

# QUEST

THE  
JEWISH GENEALOGICAL  
SOCIETY  
OF  
CONNECTICUT

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Volume 27, Number 1

Winter 2015

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- President's Message
- JGSCT 2014 Year in Review
- Sharing Genealogy with the Younger Generation by Deb Holman

## QUEST WINTER ISSUE



PLEASE let us know if you prefer to receive JGSCT information through the mail. All JGSCT communication, including Quest and notifications of meetings will ONLY be sent electronically UNLESS you change your preference. Notify Gail: [publicity@jgsct.org](mailto:publicity@jgsct.org) or Deb:

[Deborah.holman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Deborah.holman@sbcglobal.net)

### Renovations of the History and Genealogy Reading Room at the Connecticut State Library

The History and Genealogy Reading Room of the Connecticut State Library has undergone an extensive renovation that includes many improvements and upgrades including new carpeting, electrical upgrades, and walls for the archives reading area. In the near future microfilm cabinets and furniture will arrive to complete the renovation. To read more about the renovation go to: <http://cdm15019.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p128501coll2/id/333847>

-Thanks to Arthur S. Myers (former Quest editor) for sharing this information.

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's Message	2-3
Notes from Nu? What's New	3
IAJGS Leadership Update	4-5
JGSCT Year in Review	6
New Year's Resolutions	7
Sharing Genealogy with Youth	9

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

### NEXT MEETING!!

FEB 15, 2015

Exhibit Tour at Slifka Center in New Haven by Patricia Kleindiest

MARCH 15, 2015

Ron Arons

What's In A Name?

Trouble!

All programs held at

Godfrey Memorial Library

134 Newfield Street,

Middletown, CT 06457

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Doris Loeb Nabel

Thoughts Inspired by the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz & the International Holocaust Remembrance Day

Never Forget

January 27, 2015

I Remember

Are you a survivor? A 2G or 3G? Do you have relatives who suffered during the heinous Holocaust? Perhaps you don't know that you have relatives who remained behind. Maybe you know relatives of survivors who show signs of carrying an unknown, or unrecognized and unshared burden.

When I was growing up, I didn't understand why I was a little different from my school friends. Amazingly, it wasn't until I joined groups on Facebook composed of children of survivors, that I discovered people who react as I do, who have fears, and nightmares, even though they didn't personally suffer the trauma.

On November 16, 2014, I read a discussion on one Facebook groups about an article. The piece, "The Science of Suffering / Kids are inheriting their parents' trauma. Can science stop it?" appeared in the New Republic. It is a fascinating, illuminating read.

"The children of the traumatized have always carried their parents' suffering under their skin. "For years it lay...buried so deep inside me that I was never sure just what it was," is how Helen Epstein, the American daughter of survivors of Auschwitz and Theresienstadt, began her book *Children of the Holocaust*, which launched...a children-of-survivors movement when it came out in 1979."

Why is this topic of interest to genealogists?

So many people denigrate Facebook as a waste of time. For me, it's been a genealogy mecca. Not only can I easily network on Facebook with cousins around the world, Facebook groups enormously enrich my life.

Examples of the groups whose posts appear on my Timeline include: Children of the Holocaust, Generations of the Shoah, 2G Second Generation Holocaust Survivors, Children of Holocaust Survivors, SHOAH-LA CHAÎNE DU SOUVENIR, Yad Vashem: World Holocaust Center, Jerusalem, Jewish Genealogy Portal, Tracing the Tribe, Yachad-In Unum, Hack Genealogy (technology/genealogy), and Technology for Genealogy. There is a group for any area, or topic, you are researching.

The proliferation of resources assist not only researchers, they also help survivors, 2Gs, and 3Gs to understand who they are, and why.

I first saw information about the January 27 International Holocaust Remembrance Day on one of these groups; the post inspired this President's Message.

