The Kosher Koala

EDITORIAL

This is my thirty-third and last editorial and I shall miss writing to you four times a year. Unfortunately my husband's health has had many downs lately and it is necessary for me to shed some obligations. Miriam Shifreen, my long-time friend and editorial assistant, will probably take over as editor and she has all the talents to do an excellent job.

Since the December edition we have held three workshops, all only moderately attended. The workshops are the times when members or guests can use our many excellent books on Jewish genealogy and the numerous overseas journals of other Jewish genealogical societies as well as the extremely informative special interest group publications from groups specialising in German Jewish descent (*Stammbaum*), on Galician descent (*The Galizianer*), on Suwalki and Lomza background (*Landsmen*), or Kielce and Radom provinces genealogy in Poland. And it is surprisingly how few choose to avail themselves of these opportunities. It is perhaps unfortunate that we have so many resources that it is impossible for us to trundle them in boxes from the Rev. Katz Library in Lindfield, so you have to come to us.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SYDNEY WORKSHOPS 2002

All workshops are usually held at the Rev Katz Library, North Shore Synagogue, Lindfield, on Sundays, from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

✡ April 7 ✓	August 4
May 5	September 1
June 2	October 6
July 7	November 3
December 1	

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Victoria

Ronald Bower	Viviana Cohn
Orek Tenen	Geoff Trufitt

✡ **Dr Chanan Rapaport** ✓
from
The Centre For the Study of the Rapaport Family in Jerusalem
Will speak at the workshop session on
7th April, 2002
Messianism, Chassidism, and the Rabbinical world as related to the historical, anthropological and sociological aspects of genealogy,

COME AND ASK THE EXPERTS ✉

Sunday 21st April, 2002 At 3pm ⏱
(For all those in the Eastern Suburbs who don't know how to cross the Bridge)
It's at Nigel's house so ring for details
☎   **9371 6140**

INTERNATIONAL JGS CONFERENCES

Toronto Canada	**August 4-9, 2002**
Washington D.C., U.S.A.	**2003**
Jerusalem, Israel	**2004**

ON THE INTERNET

JEWISH GENEALOGY IN AUSTRALIA
http://www.zeta.org.au/~feraltek/genealogy

JEWISH GENEALOGY SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN
http://www.jgsgb.org.uk/

JEWISH PEOPLE FINDER
http://www.jewishpeoplefinder.com

1929 POLISH BUSINESS DIRECTORY
http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/bizdir/start.htm
English translations are at:
http://www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/pl-occ.txt (19th Century)
http://WWW.jewishgen.org/infofiles/PolishBusDirOccs.htm (20th C)

THE HOME OF JEWISH GENEALOGY
http:www.jewishgen.org

THE GATEWAY TO EVERYTHING JEWISH IN AUSTRALIA: http:// www.jewishaustralia.com

EDITORIAL   (Continued from page 2)

Recently our richly illustrated lecture by Mara Moustafine on the *Jews of Harbin* at the Sydney Jewish Museum, and held jointly with the Museum, attracted an audience of fifty, many of them born in Harbin or whose parents had lived there. Mara Moustafine knows her subject well and later this year her book on the same topic is to be published by Allen and Unwin, and will be eagerly awaited.

At our Annual General Meeting on Sunday 24th March, our member Diane Armstrong will speak on her book *The Voyage of their Life, the passengers of the SS Derna* in 1948, which was recently launched at the Sydney Jewish Museum.

On the occasion of the AGM I will step down after ten years and five months as president of this Society. I became interested in genealogy in my early twenties after visiting the Aachen Jewish Cemetery where my father and several of my mother's relatives lie buried. In July 1987 I attended the second International Jewish Genealogy Conference in London where I made several long-lasting friendships. In January 1987 on a visit to New York I arranged to have lunch with Gary Mokotoff. He brought with him Rabbi Malcolm Stern and Miriam Weiner. Rabbi Stern quizzed me on my interest in genealogy and then urged me to start a Society in Australia. This took nearly four years, but eventually I did.

In the meantime Rabbi Dr Israel Porush nominated me as his successor as Australian correspondent or "contributing editor" to *Avotaynu*. Thus my "career" was pushed by two revered rabbis.

I was able to get pre-launch publicity for our Society because in the 1980s and early 1990s my husband Leslie was a leader of the Australian Jewish community and we travelled to many inter-state conferences where I was able to announce the imminent establishment of our Society. Then I called a meeting for 3rd November, 1991 at my home and that is when we started. We are fortunate that we attracted many members in Sydney and in other states and that many of the early adherents are still with us. After some time we were able to bring our inter-state members together in each city and to form separate groups in Melbourne, Perth, Adelaide, Canberra and Brisbane which have been able to function separately, although still helped along by us. I was able to negotiate for the book collection of the Melbourne branch to become part of the Makor Library, but yet continue to belong to the Genealogical Society there, and this has worked very well under successive chairmen Aubrey Schwarz, Lionel Sharp, and now Leslie Oberman. At the beginning of 1998 we severed the apron strings and the Victorian branch became completely independent. They produce their own newsletter though most members still elect to also receive this journal. It has been my endeavour to try and provide each state branch still under our aegis with a basic Jewish genealogy book collection and I was fortunate to have the private means to do so. It would have been absurd for members in Perth, for instance to have to consult many books in Sydney. Of course, the Sydney library is best furnished, although the Melbourne collection may be even better by now as Makor library has many private donors.

We have also tried to keep the Kosher Koala as an organ of all the branches under our umbrella. We have been fortunate in devoted chairpersons of branches who have become my personal friends over the years. In Perth first Ross Trobe, and now Michelle Urban; in Adelaide first Hilde Hines who is almost *Mrs Adelaide Jewry*, and now Marjorie Luno now helped by Jeannie Susman, with Klee Benveniste holding the fort for many years; in Canberra Sylvia Deutsch, with Alan Shroot, Earl Hoffman and Vernon Kronenberg backing her; and in Brisbane Morris Ochert Brisbane Jewry's cultural chairman, now aided by Carol Stirk. And the friendship with Lionel Sharp and Leslie Oberman in Melbourne, and many others, has also lasted.

In Sydney I was ably assisted for eight and a half years by Rieke Nash who is taking over as president, and by Terry Newman, Stuart Shaw who has continued to receive our official Society e-mails and fax them to me, by Gary Luke, David Laufer, Jeanette Tsoulos, Phillip Baynash, Bernard Friedman, Kim Phillips, Miriam Shifreen and no doubt many others whose names I have omitted. Others have expressed friendship and support without taking a very active part in our Society. A Society like ours needs many active hands to push it along, but I wish there had sometimes been some more hands to the wheel.

I shall continue to cherish all the friendships that I have made in the Jewish genealogical world, both in Australia and throughout the world, and also the help encountered from people like Heather Garnsey and Angela Phippen from the Society of Australian Genealogists, Nick Vine Hall, Kingsley Ireland, and other non-Jewish genealogists who have given me guidance and friendship

We took pride recently in seeing talks on Jewish genealogy printed integrally from lectures given by Sylvia Deutsch and Vernon Kronenberg in the publication of Canberra *HAGSOC* (Heraldry and Genealogy Society) and David Wallace's moving personal story in the Winter issue of *Avotaynu* of

how he found who his birthmother was and then found his two half-brothers. Peter Nash also had an article in *Avotaynu*, and one of my Kosher Koala articles was reprinted in *Scattered Seeds*, organ of the JGS of Palm Beach County in Florida, USA.

