



זכרונות *ZichronNote*

The Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

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Yes, she was Jewish!

In the conclusion of her article, Heidi Lyss finds more information that confirms her great-grandmother came from a Jewish family. **See page 5.**

Also in This Issue

- Viewing the Monument**
Beth Galletto 10
- The Youth Ancestral Project at Midrasha**
Hannah Greene 12
- Ensuring Your Genealogical Legacy**
Beth Galletto 14

Departments

- President's Message 2
- Society News 3
- Calendar 4
- Family Finder Update 13



The calendar photograph that helped Beth Galletto find a living relative in Russia (see page 10)

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Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area
Jewish Genealogical Society

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Membership in SFBAJGS is open to anyone interested in Jewish genealogy. Dues are \$23 per calendar year. The Society is tax-exempt pursuant to section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code. Make your check payable to "SFBAJGS" and send to SFBAJGS, Membership, P.O. Box 318214, San Francisco, CA 94131-8214.

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President's Message
Still Fuming

Jeremy Frankel, SFBAJGS President

First of all I want to wish everybody a happy new year and trust everyone is invigorated to start out the new year tackling the challenges of their family genealogy. That said, yes, I'm still "fuming" at the way the Death Master File—or the version of it that we use, the Social Security Death Index—has been treated and our access to it reduced.

For those of you who haven't heard, when the most recent federal budget bill was passed at the end of last year, a small provision was slipped in which prohibits the publication of the last three years of deaths. In other words, once an individual has died, his or her death information won't be added to the SSDI for three years.

Citing a paragraph from the Legal Genealogist (go to <http://www.legalgenealogist.com/blog/2013/12/30/ssdi-access-now-limited/> for the full article):

"The argument was that it would save up to \$60 billion in fraud by preventing identity theft and the filing of false tax returns (and it won't) and that it would raise up to \$500 million in new revenue by requiring those who do get access to the information to pay for a certification program (and it might raise at least some portion of that amount)."

I just cannot believe the utter stupidity of whomever thought this was a good idea and informed our wonderful representatives in Congress to vote for it.

As has been stated a million times, the SSDI when used properly would be a major preventer of fraud. Administrative staff charged with processing various applications and verifying the worthiness of applicants could within 30 seconds check the SSDI and see if a Social Security number had previously been issued.

The other reality is that the whole issue is pure bunkum. The vast, vast majority of individuals who commit crimes of financial fraud do so to obtain a person's credit card and max it out as soon as possible. The last time I checked, not many deceased people own a credit card, let alone use one! How many of the 40 million credit cards which were compromised (okay, hacked) via the Target store computers belong to dead people? Not many!

Of course if the government truly believes in this "three year" rule, why limit it to just the SSDI?! Let's prohibit people from visiting the cemetery where people have been buried for fewer than three years. How about forbidding death notices and obituaries?

Continued on page 11

SOCIETY NEWS

New Members

Diane Lindauer-Levinson . levinsondj@comcast.net
Gary Patou garypatou@sbcglobal.net
Nancy Silverrod nsilverrodg@sonic.net

Updated Member E-mail

Treva Jo Marcus trevajomarcus@gmail.com

In order to continue to receive the SFBAJGS e-zine and *ZichronNote*, please send e-mail updates to newsletter@sfbajgs.org.

Board Election Results

The votes from the board election have been tallied. Ninety-nine valid ballots were received. The results are **Jeremy Frankel**, president; **Janice Sellers**, vice-president; **Jeff Lewy**, treasurer; and **Avner Yonai**, membership. **Shellie Wiener** has been appointed secretary.

Member News

Steve Morse's One-Step Website was ranked #35 on *Genealogy in Time* magazine's Top 100 Genealogy Websites for 2014, moving up from #54 last year: <http://www.genealogyintime.com/articles/top-100-genealogy-websites-of-2014-page02.html>.

Poster Contest for International Jewish Genealogy Month

The purpose of International Jewish Genealogy Month (IJGM) is to help promote and celebrate Jewish family history. IJGM is held during the Hebrew month of Cheshvan, which in 2014 runs from 25 October–22 November. One of the activities is a competition to design the poster used to publicize the event. The winner of the contest wins free registration to the IAJGS annual conference, held this year from 27 July–1 August in Salt Lake City, Utah. Go to <http://www.iajgs.org/jgmonth.html> for more information and for instructions on how to submit your poster idea. Please note that the deadline for the 2014 poster contest is **30 April 2014**.

SFBAJGS on Facebook

SFBAJGS has a Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/San-Francisco-Bay-Area-Jewish-Genealogical-Society/54214774804?ref=ts>. Friend us and visit often for updates between meetings.

We Need Volunteers for the Cemetery Project!

Members of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society have transcribed more than 35,000 cemetery records that have been added to the Jewish Online Worldwide Burial Registry (JOWBR) managed by JewishGen. While we applaud the volunteers who have done this tremendous amount of work, we now have new sets of burial records to transcribe. If you can help, send a message to cemetery@sfbajgs.org.

Seeking Stories for ZichronNote

Have you had a breakthrough in your family research, solved a family mystery through painstaking research, discovered a better way to use resource materials, or walked where your ancestors walked as part of an interesting family history trip? Have you had success or made progress at the Genealogy Clinic with the Mavens?

We want to read about it in *ZichronNote*. Please submit materials to newsletter@sfbajgs.org.

