holocaust in Latvia at <http://www.rgm.lv/db/>. They publish an annual Jewish calendar dedicated to the history of Jewish development during Latvia's First Republic. Information can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/3amkxx2>. The site can be viewed in English, Hebrew, Latvian or Russian.



Oct. 4th If you missed the last meeting . . .



Speaker, Vincent Brook signing his book



Research at the Traveling Library



Diane Wainwright presenting her book report



JGSCV members listening to Vincent Brook



Vincent Brook making a point during his presentation

. . . you missed a lot!

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

2010

November 8 – MONDAY 7-9 PM, Warren Blatt, Managing Director, JewishGen and JGSCV Board Member, An Introduction to Polish-Jewish Genealogical Research

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! Five JGSCV members speak about books they have written: **Warren Blatt, Werner Frank, Erica Miller (including signing), Helene Rosen 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?

March 6 – SUNDAY, 1:00 -5:00PM, Exclusive Research Day at the LA Family History Library

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

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



2011 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 2011

Check one:

This is a New Membership_____ Renewal_____

Single \$ 25.00_____+\$1.00 Family* \$30.00 _____ + \$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 \$_____

(Suggested minimum voluntary contribution for either fund \$5.00)

Make check payable to JGSCV and send with this completed form to:

Helene Rosen
 28912 Fountainwood St.
 Agoura Hills, CA 91301

Name (Print) _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zipcode + 4 _____

Day telephone _____ Evening telephone _____

E-mail address _____

Please tell us what talents you can share (language skills, computer skills, translation, etc.).

JGSCV Welcomes New Members

Lori Jordan Marilyn and Ben Silva



Do you have a compelling genealogical story like Phoebe Frank's on page 3? Would you like to share how you succeeded in breaking down a brickwall? Did you discover a family member in an interesting, meaningful or fun way? Have you visited your family's shtetl? JGSCV's *Venturing Into Our Past* will be publishing some of our member's stories in future issues. Please submit your story to Allan Linderman, newsletter editor at newslettereditor@jgscv.org

Have you visited any genealogy blogs?

Definition: Blog *from Wikipedia:*



A blog (a blend of the term web log) is a type of website or part of a website. Blogs are usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order. Blog can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog.

Most blogs are interactive, allowing visitors to leave comments and even message each other via widgets on the blogs and it is this interactivity that distinguishes them from other static websites.

A quick search of 'jewish genealogy blogs' on Google reveals 73,100 hits. Of course, not all are relevant but at the top of the list is **Genealogy Blog Finder** (<http://blogfinder.genealogue.com/jewish.asp>), an aggregator of blogs, followed by **Tracing the Tribe: The Jewish Genealogy Blog** (<http://tracingthetribе.blogspot.com>) run by Shelly Talalay Dardashti a recent speaker at JGSCV. Bloggers often post recent genealogy successes, brickwalls or family searches as well as other interesting information. If you find worthwhile blogs please share them with us at: newslettereditor@jgscv.org.

JGSCV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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