

SFBAJGS Activity Report for 2018

Jeff Lewy, SFBAJGS Treasurer

SFBAJGS enjoyed another productive and educational year in 2018, our 38th year. We held fifteen meetings presenting personal family histories and describing a range of genealogical sources and research techniques. We also cosponsored three additional presentations in the Bay Area and participated in San Francisco History Days, a jamboree of many local groups interested in local history.

We are among the six largest societies in IAJGS and one of the most active in supporting its goals of educating members and others on finding and using the widest variety of techniques and sources for their genealogical research.

Although our name says we are the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society, the “San Francisco Bay Area” part of our name merely means that we reside here. Our members and our interests are worldwide, as are our ancestors and living relatives. We can be as helpful to our members with ancestors in Russia, Bohemia, Galicia, and South Africa as to those whose families have been in the Bay Area for four generations or more. All of our families, like yours, originally came from “someplace else”, and we have knowledge of and connections to many of those places.

Several members attended the 38th annual conference of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS), held for the first time in Warsaw, Poland in August 2018. One of our members was the cochair of the conference, and two society members made presentations.

Our more than 225 members are generous in paying dues and making additional donations to the Society, giving us the opportunity to support our objectives:

- Support and improve online sharing of data useful to researchers everywhere doing Jewish genealogy
- Make available online formerly closed or unavailable records that support Jewish genealogical research
- Support efforts to research and remember existing and vanished Jewish communities

We support activities in the local area that are consistent with these objectives. We have ongoing volunteer projects to transcribe data from local cemeteries and other sources of birth, marriage, and death records and make those data available online for researchers everywhere.

Other work to fulfill these objectives takes place wherever Jewish communities and records are located, often far from us. Therefore, we continue our practice of making donations to other organizations that are working in those communities and archives. We support projects based on their value to the broadest possible audience of researchers, the need to preserve and protect fragile sites, and the need to record data where the repositories and archives are newly open or at risk of access restrictions.

This year, we donated \$4,600 to ten organizations for their activities. We include the purpose of our donations and the URL's of these organizations so that you can learn more about their activities if you wish.

Local

- Jewish Community Library in San Francisco: maintain and expand the very strong collection of materials related to Jewish genealogy and history in the San Francisco Bay Area. <http://www.jewishlearningworks.org/jewish-community-library/>
- Commission for the Preservation of Pioneer Jewish Cemeteries and Landmarks in the West: protect and maintain the seven Gold Rush-era Jewish cemeteries in the Sierra foothills. <http://www.pioneerjewishcemeteries.org/>
- Oakland FamilySearch Library: expand its collection of materials for Jewish research and support our Oakland meeting location. https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Oakland_California_FamilySearch_Library/

National and International

- Reclaim the Records: A nonprofit organization set up just a couple of years ago that identifies important genealogical record sets that ought to be in the public domain but which are restricted by government archives, agencies, and libraries. Freedom of Information and Open Data requests or lawsuits are filed to force the release of that public data back to the public. Reclaim the Records then digitizes everything it receives and puts it all online for free at the Internet Archive. It has already opened a variety of records in New York City, New York State, New Jersey, Washington State, Missouri, and Wyoming. Reclaim the Records is pursuing efforts in many states where officials have not previously allowed public access (see <https://www.reclaimtherecords.org/to-do/>). <http://www.reclaimtherecords.org/>

- International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) Stern Fund: encourage nonprofit institutions and organizations, Jewish or not, to pursue projects, activities, and acquisitions that provide new or enhanced resources to benefit Jewish genealogists. <http://www.iajgs.org/>

- Jewish Records Indexing – Poland: support ongoing digitization and indexing of Jewish records, primarily from Polish archives, but also from Ukraine and other locations where Polish records were formerly recorded. <http://jri-poland.org/>

- Kirkuty – Jewish Cemeteries in Poland: support photography of Jewish cemeteries in Poland, both extant and desecrated, drawing attention to the remaining signs of the prewar presence of the Polish Jewish community. <http://kirkuty.xip.pl/indexang.htm>

- JewishGen: to their General Fund, supporting the primary online site of Jewish genealogical records and instruction for researchers. <http://www.jewishgen.org/>

- Ukraine SIG at JewishGen: support digitization and placement online of records from Ukrainian national archives. <https://www.jewishgen.org/Ukraine/>

- Ukraine Scanner Project: A GoFundMe project to pay for scanners to be used at regional archives in Ukraine to accelerate the digitization and placement online of records recently made available to the public for the first time. <https://www.gofundme.com/scanners-for-the-ukrainian-archives>

Transcriptions

We continue to transcribe more than 40,000 burial records from Sinai Memorial Chapel in San Francisco dating back to the early 1920's, when Sinai Memorial was established. As a funeral home, Sinai Memorial arranges for burials at cemeteries throughout the Bay Area and in other cities in the U.S. and overseas.

We have nearly completed the transcription of about 5,000 burial records from the former Beth Israel Synagogue

in San Francisco, covering the years 1892 through 1929. These burials took place at Salem Cemetery in Colma. The records for the period before April 1906 provide a substitute for some of the death records destroyed in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire.

Financial Results for 2018

Revenues for 2018 were just over \$8,900, slightly more than in past years, with about \$5,200 in dues from 229 members, about \$3,400 in donations, and about \$300 in interest and other income. Thank you for your membership dues and donations, which support our activities and those of other groups doing work of great value to you, our members, and to the worldwide Jewish genealogical community.

Expenses totaled about \$9,600, generating a loss of about \$700. This loss was incurred deliberately to make use of our past surpluses and was primarily a result of the \$4,600 in contributions to other groups. Those contributions are described above. Other major categories of expenses were costs of mailing for membership communications and renewals, \$1,600; meetings and publicity, \$1,100; and Web site maintenance and management, \$700. All other expenses, including insurance and other administrative expenses, totaled about \$1,600.

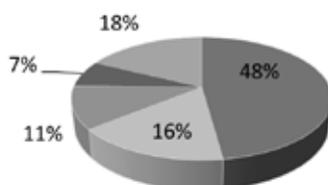
Below are simple pie charts showing the primary categories of revenue and expenses.

We want to thank you for your membership, your donations, and your interest in Jewish genealogy and family history. Please let us know if you have any questions or suggestions to improve our performance and activities, and how we can most effectively help you with your research. Also let us know if there are any projects or activities you would like to see us undertake or support. We look forward to an enlightening and rewarding year in 2019.



SFBAJGS Expense - 2018

- Grants to others
- Meetings & publicity
- Administration & other
- Membership
- Website management



SFBAJGS Revenue - 2018

- Dues
- Donations
- Interest income & other revenue