Meeting Times and Locations

Unless otherwise indicated, the SFBAJGS meeting schedule is as follows.

San Francisco: Sunday. Doors open 1:00 p.m. Program begins at 1:30 p.m.

Rhoda Goldman Plaza, 2180 Post Street.

Parking available in Rhoda Goldman Plaza garage with entrance on Sutter Street.

Oakland: Sunday. Doors open 12:30 p.m. Program begins at 1:00 p.m.

Oakland FamilySearch Center, 4766 Lincoln Avenue.

Los Altos Hills: Monday. Doors open 7 p.m. Program begins at 7:30 p.m.

Congregation Beth Am, 26790 Arastradero Road Room 5/6.

See Back Cover for Calendar of Upcoming SFBAJGS Meetings

CALENDAR

Genealogy Events

Local and Regional

Saturday, 15 February 2014. Patricia Burrow, "Creating Family History Reports with Reunion." San Mateo County Genealogical Society. Grace Lutheran Church, 2825 Alameda de las Pulgas, San Mateo. <http://www.smcgs.org/>

Sunday, 16 February 2014. Heidi Lyss, "Writing Family History." Jewish Genealogical Society of Sacramento. Albert Einstein Residence Center, 1935 Wright Street, Sacramento. <http://www.jewishgen.org/jgs-sacramento/>

Tuesday, 18 February 2014. Lewis Ruddick, "California USGenWeb Project." San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society. Danville Family History Center, 2949 Stone Valley Road, Alamo. <http://srvgensoc.org/>

Tuesday, 18 February 2014. Reese Foster, "American Treasures: The United States Presidential Library System." Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society. Cedar Room, Santa Clara City Public Library, 2635 Homestead Road, Santa Clara. <http://www.scchgs.org/main/meeting.html>

Thursday, 20 February 2014. Steve Morse, "From DNA to Genetic Genealogy: Everything You Wanted to Know but Were Afraid to Ask." Napa Valley Genealogical Society. NVGS Library, 1701 Menlo Avenue, Napa. <http://www.napavalleygenealogy.org/programs.html>

Saturday, 22 February 2014. San Joaquin Genealogical Society Family History Seminar. FREE event with four presentations (one by SFBAJGS vice-president Janice Sellers); cosponsored by California State Genealogical Alliance and University of the Pacific. UoP Biological Sciences Building, 3312 North Kensington Way, Stockton. Free door prizes and gifts; preregistration required. <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/san-joaquin-genealogical-society-seminar-tickets-8442029337>

Wednesday, 26 February 2014. Diane Ober, "Seeking My German-Jewish Ancestry." Marin County Genealogical Society. Marin FamilySearch Center, 220 North San Pedro Road, San Rafael. <http://www.maringensoc.org/>

Saturday-Sunday, 1-2 March 2014. San Francisco History Expo. (SFBAJGS will have a table there.) Old Mint, 88 Fifth Street, San Francisco. <http://www.sfhistoryexpo.org/>

Saturday, 22 March 2014. Menlo Park FamilySearch Center Family History Day. (SFBAJGS plans to have a table there.) Menlo Park FamilySearch Center, 1107 Valparaiso Avenue, Menlo Park. <http://www.mpfhc.org/>

Sunday, 20 April 2014. Lynn Brown, "Immigration Records." Jewish Genealogical Society of Sacramento.

Albert Einstein Residence Center, 1935 Wright Street, Sacramento. <http://www.jewishgen.org/jgs-sacramento/>

State and National

Wednesday-Saturday, 7-10 May 2014. National Genealogical Society Annual Conference: Virginia, the First Frontier. Washington, DC. Greater Richmond Convention Center, Richmond, Virginia. <http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/>

Monday-Wednesday, 12-14 May 2014. International Conference on the International Tracing Service Collections and the Holocaust. Washington, DC. <http://www.ushmm.org/research/scholarly-presentations/conferences/the-international-tracing-service-collections-and-holocaust-scholarship>

Sunday-Friday, 27 July-1 August 2014. 34th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. Hilton Salt Lake City Center, Salt Lake City, Utah. <http://conference.iajgs.org/2014/>

Wednesday-Saturday, 27-30 August 2014. Federation of Genealogical Societies Annual Conference: Gone to Texas. Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, 200 East Market Street, San Antonio, Texas. <https://www.fgsconference.org/>

International

12-15 August 2014. FEEFHS Annual Eastern European Research Workshop. Salt Lake City, Utah. <http://www.feefhs.org/conferences.html>

25 October-22 Nov. 2014. International Jewish Genealogy Month. <http://www.iajgs.org/jgmonth.html>

Monday-Friday, 6-10 July 2015. 35th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. Jerusalem, Israel; <http://www.iajgs.org/2015.html>. If you are interested in helping on the organizing committee, fill out the form at <http://goo.gl/zVSSVx>. 

Brainstorming with the Mavens

The San Francisco Jewish Community Library hosts a free genealogy clinic every month (except July and August) from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. Bring copies of family charts, documents, and other information and let experienced SFBAJGS Jewish genealogists help point you in the right direction in your research. 1835 Ellis Street, San Francisco. There is free, secure parking in the building. Call (415) 567-3327 x704 or write library@jewishlearningworks.org for more information.

