

The President's Corner

by Alex E. Friedlander

With this issue of *Dorot*, JGS is pleased to welcome Joy Rich as the new editor. Joy brings a wealth of experience to her role, both as a professional genealogist and as Director of the Library for many years at the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society. We thank our readers for their patience over the last few years as the journal fell far behind in its publication dates, even with several double issues. During the next twelve months, *Dorot* will be published on an accelerated schedule until the issue date catches up with the actual date of publication. Thanks go to Steven W. Siegel who initially assumed the role of "acting" editor for the Spring 2001 issue when I stepped down from the editorship after eleven years, only to find himself "acting" in that capacity for three years. Thanks are also due to Maralyn Steeg who has been responsible for the layout and design for the last three years.

After a one-year breather, the popular "Beyond the Basics" all-day seminar resumed this year, in a more weather-friendly time slot (mid-May instead of early March). The seminar this year was, for the first time,

co-sponsored by the Center for Jewish History and its constituent agencies. JGS member Bob Friedman, director of the Center for Jewish History Genealogy Institute, coordinated the event and graciously donated much time to the effort along with Claus Hirsch and Michael Levine from the JGS Executive Council. In addition to the usual breadth of subjects and expertise presented at the seminar, the final session doubled as the regular monthly meeting for May and featured Steven Morse as the guest speaker. Steven's lecture was accompanied by copious projected illustrations from his various website utilities.

We had a bonus presentation four days after the "Beyond the Basics" seminar, when Yale Reisner talked about the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. Yale moved to Warsaw several years ago to run the Institute and had some fascinating stories and valuable information to convey. His presentation was co-sponsored by YIVO and the Center Genealogy Institute.

Anyone who does not yet own the new, fully revised edition of *Genealogical Resources in New York* is missing a valuable reference tool on their shelf. Relying on the first edition, published fifteen years ago, would be like trying to use a fifteen-year-old airline schedule for your next trip to Salt Lake City. If you have not yet obtained your own copy of this landmark publication, copies are still available at a discount to JGS members. JGS is truly indebted to our former president, Estelle M. Guzik, for her singular efforts in producing this book.

As most of you probably know by now, New York will be the site of the 2006 annual international conference on Jewish genealogy. Efforts to secure an appropriate site and begin planning for the program, facilities, and resources are well under way, under the

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DOROT

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Correction

In Tina Carver's article, "Genealogy 101: The 12-Step Approach," published in the Spring-Summer 2003 issue of *Dorot*, step 12 on page 21 reads: "Don't constantly be thinking about the next steps: Plan on Genealogy 102." It should read: "Constantly be thinking about the next steps: Plan on Genealogy 102."

The President's Corner continued

capable leadership of the conference committee (Lucille Gudis, Linda Cantor, Hadassah Lipsius, and Claus Hirsch). Any members who wish to help out are more than welcome to contact the committee. In addition to the usual variety of activities and resources planned for the conference, we are looking into the possibility of initiating one or more new New York-based computerized databases to be available in time for the conference.

The continued closure of the Family History Center on Columbus Avenue near Lincoln Center has been a source of disappointment to many genealogists. Several JGS Executive Council members, including your president, are continuing to communicate with various parties in both Salt Lake City and locally in an attempt to find solutions (short-term and long-term) beyond the current limited alternate access at the Center for Jewish History and The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society have succeeded in releasing some of the films that were on indefinite loan at the closed center to the new FHC in Queens.

As I have stated in the past, the success of JGS in fulfilling its goals is due to the time and effort expended by the members of the Executive Council and our volunteers. My own efforts are only a small contribution to JGS's accomplishments. In addition to the people mentioned above, I want to thank Linda Greenman and Gerald Dunskey, who stepped down from the Executive Council at the end of last year, for their help. Gerald was a welcome presence on the Council for many years and would have remained but for a long-term recuperation and rehabilitative process following his surgery; we wish him well and hope to see him at future meetings. Linda served for a shorter period, before having to resign due to competing commitments, but was no less valued for her contributions. We are fortunate to have elected Tina Carver and Michael Pertain as their replacements.

I look forward to seeing you at future meetings and events and to continuing to serve you and the genealogical community.