We have been fortunate enough in having Dr Chanan Rapaport of the Centre for the Study of the Rapaport Family in Jerusalem, who spoke to us on the ramifications of this family in November 1993, visit Sydney again. He will speak to us on *Messianism, Chassidism, and the Rabbinical world as related to the historical, anthropological and sociological aspects of genealogy*, at the regular workshop at the Rev Katz Library in Lindfield on Sunday 7th April, 2002 at 10.00 am. Dr Rapaport is an experienced practicing psychologist and academic and a member of the Israel Genealogical Society in Jerusalem.

We will also shortly schedule a lecture by Nancy Goodstein Hilton, who is now a Mormon, but also an expert on Jewish genealogy and compiler of the Index of Jewish Records in the Family History Library. She and her husband Lynn Hilton will be stationed in Australia for the next three years. Lynn Hilton is a university professor with a special interest in biblical archaeology, in particular evidence of the Red Sea Crossing of Exodus, and Mount Sinai and the beginnings of the Jewish religion.

Finally on behalf of all of us I would like to wish Mazeltov to our foundation member and former treasurer, Terry Newman and his fiancee Anita Engel who plan to be married in Sydney in August.

Lehitraot, till we meet again,
Sophie Caplan, Editor

CANBERRA CORNER

By Sylvia Deutsch

On Sunday 24 February Dr. Vernon Kronenberg led a workshop on Jewish genealogy through the Internet, from 1.30-3.00 pm at the National Jewish Memorial Centre. AJGS members are invited to the Australian Jewish Historical Society annual picnic, this time to Braidwood, on Monday 18 March (Canberra Day). They are also welcome at the AJHS AGM on Thursday 21 March at 7.45am, when Robert Heyman will speak on genealogy, with the topic "In New York, the streets are paved with gold": the use of census data and ships records on Jewish immigration into the USA".

Grateful thanks to Sophie Caplan for her generosity in donating several valuable reference works for use of Canberra AJGS members, and for other interesting material acquired on her trip in 2001 to Jewish Genealogy conference in London.

Please call Sylvia Deutsch on 6248-6196 if you need further information.
fax: 02-6257-3631
or email: deutand@ozemail.com.au.

QUEENSLAND REPORT

By Morris S. Ochert OAM

The period under review has been quiet and I do not have anything interesting to report. Some routine enquiries have reached me including one from a lady in Boulder, Colorado, USA. She is a descendant of "Sali" Mendelsohn, about whom I wrote a story titled "Sali Mendelsohn, Balladeer". This was printed in the journal of the Australian Jewish Historical Society (AJHS) about four years ago. I was able to give the lady a great amount of detail about her ancestors and she has provided a quantity of early photographs which I have passed on to the AJHS.

Enquiries: Morris S Ochert OAM
3/23 Lucinda Street, Taringa Qld 4068
Tel: 07 3870 3860 Email: stirk@uq.net.au

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN REPORT

by Michelle Urban

Enquirers, both Jewish and non-Jewish, are given whatever information we have, while in many cases, we refer them to Sophie Caplan, our President.
On Sunday 25th November 2001, members met at the home of Michelle Urban where a very successful study afternoon took place. Some of us are just beginning the journey of researching our ancestry and using records to find out about our relatives both past and present. A hands-on workshop for beginners and others on the Net was held and was enthusiastically received. Another hands-on will take place in May 2002.

At the meeting held on Sunday 24th February 2002, at 2.00 pm, in the foyer at Perth Hebrew Synagogue, Dr Harry Cohen, Head of Gynaecology at King Edward Memorial Hospital, spoke about his "One Man's Medical Odyssey".

Our special thanks go to Leslie and Sophie Caplan for their generosity in presenting to our Branch a number of very interesting publications they brought back with them from the London Conference. These will all be very valuable additions to our reference collection.

Enquiries
Michelle Urban, Co-ordinator.
21 Broomhall Way, Noranda WA 6062
E-mail : urban1@iinet.net.au

THE GREAT MIGRATION, 1880-1914: SIGNIFICANT FACTORS

By Aubrey Newman

Fundamental to what I want to say is the basic proposition that very few Jews at the end of the twentieth century lived in the same city or even geographical region where their great- grandparents had been born.

This is the basic feature of modern Jewish life, and it has been this dispersion over the generations, and more especially in the period of the Great Migration - the years between 1880 and 1914 - which has resulted in the enormous gaps in our knowledge of our own family backgrounds. In consequence a study of migration, a study of the routes by which our families travelled from their former homes to their new homes, is very relevant to our studies of our ancestors. As a result of thorough analysis of all the factors influencing the decision to migrate and the decision where to go it becomes possible to examine where it might be profitable and possible to find traces of our families' transit through Europe and out into the wider world.

But in searching these records for such traces there are certain fundamental factors which must be kept continuously in mind in searching for information, some of them so basic as to seem almost insulting to mention. Records come into existence for certain specific and specified purposes they are for the convenience of those who originally created them and they contain only that information which the officials felt that they might need in the immediate future. In many cases these records were not even necessarily intended to have any real length of life, so that their continued existence might well represent an unintended accident.

The Great Migration which affected us all was one part of a process of migration which affected large numbers of Europeans throughout the nineteenth century. During that period of time virtually every country in Europe disgorged large numbers of migrants into the New World. But what is of particular significance for all of us was the movement out of central and eastern Europe of nearly four million Jews. For them it was the combination of overwhelming poverty, a population explosion, and political repression and persecution, all allied to a vast expansion of passenger capacity on the North American shipping routes which made it possible for millions to be transported all over the world. We normally assume that these movements were the result of pogroms under the Russian Government. The facts are however that extreme poverty was more significant than direct persecution; the fact is that the peaks and troughs of migration from Galicia - where political considerations were more bearable than in Russia - normally coincide with those from Russia and these suggest that pogroms were less significant than might have been expected as the factors behind migration.

Such pressures have been designated as "push" factors, pressures which tended to force or persuade migrants to leave their erstwhile homes. In addition there were very significant factors which served to pull migrants into the new worlds. Sometimes it was the desire for - freedom of religion or freedom from religion, freedom of personal status or freedom from personal ties which had become unbearable. Sometimes it was the lure of the Goldene Medinah, either because there was gold on the streets or because there was open land available for the taking.

In discussing patterns of migration certain basic factors must be considered. How far was there a considered decision to go? What routes were available for the would-be traveller? How far were the decisions based upon the availability of transport? Upon the preferences of various travel agents and sub-agents? How far indeed did the various would-be travellers have any knowledge of their possible destinations? I have for example been doing a lot of work on the migration to southern Africa from the Kovno region, but I still have no clear idea of what "knowledge" there was in Kovno of life and conditions in Cape Town or Johannesburg. But the factor which must be predominant is the importance of the individual decision to migrate. There may have been tens of thousands on the move at any time, but there were tens of thousands of individual decisions, and even if there were agents available to give assistance and advice all they could do was to persuade. Even where there were societies and associations set up to encourage colonisation - such as the Jewish Colonisation Association (JCA) it is clear that they too were highly reactive to populist movements.