Upcoming dates:

2 March 2014

6 April 2014

4 May 2014

1 June 2014

Finding Lillian, Hannah, and Dora: The Hidden Jewish Heritage of the Keller Sisters, Part 2

Heidi Lyss

Heidi Lyss delved into the world of genealogical research five years ago, on receiving a book from her father about a distant Swiss relative. She has presented seminars to Northern California genealogical societies on writing family histories and has taught creative writing and English composition at local colleges. Her published pieces include fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, and trade/academic articles. She is a board member of SFBAJGS. The first part of this article appeared in *ZichronNote* Volume XXXIII, Number 3, November 2013.

Upon learning that my great-grandfather had been buried in a Jewish cemetery, I called my mother and brother, who expressed the same fascination and excitement that I felt. And the information continued to flow. I learned of the JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry database and sought Joseph Keller's name there. While I did not find him, I did locate his wife, my great-great-grandmother Rosalia:

KELLER, Rosalia. Date of death: 13-Dec-1901, 64 y. Mountain View Cemetery / First Hebrew Congregation, Oakland, CA / USA.

The date of her death matched the *San Francisco Call* newspaper account. I phoned Mountain View Cemetery and was told to contact Temple Sinai in Oakland about the congregation's Home of Eternity Cemetery. The attendant at Temple Sinai advised me to e-mail the information I had to their business manager. I did so, inquiring about Rosalia, as well as about Hannah, Dora, and Abe Keller and Mamie Keller Izeman. I didn't wait for the response from Temple Sinai, though, to visit the cemetery. My mother and I drove to Oakland and walked the rows of the narrow strip of land that constitutes the First Hebrew Congregation graveyard. Pacing across the grass and reading, we thought, each stone, we somehow missed Rosalia, and I hoped that in the response from Temple Sinai we would learn her plot number. We gave up for the moment and headed next door to the columbarium where my mother's parents, John and Rose, and her grandparents Lillian Keller and Henry rest.

In the Chapel of the Chimes office, we inquired about the other Keller family members. At first the staff seemed disinclined to look up any information since the office's closing time neared, but as we shared a bit of our story, one woman began to express curiosity and went to pull an array of drawers containing typed note cards out of a cabinet in the next room. To our happy surprise, she located information on Dora and Hannah Keller, though Abe and his family remained absent. She didn't look for the Izemans, as we ran out of time and the staff readied to turn off the lights. The rest of the columbarium fortunately remained open.

Chapel of the Chimes leaves me feeling a bit claustrophobic. I don't connect with the stacks

of vaults containing urns, finding myself more comfortable—to the extent one can be—at a traditional burial ground graced with plants and singing birds. We roamed the columbarium corridors, passed trickling fountains, and paid our respects first to my mother's parents, then to Lillian and Henry. Finally we reached Lillian's sisters, Dora and Hannah. True to the affection that my mother remembered them sharing in life, they shared an urn in death. What we didn't expect, however, was to see a second urn placed in the same vault. On it were etched in elaborate letters "Miriam Izeman" and "Ruth Virginia Izeman." The writing appeared in such an ornate form I couldn't in truth be sure I was reading "Miriam"; my mother thought the name read "Marion." Either way, we felt confident that the inscription referred to Mamie. We both experienced surprise at finding Ruth Virginia's name on the urn with her mother and sadness when we saw that Ruth had died at the age of 22, though I had earlier wondered why she showed but a short trail of genealogical records, while I had uncovered many more for her older sister Josephine.

I sent a follow-up e-mail to Temple Sinai, noting that now we sought information only on Rosalia Keller, including her grave location, and possibly her son Abe Keller and his family. The Temple Sinai business manager soon wrote back:

Heidi,

Glad to hear that you located your other relatives. In reviewing our records I find that Roselia Keller is buried at the Home of Eternity Cemetery. She died of Bright's disease on Dec 13, 1901 at the age of 64, sorry no date of birth. Roselia is buried in Grave 280A, Fence Plot.

I do not have records of an Abe/Abraham Keller, but I do have a Joseph Keller buried next to Rosalia. Not much information on Joseph, burial location is Fence Plot, Grave 280 B, date of Funeral Sept 4, 1906. Note on card states he died 10 years prior and was removed from Salt Lake.

I hope this information has been helpful. Good luck on your search and let me know if there is anything more you need from me.

The Temple Sinai business manager contacted the cemetery staff, who kindly offered to mark the graves



*Joseph and Rosalia Keller's tombstone
in Home of Eternity Cemetery*

for us. My mother and I rushed again to Oakland only days before leaving for Thanksgiving in Santa Barbara—a perfect time of year to locate lost family. My brother remained out of town, waiting with curiosity.

We spotted two orange cones marking the grave like gateposts. The text on the stone shared by my great-great-grandparents contained both English and Hebrew lettering. The carving for Joseph, though more recent, appeared more worn, as it faced west and had been eroded by Pacific winds. I traced my fingers along the inscription, able to read the simple English words—“In memory of Joseph Keller Born July 8, 1829. Died Sept. 8, 1895.”—but could not decipher the faint unfamiliar Hebrew letters. The text for Rosalia faces south, and stands sharp and clear:

פן
REST
Our Darling
Mother
ROSALIA
KELLER
Died
Dec. 13, 1901.
Aged, 64 Years.

ת"נ צ"ב"ה

All those years, Rosalia and Joseph Keller lay so close to where my mother regularly rode her bicycle as a girl, close to Fenton's where I went for hot fudge sundaes as a teen. All those years when my grandfather toured the aisles of the nearby Payless seeking bargains, and all those years next door to Chapel of the Chimes, where we had known their daughter Lillian was interred.

