



# VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

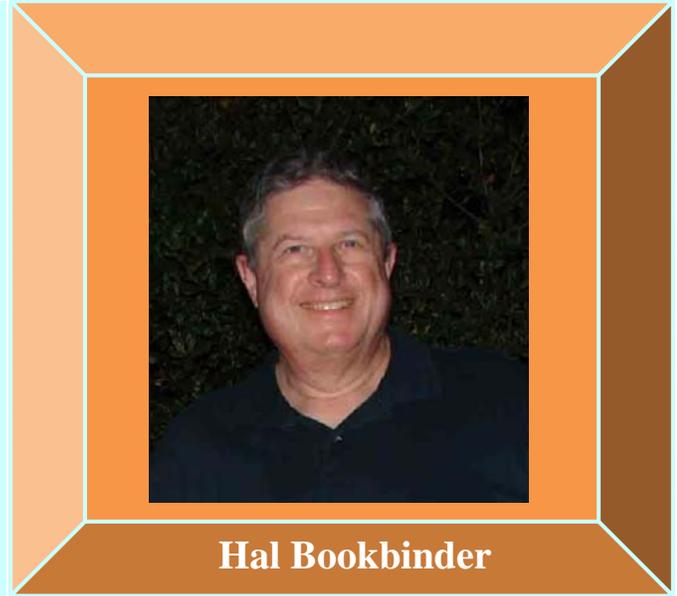
NEWSLETTER OF THE JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY  
OF THE CONEJO VALLEY AND VENTURA COUNTY (JGSCV)

Volume 6, Issue 6

March, 2011

## President's Letter:

For those of you who didn't attend our February 13<sup>th</sup> meeting—you missed a phenomenal presentation by Hal Bookbinder on "Why Did Our Ancestors Leave a Nice Place Like the Pale". Hal's passion for history came through with the erudite, comprehensive and very interesting presentation starting with Union of Lublin in 1569 that laid the groundwork for the Pale of Settlement which started in the 1700's and ended in 1917. The Pale was "home" for about 80 percent of our ancestors and it was a fascinating journey through time—and hard to comprehend the hardships our ancestors endured while living under such conditions. A copy of Hal's handout is on our website---go to [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org) and click on meetings, prior, and click on the February 13<sup>th</sup> date. As we ran out of copies at the meeting due to the large turnout—83 attendees—those who did not receive one at the meeting can download and print it from the website. We had attendees from New York, Boston and Illinois as well as Los Osos, San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara, California as well as our "usual" geographic area.



Hal Bookbinder

Hal, also serves on the JewishGen Board of Governors and gave an overview on the collection and dissemination of Jewish family history. He talked of the challenges, a wider purpose, topics for consideration and the input the JewishGen Board is seeking from us, the JewishGen family of users. A copy of that handout is also on the website. Please send your thoughts on JewishGen to Hal at the e-mail address on the handout.

In lieu of our monthly book report, Sara Borczuk Applebaum, who discussed her book, *Lost and Found: A Family Memoir*, at our January Authors program, talked on self-publishing and what she learned along her adventure in publishing her first book. Her suggestions will help anyone who is writing their own family history book.

I am delighted to announce that JGSCV is now an Amazon.com affiliate! Please read more about this new venture and how your shopping at Amazon.com can raise funds for the JGSCV with no cost to you. See page 5. This program, along with Ralph's Community Contribution (also page 5) are two ways you can help your society!

JGSCV is always trying to reach out to more people interested in Jewish Genealogy—if you belong to a group that you think would be interested in receiving our monthly meeting notices please let Marion Werle ([publicity@jgscv.org](mailto:publicity@jgscv.org)) or me ([president@jgscv.org](mailto:president@jgscv.org)) know. The publicity committee sends e-mails to over 70 organizations each month—but we know if someone who belongs to a group brings JGSCV publicity to their attention it carries more weight.

Our March 6 meeting is our long-awaited Exclusive Assisted Research Afternoon at the Los Angeles Family History Library (LAFHL). An article on page 3 will give you hints on how to prepare for this trip. To maximize your research afternoon experience please do some advance planning as to what you plan to research. Remember only 2011 JGSCV paid members may attend...you can join at the door or a copy of the membership/renewal form is on page 8. This is your opportunity to have personal help with your genealogy by the senior members of JGSCV and LAFHL volunteers! We will not be bringing our traveling library to the March meeting as we can use both the JGSLA and Polish Genealogy Societies books at the LAFHL.

Looking forward to seeing you at the March 6 LAFHL meeting!

