



Jewish Genealogy Downunder

Quarterly
newsletter
of the
Australian
Jewish
Genealogical
Society
(Vic) Inc.

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www.ajgs-vic.org.au



The Great Solomon Reunion, held in March in Melbourne, attracted 160 descendants and associated family members. Reunion organisers Katrina Cowen (front) and Jenny Cowen (second, from left) said the event was a great success and was well supported with presentations by Brad Argent (left) from Ancestry.com.au, Madeleine Say from the State Library of Victoria and author and Rabbi Dr John Levi (right). For the full story, see pages 6–9.

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APRIL 2012 MEETING

The Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Vic) in association with Makor Jewish Community Library

Sharing your family research issues: a hands-on workshop

Sunday, 22 April 2012, from 2 pm to 4 pm

An opportunity for personal help with your family research

Members and visitors will join small groups, work around common research interests and receive hands-on help from more experienced members. This is also an opportunity for all to share their road blocks.

Participants are requested to bring their completed six-generation chart to the meeting to assist you and your helpers at the workshop. Email lizronjames@hotmail.com for a digital copy of the six-generation chart.

Lamm Jewish Library of Australia, entry through 306 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield South, Victoria 3162.
All welcome. Members \$4; non-members \$8. Enquiries: admin@ajgs-vic.org.au or (03) 9523 6738.

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PO Box 189, Glenhuntly, Victoria 3163

Editor

Lionel Sharpe (+61 3 9523 6738)

Assistant editor

Kaye Quittner (+61 3 9592 9598)

Email

admin@ajgs-vic.org.au

AJGS (Vic) Inc. website

www.ajgs-vic.org.au

Editorial policy

We welcome contributions from members which will help others further their research. This might include sharing recent findings or the discovery of interesting resources. The editor has the right to accept or reject any material submitted or edit as might be appropriate. Material appearing in this newsletter may be reprinted by other newsletters as long as proper attribution is given.

Jewish Genealogy Downunder is free to all members of AJGS (Vic) Inc.

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Australian Jewish Genealogy Internet Discussion Group

Website: www.ajgs.org.au (online forum)

AJGS (Vic) Inc. membership fees (new in 2012)

Individual	\$35
Family	\$40
Concession	\$15

EDITORIAL

A newsletter such as ours plays a crucial role in encouraging those who are starting out on their search for ancestry, in suggesting new resources for research for the more advanced and keeping up the enthusiasm of those who are about to give up. We welcome letters which provide us with feedback on our articles. Here is sample of some of the correspondence we received recently.

From Naomi Barnett

I've just read the excellent magazine for the December quarter. We will be going to Bendigo for a couple of days with two other couples and are interested in doing a guided walk of the Jewish graves.

Then, a few months later, we received this feedback:

I thought it proper to let you know we met up with Sarah Austin (recommended guide) in Bendigo. We spent over three hours in her company seeing the various places around the city with a Jewish connection and then going out to the cemetery. Thank you for publishing the article which started all this, and for providing her contact details. We went with a group of friends so there were eight of us in total and we all felt really enriched by the experience.

A special thanks to Judy Levron, who wrote:

I have just returned from overseas and was fortunate to be in Amsterdam at the time of the launch of a book 'In Memoriam', which was published by the Archives of Amsterdam. This book is about the 'Kinder' transport during the years of 1942-1945. The concept of the book was the listing of all the [children's] names, dates of birth, where they were from and most importantly, a photograph of the child. These photographs were sourced from around the world and they were included in the first book if they arrived on time.

It is with great pleasure that I acquired this book and in memory of all the children who died from my family from Poland, Germany and the rest of Europe I wish to donate this book to the new library.

We wish to thank AJGS (Vic) committee member Bubbles Segall for donating a full set of *Toledot* and *Avotaynu* journals to our library collection. This gesture is much appreciated and a valuable addition to our resources.

This issue includes lists of websites provided by our recent guest speakers, committee member Rodney Eisfelder and overseas guest Daniel Horowitz. Again a valuable addition to our resources knowledge.

We congratulate members Jenny and Katrina Cowen for organising the outstanding Solomon family reunion held from 10 to 12 March. A full report with photos appears in this issue.

Finally, to all our Jewish members and supporters, Kaye and I wish you a Happy Pesach.

Hag Pesach Sameach.

Lionel Sharpe
Editor

VALE

We note the passing of two members, Dr Oskar Delatycki and Dr Sam Chani. Both have made a significant contribution to Jewish genealogy.