We placed stones on Rosalia and Joseph's shared tombstone and left.

Return to Sinai, December 2010

Dawn met me at the doors to the sanctuary of Temple Sinai in Oakland, California and introduced me to her husband, as Rabbi Steven Chester made his way over to us to say hello. I had contacted the First Hebrew Congregation's Shabbat Buddy program to see if I might come to a service and meet someone there who could share more information about the congregation, explaining that my family had likely been members more than 100 years earlier. “Who is here for the first time?” Rabbi Chester asked once we all sat down and he commenced the evening. Dawn assisted up front with the service, and I sat next to her husband, who whispered, “Tell them your story.” So I did. I told the assemblage that I had just discovered part of my family had Jewish heritage, and had participated as members of the synagogue more than a century ago, that my great-great-grandparents were buried in the temple's cemetery, and that I was there to visit the Kellers' one-time congregation. The lights glowed. Rain sheeted down outside, ringing against the roof, and I felt ebullient. The irony struck me: I stood amid a group immersed in Judaism and its traditions, which were new to me, yet mixed with the new I perhaps carried some of those traditions too, and rooted partly in that very congregation.

The Dora Keller who was confirmed in 1900 likely *was* our Dora. Possibly the whole family attended the event, which was held at Temple Sinai's earlier location at Castro and Twelfth in Oakland:

Services at the Jewish Synagogue

The pentecostal services at the First Hebrew congregation's synagogue were of a brilliant character.

...

At the confirmation services the opening address was delivered by Miss Dora Keller. Miss Fannie Silverstein offered the prayer and Miss Lucie Jacobs recited the consecration address. The closing prayer was said by Miss Sadie Ringolsky. Arthur Cerf delivered an address on "Jewish Pride." The subject of Miss Minnie Coffee's address was "Education of the Present Woman."

Rabbi Friedlander conducted the confirmation exercises. Following is the class: Dora Keller, Sadie Ringolsky, Fannie Silverstein, Francis Cohn, Minnie Coffee, Lucie Jacobs, Phil Ringolsky and Arthur Cerf. (*Oakland Tribune*, 5 June 1900).

I wonder if any of the Kellers came to Temple Sinai's current building, erected in 1914. I like to imagine that perhaps they even sat in the same row as I did almost 100 years later.

Piecing the Story Together

Following my discovery, I joined the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogy Society and, with helpful input from the group's expert genealogists, continued my search, assembling a mosaic from a series of clippings and data into the beginnings of a story: Rosalia Pinschower left her home town of Kempen, Prussia—today's Kepno, Poland—in 1861 at the age of about 24. She traveled on the steamship *Hammonia*, sailing from Bremen via Southampton, England, perhaps alone, perhaps with acquaintances, and arrived in New York City eighteen days after the new Confederate government had shelled Fort Sumter and the Civil War had begun. I still do not know how she reached Nevada.

I am not certain when Joseph Keller arrived in the States or reached the West Coast, but he possibly came as early as 1851. A Joseph Keller voyaging by ship disembarked in San Francisco that year, after traveling across Panama by land, though I do not know if this Joseph Keller was our ancestor. Our ancestor may have been the Joseph Keller who, with partner Isaac Cohn, opened a general store and built a silver and gold stamp mill in Dayton, Nevada, just southeast of Virginia City, in 1859. Adolph Sutro later constructed a processor next to their business.

Joseph and Rosalia married in Virginia City according to family lore, and by 1869, with their two eldest daughters, Sarah and Mamie (ages around 5 and 2), Rosalia's likely niece Carrie Pinschower, and another likely family member, Benjamin Keller, moved east in Nevada to catch the beginning of the short-

lived silver boom in Hamilton, a settlement that now appears on lists of Nevada ghost towns. The extraction of riches in Hamilton ebbed quickly due to deceptively shallow silver veins, and the family soon moved to the newly established "Gentile" town of Corinne in the Utah Territory, where Joseph opened a produce business, became a city councilor, and farmed a small property that included a weeping willow tree and a pond with a bridge fondly remembered by both Lillian and Dora in family postcards. Abraham, Hannah, Lillian, and Dora all came into the world in Corinne. As their paths emerged, I puzzled over when and where the three missing children, all who had passed away before 1900, were born and died.

I did find out that the children grew up learning their faith, as suggested in a letter Lillian Keller's then 11–12-year-old sister Mamie wrote to the national Jewish children's paper, the *Sabbath Visitor*:

CORINNE, UTAH, December 8, 1879

DEAR VISITOR – Notwithstanding my sister has left for California, where she will remain for some time, I am determined not to be deprived of your valuable Sabbath-school Visitor, too. I wish I could be somewhere in the States, where I could regularly attend the Sabbath-school. I have no opportunity now, because there are only three families here, and we have no teachers, so I am obliged to be content with your valuable paper.

Your friend,

MAMIE KELLER¹

Several months following the publication of Mamie's letter, it seems her eldest sister remained in California, for Sarah appeared in the 1880 census for Cloverdale in Sonoma County, staying "on a visit" with her "cousin" Simon Pinschower and his wife. Sarah was also the first to move away permanently from the family and the town of Corinne when she married in the 1880's and settled in Idaho.