Online News continued

The state of New York has 2,375 links to statewide resources and all sixty-two counties at www.linkpendium.com/genealogy/USA/NY. From there, click on the link to a county. Sources linked to within the counties are Biographies, Oral Histories, Diaries, Memoirs; Cemeteries; Census; Church Records; Directories; Forums; History; Immigration and Naturalization Records; Introductions and Guides; Libraries, Museums, Archives; Maps and Gazetteers; Military; Obituaries and Funeral Home Records; Photographs, Postcards, Historical Images; Projects; Societies; Surnames; and Vital Records.

International

American Sephardi Federation – Istanbul Marriages and Burials

An important goal in the field of Turkish-Jewish genealogy was realized recently with the creation of a new search engine on the website of the American Sephardi Federation. Researchers can now access databases of marriage and burial records of the Jewish community of Istanbul, Turkey, dating from 1886 to 2003. Information was extracted from over 27,000 marriage records in the Istanbul Chief Rabbinate's Office and from lists of more than 5,000 burials in the cemeteries in Kuzguncuk, Ortakoy, and Haydarpasa.

Written in Turkish, French, Ladino, Hebrew, and Solitreo (Ladino in a special Hebrew cursive script), the records were transcribed in a readily accessible Romanized text. The records are not exclusively Sephardic; there are a number of Ashkenazic records included as well.

The columns in the marriage database are: groom's surname, groom's given name, given name of groom's father, bride's surname, bride's given name, given name of bride's father, Jewish date of marriage, civil (Gregorian) date of marriage, reference (page number and, usually, line number where the complete marriage record may be found in the Istanbul marriage register), other surname(s) of the grooms, brides, or fathers, and comments.

The burial database has the following columns: surname, given name, date of death (English), father's name, mother's name, other surnames, spouse's name, place of birth, date of birth, cemetery, quarter district, plot location, date of death (Hebrew), date of burial, and comments.

Microfilm copies of the original records are housed in the archives of the American Sephardi Federation. ASF is located in the Center for Jewish History in Manhattan, where

the microfilm can be viewed. The original, complete marriage records are only available in the Istanbul Chief Rabbinate's Office. They hope the microfilming of all of the records can be completed so copies can be made available to researchers outside of Istanbul.

Orchestrated by Daniel Kazez of Wittenberg University, Ohio, a network of dozens of volunteers contributed hundreds of hours to transcribe the records. www.asfonline.org/portal/genealogy/Turkey

(Report by Randall C. Belinfante)

Czestochowa-Radomsko Area Research Group – Holocaust Survivors

More than 16,000 records of survivors of the Holocaust are now searchable online due to the efforts of the Czestochowa-Radomsko Area Research Group and the assistance of Shoreshim. Over 20,000 surnames are listed on the website of the Czestochowa-Radomsko Area Research Group. www.kazez.com/~dan/crarg/HoloSurn.html

They are taken from the following sources:

- Surviving Jews in Lublin, 1945
- Listing of the Surviving Warsaw Jews in the US Zone in Germany, 1948
- List of Survivors: Stockholm, 1946
- Surviving Jews in the Kielce District
- Surviving Jews in Czestochowa, about 1945
- Surviving Jews in Warsaw as of June 5th, 1945

Additional information on the names is provided on the website of Shoreshim, a non-profit, fee-based, membership organization. www.shoreshim.org/CRARG/CrSearchDb.asp

Hungarian Jewish Roots

Andras Koltai's "Hungarian Jewish Roots," launched in mid-January 2004, is the first major online initiative to deal with specifically Jewish genealogical research in the territory of the former Hungarian Kingdom.

In addition to a short historical introduction, the website lists major Jewish genealogical sources in Hungary, such as Jewish and state birth, marriage and death records, censuses, gravestone inscriptions, name changes recorded by the Secretary of State and held by the National Archives, real estate registrations, tenant lists, obituaries, and telephone books. Images of two of these sources are posted as examples: an 1848 Jewish census and an 1886 petition for the Hungarianization of a name.