The basic structure of transport between the Russian interior and the West channelled movement into a number of basic corridors. For most, the basic decision involved a rail journey to the western coast of Europe even if it began with an illegal crossing over the border. There were some others who chose or who were able to leave by sea through Libau, Riga, or one or other of the various ports in the Baltic that were in use at some time or other. Such departures at times presented problems, but a substantial number of migrants from the northern part of the Pale did pass along the various shipping routes either to the German Atlantic ports

or directly to the east coast of the United Kingdom. For those living in the central section of the Pale of Settlement the obvious path was through either Warsaw or Austria-Hungary so that one path would lie through Budapest and Vienna. From the area of the southern Pale or of Romania the most common routes would appear to have been out through the Black Sea or the Eastern Mediterranean, and it would seem to be no mere accident that the overwhelming majority of those who went to the Holy Land in the first three waves of Aliyah came from those areas that found it easier to go there than to America.

A great deal of light upon this whole movement of migration can be thrown by an examination of the ways in which there were developments in the Jewish communities in the various lands through which migrants travelled. We have available information about such communities in Germany, Scandinavia, France, or the United Kingdom. In most of the countries of the transmigration - most especially is this true for Germany -- very few of the migrants stopped off to swell the numbers of Jews already in the country. But in the United Kingdom the numbers of Jews between 1870 and 1914 rose from about 60,000 to well over 250,000 - an increase which cannot be accounted for by natural population growth.

Once those who had arrived at the western European seaboard had determined on their destination much more remained to be decided. There were a number of continental ports which had shipping routes direct to North America. And indeed it was always possible to purchase in advance a through ticket covering all aspects of the journey. It was also possible to purchase such tickets at any point of the journey. But it follows that those who travelled direct from a continental port to North America would never appear in records created in the United Kingdom, and certainly never in the records of the institution which I and my students have been studying, The Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter. Others would come into England, not in Liverpool but along the East coast - into such ports as Hull, Grimsby, London, or some of the more minor ports along the coast. It is amazing to find how many seeking genealogical information volunteer the statement that their ancestors sailed from Europe and landed at Liverpool: they have very clearly never looked at a map and considered the economics of mass transportation through Europe.

The majority of the migrants passing through Britain proceeded directly from landing stages in the east of the country to boarding stages in the west. It cannot be too often repeated that there were

in this period no registers of names of incoming aliens or any sort of passengers coming into the United Kingdom from European ports. What we do have are of course the manifests drawn up for each ship leaving for a non-European port. But these are probably the most important areas of research in United Kingdom records which remain to be studied. Again it must be emphasised that these manifests contain little information beyond the names and occupations of the individual and their nationality. There is no way in which they can be compared with the information available through the manifests still preserved for entry into the United States.

There is however one stream of research which has been studied in detail, and that is the stream which passed through London and which appears in some form or other in the records of the Shelter. While there were clearly "Shelter" institutions in other cities in the United Kingdom - such as Leeds or Liverpool - and in other countries in Europe - such as the Montefiore Vereeningung in Rotterdam or the Asile in Paris - the Shelter in London developed along lines of its own. Two distinct aspects can be distinguished. It is still not clear precisely how far the Shelter was part of a wider system of migrant management operating on behalf of the Port of London Health Authority but some interim conclusions have become clear. At times the Shelter authorities ensured that new migrants coming into the Port of London went to addresses where they could be checked by the Medical officers, and at times its work was to deal with large numbers of individuals who might otherwise have become a threat to themselves or to the status of the established community. The way in which the Shelter reacted to the thousands who poured into London in order to escape from the Russo-Japanese War illustrates this rescue aspect very clearly indeed. But on top of this, and in some sense more importantly, the Shelter developed as part of an organised stream of migration between Lithuania and South Africa, largely in close association with the shipping companies involved. Whether the Castle and Union lines created or merely exploited a desire to move out from Kovno to the Cape of Good Hope, it remains true that by 1896 there existed a close link between that movement and the Shelter. The still extant Registers of the Shelter have illustrated the details of this movement, and a comparison of the numbers passing each year through the Shelter en route to South Africa with the totals provided by the Board of Trade returns shows that the Shelter directly provided facilities for anything between 17% and 30% of the total numbers of aliens who left the UK for Africa.

And once they had landed they were liable to be left on their own in their new destination. In America there was HIAS to help them; in London there was the Shelter. In Cape Town there were Benevolent Societies which tried to be of assistance. But all too often there was pressure on the new arrivals, pressure to move on elsewhere in the country and pressure to cease to be a burden on the over-stretched facilities at the point of debarkation. One aspect of the work of the Shelter is the parallel which exists between it and similar institutions in the other countries of reception. Work for example on the Asile in Paris gives some parallel insofar as it too acted as a receiving institution. But analysis of the activities of HIAS in America would throw a great deal more light upon the importance of such institutions in assisting the passage of individual migrants.

The whole pattern of migration upon which we have been working is unique to the period between 1880 and 1914. The concept of "open frontiers" ended with the outbreak of the first World War. After 1918 "push" factors ceased to operated as they had done previously when "pull" factors equally became much less significant.

Aubrey Newman is Joint Honorary Director of the Stanley Burton Centre for Holocaust Studies at the University of Leicester and Professor Emeritus of History at that University. He has served three years as President of the Jewish Historical Society of England, and was responsible for organising a number of conferences on behalf of the JHSE: the joint conference of the American and English Historical Societies in 1970, which resulted in the publication of Migration and Settlement; in 1975 on Provincial Jewry in Victorian Britain (the papers presented to that conference were made available in a limited run as Provincial Jewry in Victorian Britain; in 1980 on the Jewish East End (The Jewish East End, 1840-1939); and in 1993 the centenary conference of the Jewish Historical Society of England (Patterns of Migration, 1850-1914). He has also published studies of the United Synagogue and the Board of Deputies. Currently his main interests are in migration studies and the history of provincial Britain.

REPORT FROM THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH

By Jeanie Susman

Our first meeting for 2002 was held on Tuesday, January 22nd at the home of Hilde Hines. There was much to discuss about our plans for the future, our wish to broaden the scope of our activities and

of course, as with all South Australian societies, our need for new members.

Our ranks have been sadly depleted with the loss of Joe Bolaffi and Ralph Kaiser and the resignation of several members because of conflicting or family reasons.

Although small in number our members are enthusiastic and committed. We have a modest but veritable collection of resource material., much of it donated through the generosity of Sophie Caplan, the founder of the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society and its president since its inception just over ten years ago.

We receive the quarterly journals *The Kosher Koala* from Sydney and *Jewish Genealogy Downunder*, the newsletter of the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Vic) Inc. We are also in the process of arranging a subscription to the very informative journal *Avotaynu*. From time to time we are able to help people seeking information about relatives past or present, who submit their queries in these journals, and we ourselves are able to access these facilities.