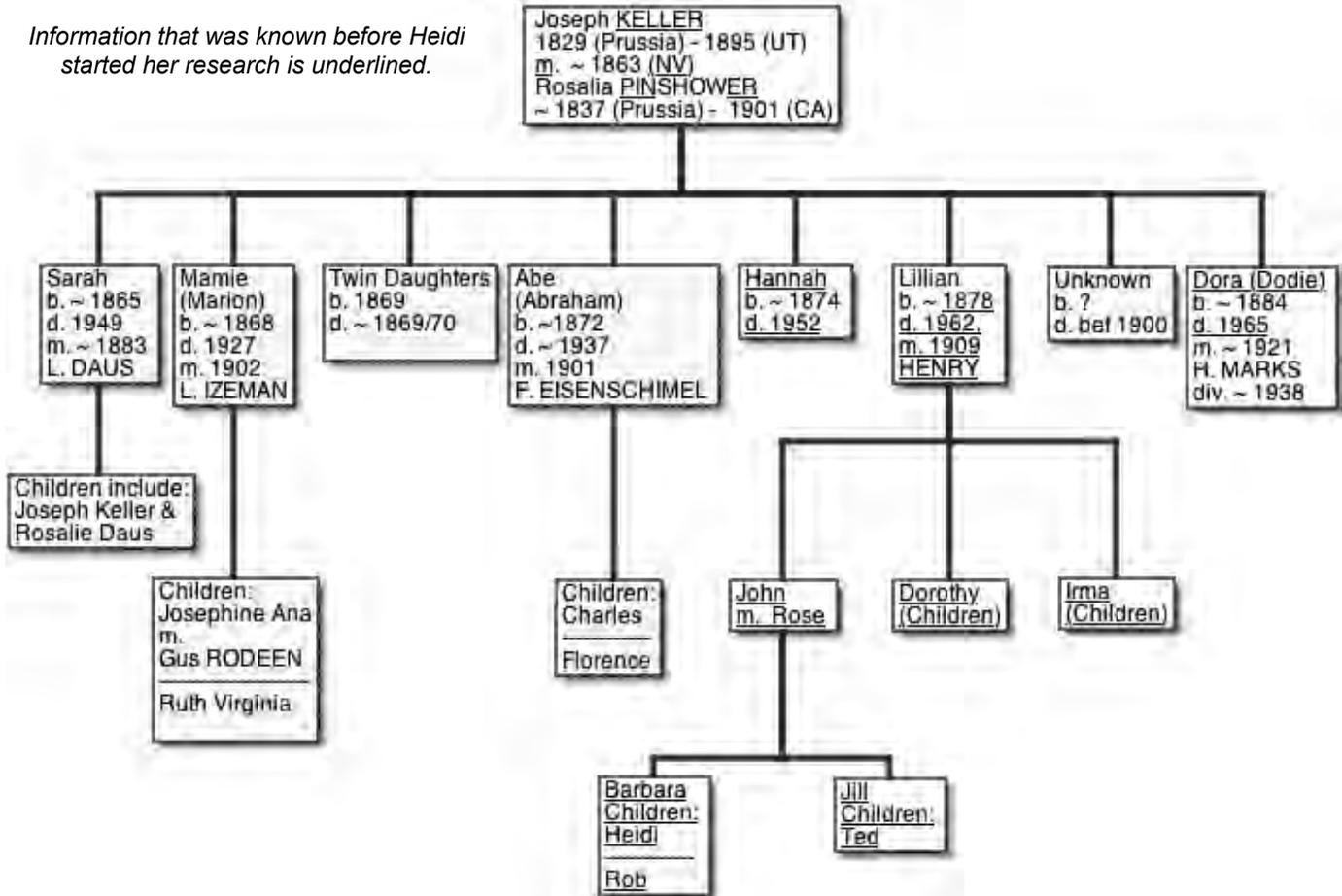
Joseph Keller's 1895 death happened suddenly, per a *Salt Lake Herald* article I found after the *Tribune* piece. Following his death, the family stayed in Corinne for at least two more years, as shown by a letter from Dora to the faraway *San Francisco Call* newspaper:

CORINNE, Utah, March 7, 1897.

Dear Editor: As I have not seen any letter from Corinne yet, I thought I would write. I am a little girl 11 years old, and I enjoy reading the children's page very much. I go to school and am in the seventh grade. I have several pets, a calf, a dog and some lovely pigeons. I must tell you about

Keller Family Post-Research

Information that was known before Heidi started her research is underlined>.



the earthquakes we have been having. A farmer who lives near town saw some smoke rise up into the heavens, and he thought at first it was a sheep camp on fire, and then he discovered that it came out of the lake. The farmer is convinced that it is an active volcano. I fear my letter is getting too long, so I shall close. Hoping to see it in print, I am your little reader,

DORA KELLER.²

I was intrigued to learn that in remote Utah the family read a San Francisco paper.

By 1900, Rosalia and her children had moved to Oakland, California. Other Pinschowers lived in the area, including Rosalia's nephew Simon (still in Cloverdale) whom Sarah had visited in 1880, as well as Rosalia's likely brother, also Simon, who resided in Berkeley with his daughter Carrie Pinschower Abraham and her family. Siblings Simon and Carrie Pinschower, cousins of the Keller sisters, emigrated as children from Kempen, Prussia in 1865 with their mother, traveling to the Bay Area, most likely to join their father Simon.