Also via these groups I first learned about two programs described below. 'Holocaust: Night Will Fall' a documentary hidden for decades because of the graphic depiction of the horrors. The British government commissioned filmmaker Alfred Hitchcock and media giant Sidney Bernstein to film the Allied troops as they liberated Bergen-Belsen, Dachau, and Auschwitz in 1945. The film "...aired in 15 countries Monday [January 26], as part of the international Holocaust Remembrance Day commemorations."

The title of the only documentary on which Hitchcock worked "...refers to the original Hitchcock-Bernstein script: "Unless the world learns the lessons these pictures teach, night will fall." (<http://www.timesofisrael.com/70-years-later-hitchcocks-holocaust-footage-airs>) I found that the film is also on YouTube.

## P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E (Cont. from pg. 2)

'Voices of Auschwitz' aired on CNN on January 27. Wolf Blitzer narrates the documentary of his interviews with survivors on the grounds of the notorious concentration camp. He also talks to Steven Spielberg, founder of the Shoah Foundation, which serves to record the stories of survivors.

I have learned so much about so many issues, and found an incredible amount of information on Facebook. If you are not a member, I would suggest signing up for it, and using the site as you choose. It is possible to restrict access to your page and to use it only for genealogy.

## NOTES FROM NU? WHAT'S NEW?

E-zine of Jewish Genealogy From Avotaynu  
(<http://www.avotaynu.com/nu.htm>)  
Gary Mokotoff, Editor

November 16, 2014:

**Bennett Greenspan: "75 Percent of Jews Trace Ancestry to Middle East"**

Bennett Greenspan, president of Family Tree DNA, is featured in an article in the Israeli Newspaper Haaretz where he states that 75 percent of Jews trace their ancestry to the Middle East. Greenspan says, "We're not interlopers who came here from Eastern Europe, and we're not Serbs or Kazars. You can use whatever polemic you want to discredit the Jews or discredit the nation, but saying that we weren't here is a lie."

You can read the complete article at <http://www.haaretz.com/jewish-world/jewish-world-news/.premium-1.626156#>. Registration is required.

January 4 2015:

**Database of Prisoners of War During WWI**

Israel Pickholz notes that the International Committee of the Red Cross has an online database of persons who were prisoners of war during World War I. There are images of index cards for each individual. The database is organized by nationality. If there are no results for the name search, the closest name is displayed and it is then possible to browse the collection from that point forward.

The website is at <http://grandeguerre.icrc.org/>

January 4, 2015:

**Maps of Litvak Jewry**

If you are of Litvak (Lithuania Jewish) ancestry, Dovid Katz, a Yiddish scholar and cultural historian of Lithuanian Jewry, has an interesting website at <http://dovidkatz.net>. Much of what he shows requires knowledge of the Yiddish language, but his map collection should be of interest to all, including non-Litvaks. It is located at <http://www.dovidkatz.net/WebAtlas/AtlasSamples.htm>.

Just a few examples are "Map of the Lithuanian Jewish Communities: Links to Their Holocaust Fate." at <http://www.dovidkatz.net/dovid/Lithuania/Holocaust/LT-Holocaust-small.html> and "The Classic Litvak Territory" at [http://www.dovidkatz.net/WebAtlas/0\\_Lite\\_A2.htm](http://www.dovidkatz.net/WebAtlas/0_Lite_A2.htm). There are many maps that show the different pronunciations of the same word in the various regions of Lithuania. For example, the 18 ways hamentashen (the three-cornered pastry eaten on Purim) was pronounced.

**Yes!! We are on Facebook!**  
Visit our page often for updated news  
and information.  
Search using: JGSCT



## FROM THE IAJGS LEADERSHIP DIGEST

### Announcing a new website: Yiddishkayt

(Vol. 115, Issue 1- November 3, 2014 -Jan Meisels Allen)

Yiddishkayt, a Los Angeles-based Yiddish cultural organization presents the history of Jews over the past 1,000 years and present.