Until now we have been meeting about every two months, and have attempted to alternate an evening of research with an interesting speaker. Our recent Research Session for members was held on Thursday, March 21st from 9.30 a.m. to 12, at the Archives Room at the Beit Shalom Synagogue.

Our next interesting speaker will be Myer Solomon who will talk about his father Nathan Solomon, a prominent Jewish businessman in Adelaide in the early part of last century, on Tuesday, April 30th, 2002 at 8 p.m at the home of Marjorie and Manolo Luno, 2 Blyth Street, Glen Osmond..

Non-members are asked to donate a $2 coin.

The South Australian Branch contact is :
Marjorie Luno, President ,
AJGS (S.A. Branch), c/- Beit Shalom Synagogue,
P.O. Box 47, Stepney. SA 5069
Jeanie Susman
E-mail: chatsworth@picknowl.com.au

AUSTRALIAN JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY (Vic) Inc.

Report from Lionel Sharpe

Tess Schwarz, who recently published her autobiography, "The First Forty Families: Bringing My Family Tree And Forest To Life", addressed the Society at our first meeting for the year on Wednesday, 6th February at the Beth Weizmann Community Centre.

Tess spoke about the escape of her family from the pogroms in Russia in the early 1900s and how her great aunt and uncle, Chaya and Myer Pahoff, eventually arrived in Melbourne and settled in North Carlton. Between the years 1925 and 1929, they were responsible for bringing forty related families to Melbourne. Among them were Tess's parents, David and Chaya Hain (nee Jacobson). Detailed family trees were available for inspection.

The Society held a workshop on Sunday 17th February in association with the Australian Association of Jewish Studies 14th Annual Conference on the theme: 'Information Technology and Jewish Genealogy'. Using overhead projection we were able to give an on-line demonstration of the Internet and available databases on CD.

The 'Re-launch' of "Australian Genesis - Jewish Convicts and Settlers 1788-1860" by John S. Levi and G.F.J. Bergman, will be held at Slome Hall, Temple Beth Israel, 82 Alma Rd, St Kilda on 3 March 5.00 pm to 6:30 pm. Rabbi John Levi spoke on "The First Jews of Australia". This magnificently illustrated book was first published in 1974 covering the period 1788-1850 and has been out of print for over two decades. This new edition brings the history up to 1860 and will fill a gap for those interested in the early settlement of Jews in Australia

The Society agreed to participate in the In One Voice - "Celebration in the Park" event which was held in Caulfield Park on Sunday 17th March. This event, which has for many years attracted thousands of visitors, was cancelled last year and a new committee was formed re-launch a concert, art shows and the promotion of organisational life this year.

The following weekend the Society hosted a table at the Bendigo Family History Expo. Bendigo is a city about two hours drive from Melbourne. A Jewish community flourished there during the goldrush in the 1850s.

The Annual General Meeting of AJGS (Vic) will be held on Wednesday, 22 May at 7.30 at the Beth Weizmann Community Centre.

BANKSTOWN SYNAGOGUE MEMORIAL SERVICE AND EXHIBITION

By Terry Newman

The Southern Sydney Synagogue (SSS) at Allawah is planning to hold a special Shabbat service on 1st June, 2002 as a memorial to the now no longer extant Bankstown Synagogue. It is inviting former members of the Bankstown Synagogue, and others with connections to the shule (such as descendants of early members), to attend.

Situated in Sydney's south-west, Bankstown Synagogue was not rebuild following a disastrous fire attack in March 1991 which gutted the main building. The dwindling congregation subsequently disbanded, with members moving into other parts of Sydney, where the Jewish communities were stronger.

The SSS now incorporates the defunct synagogues of both Wollongong and Bankstown, and extensive memorial boards are proudly displayed in the shule vestibule.

In June 2001 there will be an exhibition in the synagogue hall of Bankstown memorabilia together with a photographic display depicting some of personalities and events in the life of the congregation, which covered a period of over 80 years.

Terry Newman, son of a former headmaster of Bankstown Hebrew School (the late Edgar Newman), is currently searching for material on Bankstown, and has been putting together lists of marriages, barmitzvahs, yahtzeits, etc. He would be especially happy to receive photos connected with Bankstown, and any interesting reminiscences that are still available.

Further information may be obtained from Terry Newman (phone: 9588 5453, or by email:tnewman@acay.com.au) and from David Samuels (phone: 9543 9014), the current President of the SSS, and who served as President of Bankstown during the 1980's.

Those intending to attend the Shabbat service, please contact either Terry Newman or David Samuels. The postal address of the SSS is: PO Box 119, Allawah, 2218.

Terry Newman is a foundation member of this society and a former treasurer. Ed

JEWISHGEN ON-LINE WORLDWIDE BURIAL REGISTRY and JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND RECORDS - UNITED KINGDOM (JCR-UK)

By John Berman

Do you have any spare time? Are you interested in any particular area of the UK?

A very generous donor made a gift of Burial records to the JOWBR and JGSGB at the London2001 Conference. These records now need transferring from paper to electronic format prior to being imported into the JOWBR database and then being available on-line via the JOWBR http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/cemetery/ and the soon to be announced Jewish Communities and Records - United Kingdom (JCR-UK) web site.

Hull Old Hebrew Congregation Burial Ground Church Lane, Marfleet
486 Graves covered - 1900 to Current (Type Written)

Hull Old Hebrew Congregation Burial Ground Delhi Street
1080 Graves covered - 1855 to Current (Type Written)

Hull Old Hebrew Congregation Burial Ground Ella Street

BishopsWear Cemetery, Sunderland
Register of the Burials in the Hebrew Burial Ground
69 Graves Covered - 1881-1887 (Hand Written)
(Note - Some of these are written in Hebrew)
Register of Burials in Plot 1
102 Graves Covered - 1856-1899 (Type Written)
Register of Burials in Plot 3
1000 Graves Covered - 1926 - 1991 (Type Written)
South Shields, Newcastle
200 Graves Covered
Elswick Road Cemetery, Newcastle
900 Graves Covered - 1860 to 1970 (Type Written)
West HartlePool Hebrew Congregation
111 Records Covering 1887-1971 (hand written)
Spion Kop Cemetery
73 Records covering 1887 to 1967
Middlesbrough Hebrew Congregation
690 Records covering 1880 to Current (hand written)
Grimsby Hebrew Congregation
539 Records covering 1896 to 1996 (hand written)

Theses records are currently being worked on:
Hull Western Synagogue Burial Ground Delhi Street, Hendon Road from 1903
1103 Graves covered

BishopsWear Cemetery, Sunderland Register of Burials in Plot 2
254 Graves Covered - 1899 –1926
Sunderland Funeral Directors Records

If you can help, then please respond privately.
John Berman
London
JBerman@jewishgen.org

FAMILY TREE OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE REACHES 2 MILLION ENTRIES

The JewishGen year-end 2001 report shows that the Family Tree of the Jewish People has reached more than 2 million entries. FTJP is a database of family trees submitted by Jewish genealogists throughout the world. It is a valuable tool in genealogical research because it helps to link researchers with common ancestral lines. If you have not yet submitted your family tree in GEDCOM format to FTJP, you can do so at:

http://www.jewishgen.org/gedcom.