I still have not learned whether any of Joseph and Rosalia's children, aside from my great-grandmother Lillian, converted to Christian Science. The 1931 funeral records for Ruth Virginia Izeman, Mamie Keller's daughter, were attended to by Dora Keller, then Mrs. Dora Marks (another surprise: my maiden great-grandaunt had married, divorced, and retaken her maiden name before my mother came into the world). The documents note that Ruth had died in the Christian Science "Hospital" in San Francisco, one of two Christian Science sanitariums in the U.S.

And I still don't know why my great-grandmother converted. Perhaps she did so because her husband Henry grew up Christian, though his denomination was Lutheran and he did not practice his religion with as much enthusiasm as she did. Possibly she experienced discrimination, prejudice. Perhaps Lillian's shift derived from a loss of confidence in medical care and an embrace of the Christian Science philosophy regarding using spirituality to heal physical conditions, rather than relying on modern medicine. Rosalia died of Bright's disease, a catch-all term at the time for multiple kidney ailments which were treated by physicians of the era with diuretics,

laxatives, and even bloodletting, possibly creating a skepticism regarding medical treatments on the part of her daughter. Maybe Lillian simply carried a passion for this new faith that she discovered, or perhaps she converted for more than one, or none, of these reasons.

Trail of Postcards

My family's collection of postcards marks the route of a journey Dora undertook four months after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. In August of that year the then 21-year-old woman voyaged by train to Salt Lake City, and then on to Idaho to see her eldest sister, Sarah Keller Daus.

This past May my partner and I drove through the Nevada desert while on a road trip to Chicago. In Wells we turned north toward Twin Falls, Idaho, gradually leaving behind the miles of sagebrush, but even as the landscape shifted and grew more pastoral, I imagined Dora's trip, which had continued into Utah. She would have crossed the glistening white Bonneville salt flats and skimmed above the surface of the turquoise Salt Lake on the then new "Lucin Cutoff" (we have a card marking the dramatic point where the track heads straight toward the water). Arriving in Ogden, she penned and posted a card to each sibling before boarding another train to journey south to Salt Lake City. "In Ogden now, leaving for SLC in a moment. Recognize this scene? Love and kisses, Dora."

After Salt Lake City, Dora's journey took her north to Weiser, Idaho, where the Snake and Weiser rivers meet, for a visit with sister Sarah. She wrote another batch of exuberant postcards, mailed them on 24 August, and returned to San Francisco by the end of the month. She seems to have bypassed Corinne, but I cannot be sure.

On 4 September 1906, about a week after his daughter Dora's return to California, a second funeral was held for Joseph Keller, and his coffin, exhumed from the Jewish cemetery in Salt Lake City, was lowered into the ground in Oakland next to that of his wife, Rosalia. The postcards that remain in our family's hands don't mention the transport of Joseph back to California, yet I suspect Dora made the arrangements on her journey, perhaps aided from afar by brother Abe, who worked for the Southern Pacific Railroad in San Francisco.

Absences and the Quiet of the Past

Mamie, the second eldest of the adult Keller siblings, passed away at about the age of 59 in 1927 at the Oakland home she shared with her husband and two daughters. Her younger daughter, Ruth Virginia, followed her in death a mere four years later, at the

age of 22. Abe Keller died in 1937 or 1938, and Sarah Keller Daus in 1949.

It seemed that silence enshrouded the dead, at least in the presence of my young mother and her sister. I wonder if my great-grandmother and great-grandaunts didn't want to speak of the deceased family members around the children, or if they simply did not open any doors back to the past, even when sitting together, just the three of them.

Return to Nevada

Over the long Independence Day weekend in 2013, my mother, my brother, and I visited the Nevada Historical Society in Reno to search for Kellers and Pinschowers in the Virginia City *Territorial Enterprise* newspaper indices and in other library records. With the aid of knowledgeable staff librarians, we uncovered information regarding two of Rosalia's missing three children. The *Territorial Enterprise* reported the 7 January 1869 birth of twin girls to "the wife of Joseph Keller" in Hamilton, White Pine County. It seems the two girls died sometime between 1869 and mid-1870, as the June 1870 census for the Keller family in Hamilton does not list them.

Later, thanks to the help of staff in the Storey County Recorder's Office, we accessed land records for the Pinschowers in Virginia City, which describe the real estate transactions of Jacob and Regina, Morris, Samuel, and Jonas Pinschower. Though we still haven't identified if or exactly how Rosalia is connected to these Pinschowers, we appreciated learning of the buildings that some of her possible family members owned. According to the Virtual Shtetl Web site (<http://www.sztetl.org.pl/en/>), created by the Warsaw-based Museum of the History of Polish Jews, the majority of Jews living in nearby Carson City in the mid-1800's hailed from the town of Kempen, Prussia, now Kępno, Poland.

A wealth of mining and other historical sights still exist in Virginia City, which at an altitude of 6,000 feet commands a striking view of the valley. We were refreshed during our visit by a robust afternoon breeze. We located the original brick building built by either Morris or Jonas Pinschower in the early 1860's on the main road, creatively called C Street, and though I am not sure of the exact family link, I pictured Rosalia Pinschower Keller walking through the door. The building survived an 1875 fire, unlike most of its neighbors. As Rosalia and Joseph lived in Virginia City in the 1860's at the same time that Samuel Clemens wrote for the *Territorial Enterprise* and adopted the pen name of Mark Twain, I like to think that maybe my great-great-grandparents passed him on the elevated wood plank sidewalks

Continued on page 15

Viewing the Monument

Beth Galleto

Beth Galleto has been working on her family history since a distant cousin made an unexpected visit in 1978 and sketched out a makeshift family tree on a napkin. When not working on genealogy, she is a freelance copywriter and editor. She was formerly the editor of *ZichronNote* and is currently the SFBAJGS Webmaster.