The new website (<http://www.yiddishkayt.org/#>) has sections of interest to genealogists: "Investigate"—which has stories of people and events and "navigation" by geography which enhances the stories of the people under the history such as: Hannah Arendt (political thinker), Eloykem Zunser (Jewish song and folk poetry), Rose Schneiderman (labor champion), Liberation of Auschwitz, First US Birth Control Clinic, Founding of YIVO and more. Their "Journey" area goes to the historical heartlands of Jewish life. Their "Cultivate" section has information on Yiddish language and culture.

### JGSLI Unveils New Website and YouTube Channel

(Vol. 115, Issue 2 – November 4, 2014 - Nolan Altman)

The Jewish Genealogy Society of Long Island (JGSLI) is proud to announce its new website at <http://jgsli.org>.

JGSLI is also pleased to announce the inauguration of its YouTube channel. Videos can be accessed the "Resources and Services" tab on the website homepage, (ultimately from <http://jgsli.org/youtube/>) or directly from YouTube at [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUV8xttIn93AwJX2\\_I0AIAg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUV8xttIn93AwJX2_I0AIAg)

The first 5 short videos include:

- 8 Ways to Find Your Ancestral Home
- 8 Pieces of information on a Passenger Manifest
- Naturalization Documents in a Nutshell
- 8 Pieces of Information on a NYC Death Certificate
- 8 Sites You Should Explore for Holocaust Research



Brest Litovsk-Tombstones at the site of the new supermarket tombstones piled up in Brest Litovsk-Fortress  
© Debra Debra Brunner Brunner ©

### 1st (Belarus) Brest Town Built Out of Jewish Tombstones

(Vol. 116, Issue 3 - November 13, 2014 – Jan Meisels Allen)

Brest, Belarus, a town near the border with Poland has discovered 450 Jewish gravestones in the foundations of the houses that have been demolished to make way for a new supermarket. When the Nazis arrived in 1941 the Jews became victims of the Shoah. Following World War II when the Communists took over the devastated Jewish community, the Communists went about destroying any remnants of the Jewish community. In 1959 the Largest Jewish cemetery in Belarus was turned over to become a sports arena. The Communists "recycled" the headstones which are now being found in Belarus road surfaces, pavements and gardens. Over the past six years 1,500 headstones were found.

For now the headstones are being dug up and are being "stored" by the 19th century Brest Fortress-Litovsk, a Soviet Second World War monument. The stones cannot be returned to their original place as it is now the sports stadium and the original location is unknown. To read more about this see: <http://www.vice.com/read/jewish-graves-in-brest-belarussia-kate-samuelson-333>

Thank you to the National Genealogical Society and their *UpFront with NGS* for alerting us to the story.

## MORE FROM THE IAJGS LEADERSHIP DIGEST

### National Museum of American Jewish Military History Exhibit Jews in the American Military

(Vol. 116, Issue 7 – November 14, 2014 -Jan Meisels Allen)

The National Museum of American Jewish Military History (NMAJM) , documents and preserves the contributions of Jewish Americans to the peace and freedom of the United States. It operates under the auspices of the Jewish War Veterans (JWA) of the USA. The JWA was founded by Civil War Veterans in 1896. For the first time the NMAJM has a core exhibit, Jews in the American Military, that takes the visitor from the Colonial era (Nieuw Amsterdam in 1654) to Afghanistan showing Jewish participation in the American military. Some of the historical artifacts include stories, letters, and memorabilia donated by Jewish veterans and their families including a Revolutionary War rifle, a camouflage kippah designed to honor a casualty of the War in Iraq, a brain surgery kit from the Civil War, a diary from a Jewish POW, and a Torah carried by a Jewish army chaplain on the Burma Trail. The exhibit includes an "Answering the Call" section about enlisting and serving in World War 1 and World War 2. The "Spirit" section centers on Jewish military service in the Civil War through World War I. The "Conviction" section tells about American Jews who served in every branch of service of World War 2. The "Purpose" section follows the end of World War 2 and the efforts to contain Communism. The final section is "Leaving the Service" about the transition to civilian life and profiles a selection of distinguished American Jews who have served with honor. See: <http://www.nmajmh.org/exhibitions/coreExhibit.php>

The exhibit opened officially on Veterans Day November 11, 2014. It is located in Washington DC at: 1811 R St NW, Washington, D.C. 20009 for hours that the museum is open see the website: <http://www.nmajmh.org/>

Thank you to Phil Goldfarb, President JGS Tulsa for alerting us to this new exhibit.