A very important part of genealogical research is networking with other genealogists. Adding your family tree to FTJP adds to this networking ability.

JewishGen now has nearly 6 million records in its many databases. Other large databases are JRI-Poland (1.5 million) which contains an index to Jewish vital records of Poland; All-Lithuania Database (282,000); All-Belarus Database (180,000); Yizkor Book Necrology Database (116,000); and JewishGen Family Finder (268,000).

The entire JewishGen umbrella received 4 million hits per month in 2001 with more than 10,000 user session per day. Just five years ago there were less than a half million hits per month and less that 1,000 user sessions per day. Such has been the growth of the Internet and Jewish genealogy.

JEWISH RECORDS INDEXING (JRI) PROJECT - POLAND

Phase 1, a database of some 750,000 people identified in the 1929 Polish Business Directory. Is completed with the indexing of some 34,000 towns and placing on the Web images of all 3,000 pages of the directory in PDF format. The data is located at
http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/bizdir/start.htm.

The town index was an international effort, using volunteers from many countries: Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, Poland, Sweden and the United States.

JEWISH GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH IN THE IMPERIAL RUSSIAN EMPIRE

by Vladislav Sosnikov

The Imperial Russian Empire occupied a vast territory covering an area in both Europe and Asia. The European portion traditionally was composed of territories initially acquired more than 1,000 years ago from the medieval principalities of Kievan Rus. In the 18th century, Russia acquired much of Poland and territories along the Baltic Sea at the same time that it expanded southward into lands conquered from Ottoman Turkey. In the 19th century, the Russian Empire added Finland and many territories in Asia, becoming the largest country in the world. In the 20th century, the Soviet Union included most of the territories of the former Russian Empire with the exception of Finland and Poland.

National boundaries have changed dramatically over the past two centuries; so also have administrative districts within countries. The Russian Empire was divided into *guberniyas (provinces)*, *uezd* (districts) and *volosts* (subdivisions of uezds). After the demise of the Empire, the former capital cities of most guberniyas became centers of *oblasts* (regions) in the successor Soviet Union. Many exceptions exist; however, and many oblasts are different in size and name from the former guberniyas. Pre-revolutionary uezds are comparable to *raions* (subdivisions of oblasts in contemporary Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine).

Jewish History in the Russian Empire

Jews first appeared on European Russian territory more than 1,000 years ago, but they did not inhabit Russia in great numbers until after the partitions of Poland in the years 1772-95. The three partitions brought almost one million unwelcome Yiddish-speaking, Ashkenazic Jews into the Empire. There they faced hostility from the Christian clergy and routinely experienced anti-Semitism from the majority of Russian citizens.

In 1791, the Russian Empress, Catherine the Great, established the Pale of Settlement, an area along Russia's western border, and decreed that all Jewish inhabitants of her realm (with minor exceptions) must live within its borders. The Pale had four major regions: ten Polish guberniyas; six guberniyas in northwestern Russia (Grodno, Kovno, Minsk, Mogilev, Vilno, and Vitebsk); five guberniyas in southwestern Russia (Chernigov, Kiev, Podolia, Poltava, and Volhynia); and four guberniyas in southern Russia (Bessarabia, Ekaterinoslav, Kherson, and Tauria). With some adjustments, this residency restriction remained in force until 1917. At the time of the first All-Empire Census in 1897, 93.9 percent of the Empire's Jews still lived in the Pale, and only 208,000 of the 5.2 million Jews lived in the interior of Russia or in Finland.

The major areas where Jews lived, Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova (formerly Bessarabia), and Ukraine (with the exception of Bukovina and Galicia), were part of the Russian Empire from the late 18th century until the czar was overthrown during the 1917 Russian Revolution

Social Status of Jews in Russian Empire

Imperial Russia created a variety of laws that generated records about its Jewish subjects; many of these records survive in archives and are valuable sources of genealogical information today. In order to understand the types of records created and to know where to seek them, the researcher needs to know the class structure formulated by medieval Russian law. The Russian Empire was a Christian state ruled by an autocratic czar with the help of an extensive bureaucracy. Every inhabitant was seen as belonging to one or another class, each of which served a specific function within the society and had different, specific duties and obligations toward the crown. These classes were nobility, clergy, military, peasants, town dwellers and artisans. Jews, officially classified as *inorodtsy* (non-Christian *strangers* of foreign origin), were required to be good citizens and to take an oath of loyalty to the czar.

Initially, when the Jews of the western provinces became subjects of the Russian crown in 1772, they were allowed to keep the long-standing community organisations and privileges that they had enjoyed in the Polish-Lithuanian state. The situation changed in the 1790s, however, when the Pale of Settlement was established along with special laws and regulations that limited their social status and established particular obligations and duties. Jewish merchants, for example, were forced to pay taxes twice as high as those paid by non-Jews. Although the *kahals* (Jewish communal governments) were allowed to exist for the first 50 years after creation of the Pale, they were forced to carry out the discriminatory policies of the State.

An urban population, Jews engaged primarily in banking, industry, and trade, operating small shops and businesses. They resided in small Jewish market towns *(shtetls) (evreiskie obschestva mestechka)* and in separate communities within larger *towns (gorodskie meschanskie evreiskie obschestva)* and were registered separately in revisions of government tax census *records (reviskie skazki)* conducted

in the corresponding districts (uezd). The Crown Treasury Chambers *(Kazennaya Palata)* in each guberniya compiled lists of taxpayers during periodic revisions during the years 1795-1858. Also, Jews paid a number of special taxes including the *korobochny sbor* (the main community tax used to support community institutions and mutual aid) and *svechnoi sbor* (tax on Sabbath candles used to support Jewish schools).

Among others, additional individual taxes were levied on inheritances, the lease of buildings, distillery and liquor trade, industry, ownership of cattle, and the right to wear Jewish clothing. The taxes were established by local governments and approved by the czar's Interior and Financial Ministries. All the specific Jewish community taxes were paid and registered at the corresponding city governmental bodies. From 1836 to 1875, this was the *Duma, Ratusha, Magistrat;* after 1875, it was *Gorodskaia Uprava.*

Significant changes occurred in the organization of Jewish life during the 19th century. The kahals were abolished in 1844, and Jews of the Pale came under the governance of the general police administrations in the districts; city governments were responsible for economic and tax matters. Government-appointed rabbis were added to the list of Jewish community officials who, by that time, already had diminished control over economic aspects of their lives. Jewish courts continued in existence and even Christian courts deferred to them. *Chevrot* (brotherhoods of the Jewish community) increased in importance and number, many assuming the role of trade unions, while synagogues became meeting places for various new political parties.