We're on our way to see the monument. There are five of us in the car—two residents of this small Russian city of Pochev, the driver, the interpreter, and me. The two local women are directing the driver to the site, which is not easy to find. It's a hot, humid June day, and the countryside is quiet and peaceful. The trees and vegetation we pass are lush and green.

At last we turn onto a small unpaved road and come to a stop. The surface of the road is rutted and marred with deep holes, and the driver is afraid he will damage the car if he continues, so he parks and we get out and walk. The air smells of rot, and soon we come to its source: a pile of garbage, about four feet across, with greasy papers, putrefying meat, and other decaying residue.

We continue walking, but the faint odor of garbage lingers when we arrive at the monument. In the distance a house or barn is barely visible between large sheltering trees. The site is surrounded by weeds reaching above my waist, some of which sting and raise painful red welts on my skin when my hand brushes them. The monument itself is enclosed in a metal railing, but someone has managed to leave two large wreaths of artificial flowers at its base, one purple and pink and the other blue.

The monument is about four feet tall, in two sections of some sort of dark stone. It looks, appropriately, like a large gravestone. It sits on a concrete block atop a pedestal, about ten feet wide at its base, composed of two stair steps that appear to be tiled with marble. The monument's inscription, in Hebrew on the larger top section and in Russian on the bottom section, says that on 16 and 17 March 1942, 1,846 Jews were murdered on this site by Nazis.

On those days in March more than 70 years ago, snow probably remained on the still frozen ground. If the murder squads followed their usual pattern, they transported their victims in trucks to the killing site. There they made them take off their clothes and forced them to the edge of the ditch into which their bodies fell after they were machine-gunned.

I imagine the shock of cold air on their skin, the feeling of shame and humiliation at being naked in public, the confused clamor of barking dogs, shouting men, screaming victims, and constant loud gun fire, the sense of "No, no, this can't be happening!", and the overwhelming terror at being forced to the edge of the pit.

Among the 1,846 men, women, and children were brothers and sisters, nieces and nephews of my grandparents, my mother's relatives whom she never knew.

Located near Russia's western border, Pochev was an obstacle for the Germans in their plans to capture Moscow. A translation of a Russian-published history book says that Pochev's citizens put up a fierce fight against the German invaders. Among its defenses, an antitank ditch was constructed on the outskirts of the city.

When Pochev fell in August 1941 it was hard for all its citizens, but particularly for those of Jewish ethnicity, the book continues. They had to go through special registration and wear a yellow six-pointed star. In November all the Jews living in the area were arrested and sent to two ghettos: Women and children were kept in the former poultry processing plant, and men and boys older than 14 were in a former school. During the winter, the working-age population of both ghettos were forced to perform slave labor. Then, during two days in March, 1,846 Jews were killed in the antitank ditch. "After the





Marina and Beth in Bryansk

liberation of the city, a monument was erected on the mass grave,” the book says.

A day before my trip to Pochev I had met with the rabbi of the growing Jewish community in Bryansk, the provincial capital, a city about 70 miles away over badly paved roads. Among other things he showed me a 2012 calendar published by the community, with each month illustrated by old photos from the turn of the 20th century and even earlier. When I arrived at the month of July, I found myself staring at a photo of my great-grandparents, my grandmother’s parents from Pochev. I recognized the photo because a copy was in the cherished collection my grandmother kept to remind her of the family from which she had parted in 1911 after she married and left for the United States with her new husband. It shows my grandmother’s parents sometime in the 1930’s, posing stiffly in chairs in a garden in what is now Israel, where they spent their final years.

“How did you get this photo?” I asked eagerly. The rabbi told me that one of his flock, a woman named Marina, had provided it for the calendar. He gave me her contact information, and the next day I asked my interpreter to set up an appointment with her.

We meet in Marina’s apartment after my return from Pochev. The apartment is in a stark Soviet-style apartment block, but inside it is furnished cozily with leather armchairs, old armoires, and other beautiful polished wood furniture. In Russian style, Marina offers us refreshments: bread spread with butter and layered with red caviar, triangles of pastry stuffed with cheese, chocolates, and a good white wine to drink a toast. She knows less than I do about the family and hadn’t known exactly who the people in her photo were. With the help of the interpreter we establish that the man in the photo, my great-grandfather, was a brother of her great-

great-grandfather. Or, to put it more simply, she is my third cousin once removed.

During the war her family was evacuated to the Ural Mountains, more than 1,000 miles east in the Russian interior. Later they were able to return to Bryansk. Marina is married and has two grown children. She works in a photography shop, and she gives me photos of her family that she has copied.

I ask the interpreter to take a photo of Marina and me in her apartment, and in my hotel room I e-mail it to members of my family back home in the U.S. My sister writes back, “I see a family resemblance.” Introducing Marina to my family is a small victory.