Mr. Koltai is preparing a database that will include both "ordinary" and famous Hungarian Jews. He is collecting and processing obituaries, interviews, school reports, Holocaust lists, and other source material that includes Hun-

Online News continued

garian Jewish names. After reaching an optimal size, hopefully in mid-2004, a searchable database will be added to the website. Mr. Koltai is seeking information from people worldwide. He also welcomes opinions from users of the website that will help to improve it. He can be reached by e-mail at mail@jewishroots.hu or through www.jewishroots.hu.

(Report by Andras Koltai)

JRI-Poland Shopping Basket

The additional archives and branches listed in the Spring-Summer 2003 issue of *Dorot* are now included in the Jewish Records Indexing-Poland Shopping Basket. The entire list is at www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/psa/psabasketlist.htm. This online order processing system allows researchers to purchase from the Polish State Archives those Jewish vital records indexed through JRI-Poland/Polish State Archives projects. The JRI-Poland online database contains indices of over 2.2 million vital records. Researchers can now obtain copies of records with greater efficiency. A step-by-step guide to ordering records using the Shopping Basket system is on the website. www.jri-poland.org/psa/psabasketinst.htm.

Although all of the Polish State Archives branches in which indexing was done are included in the Shopping Basket order system, not all towns have been indexed. In addition, some indexed records are not yet online. Many of these indices are not online as fundraising has not yet been completed. For these indexed records, qualified contributors in receipt of the Excel file for their town can order records using a special form. For more information and a copy of the form, please contact the appropriate Archive Coordinator. The names and email addresses of the coordinators are in the Polish State Archive project status report at www.jri-poland.org/psa/status.htm. Records indexed from Genealogical Society of Utah (LDS/Mormon) microfilm or any other source cannot be ordered through this system.

(Report by Mark Halpern)

New York Public Library – Yizkor Books

New York Public Library, in partnership with the National Yiddish Book Center, is digitizing the full text of over 700 post-World War II yizkor books in its Dorot Division. Yizkor books are memorial books listing names, places, and dates of members of a particular community who perished during the Holocaust. In addition to commemorating the dead, yizkor books contain personal sketches and biographical memoirs of the living as well as essays on the political, intellectual, artistic, professional, and spiritual fabric of the community. Written in Hebrew, Yiddish, or both, some

books include an English-language summary. To date, just a very few number of books have been placed on NYPL's website.

www.nypl.org/research/chss/jws/yizkorbooksall.cfm. A link to this website has been placed on the JGSNY website. Yizkor books are generally six hundred to nine hundred pages long. They do not have indexes. JewishGen has placed English-language translations of many Yizkor books on its website at www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor. The National Yiddish Book Center will produce clothbound reprints of nearly all of the more than 700 volumes on demand. www.yiddishbookcenter.org

Routes to Roots Foundation – Kiev Vital Records

The Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Kiev has provided Miriam Weiner with information about newly-discovered Jewish vital records for the following towns/districts: Belaya Tserkov, Buki, Burty, Cherkassy, Gorodishche, Ladyzinka, Malin, Matusov, Moszny, Rotmistrovka, Smiela, and Talnoye (Talna/Talnoe). The new data is primarily birth, marriage, death, and divorce records, along with some lists of leaders of the Jewish communities of the towns. This is the first time any Jewish vital records for the town of Talnoe/Talnoye have been found. To view the information, go to Ms. Weiner's website at www.rtrfoundation.org, search the ARCHIVE DATABASE, type in a town name using the above spellings, and click on the particular record group of interest.

If any problems arise, she can be e-mailed at: Miriam Weiner, President, Routes to Roots Foundation, Inc., Secaucus, New Jersey, mweiner@routestoroots.com

(Report by Miriam Weiner)

Yad Vashem – The Central Database of Holocaust Victims' Names

In 1955, Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem, began collecting Pages of Testimony to commemorate Jews who perished during the Holocaust. It began digitizing the Pages in 1992 and placing them in a Hall of Names that could be searched on the computers at Yad Vashem. The Pages, filled out by family members, friends, or neighbors, many of them survivors of the Holocaust, include more than two million victims' names, date of birth, place of birth, place of residence before the war, profession, parents' and spouses' names, where and when the person perished during the Holocaust, and, sometimes, a photograph.

Starting in 1999, the Pages, along with more than another million names collected from major published sources,

(continued on page 22)