For taxation and military conscription purposes, the Russian government devised a special system of registration to track Jewish movement within the country. No one was permitted to move from his place of residence without special written consent issued from a specific governmental office. Despite the law, however, Jews moved frequently both within the Pale and even to the interior of the country, citing such reasons as travel for business, attendance at one or another educational institution, to visit relatives, or even to resettle in newly allowed areas. Much migration was done without official approval, especially when the need arose to evade military service.

In the early 1800s, Czar Alexander 1 devised a plan to resettle some Jews from the Pale of Settlement to agricultural colonies in Novorossia (New Russia), the vast southern territories seized from the Ottoman Empire. Although thousands of Jews moved to agricultural colonies in the southern guberniyas of Bessarabia, Ekaterinoslav, Kherson, and Tauria throughout the 19th century, few succeeded as farmers, despite certain privileges granted to colonists. At the same time, however, many Jews settled in south Russian towns and established prominent communities in Ekaterinoslav (today, Dneperpetrovsk), Elisavetgrad (today, Kirovograd) and Odessa. Nonetheless, Jewish agricultural colonies formally existed until the beginning of the 20th century.

Military Duty

In 1827, Czar Nicholas 1 decreed that Jews, who had heretofore been exempt from military service, were now liable for up to 25 years of army service as common soldiers - and the kahals were made responsible for delivering the required number of recruits. Jews employed many methods to avoid induction including the use of false documents and officially permitted ransom. Many young men simply ran away from their communities when their draft date approached. In every community, however, some men fulfilled the military obligations and had the rank of reserve soldiers. In every guberniya and district, draft offices *(rekrutskie prisutstviya* before 1874 and *po voinskoi povinnosti prisutstvie* in the years 1874-1917) kept registers of all males eligible for conscription; in addition, appropriate family lists were compiled periodically.

Vital Record Registration

As noted above, all Jews were registered or assigned to a specific geographic location even if they actually resided elsewhere. Beginning in 1826, Jews were required to register all births, marriages, divorces, and deaths in the synagogue to which they were assigned. In 1835, new regulations ordered the rabbis to keep registers *(metricheskie knigi)* of all Jewish vital events; after 1857, they were kept by government-appointed *crown rabbis* who were usually not the spiritual leaders of the respective communities.

For the years 1835-1917, Jewish vital records were collected annually by municipal institutions - initially by *Gorodskaia Duma or Ratusha Magistrate,* after 1870 by *Gorodskaia Uprava.* Beginning in 1844, these institutions compiled family lists of all resident Jewish families every two years; periodically, they also created alphabetical lists of the heads of local Jewish families. In addition, many other documents about Jews were created: registers of recruitment turn, local tax records, copies of revision lists, registers of specific taxes for Jewish communities, registers of community members, and registers of permission to leave.

According to the class structure of the 19th century Russian Empire, different administrative institutions were responsible for different classes in each city. For the years 1870-1917, the *Meschanskaia Uprava* was responsible for town dwellers; *Remeslennaya Uprava* handled matters for craftsmen; and *Kupecheskaia Uprava* dealt with the merchants. These institutions were responsible for the taxes and military recruitment for their class of the population, and their records are each kept separately in archives today. Jewish shtetls were administered by the local government of the volost, a smaller administrative subdivision of the uezd.

Police Records

For administrative control purposes, district and city police kept their own files on Jews. Among their records after 1844 were lists of residents, petitions to establish a business, registers of internal travel passports, and other miscellaneous documents. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when liberal and revolutionary political parties appeared, e.g., Bund, Social-Democratic and Zionist parties, Jewish activists became a special focus of attention for the police departments of each guberniya. An alphabetical card catalogue of names was created at the headquarters of the czar's police department in Moscow. Today this unique catalogue, which alphabetically lists hundreds of thousands of individuals, is in the custody of the Russian State Archive in Moscow.

Temporary Amelioration of Burdens Under Czar Alexander 11

During the reign of Czar Alexander 11 (1855-81), conditions for Russia's Jews ameliorated somewhat. After 1859, Jewish merchants of the First Guild (i.e., the richest) and foreign Jews "noted for their social position" could reside permanently in St. Petersburg and Moscow. After 1861, Jews who had academic degrees and worked for the government could reside anywhere in the empire; after 1879, any Jews with an academic degree, regardless of his employment, might do likewise. Merchants of the first and second guild were allowed to live in Kiev; after 1865, Jewish artisans, mechanics, and distillers could reside outside the Pale.

Even before the end of Alexander ll's reign, however, the trend had begun to reverse and deteriorated even further under the last two Romanovs, Alexander 111 (1881-94) and Nicholas 11 (1894-1917). In 1887, the government introduced strict limits on Jewish educational access and began to enforce residency requirements more rigidly. In 1891, 20,000 of the 30,000 Jews who lived in Moscow were expelled to the Pale, many of them in chains. The list of restrictions on Jews became enormous. The Pahlen Commission, created in 1883 to study "the Jewish question," reported that:

no fewer than 650 restrictive laws directed against the Jews may he enumerated in the Russian code, and the discriminations and disabilities implied in these laws are such that they have naturally resulted in making, until now, the life of an enormous majority of the Jews in Russia exceedingly onerous.

Previously, local judicial and municipal reform had permitted Jews equal representation, but a law of 1879 restricted Jewish representation on local governmental bodies to no more than one-third - even in areas Jews were a much larger percentage of the population.

Emigration, Assimilation and the Tragedy of Russian Jewry

Jewish life in the Pale did not see much social change before the Russian Revolution. Poverty was widespread and the separation of the Jews existed until the fall of the Czarist Empire in 1917. Approximately 1.5 million Jews from the Russian Empire (excluding Russian Poland) emigrated to the United States between 1880 and 1914; at the same time half a million went to Canada, South Africa, South America, western Europe, Palestine and Australia.

Emigration was not legally regulated in Russia until 1892, but everyone who wished to travel abroad was required to obtain permission from his home-town government and to obtain a travel passport from the local governor's office. Jews, most leaving illegally, migrated from the western provinces of the Russian Empire chiefly by railway to the German seaports of Bremen and Hamburg to board ships for America. Beginning in 1888, the Baltic port of Libau (today Liepava) also offered service.

Emigration ceased during the Russian Revolution (1917) and subsequent civil war (1918-21) and almost no one emigrated from the successor Soviet Union. In the great social changes after the Revolution, Jewish religious communities and the traditional way of life were assimilated and dispersed in the growing industrial country. Many Jews left their shtetls for large cities like Moscow and Leningrad. During Stalin's Great Terror in the 1930s, millions of Soviet citizens, including many Jews, died in prisons and labor camps. Only in the western parts of Ukraine and Belarus, which were under Polish rule during the years 1921-39, was traditional Jewish life preserved longer.

The USSR annexed the western Belarussian and Ukrainian regions in 1939, as well as Bessarabia in 1940 and brought dreadful political repression and

a socialist economy on these territories. Nazi Germany's invasion during World War 11 completed the destruction of the remaining Jewish communities and millions died in the Holocaust. After World 11, the Jews who remained alive in the USSR lived under the strict totalitarian regime of the Cold War until the 1970s when the Soviet regime yielded to political pressure from the West and allowed limited Jewish emigration. A total of 700,000 Soviet Jews had emigrated by the end of the 1980s, some to Israel, the majority to the United States. Some also to Australia.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Jewish religious, community, and cultural life could once more be re-established under the democratic laws of the newly independent states. More than one million Jews live in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and other republics, but Jewish emigration continues.