Lamm Jewish Library of Australia launched

With much fanfare and publicity over a number of months, the recently opened Lamm Jewish Library of Australia was officially launched on 18 March.

The *Australian Jewish News* proclaimed in a full page article 'A new chapter for Jewish Melbourne – A dream to unite the resources of the Jewish community in one place has been realised'.

Jewish Genealogy Downunder has been reporting progress on converting the old nursing home, adjacent to the Beth Weizmann Jewish Community Centre, to a modern library over the past six months.

On the Sunday morning of the launch, a huge crowd packed the car park in front of the building to hear speeches by Victorian Premier Ted Baillieu, who officially opened the centre, Sam Tatarka, President of the Zionist Council of Victoria, and library benefactor Dr Danny Lamm, currently President of the Executive Council of Victorian Jewry.

Ros Collins, who was the first director of the Makor Library some 25 years ago and who conceived the idea of a truly national Jewish library, was delighted to see her dream come true.

Dr Lamm, who was handed the keys to the building, said he looked forward to the next 50 years of a library poised to be "the cornerstone of Jewish communal life".

The general community were invited to inspect the library after the speeches and were provided with an afternoon of entertainment including cooking lessons, live music, authors in conversation and Israeli dancing.

Separate rooms are set aside in the Lamm Library to house the resource collections of the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Vic) and the Australian Jewish Historical Society (Vic).

Members of the AJGS (Vic) committee were present during the afternoon to take enquiries from family researchers.



Top: Victorian Premier Ted Baillieu officially launched the Lamm Jewish Library of Australia.

Right: A large audience gathered in front of the new library to hear the speeches.

Digitised newspapers: a useful resource



On 22 February 2012, Rodney Eisfelder presented a talk, 'Digitised newspapers: a useful resource for family research', to an audience in the new Lamm Jewish Library of Australia.

It was the very first presentation in the recently opened facility, the new home of the Australian Jewish Genealogy Society (Vic) and the Australian Jewish Historical Society (Vic).

Rodney, who has been an active committee member of the AJGS (Vic) since its inception in 1990, has developed skills in utilising a wide range of resources for family research.

Currently, 234 Australian newspapers and magazines dating from the 1820s to 1956 are accessible online through TROVE: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>.

Rodney utilised the following websites to introduce the audience to the potential of this source of information.

Historical newspapers online

1. Australia

- <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>
Lots of Australian newspapers, mostly to the 1950s.
- www.ryersonindex.org/
Obituary Index, especially the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

2. New Zealand

- <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast>
Seventy papers 1839–1945 from all regions of New Zealand.

3. Germany

- <http://deposit.ddb.de/online/exil/exil.htm>
Mostly the German-Jewish Diaspora (especially 'Aufbau').

- <http://deposit.ddb.de/online/jued/jued.htm>
Nazi-era Jewish newspapers – historically very important.

- www.compactmemory.de/
A miscellany of stuff.

- <http://calzareth.com/aufbau/index.html>
Index of Aufbau personal notices.

4. Netherlands

- <http://kranten.kb.nl/>
Kranten=Newspapers. KB=Koninklijke Bibliotheek (Royal Library).

5. Austria

- <http://anno.onb.ac.at/>
Austrian Newspaper Online; Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.
- <http://anno.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/anno?aid=nfp>
Neue Freie Presse (Vienna).

6. USA

- <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>
Library of Congress.
- <http://fultonhistory.com/Fulton.html>
New York (City and State).

7. Israel

- www.jpress.org.il/view-english.asp
Main entry point for 26 Jewish newspapers in English, French and Hebrew.
- www.jpress.org.il/publications/PPost-en.asp
Palestine Post (1932–1950 when the name changed to The Jerusalem Post).

8. England

- www.thejc.com/
The Jewish Chronicle (click on the Archive link).
- www.london-gazette.co.uk/
The 'official' newspaper of England.

9. The Rest

- <http://news.google.com/newspapers>
- <http://icon.crl.edu/digitization.htm>



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In the news and on the move

Daniel Horowitz visits Melbourne

'Researching genealogical resources in Israel from your couch' was the topic the AJGS (Vic) chose for a lecture by Daniel Horowitz (pictured right), at the recently opened Lamm Jewish Library of Australia on Thursday, 22 March 2012.

His presentation covered such topics as: How to access genealogical online resources and databases available in Israel to find relatives; How to overcome the barrier of the language with a basic lesson of Hebrew keywords; and Translation tools available to help everybody deal with the vast list of places where you can find information of people that were born, lived or died in Israel.