## NOTES

If you enjoy and are enriched by JGSCT programs, please remember to renew your membership. JGSCT dues help defray the costs required to develop a full schedule of informative programs and speakers to enhance your genealogical research and experience. A membership form can be accessed and completed from the website <http://www.jgsct.org/>.

### SHARE YOUR STORY

Nearly everyone reading our newsletter has already begun the search for family history. Many of us encountered obstacles soon after, but we persevered.

Share your story of how you began your journey. The length of the write-up could be short, medium or long - but please share it!

Send your story to: [quest@jgsct.org](mailto:quest@jgsct.org)

Sending announcements and newsletters by mail uses funds that could be put to better use.

Help your JGSCT by requesting that all correspondence be done electronically.

To make changes, contact: [quest@jgsct.org](mailto:quest@jgsct.org)

## PROGRAM IDEAS FOR JGSCT

Do you have requests or suggestions for future JGSCT programs ?

We are always looking for quality programs for our members and guests.

Email: [quest@jgsct.org](mailto:quest@jgsct.org)



## JG S C T 2 0 1 4 Y E A R I N R E V I E W

JG S C T started 2014 on a high note as President Doris Nabel and Secretary Monica Talmor gave a presentation on their genealogical travels in Europe. So much information was available that we had to schedule follow-up programs!

In February, we welcomed Mary Donohue, the co-author of [A Life of the Land: Connecticut's Jewish Farmers](#). She described how The Jewish Agricultural Society in New York began an effort in the 1880s to settle some of the new European immigrants on farms in Connecticut. One area the society chose was centered around Colchester, Lebanon, and Montville. The story noted what these families owned, how they worked the farms for generations, and finally developed their lands into the resorts of Moodus.

Ellen Cassedy spoke in March about her trip into the Jewish heartland of Lithuania to study Yiddish and connect with her Jewish forebears. Ellen took us to the archives and kitchen tables where her family history revealed its confounding secrets, and to the Vilnius Yiddish Institute, to complex commemorative sites, and to encounters with the leaders of Jewish education efforts in Lithuania today, giving us an close-up view of how a post-Holocaust nation explores its own "Jewish family history."

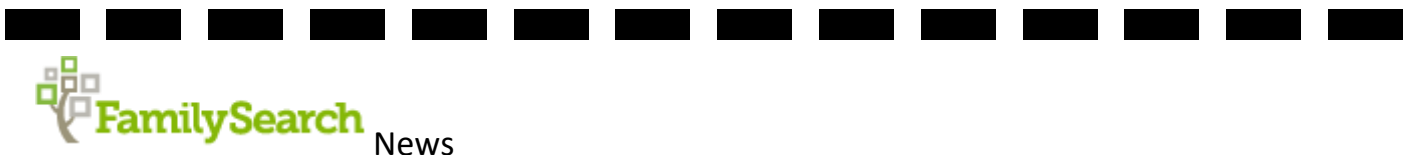
We held no program in April but May brought Secretary Monica Talmor completing her Genealogical Travel in Romania presentation.

In June we hosted an afternoon of assisted research for our membership. After the summer hiatus, in September Monica Talmor educated us on the use of DNA in genealogical research.

Gary Mokotoff, editor of Nu, What's Nu, presented "Holocaust Research - How to Document Victims and Locate Survivors of the Holocaust"

In November, President Doris Nabel and Quest Co-Editor Deb Holman, who both attended the IAJGS conference held in Salt Lake City in July, summarized their experiences.

Finally, in December, Ralph Parker of Newington explained to a rapt audience how he managed to survive World War II in Nazi Germany. Mr. Parker was born in Berlin in 1920 and shared his story of life before the Nazis, how he navigated Nazi Germany, work camps, and how he eventually came to the United States.