Adoption of Jewish Surnames

With the exception of some rabbinic and other notable lines, most Polish Jews who came under Russian sovereignty at the end of the 18th century did not have true surnames but identified themselves for religious purposes by their traditional Hebrew names, e.g., so and so, the son of so and so. In December 1809, the Russian government ordered all Jews to adopt fixed, inheritable family names so that they might be more easily identified for taxation and conscription.

No name adoption registers are known to have survived, but each individual Jewish community apparently was responsible for administering the process. Given the increasingly harsh laws under which Russian Jews were forced to live, it is not surprising that many evaded the law in a variety of ways and to the best of their abilities. As late as the middle of the 19th century, government officials complained about the frequent change of family names among Russian Jews who lived in different communities under different names. The Jews of 19th century Russia were extremely mobile; they moved often in search of a better life and to avoid military conscription and extremely harsh taxes. Often they lived in different communities under different surnames, frequently adopting the name of their previous community as a surname. Thus, even close relatives might have different last names and many Jews probably lived in (and created a paper trail in) many shtetls, not just the single one cited by an immigrant ancestor. Until the Russian Revolution, Jews were forbidden to change the names with which they were recorded in their official birth register. For many reasons, this was a law more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

RESOURCES FOR JEWISH GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH
Archival Sources

As is true in most places, archival collections are the major source of Jewish genealogical information, but the complete holdings of Jewish genealogical records are still being uncovered after years of official indifference, neglect, and secrecy. In general, archival sources document Jews in Russian controlled territory since the 1790s, but in many cases, only limited information is available for a given historical period. Wars, revolution, and divisions between neighbouring countries caused the destruction of many archival records from the Imperial Czarist Empire.

Provenance determines where records are to be kept. That is, records are held in the archives where they were created, despite changes in sovereignty. In the case of the Russian Empire, however, not only did boundaries between countries change, but so also did the administrative divisions within the Empire. Especially after World War 11, archival holdings were exchanged and moved between neighbouring regions and/or countries. In order to know which archives to search for possible records of interest, genealogists need to study comprehensively the administrative divisions within the 19th and early 20th century Pale of Settlement.

Central historical archives hold the bulk of the most ancient and historically important records of the country. For example, the Central Historical Archives of Russia in Moscow and in St. Petersburg hold the archival collections of the central government of the Russian Empire. In addition, regional archives exist in each oblast centre today in Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine. They usually hold both pre-Revolutionary and Soviet records, including most of the genealogically relevant documents for the corresponding guberniyas and uezds. The situation is different in Belarus and the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) where nearly all genealogically useful records have been concentrated in central state historical archives. In these countries, regional archives do not hold any pre-World War 11 records.

Fond, opis, and delo are archival designations of the record storage system that enables an archivist in the former Soviet Union to retrieve records. A fond corresponds to a record group, an opis to an inventory of a subject or records within a specific fond, and a deto is a file within an opis. As a result of Russian archival descriptivé practice, each item in an archive is defined by three numbers: fond, opis, and delo.

The records in a fond are the records of a single specific organisation or individual. The organisation might be a unit of a government institution; in the case of the Russian Empire, the individual was usually a rich landlord, merchant, prominent artist, scientist, cultural activist, or industrial capitalist. Archivists and researchers can find an archival record by the institution or individual that created it. Therefore, when seeking genealogical information for a certain town resident, one must locate record groups (fonds) of the corresponding guberniya, district and town administrative institutions, religious and public organisations and then look through inventories and indexes in search of interesting items. An individual file (delo) usually is a bound volume of old papers that varies in size from a single sheet to a thousand pages. The handwriting is in Old Russian script and requires specific language expertise in order to understand the contents.

Basic reference aids in the archives are standardised archival guides *(putevoditeli)* and traditional archival inventories *(opisi fondov)*. Officially published archival guides in Russian, Ukrainian, or other national languages are in almost every archive of the former Soviet Union and include general summaries of the records in each fond and collection. They may be found in many libraries, as well.

Archival inventories *(opisi fondov)* show the ordinal numbers and brief titles of every item (delo) within the record group (fond). Each fond may have several opisi. They usually have been compiled in the 20th century and are typewritten in Russian, Ukrainian, or other national languages. Indexes *(ukazateli)* and card catalogues *(katalogi)* sometimes are created for particular record groups. They may be a geographical index to a collection of vital records or a subject index listing names of government and public institutions mentioned in a collection of governor's office records. If these reference aids exist, they are generally fragmentary and not genealogically oriented; genealogy was not a priority in the Soviet archives.

In recent years, some central historical archives in Russia and in Belarus started compilations of computerised databases of genealogical archival sources; unfortunately, these files are for the internal use of archivists only and are not available to outside researchers. On the other hand, the most advanced archives have started to build web sites and to provide information about their holdings and services on the Internet. A comprehensive list of Russian archival addresses and a standardised description of their holdings and conditions for researchers has been compiled by Patricia Kennedy

Grimsted and is available on line at <http://www.lisg.nl/~abb>.

Types of Records for Genealogical Research

The primary source for genealogical research during the Russian Empire are:

- Revision lists for the years 1794-1808, 1811-12, 1815-25, 1833- 35,1850-52,1857-59
- Supplemental revision lists from 1860 to end of 19th century
- Local censuses of householders for the years 1862 to 1916
- Surviving portions of the All-Empire 1897 universal census
- Family and local residential lists *(posemeinye spiski* and *obyvatel skie knigi)*
- Class lists for merchants *(spiski kuptsov)* and members of town communities *(spiski meschan and spiski evreiskih obschestv)*
- Lists of voters eligible to vote for the city council
- Jewish vital records *(metricheskie knigi)* for years from 1835 - 1918
- Military conscription records *(posemeinye spiski* and *svidetelstva o voinskoi povinnosti)*
- Land and property records in corresponding town administrations
- Records of educational and cultural institutions

Because Jews were active in the economic life of the areas where they lived, such documents as commercial contracts, debt documents, protests, lending contracts, purchase orders - all stored in the collections of city governments - may be valuable to the family historian

After 1905, when Russian law allowed elections of the people's representatives to the *Duma* (parliament), lists of voters - men over the age of 25 - were published in the official government regional newspapers (the *Gubernskie Vedomosti)* in 1906,1907 and 1912.

After the Russian Revolution in 1917, the old governmental institutions ceased to function and new state structures were created in the Soviet Union. In 1918, religious institutions were separated from the State, and the registration of Jewish births, marriages, divorces, and deaths transferred to civil institutions. In the 1920s, a system of local registry offices (ZAGS) of the Ministry of Justice was established. The ZAGS offices continue to function in Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine and keep registers for the last 75 years.

Records created prior to 1920-25 normally have been transferred to the state archives of the appro-

priate oblast centre. ZAGS archives do not provide service for genealogists and issue legal copies of vital records only to relatives of the person for whom information is required. Requests with notarised copies of proof of relationship should be sent through one's embassy or directly to the Ministry of Justice of the country involved.