*Jan Meisels Allen*

FUTURE MEETINGS NOTICES PAGES 3, 9

## 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](http://www.jgscv.org) by selecting the membership button.

## AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN DATABASE

The Czech Republic has digitized many documents encompassing the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The National Library of the Czech Republic databases can be accessed at <http://tinyurl.com/472a7su> Note, some data is only available onsite in Prague and copyright laws protect some. However, by navigating the site you may find a treasure like Joe Slater of Melbourne, Australia who discovered his grandfather's casualty report from World War I.

## CENTURY OLD COLOR PHOTOS OF RUSSIA

From 1909-1912 photographer Sergei Mikhailovich Prokudin-Gorskii photographed parts of the Russian Empire with the support of Tsar Nicholas II. Incorporating a technique described on the website (<http://tinyurl.com/36wmgnx>), the photos appear in very robust color; unique for its time.

## ARCHIVED CROATIAN NEWSPAPERS

More than 30 publications from Croatia are searchable online at <http://tinyurl.com/4j3xpmf>. Some newspapers have archived data from 1848. You may need translations that are available at <http://translate.google.com>.

## MORE GENEALOGY ON TV

In addition to "Who Do You Think You Are" airing Fridays at 8PM on NBC, The Oprah Winfrey Network (OWN) has begun airing "Searching For . . ." on Mondays at 9PM. "Searching For . . ." is a genealogy reality show that follows Pam Slaton, a professional investigative genealogist, as she finds people for clients. While not always a pure genealogical search, Pam uses many of the tools useful to genealogists.

"Who Do You Think You Are" continues to be successful for NBC. To date the show is #2 in the ratings for its time period.

## DC2011 CONFERENCE ANNOUNCES

### SHABBAT SCHOLAR

Rabbi Shmuley Boteach will be the Shabbat Scholar for the pre-conference Shabbat on August 12<sup>th</sup>. Rabbi Shmuley is the prolific best selling author of 23 books and host of a successful TV show ("Shalom in the Home" on TLC) and radio show ("The Shmuley Show" on WABC in New York). Rabbi Shmuley will explore the source and effects of our genealogical quests at Friday night service. An open discussion forum will be held on Saturday afternoon preceding the IAJGS Conference.

### SOCIAL NETWORKS FOR FAMILY HISTORY

While not for everyone, social networks can be useful tools for genealogists. It is one of several areas highlighted on Family Search's new Family Tech pages. With separate tabs for 'Computing', 'Software', 'Devices', 'Internet' and 'HowTos', the Family Tech pages also include insights on smart phones, data storage and much, much more. For information, go to <http://tinyurl.com/4dfpkm> and look around.

### SCOTLAND CENSUS OF 1911

The General Registrar Office of Scotland will release the 1911 census records on April 5, 2011. When available, this database will include the names, addresses, ages, occupations, birthplaces and marital status of more than 4.7 million Scots. This was the last population survey completed before World War I and thus includes information on many who died in that war. For more information go to <http://tinyurl.com/d5hn>

### DISCOVER WHO YOU ARE SWEEPSTAKES

The "Family Tree Magazine Discover Who You Are Sweepstakes" ("Sweepstakes") began February 4, 2011 and will end at 11:59 PM ET on February 27, 2011. There are two ways to enter. Share your favorite discovery moment from any of the February episodes of NBC's Who Do You Think You Are or ask a question about a technique or resource used in the show by:

1. "Liking" the Family Tree Magazine fan page on Facebook  
<http://facebook.com/familytreemagazine> and then post to Family Tree Magazine's wall or leave a comment. Entrants who already "Like" Family Tree Magazine need only to leave a comment on the Family Tree Magazine Facebook fan page during the sweepstakes entry period prior to 11:59 PM ET on February 27, 2011.
2. Posting a comment on Family Tree Magazine's Genealogy Insider Blog  
(<http://blog.familytreemagazine.com/insider/>)  
Choose any blog post about WDYTUA.

**BE SURE TO READ ALL THE RULES** at: <http://tinyurl.com/4zsjht5>

One winner per week will get a \$205 Discover Your Roots Kit including a bookazine, a Family Tree course and Reference ebook plus research guides and more!



## Preparing For JGSCV's Exclusive Research Afternoon at the Los Angeles Family History Library March 6, 2011 1:00-5:00 PM

**J**GSCV members are privileged to have an exclusive research afternoon at the Los Angeles Family History Library (LAFHL). This meeting is open only to 2011 current-paid members. Anyone may join or renew their JGSCV membership by paying their dues at the door—and if you prefer to pay before the meeting a form is on page 8 of this newsletter. The LAFHL had been closed for over 18 months and recently reopened—making this an opportunity to visit and receive assistance with your personal genealogy that is not to be missed!