Daniel was born in Caracas, Venezuela, and has lived in Israel since 2005. He is the senior genealogist with MyHeritage.com and was on a short visit to Australia addressing both Jewish and non-Jewish audiences in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide.

During his three-day visit to Melbourne, he conducted two classes with Year 7 students completing their roots projects at Mount Scopus Memorial College and consulted with the director of the new Bialik College library about MyHeritage.com. In Sydney, he spoke to the Society of Australian Genealogists and gave presentations at the 13th Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry in Adelaide.

Since residing in Israel, he has lectured at various international conferences and local groups. He is a board member and webmaster of the Israel Genealogical Society, the IAJGS and the Horowitz Families Association.

His website is: <http://www.searchingformyroots.com/>

Useful websites discussed in his lecture included:

Israel Genealogy Research Association:
<http://genealogy.org.il/>

Israel Genealogical Society: www.isragen.org.il/

Douglas E. Goldman Jewish Genealogy Center at Beit Hatfutsot: www.bh.org.il/

Yad Vashem: www.yadvashem.org/

Recent acquisitions for our AJGS (Vic) resource collection

Resource CD March 2012, Edition 3. Resources in the Library of the AJGS (courtesy of the AJGS NSW).

In Memoriam: De gedeporteerde en vermoorde Joodse, Roma en Sinti kinderen 1942–1945, by Guus Luijters (2012) (donated by Judy Levron).

Abraham Jacob Solomon and Julia Solomon (nee Isaacs), England, Australia and The Netherlands, 2012 (compiled by Helen Tversky-Steiner, South Australia).



Early bird registration extended for international conference



The 2012 International Conference on Jewish Genealogy, hosted by the Cercle de Généalogie Juive, will be held at the Marriott Rive Gauche Hotel in Paris, France, from 15 to 18 July.

If you are interested in going to the conference, early bird registration has been extended until 10 April.

The Gala Dinner honoured guest will be Father Patrick Desbois, president of the Yahad-In Unum Association. He has devoted his life to confronting anti-Semitism and furthering Catholic–Jewish understanding. He and his team have criss-crossed the countryside in Ukraine in an effort to locate every mass grave and site at which Jews were killed during the Holocaust.

For further details about the conference, visit www.paris2012.eu.

NEW MEMBER

The AJGS (Vic) extends a warm welcome to new member Jennifer Bowen.

Revisiting the Great Solomon Reunion

AJGS (Vic) Secretary Lionel Sharpe recently attended the Solomon family reunion, held in March in Melbourne, Australia. Here, he describes why the three-day event attracted so much media attention and who was behind its success.

March 11, 2012 finally arrived. The Solomon and Associated Families Reunion was being held at the Alma Sport Club in North Caulfield. I registered, uncertain whether I had any Solomons in my extensive family tree. At least this was one way to check out whether I belonged to this historic family, descended from convicts.

The event, which had been many years in the planning, was an outstanding success. *The Age* newspaper featured an article (on page 5) titled 'The Solomons mine their treasures and memories', by well-known journalist Lawrence Money, and displayed two large photographs. As well, Channel 7 featured the reunion in the Sunday evening news and included it in a segment on their 'Sunrise' program, and the ABC ran a radio interview on the event.

So why all the fuss about a family reunion? I decided to visit the organisers, sisters Jenny and Katrina Cowen, after the event to search for an answer.

Jenny and Katrina are direct descendants of the Jewish pencil-maker Samuel 'Shlomo' Moss Solomon, whose sons Emanuel and Vaiben were convicted in England and transported as convicts to Australia in 1818. Each was given a seven-year sentence. Years later, their father, Samuel Moss Solomon, and his second wife, Esther, followed as free settlers.

The Solomon family eventually included 10 children, eight from Elizabeth, his first wife, and two from Esther, his second wife, who happened to be his first cousin. They were Moss Vaiben, Susan, Emanuel, Hannah, Sarah, Philip, Esther, Isaac and Elizabeth (Betsy).

Vaiben and Emanuel Solomon later prospered in business, politics and the arts in South Australia.

The families who married into the Solomon clan include Alexander, Barnett, Benjamin, Boas, Keesing, Cashmore, Cohen, Daniels, Fewster, Isaacs, Joshua, Jacobs, Jacobsohn, Judell, Marks, Lipman, Moss, Myers, Meyers, Phillips, Salom, Victorsen and Voules Brown. In all, there were 111 grandchildren.