Business, Provincial and City Directories

Business directories, such as the all-Russia *Vsya Rossia;* regional directories *(Ves Severo-Zapad);* and city directories, such *as Ves Kiev* were published in Russia during the 1890s and the first decade of the 20th century. Listed in them are many people who engaged in crafts, trade, and small

Provincial directories *(gubernskie pamyatnye knishki)* were published periodically in each guberniya from 1850 to 1916 and cover all public institutions and offices, including Jewish institutions. Included are rabbis, other religious functionaries, doctors, hospital staff members, pharmacists and teachers; many of the latter were Jewish. Many directories are held in major libraries around the world, including the U.S. Library of Congress and the library of Columbia University in New York.

Yiddish and Russian-Lang. Newspapers

Prior to World War 1, many Yiddish and Russian-language Jewish newspapers existed in the Russian Empire. They often included marriage and death notices, as well as articles of interest to family historians. Large collections of such newspapers may be found at U.S. Library of Congress; the YVIO Institute for Jewish Research; the New York Public Library, Jewish Division; and the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem.

Languages Used in Records

Throughout this article, country and town names are rendered in transliterated Russian spelling because Russian was the official language of the Czarist Empire and most archival documents, inventories, and reference aids created in that period are written in Russian. Some records in Belarus and western Ukraine are in Polish for the period when portions of these countries were under Polish administration; in the western part of Ukraine that belonged to Hungary until World War 1 and to Czechoslovakia in the interwar years, records are in those languages.

Yiddish (written in Hebrew script) records usually are parallel to Russian text in Jewish vital statistics registers. The Ukrainian and Belarussian languages appear in some records after 1918; the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian languages became official in those countries after 1918.

Calendar Considerations

Prior to 1918, Russia used the Julian calendar, after which the Soviet government adopted the Gregorian calendar used in the West. This means that dates in records from the 19th century Russian Empire are actually 12 days earlier than the corresponding date in the Gregorian calendar. In addition, the Jewish calendar - months and days – appears in Jewish registry books that are written in Russian and Yiddish alongside the Christian calendar dates. A lack of correspondence between dates may occur, also, because the Jewish day begins at sundown.

Archival Conditions for Researchers

During the Soviet period, archives traditionally were not open to the public. Since 1991, in the newly independent countries, archives have been officially open to domestic or foreign researchers, including genealogists. Specifically, the Baltic States have established good conditions for researchers. Unfortunately, in Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine, a difference still exists between official national policy and local practices.

Genealogists desiring to do their own on-site research should apply in writing to the archival director for formal approval of the proposed research; even if granted, the researcher's work in the reading room may be supervised by archivists. In all too many archives, because of a poor economic situation and slack bureaucratic discipline, procedures remain complicated and unfavourable to individual genealogists. Many genealogists report difficulty gaining access to records and favouritism by the directors of various archives. As a result, genealogists must often depend upon good luck and the mercy of an archivist.

Frustrating limits on the delivery of archival files to the reading room and problems obtaining photocopies often are encountered. Although most archives have obtained photocopy machines in recent years, the number of copies are sometime limited. Users are not allowed to make copies themselves but must fill out a special application for copying permission that then must be considered by the archives director. Every photocopy made must be checked by an authorised archivist and imprinted with an archival copyright stamp. Photocopying an entire file is not permitted. Charges for copies vary from one to ten U.S. dollars per page of European letter size paper. Sometimes archivists mask part of the document, allowing users only to obtain the record pertaining to the approved subject of research.

Genealogical Services

In recent years, many archives, especially central historical archives in major cities, have begun to offer genealogical services for a fee. Unfortunately, most have received more inquires than they can handle and lack adequate resources for speedy service. In addition, mail correspondence and money transfers tend to be very complicated in Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine. It typically takes many months - even years - for a foreigner to obtain an answer and then the results often are unreasonably expensive and incomplete, primarily because of inexperience and lack of finding aids.

Anyone who requests research by mail initially will be charged from $US.50 - 80 simply for the archives to accept the request. Basic fees for genealogical research vary from $US.4-8 per hour of searching. Every photocopied page of a document costs from $US.1-10 - and even higher. Photocopies are sent from the archives only after receipt of the full payment. An average search costs approximately $US.300. A final archival report, typewritten in the language of the particular country, usually consists of a list of all archival records inspected during the search and a line-by-line transliteration of records found that are relevant to the search. Photocopies of original records usually must be ordered separately.

A competent local genealogist or professional genealogical service usually can provide better and quicker service, and is available in genealogical reference books, magazines, and on the Internet.

Adapted from a presentation at the 20th Annual International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in Salt Lake City, Utah, 11th July, 2000, and published with permission from Avotaynu, Vol XVI, No. 2, (Summer 2000), 32.

JEWISHGEN HOLOCAUST DATABASE

By Joyce Field

http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Holocaust
This database is the result of a coordinated effort by many people and organizations and contains numerous and varied data sets, all searchable from one location. The current database contains 37 data sets with approximately 140,000 records. Included are concentration camp data; databases on Norway, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, and Poland; ghetto registers from various cities, such as Lvov, Krakow, Brest, and Pinsk. New material will be added in forthcoming quarterly updates.

To ensure that the results are as accurate as possible, many steps are needed: obtaining the data; establishing transcription standards; forming a data entry group under a project coordinator; developing an Excel template; getting the completed data entry to a team of proofreaders; and then going through a second level of validation if the data set has been provided by Yad Vashem or USHMM. For example, the Dachau Indexing Project (over 120,000 records) now has approximately 60 volunteers all over the world doing data entry, four volunteers doing validation, and three co-ordinators to supervise this massive project. This project, like all the others, would not have been possible without the vision of our leadership and our partners, the dedication of so many volunteers, the commitment of valuable resource material provided by our donors, and the support of those who continue to make a financial investment in this.

We have an immediate need for more volunteers for data entry and project management and with your ongoing assistance and support, the JewishGen Holocaust Database will one day serve as a major tool for connecting our past - to the present - for the future.

Joyce Field
JewishGen Vice President Research

HELP US TO REGISTER HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS!

By Laura M. Green

The Survivors Registry of the United States Holocaust Museum in Washington DC maintains the single most comprehensive listing of Holocaust survivors in the world.

The Registry has existed for over a decade, and currently contains approximately 172,000 names of Jewish survivors and their descendants, anyone displaced, persecuted, and/or discriminated against by the racial, political or ethnic policies of the Nazis or their allies from 1933 to 1945 and who survived the end of World War II. A Holocaust survivor can be registered even if he or she is no longer living today.

It is important to make certain that each survivor's unique experience is recognised and preserved for future generations. Forms can be downloaded from our web page at

http://www.ushmm.org/remembrance/registry

We also welcome research requests relating to Holocaust survivors. Persons searching for survivors can complete a research request form, also located on our web page.

If you have any questions, please contact me at:
lgreen@ushmm.org
Laura M. Green
Collections Manager, Survivors Registry