Car-pooling is best, so ask your friends from JGSCV about sharing. JGSCV itself is not putting together any car pools.

### Directions:

The LAFHL is located at: 10741 Santa Monica Blvd in Los Angeles on the grounds of the LDS (Mormon) Temple. From the 405 freeway get off at Santa Monica Blvd. and go east to Manning Ave. Turn north on Manning Ave, make the first left into the LDS Temple compound, proceed right until reaching the Visitor's Center then, park along the fence. The entrance to the LAFHL is on the right (east) side of the Visitor's Center. The library is on the lower floor of the FHL—there are stairs and an elevator from the first floor.

LAFHL has the largest holdings of any branch outside of Salt Lake City! Take a look at their website: [www.lafhl.org](http://www.lafhl.org) for a listing of the resources that are available. In addition to microfilms, microfiche, maps and books,

they have 86 computers (PCs not Macs) that have access to many genealogical sites at no charge. These sites include: Ancestry.com (full institution subscription); FindMyPast.com, Footnote.com, The Genealogist, Genline Family Finder, Godfrey Memorial Library ([godfrey.org](http://godfrey.org)), Heritage Quest Online, Historic MapWorks Library Edition, Paper trail, WorldVitalRecords.com, 19th Century British Library Newspaper Digital Archive and more!

They have reduced the number of microfilms, microfilm readers, microfiche, microfiche readers and books, as many of these records and books are now digitized. However, the foreign vital records microfilms, including the Jewish ones are still available at the LAFHL! JGSLA has a list of the Jewish microfilms on their website that are currently at the LAFHL: <http://jgsla.org/research/microfilms-at-lafhl>



A copy of this floor plan is located on JGSCV's website [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org) under meetings as one of the handouts.

At 1:30 p.m. there will be a presentation on an introduction to the Los Angeles Family History Library by Barbara Algaze (right), volunteer at the LAFHL. In addition to Barbara, there will be several volunteers from the LAFHL to help you with the resources to help you to do your research.



### **PREPARE IN ADVANCE**

To make the best use of this experience you should take your research papers with you.

Be sure to bring:

- Copies of your family group sheets
- Documents
- Family time lines
- Family trees!

### **PRIORITIZE YOUR RESEACRCH LISTS**

- Foreign and state censuses
- City directories
- Vital records (birth, marriage or death records)
- Maps
- Naturalization records
- WWI and WWII draft registration records.

For traditional methodology, bring: Paper pads, post-it notes, pens, pencils and a magnifying glass.

For electronic methodology, bring: laptop computer, genealogy program, USB storage drives, writable CD Rom, digital camera—to use if making photos from microfilms.

If you are planning to use the foreign microfilms, remember the records are in their native language. Unless you are knowledgeable in the language, it is best to have some key-finding words in that language such as male, female, birth, death, marriage, wife, husband, father, and mother. While there are some foreign language dictionaries available at the LAFHL, good preparation will allow you to make better

use of the limited time available. Many records are handwritten, are in chronological rather than alphabetical order, and may not be indexed. Bring a magnifying glass to help you read the handwriting.

An extra feature at the LAFHL is the availability of permanent libraries of genealogy societies including our sister society, JGSLA. The books are available for anyone to use. You may wish to look at the JGSLA website to see which books are available: <http://www.jgsla.org/library.htm>. The Polish Genealogical Society of Southern CA, also has their permanent library housed there and we can use the materials at the library. Remember, all books, microfilms, microfiche, maps, etc. may only be used at the FHL—nothing may be borrowed or removed from the FHL.

If you wish to print a document off a microfilm or microfiche reader or copy machine, you make your copies and pay at the front desk. We don't know how much change they will have so it would be appreciated if you bring change and small denomination bills.

There is a small lunchroom with vending machines and a refrigerator where you can store your bag lunches and drinks. We don't know what/if food will be available on a Sunday. If you want to bring a snack or lunch you may eat and drink **ONLY** in the designated area.

There are lockers with keys available at no fee *for members* to keep their valuables. There is a coat rack for coats, jackets, and sweaters. Sometimes they forget to ask maintenance to turn on the heat on Sundays (when they are usually closed) and it gets very cold down there--especially in the classroom. You might want to bring a sweater, sweatshirt, or jacket—just in case!

This is not a lending library, remember, nothing may be taken from the facility.