More than 160 descendants of the estimated 4500 Solomon descendants registered for the event; however, many missed out because they were not able to be contacted in time.

So how did it all begin? Some four years ago, Jenny and Katrina explained, they encountered Trevor Cohen (descendant of Michael and Betsy [nee Solomon] Cashmore), a keen family historian and distant cousin, at a gathering. It was there that the seed of a family reunion was sown, and Jenny made a promise to Trevor that she would organise a reunion sometime in the future.

The first issues to be tackled were: how does one find descendants 200 years down the track? How does one go about building a database of direct descendants and find their addresses? Jenny commenced by emailing anyone who had a common ancestor on Ancestry.com.au; Todd Knowles, the originator of the Knowles Collection of Jewish records and reference consultant at FamilySearch.com in the US, was also consulted. She then enlisted help from Trevor Cohen, Liz James, Roger Powell and Susan Woolf (UK).

Notices were placed on various websites and in genealogical magazines. Slowly, by word-of-mouth, names came to their



Bearers of the Solomon name at the reunion:

(Back row, from left)
Dr Matthew Solomon (Vic.); Grant Solomon (WA); Zac Solomon (Vic); Richard Solomon (SA); John Solomon (Vic) and Barry Solomon (NSW).

(Front row, from left)
Leone Solomon (NSW); Neri, Lani and Sonya Solomon (Vic).

attention and emails were received with such comments as 'We know we are descendants but we are not Jewish – can we come?' Some were curious as to whether the family was of Sephardic or Ashkenazi origin, and other questions arose about extended families.

As the momentum grew, decisions had to be made about the nature of the get-together. Some indicated that they were coming from interstate, New Zealand and England, so the idea of a residential reunion was even considered. How many days? Who would be the speakers? What costs would be involved? As there was no formal organisational backing, Katrina and Jenny had to make many critical decisions themselves.

Then there was the issue of speakers. Trevor Cohen, who had published many articles, including a paper on Emanuel Solomon's support of Mary MacKillop following her excommunication, was the obvious choice as keynote speaker. Rabbi Dr John Levi was also a must. He had produced a book on the pre-1850 Jewish settlers, *These Are the Names*. Todd Knowles, staff member of the British Reference Section of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, agreed to fly here from America to attend the event, and Brad Argent from Ancestry.com.au gave technical support in creating the Solomon family tree and promised to address the family reunion. Madeleine Say, Picture Librarian at the State Library of Victoria, offered to speak, after seeing some of the 300 photos that had begun to trickle in from family members.

Then there was the young English Rabbi, Roderick Young, who at the age of 23 had discovered he was Jewish and that he was part of the Solomon clan (via Julia [nee Isaacs] who married Abraham Solomon). He flew from London to meet his newly discovered family and gave an emotional overview of how he discovered his true identity. Marjorie Luno (nee Boas), the oldest family member to attend the event, encouraged descendants to use this opportunity to share their memories.

So what we experienced was a wonderful three-day event, including a special Shabbat service and Kiddush at the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation in Toorak, two early Melbourne guided historical walks, two days of glorious weather, a wonderful venue and catering,



All together now! Beverly Carr (left), organizer Jenny Owen and David Graham inspect a cookbook at the Solomon reunion. Inset: Emanuel (left) and Vaiben Solomon. (PHOTOS: JENNY OWEN)

The Solomons mine their treasures and memories

By LAWRENCE MONEY

RETIRED Inspector John Solomon's mother was a Solomon who married a Solomon. "This is where it gets complicated," he says. "My grandmother was also a Solomon who married a Solomon so if you ask me what line of the Solomons I come from, I haven't a clue."

However, one thing is certain — John and son Andrew are descended directly from Jewish people — maker Sam "Shimon" Solomon, whose son Emanuel, at age 17 was convicted of larceny in England and transported to Australia in 1818 for seven years.

Emanuel's brother Vaiben was transported, too, then later Solomons followed as a free settler.

They all produced a small army of children and posterity



John Solomon and the small son of Sam Solomon (in painting).

... was for Jewish until age 23. "My dear mother even told me Jews had been Church of England," he told the gathering.

The Solomons have Jews everywhere — one was the baronet in London, the one fought at Gallipoli, one went down with the Titanic, one was partner of South Australia, another helped write the Australian Constitution.

Roger Powell had spent many weeks constructing a family tree of 170 names, which attracted many matters along the way.