FamilySearch recently discontinued their free photoduplication service. The reasoning behind this is that the service is no longer needed as digitization of materials is increasing as a result of the formation of new online partnerships.

FamilySearch also announced that as of February 1, 2015, there would no longer be access to the website through [New.FamilySearch.org](#). Data from that site will be accessible at [www.FamilySearch.org](#).

The Family History Library is hosting free on-line classes January through April 2015. These classes are designed to help individuals and families find their ancestors and teach important family history techniques. They are free to the public. For information about specific classes click on this link: <http://tinyurl.com/pm3npu6>

## NEW YEAR – NEW (?) RESOLUTIONS! You can join in too!

Deb Holman, Quest Co-Editor

Last year, I participated in the blog challenge “52 Ancestors in 52 Weeks” posed by Amy Johnson Crow (<http://www.nostorytoosmall.com/posts/category/52-ancestors-challenge/>). The idea was to post about an ancestor *every week*. I took up the challenge for two reasons: to share some of the research I had gathered over the past few years and to help me concentrate on *one person* at a time.

I made it to week 18 then lost my focus when my grandson (and summer) arrived. So, I’m trying again this year! In addition, I am participating in the Genealogy Do-Over (<http://www.geneabloggers.com/announcing-genealogy-dooover/>) organized by Thomas MacEntee.

The “Do-Over” is a 13 week “program” with tasks designed to help participants develop a “firm foundation in genealogy and family history research skill building.” For those of us who began our “genealogical journey” years ago, this is a great opportunity to review our past work and ensure we are using “best practices.” I hope to improve my skills in the areas of citing sources, keeping better records of my searches, cleaning up my digital files and verifying my research is accurate.

You can follow my progress (or give me a kick in pants to keep going...) at <http://whoweareandhowwegotthisway.blogspot.com/>

On November 29, 2014, I participated in a “Holiday Special Boot Camp.” The 3 hour webinar was held by Thomas MacEntee of Hack Genealogy and Lisa Alzo (The Accidental Genealogist.) The webinar was recorded and is now available for FREE at: <http://vimeo.com/hackgenealogy/genealogyholidayspecial>

Access is FREE and you can download the video (note: it is a large file, 440MB since it is a 3-hour recording.) The handout can be found at <http://hackgenealogy.com/holidayspecialhandout>.

While the content was not specific to Jewish genealogy, there was so much information packed in that I felt I needed to share this resource with our members. In addition to several topics on good research procedures, the webinar also covered topics such as: Cluster and Collateral Research, Foreign Records Research, Immigration and Naturalization.

### **British-Jewry Website Back Online**

Sherry Landa has announced that the British-Jewry Leeds database is back on line following a software upgrade made possible by a very generous donation received from a grateful website user.

The website is at: [www.british-jewry.org.uk](http://www.british-jewry.org.uk)

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### **GenTeam.eu Update**

According to a posting by Randy Schoenberg on the JewishGen Austria-Czech SIG, “*Felix Gundacker and Georg Gausch have made available a new database of Prague Familianten and Prague marriages (1784-1804) on GenTeam.at. Access is free with registration. Thank you Felix and Georg.*”

## O D D S   A N D   E N D S

Our JGSCT Membership Chair, Linda Winkelman, has alerted us to some items of interest:

The website for the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association: RIJHA is the oldest Jewish Historical society in continuous operation in the United States. Visit: [www.RJHA.org](http://www.RJHA.org) to learn more.

A webpage for The New England Hebrew Farmers of the Emanuel Society: Chesterfield, Connecticut, USA Created by Nancy R. Savin, Webmaster: Michael Kirsch  
<http://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/NEHFES/>

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The 2015 New England Regional Genealogical Conference will take place April 15-18 in Providence. While not a Jewish genealogy conference, it still will have many programs of interest. Daniel Horowitz (Chief Genealogist at My Heritage) and Godfrey Memorial Library Director Beth Mariotti are scheduled to present. Website at: <http://www.nergc.org/>.