JGSCV  
**UPDATES . . .**



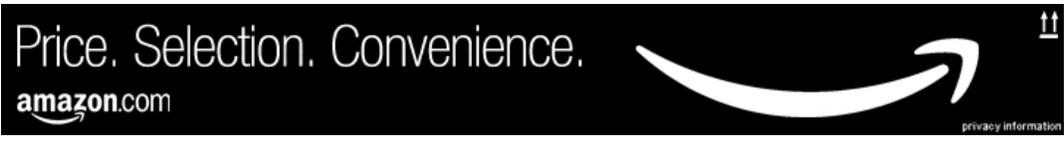
Look for the SCHMOOZING CORNER sign (left) at our regular meetings at Temple Adat Elohim where you will



find a JGSCV expert who can help you overcome a genealogical brick wall or maybe just answer a question. Marion Werle (photo right) was the facilitator at the Feb. 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. Remember, there will be no SCHMOOZING CORNER at the LA Family History Library on March 6<sup>th</sup>.

**NOW TWO WAYS TO HELP JGSCV**

1. JGSCV has now partnered with amazon.com to help raise funds at no cost to you. Just use our website to access to amazon.com and we automatically receive credit. Start at [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org) and click on the Amazon banner at the bottom of the page (like the one below). This will take you to Amazon's home page where you can begin your shopping. *You will not pay any more for any item you purchase in this manner.*



2. Remember to sign up for the Ralphs Community Contribution Program. Ralphs requires annual registration on their website [www.ralphs.com](http://www.ralphs.com). Sign in and scroll down to community contribution. JGSCV is number 84732 that you insert under charity of choice. Even as an occasional Ralphs' shopper, it helps JGSCV with no cost to you!

**REMINDER:** JGSCV's Traveling Library is taking this month off. There will be lots of research sources available at the LAFHC.



**FEB 13**  
*JGSCV MEETING!*



At the Feb. 13 JGSCV meeting



Susan Dressler of San Luis Obispo and Carol Stern of Los Osos at their first JGSCV meeting



Sara Applebaum describing the intricacies of self-publishing



Hal Bookbinder explaining 'Why Our Ancestors Left A Nice Place Like The Pale'



**Tribe** recently interviewed Jan Meisels Allen, president of JGSCV. The article below was published on Jan. 27, 2011.

from **TRIBE**

## TRACE YOUR TRIBE

by Robin Heinz Bratslavsky



Despite what your zayde or bubbe told you, your family name was not changed at Ellis Island.

“The last names had to match the manifest when people arrived in the United States,” says Jan Meisels Allen, president of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV).

Name changes are just one of many roadblocks an amateur Jewish genealogist might encounter while researching a family’s past. Political upheavals, border changes and the Holocaust all contribute to the difficulties American Jews often encounter when trying to research their family histories.

When it comes to surnames, Allen says, families typically changed them after they arrived in the United States so they would sound more American.

This is not to say, however, that the name on the manifest was the exact name given in Europe.

“Your grandparents [or great-grandparents] were speaking with the accent from wherever they came from,” Allen says, “so it’s entirely possible that the name on the manifest wasn’t exactly correct — the person writing the manifest may not have understood the pronunciation provided by your relative.”

In addition to family names being changed, many of the towns from which Eastern European Jews migrated have been subjected to name changes.

So, with all of these discrepancies, how can you get started tracking down your own family’s history?

Allen recommends interviewing family members.

“One of the biggest bubbe meises [grandmother’s story] out there is that no one in the family remembers anything,” Allen says. “You just have to know how to ask the right questions.”

To begin your Jewish genealogical research, Allen says:

- Interview family members. Begin conversations asking about their recollections of stories, people, etc.
- Remember, your family’s name was not changed at Ellis Island.
- Realize that not all records have been destroyed. They may be tough to track down, but with some good research, you may be able to find documents that pertain to your family.
- Log on to JewishGen ([jewishgen.org](http://jewishgen.org)), the premier site for Jewish genealogical research. There, you will find loads

of help for starting your search, including special interest groups that focus on particular countries or regions. You also can register your family's surnames and post messages on discussion boards.

- Join a Jewish genealogical society. Here, you will have access to the group's extensive library, experts and others who have made great strides in researching the histories of their Jewish families,

After you've done all of the above, Allen recommends investigating Ancestry.com. Although this is a paid site, it offers a wealth of information. She also notes that several public libraries have editions of Ancestry.com that can be accessed for free.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (commonly known as the Mormon church), maintains what is regarded as the best worldwide genealogy database. The Los Angeles Family History Library, at its Los Angeles temple on Santa Monica Boulevard, is open to the public (membership in the church is neither required nor expected). The library offers classes and experts to help you — all free. The facility boasts online research opportunities, plus access to the Family History Library's extensive microfilm/microfiche collection. For more information, visit [lafhl.org](http://lafhl.org).