Emanuel Solomon, the great-great-grandfather, died at the start of it all, died in 1873 aged 73. He had become a merchant after he served his sentence — then went into property. He opened the first theatre in Adelaide, was a member of the SA Parliament, even founded a bank for retired businessmen. The first Jew.

British regulators Jenny Owen and sister Katrina, Emanuel's great-great-granddaughters, spent 12 months trawling down the clues. "This is the first Solomon reunion in 150 years," said Jenny, a solicitor.

John Solomon also brought a small box that had been presented to Shimon Solomon before he left for Australia.

"My mother used it as a pin cushion," he said. "But I remember to a hat that there was still a faint smell of staff inside."

He said he was hospitalized after a fall last year and, while suspended in traction, found a opportunity to write other signs telling him to donate it to the Jewish Museum of Australia in St Kilda.

"All the family can now find them," he said yesterday and handed it over to organizers at the Melbourne Reunion.

Above: Article from *The Age*, Tuesday, 13 March 2012.



a line-up of excellent speakers and contributions from the audience in the way of artifacts and family stories.

Apart from the camaraderie, the viewing of photographs and family documents, what other outcomes might we anticipate?

Jenny and Katrina are already thinking about 2018, 200 years after the Solomon brothers landed in Australia. This will give time to search and collect photographs and spread the word among extended families.

In her summing up at the end of the three days, Jenny made a special plea to Michael Danby, Federal Member for Melbourne Ports, who read a message from the Prime Minister to the Solomon Family, to advocate for a plaque to be placed on the grave of every member of the first parliament of Australia to honour their contribution to the nation. She particularly had in mind her ancestors, Elias Solomon of Fremantle Western Australia, whose grave has fallen into disrepair, and Vaiben Louis Solomon, who was the 21st Premier of South Australia. Both were members of the first Australian Commonwealth Parliament.

Trevor Cohen, in thanking the conveners, commented: "And now Jenny and Katrina have convened this reunion. One can only imagine how delighted our forebears would be if they were looking down on this event."

So to answer the questions I posed at the beginning of this article. I did find a 'Solomons' on my family tree and was told that this may be a branch of the 'Solomon' family tree. While many families celebrate family reunions, I do believe that this one was deserving of all the fuss. Few Australian Jews trace their heritage to this country's early convict settlers. This special event was the culmination of years of dedicated research uncovering more and more branches of the Solomon family. However, it took the commitment and energy of two descendants, Jenny and Katrina, to muster an enthusiastic crowd to honour their ancestors and offer an opportunity to all known descendants 'to meet the family'.

Lionel Sharpe



Above: Neville Wight, Ruth Benjamin (nee Alexander) and Meryle Alexander inspect one of a number of family trees displayed at the Solomon family reunion.

Below: A snuff box that had been in the Solomon family for many generations was presented to the Jewish Museum of Australia in St Kilda, Melbourne (courtesy of John Solomon).





W. Todd Knowles, staff member of the British Reference Library in Salt Lake City.



Rebecca Forgasz, Director, Jewish Museum of Australia, John Solomon and son Andrew with a portrait of Samuel Moss Solomon (1769–1842).



Madeleine Say, Picture Librarian at the State Library of Victoria.



Retired Supreme Court Judge Howard Nathan.



Trevor Cohen, family historian and keynote speaker.



Helen Tversky-Steiner and Andrew Steiner, visitors from Adelaide.

POSTINGS

Jewish genealogical research trip to Salt Lake City planned

For the 20th consecutive year, veteran Jewish genealogists Gary Mokotoff and Eileen Polakoff will be offering a research trip to the LDS (Mormon) Family History Library in Salt Lake City from 18 to 25 October 2012. To date, more than 400 Jewish genealogists from the US, Canada, South America, Australia, Israel and Europe have taken advantage of this program.

The program offers genealogists the opportunity to spend an entire week of research at the Library under the guidance and assistance of professional genealogists who have made more than a four dozen trips to Salt Lake City. Each person has access to trip leaders each day except Sunday from 9 am to 5 pm at the library for onsite assistance and personal consultations. There is also a planned program that includes a three-hour class at the beginning of the trip introducing the new participants to the facilities and resources of the Family History Library, and a mid-week informal group discussion of progress and problem-solving.

Social events include a mid-week Sunday brunch for camaraderie and discussion of successes (and failures); attendance at the Sunday morning broadcast of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir; and informal group dinners. Participants stay at the Salt Lake Plaza Hotel, which is adjacent to the Family History Library and which has free wi-fi service.