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### **DID YOU KNOW??**

The American Jewish Historical Society (AJHS) is the oldest ethnic historical society in the United States. The New England Archive of the AJHS is housed at the New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) in Boston, MA. The NEHGS newsletter, *The Weekly Genealogist* often includes a selection from *Chapters in American History*, a series of essays edited by Michael Feldberg, PhD, Executive Director of AJHS from 1991 to 2004 and current Executive Director of the George Washington Institute for Religious Freedom. (<http://www.americanancestors.org/browse/publications/the-weekly-genealogist>)

### **200,000 ADDITIONAL GRAVESTONE RECORDS FROM POLAND NOW SEARCHABLE ON JRI-POLAND**

JRI-POLAND has announced the following:

As a result of a historic agreement between Jewish Records Indexing-Poland and the Foundation for Documentation of (Polish) Jewish Cemeteries (FDJC), a search of the JRI-Poland database links to the Foundation's Database with more than 200,000 gravestones from 81 towns.

The Foundation has developed the most extensive source for locating Jewish Cemetery gravestones in Poland.

For a full list of cemeteries now included in the database, go to: <http://cemetery.jewish.org.pl/list/>

A routine JRI-Poland search [www.jri-poland.org](http://www.jri-poland.org) will now generate search results that include entries from the FDJC database and link directly to both digital images and full transcriptions of the gravestones.



Registration is now open at [www.iajgs2015.org](http://www.iajgs2015.org) for the IAJGS 35<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Jewish Genealogy taking place at the Jerusalem Ramada 6-10 July 2015



## SHARING GENEALOGY WITH THE YOUNGER GENERATION

### DEB SAMUEL HOLMAN

One of the reasons I began doing genealogy was to provide my children with a sense of our family and our history. I've also taught a "Finding My Roots" course to students at our local alternative high school. (That's a subject for a future Quest article.)

I'm pleased to see that recently there seems to be upsurge in information related to sharing family history with the younger generations. At the recent IAJGS Conference in Salt Lake City, I met Janet Hovorka of "Zap the Grandma Gap." Janet has created an entire line of children's activity books. Some are geared to general family history; others focus on a specific culture. The activities are designed for children aged 6-14, so I guess I have a while until I can "zap" the "grandma gap" with my grandson who is only 8 months old!

The "My Jewish Ancestor" workbook includes activities such as: Learning about Jewish history, traditions and culture, finding your family's place in the Diaspora, and recording family recipes. For more information go to: [www.Zapthegrandmagap.com](http://www.Zapthegrandmagap.com). Another good resource of genealogy activities for young children is Pinterest. A search, using the terms "genealogy for kids" turned up 26 pins (links to sites with information about that topic.)

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### JewishGen Searches Updated

In a posting on the JewishGen Digest (Nov. 4, 2014), Phyllis Kramer announced the following:

Good News! JewishGen has upgraded its website search facility, using a custom Google Search.

Now you can easily search all the text on all of JewishGen's web pages. This includes KehilaLinks, Special Interest Group (SIG) pages, InfoFiles, Yizkor Books, ViewMate's archives, Communities pages, etc.

JewishGen's website search facility is available at: <http://www.jewishgen.org/JewishGen/Search.asp>, which can also be accessed by going to the "About Us" oval on the main JewishGen menu bar, and then clicking on "Search Website".

Please note that the website search does NOT include databases, which should be searched separately:

--ancestral surnames and towns via the JewishGen Family Finder (JGFF)

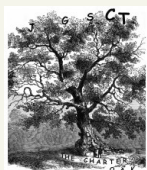
--historical records via the JewishGen databases at <http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/>

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Mary Donahue lectures on the history of the Jewish Farmers in SE Connecticut during JGSCT February 2014 program

WWW.JGSCT.ORG



**The Jewish Genealogical  
Society Of Connecticut**

We meet at Godfrey Memorial Library:

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