JGSCV ([jgscv.org](http://jgscv.org)) meets at Temple Adat Elohim in Thousand Oaks, though members live in all of the valleys. Many members have been involved in genealogical research for years and are great resources for beginners. Allen also says that monthly meetings often include expert speakers and authors. The Jewish Genealogical Society of Los Angeles ([jgsla.org](http://jgsla.org)), also offers meetings and resources at locations across Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley.

So, why bother researching your Jewish genealogy?

“You meet wonderful people who turn out to be your relatives,” Allen says.

.....  
**March Is Women's History Month and May Has Mother's Day**

Have you searched your female ancestors recently? Do you have a special memory of your mother, grandmother, older sister or aunt...a recipe, a memento, letter, or some piece of jewelry from her? Tracing women in genealogy is definitely a challenge with most women marrying and taking their husband's name. In the past, many of our female ancestors were more "hidden behind the scenes". However, it is not impossible to find female family members!

A webinar entitled, *Chasing Women--Finding Your Female Ancestors* was held on February 16—but it is archived and available free for 30 days on <http://www.legacyfamilytree.com/webinars.asp>. Thereafter, the webinar may be purchased on CD. [Other webinars are also archived available on the same website].

What better way to honor our female ancestors than to research their lines, and honor those who perished in the Shoah with a Page of Testimony. By writing down a story about them in your genealogy, future family members will have something to remember, pass down and shared again. Examples include a recipe passed down from one generation to another, a story of cooking or baking with mother, grandmother or aunt, or a story remembered how they cared for you when you were ill with the flu or measles- all goes to remembering and honoring them.

**JGSCV BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| Jan Meisels Allen, President   | <a href="mailto:president@jgscv.org">president@jgscv.org</a>               | Stewart Bernstein, Member-at-large                           | <a href="mailto:stewart@jgscv.org">stewart@jgscv.org</a>         |
| Warren Blatt, Member Education   | <a href="mailto:education@jgscv.org">education@jgscv.org</a>               | Debra Kay Blatt, Information Chairman                        | <a href="mailto:information@jgscv.org">information@jgscv.org</a> |
| Dorothy Drilich, Secretary   | <a href="mailto:secretary@jgscv.org">secretary@jgscv.org</a>               | Sara Hyman, Member-at-large                                  | <a href="mailto:treasurer@jgscv.org">treasurer@jgscv.org</a>     |
| Allan Linderman, Newsletter Editor   | <a href="mailto:newslettereditor@jgscv.org">newslettereditor@jgscv.org</a> | Helene Rosen, VP Membership                                  | <a href="mailto:membership@jgscv.org">membership@jgscv.org</a>   |
|  | Marion Werle, Publicity  | <a href="mailto:publicity@jgscv.org">publicity@jgscv.org</a> |  |
| *****  |  |  |  |
| David Oseas, Webmaster:  | <a href="mailto:webmaster@jgscv.org">webmaster@jgscv.org</a>               | Raya Sagi, Librarian:  | <a href="mailto:librarian@jgscv.org">librarian@jgscv.org</a>     |
| Mailing address: 6052 Hackers Lane, Agoura Hills, CA 91301 Phone: 818-889-6616 |  |  |  |
| Website: <a href="http://www.jgscv.org">www.jgscv.org</a>                      |  |  |  |



**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**

**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.).**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**2011 JGSCV Meeting Dates**  
**All Meetings are held at Temple Adat Elohim**  
**Unless Otherwise Noted**  
**2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks**

**ALL MEETINGS SUNDAY 1:30-3:30 PM (Except March 6<sup>th</sup>, see below)**

**March 6 1:00 -5:00PM Exclusive Research Day at the LA Family History Library** Personal genealogical help is available from LAFHL volunteers and senior JGSCV members.

**April 3 Jews of the Pacific Coast** Ava F. Kahn Jewish experience in Seattle, Portland, SF, LA and small western towns. Program Co-sponsored with the Western States Jewish History.

**May 1 Yom Hashoah Day Commemoration, The First Massive Jewish Deportation: To Camp de Gurs in 1940** Werner Frank Thousands of Jews were expelled to Camp de Gurs on the way to the 'Final Solution'. Frank describes these actions and others as they relate to his family in Baden.

**June 5 Wrongful (Jewish) Wraskals of the West** Ron Arons West coast criminals including research tools and methodology.

**July 17 Genealogy in the Round: Share Your Successes, Failures, Artifacts and Brick Walls**

**August 14-19 IAJGS hosted by JGS Greater Washington**  
**No JGSCV meeting in August**

**JGSCV Welcomes New Members**  
**Susan Birdsall**  
**Tamar Shulem**