Additional information can be found at www.avotaynu.com/slctrip.htm, or email gary@mokotoff.net or call 201-387-7200.

The next generation of genealogy in Israel

To welcome 2012, we are happy to announce the launch of activities for the Israel Genealogy Research Association. IGRA is bringing new technology, new energy and new excitement to genealogy in Israel.

We are dedicated to being open to all groups within Israel and outside of Israel and welcome everyone interested in genealogy. One of our driving forces is to open up as many possible data sources as we can to the public.

We strive to use the latest technologies to reach the most people we can with our content. Our website can be accessed at www.genealogy.org.il. The site will host videos, webinars, genealogy articles, research guides, a calendar of events and more. The website is in English but will be multi-lingual with a translation option into several additional languages.

Visit the website and register (free) to receive increased access, stay informed on everything going on and allow us to contact you about our activities.

There are many benefits of membership as well and we hope you will consider joining us in this exciting endeavour. Details are on the membership benefits page.

Billie Stein

Israel Genealogy Research Association
www.genealogy.org.il

ProQuest Historical Newspapers

ProQuest has added the following American Jewish newspapers to their Historical Newspapers Collection: *The Jewish Advocate* (Boston-based weekly, the oldest continuously circulating Jewish newspaper in America) and *The American Hebrew & Jewish Messenger* (from 1857). Later this year, they will add *The Jewish Exponent* (1887–1990) and *The Jerusalem Post* (1932–1988) as an international complement.

The ProQuest Historical Newspapers Collection is subscription-based through libraries. Libraries may choose which newspapers they subscribe to from the collection. If you are interested in having these newspapers available at your library you need to make your interest known. The IAJGS has been successful and fortunate in having the entire ProQuest Historical Newspaper Collection available in the Resource Room/Center computers at recent IAJGS conferences in Philadelphia (2009) and Washington DC (2011) and will continue to work with ProQuest to try to have this resource available at future IAJGS conferences.

To read more about ProQuest, visit <http://proquest.com/en-US/aboutus/pressroom/11/20110927.shtml>.

Jan Meisels Allen <janmallen@att.net>
IAJGS Vice President

Announcing NALDEX

GerSIG, the German Special Interest Group, has announced the online publication of the first phase of NALDEX, the Name Adoption List inDEX for Germany, at www.jewishgen.org/databases/Germany/Naldex.htm.

NALDEX is accessible via this link, or through the All-Germany Database. Those parts that relate to former German territory east of the Oder-Neisse line are also included in the All-Poland Database.

The database has more than 16,000 entries, each representing a head of household. Some of the lists contain little information – only the head of household's name and residence. Others list spouses and offspring, occupations and/or maiden and former names.

To the extent possible, we have included all the information found on the lists, and have transcribed names and places as read. Occupations are given in German and English, and modern place names are given in Polish or Czech where appropriate. (Still to come: Russian and Lithuanian.)

We look forward to receiving comments, recommendations and contributions toward the next phases of the project.

Roger Lustig <GerSIG.Research@verizon.net>
Princeton, NJ USA research coordinator, GerSIG

State Library of Victoria

Family History Feast

On Monday 30 July 2012, the State Library of Victoria will host the annual Family History Feast, a day of free family history information sessions organised jointly by the Library with Public Record Office Victoria and National Archives of Australia (Victorian Office). The day will conclude with the annual Don Grant Lecture organised by the Victorian Association of Family History Organisations.

JRI-Poland – new tool to graphically follow families in the records of Poland

Jewish Records Indexing – Poland today announced the Surname Distribution Mapper, a tool designed to help genealogy researchers graphically understand where their family names first appeared in the 19th century records and visualise how the family spread throughout Poland by decades from the early 1800s into the first part of the 20th century.

Stanley Diamond, JRI-Poland executive director, described the new feature as follows: Using modern mapping technology provided by Google Maps, the Surname Distribution Mapper allows users to graphically display their search results using a tree icon to indicate the number of entries found for a surname in a town's vital and other records. By running the cursor over each tree icon, a user can view a popup window displaying the number of vital record entries found in various towns in the JRI-Poland database. Clicking on the balloon brings the user to the familiar JRI-Poland search results for detailed viewing of a town's entries.

Additionally, and especially exciting for researchers, the Surname Distribution Mapper can display results for specific decades or in a 'progressive mode', where tree icons appear successively by decade to give the researcher an idea of the movement of their family around Poland and the Western Ukraine.

"The Surname Distribution Mapper enables a researcher to experience visually much of what we had only been able to do conceptually," explained Robinn Magid, Lublin Archives Project coordinator and long-time JRI-Poland board member. "Our goal is to quickly determine where a person should focus their research energy to obtain results beyond what the family's oral history might recollect."

"JRI-Poland database manager Michael Tobias has given us the gift of highlighting migration patterns and spotlighting probable 'home bases' for families. The Surname Mapper takes genealogy search results to a new level," she said.

Gary Mokotoff, publisher of *Avotaynu*, said: "It is a magnificent pictorial representation where they lived and the geographic time frame in which their records were created."

The Surname Distribution Mapper is now live and can be initiated from the 'search database' link on the JRI-Poland home page at www.jri-poland.org.

JRI-Poland

State Library of Victoria

The digitising program at the State Library of Victoria makes historic and invaluable newspapers, manuscripts, photographs and other collection material available without cost online. In 2010–11, 85,037 items were digitised.

Of interest to genealogists, historians and researchers is the Times Digital Archive 1785 to 2006. Online access has also been provided to the Irish Newspapers Archives from 1763 to the present, and to FindMyPast UK.

The latter database contains 750 million British death and marriage indexes, parish and census records and immigration, shipping and military records. In addition, the library offers the Family Matters blog for genealogy enthusiasts.



Dr Lenka Matusikova with Dr Michal Durovic, head of the laboratory at the Czech National Archives, where registers of vital records are being restored.

Czech National Archives – digitising records

I received exciting news last month from Dr Lenka Matusikova at the Czech National Archives: the recently digitised Czech Vital records – all 4000 plus volumes in Prague – will be available on the web at the end of March.

These scanned records will be uploaded to the National Archives website, along with the catalogue of towns in the Czech Republic (in Bohemia and Moravia and Silesia) whose Jewish vital records have been recorded by the Jewish communities in those towns (and sometimes copied by the Catholic priests in those towns) and preserved by the National Archives in Prague.

Aside from some previously digitised records, these Jewish vital records will be the largest collection of Jewish records for the Czech Republic available free and on the internet.

Previously digitised records in the Czech Republic included those Jews who moved to Prague at the turn of the 20th century (also available on the National Archives website) and some similar records held at the Prague City Archives (now digitised and also available on that website).

It is expected that the most recent scans will be uploaded over a period of time, but all should be available at the end of 2012.

Those interested in Czech research (especially those unable to travel to Prague) will, I am sure, be as delighted as I am that these records will at last be available to all.

There will still be the issue of the documents being in German cursive script, which is an older style of writing, and many modern readers will not be able to read it without expert help.

Lenka intends to begin presenting the material in Czech, but she knows it also needs to be in English so that international users will be able to read her explanations of how to access the material.

Daniela Torsh

Ancestry.com

Recently, I had been helping a woman with her research, and she wanted to know how I fitted into her Daniels family.

The latest version of Ancestry.com automatically calculates relationships and displays them each time you 'go' to a new person. This is how Ancestry.com explained my connection to the Daniels family: 'Father-in-law of grand aunt of husband of stepdaughter of grand uncle of nephew of wife of first cousin once removed of husband of Liz James'.

I think she was a close relative!

Liz James

FROM NU? WHAT'S NEW? Vol 13, No 8**MyHeritage.com and FamilyTreeDNA become partners**

MyHeritage.com and FamilyTreeDNA (FTDNA) have partnered to provide MyHeritage members lower-cost DNA testing than what is available at the FTDNA site. For example, the 37-marker Y-chromosome DNA test offered by FamilyTreeDNA for \$169 is available at the MyHeritage site for \$149. There is no cost for 'membership' in MyHeritage, so it appears that one should always purchase FTDNA kits through MyHeritage. The only consideration is that you are giving MyHeritage your email and postal addresses. You can always opt-out of mailing received from the firm, and it is unlikely they will use the postal addresses for mailings given the high cost of postage these days. There are even greater discounts for paid subscribers: 10% for premium subscribers and 15% for premium plus members. Premium plus members get the Y 37-marker test for only \$126.65.

Order kits at www.myheritage.com/all-dna-tests.

Mormon/Jewish controversy

The posthumous baptism of Simon Wiesenthal's parents and the inclusion of Elie Wiesel in the Mormon religious database went viral last week with CNN, Reuters and the Associated Press reporting the controversy. Many news organisations gave their own slant to the story. The Mormon Church apologised for the Wiesenthal baptisms. A Church spokesman claimed the Wiesel records were part of a genealogical database not their religious database, which is untrue. Wiesel, his father and maternal grandfather were part of the religious database, which is only accessible through an individual password supplied by the Church. It can be plainly seen at www.avotaynu.com/nu/Baptisms.htm that LDS ordinances were planned for the Wiesel family.

Book memorialises children of Dutch Holocaust

In Memoriam is a book of more than one thousand pages that identifies 17,964 Jewish and gypsy children murdered in the Holocaust. It shows each child's name, date of birth and address, death date and place. There are sometimes pictures of the children. The book can be purchased at www.nieuwamsterdam.nl/in-memoriam.

An exhibit based on the book is being held at Stadsarchief Amsterdam from 10 February to 20 May. Information can be found at <http://stadsarchief.amsterdam.nl/english/exhibitions/index.en.html>.

(JGD Editor's note: The AJGS (Vic) has a copy of this book in its resource room at the Lamm Jewish Library of Australia.

Rabbi Shmuel Gorr archive catalogued

(Australian-born Rabbi Shmuel Gorr was well known in the Melbourne Jewish Community in the 1950s and 1960s.)

The International Institute for Jewish Genealogy and Paul Jacobi Center has announced that the cataloguing of the Rabbi Shmuel Gorr Genealogical Papers has been completed. Rabbi Gorr (1931–1988) was a pioneer of contemporary Jewish genealogical research, working as a professional genealogist in Jerusalem for more than a quarter century until his death. He bequeathed his papers to the National Library of Israel (at that time called the Hebrew University and National Library).

Search the collection by going to the library's search engine at <http://tinyurl.com/8xsctm9>. Select Search Option 'keywords anywhere' and search for the keyword 'Gorr' followed by additional keywords.

Rabbi Gorr was indirectly responsible for the creation of the Daitch-Mokotoff Soundex System. In 1985, I collaborated with him

to index the names of some 28,000 persons who legally changed their names while living in Palestine from 1921 to 1948: most were Jews with Germanic or Slavic surnames. It was important to his research, because clients were trying to locate relatives who immigrated to Eretz Israel. Many had changed their European names to Hebrew-like names. When I examined the European names, I found there were frequently spelling variants of the same basic surname and the list should be soundexed. Using the conventional American system, many Eastern European Jewish names which sound the same did not soundex the same. The most prevalent were names spelled interchangeably with the letter w or v, for example, the names Moskowitz and Moskovitz. The American system soundexed them differently. This started my efforts to create a new system that could support German/Slavic names as well as names of other groups.

Gary Mokotoff

PEOPLE LOOKING FOR PEOPLE

The following notices are published as a community service to our readers. They come to us via internet discussion groups or by mail and email contact with the society.

ALEXANDER

I have just learnt that an old friend in Australia from Israel days in 1967, who has been active in Zionist activities, passed away last year in Sydney. His name was Adrian Alexander. We met in Israel soon after the 1967 war and he has contributed a first-rate chapter to a book I am organising. I wish to make contact with his family.

Michael Zimmerman, Chicago, USA
<mikezimmerman3@gmail.com>

MANSFIELD, SILMAN, MORITZ, BOAN and COHEN families

I am an AJEX historian living in London and I'm working on a book on Jewish prisoners of war under the Japanese in World War II. I wish to contact the families of the following people: George Mansfield, Leon Silman, Abe Moritz, Harry Boan, and Norman Cohen.

Martin Sugarman <martin.sugarman@yahoo.co.uk>

TUGEN (Tughadt)

I am a PhD student at the University of Sydney. I am tracing the history of Jewish refugees from Czechoslovakia in Australia 1938–1942. I am searching for former refugees or their descendants who arrived in Australia during that period (not after the end of the Second World War).

I would also like to find the descendants of George Robert Tugen (born 1932) and his sister Dorothy, who arrived in Sydney on the *Orontes* on 12 February 1939 with their parents, Robert George Tugen and Gertrude Tugen. The family subsequently settled in Melbourne. The Tugens were members of a very well-known Jewish family in the Czechoslovakian town of Brno. It is believed the family name was originally 'Tughadt'.

George Robert Tugen married Patricia May (born 1933). George died in Melbourne in 2005 and Patricia died in 2006.

Permission to interview former refugees or their descendants about their experiences has been approved by the Ethics Commission for Human Research at the University of Sydney.

Anna Rosenbaum <martin_rosenbaum@hotmail.com>