The Galitzianer **Request for Submissions**

The Galitzianer is the quarterly journal of Gesher Galicia. Submissions may be articles and/or graphics, both original and previously published, relevant to Jewish genealogical research in Galicia: articles about recent trips to Galicia, reports on your own research, research techniques, historical and recent pictures relevant to these matters, lists, book reviews, etc.

Electronic submissions are preferred, though not required. Submissions are accepted from both members and nonmembers of Gesher Galicia.

Though submissions are accepted year-round, the deadline for the June 2014 issue is **15 May 2014**. To send a submission, or if you have any questions, contact Janice Sellers at janicemsj@gmail.com. For more information see <http://www.geshergalicia.org/newsletter.html>.

President’s Message, continued from page 2

As we say in England, anyone with a bit of “common” can figure out the life and family of an individual and pose as him when “phishing” for information. Just recently I bumped into a police officer who had a last name I was familiar with. All I knew was his last name, the initial letter of his first name, and the fact he was a police officer. I was able to research him and his family and go back five generations on his Jewish side and three on his Italian side! As I said at the beginning—I’m still fuming at the stupidity of it all.

Not wanting to end on a down note, I do want to let you know that we have yet another wonderful year of presentations planned for you, so do check out our online calendar, mark your diaries, and bring a friend or two. Also, we had a good response to my request for volunteers to assist with our participation on the JOWBR [Jewish Online Worldwide Burial Registry] project. Thank you, Judith and Fred!



The Youth Ancestral Project at Midrasha

Hannah Greene

Hannah Greene lives in Oakland and serves as Communications Manager in the office of Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson. A native of the Boston area, Hannah moved to the Bay Area ten years ago for graduate study in music history at UC Berkeley. She serves in a volunteer capacity on several educational and political nonprofit boards and enjoys hiking, singing, and practicing meditation in her free time.

In a small classroom on the second floor of Congregation Beth El in Berkeley, a handful of students and a local genealogist pored over photocopied sheets of old census records, searching for clues about their ancestors. The class was part of the Youth Ancestral Project, a program initiated by Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson in February 2011 to empower youth to connect with their ancestral roots through intergenerational dialogue, research, and storytelling.

“When I looked into my family history, it gave me a deeper appreciation for what my parents and grandparents went through in their journey out of the South,” shared Supervisor Carson. “I wanted youth in Alameda County to have that same chance to connect with a deeper sense of who we are, that we’re not just from West Oakland or East Oakland or Berkeley.”

In September 2012 the project came to Berkeley Midrasha, a weekend educational program for 8th–12th graders cosponsored by Congregation Beth El and nine other synagogues. Janice M. Sellers, an Oakland resident and expert in Jewish genealogy, led students in weekly explorations of the meaning of family; interviewing and research skills; and personal identity in the multicultural, religiously diverse Bay Area.

By chance, each student who participated in the class had one Jewish parent and one non-Jewish parent. The youth were encouraged to investigate a branch of their family or a particular relative who piqued their interest.

Theo, a tall 8th grader with sandy blond hair and a big smile, gleefully reported in the first session that his great-great-aunt on his mother’s Russian Jewish side was a KGB spy. His goal was to learn about “more cool people” in his mother’s family and also in his father’s family tree, which is mostly Catholic. Theo knew that on his father’s side his eighth-great-grandfather was Dr. Benjamin Rush, a physician, writer, and educator who signed the Declaration of Independence, attended the Continental Congress, and spoke out against slavery.



Theo decided to find out more about Freeman Rush, a relative who fought in the Civil War and escaped from a Southern encampment. Through family interviews and Internet research, Theo discovered that Freeman was born in 1846, died in 1925, and joined the Union Army at the age of 15. On May 4, 1865, his regiment was captured in Louisiana. Freeman later escaped to Alexandria, Virginia.

“Where was he born?” asked Janice during a report session. “I don’t know,” confessed Theo, prompting a lesson about where to look for vital statistics. Janice explained that the decennial census, military records of pensioners, and birth and death indices all contain nuggets of information that can help researchers create a more complete picture of an ancestor’s life.

In a session devoted to Internet research, soft-spoken 9th grader Zach sat down at the computer and typed in the name of his maternal grandmother, Jane Barthold. In the California Birth Index, a record popped up for Jane Scott Barthold, a woman born in San Francisco in 1938. Although the listed day of her birth was a few days off from the date Zach was given by his mother, he thought he might have found his grandmother. Zach then tried finding her on the 1940 census, with no luck. “Maybe she doesn’t exist!” he joked. She might have been missed by the enumerators or her name could have been misspelled, explained Janice.



Zach moved on to search for his maternal grandfather, James Edward Severns. He discovered some new information from the census. James’ father, Edgar Severns, was born in 1903 in Illinois, had finished four years of college, and was employed as a public accountant. James’ mother, Elner Youse, was born in 1904 in California and received a high school education. In conversations with his father, Zach learned for the first time that his Jewish relatives emigrated from Belarus and his grandfather worked for Ford at a factory in Michigan.

In the closing session, Zach reported that he had learned he could visit the Oakland History Room at the Oakland Public Library to dig deeper into his family story. “Are there apps for genealogy?” he

asked. Janice and Project Coordinator Nicka Smith smiled and answered, “Oh, yes!”

“This class got the students thinking about family, so now they are more interested in learning stories from family members and in passing on those stories,” remarked Janice. “The research got conversations going between younger and older generations and made them more curious about their heritage.”

The Youth Ancestral Project started during Black History Month in 2011 and then expanded to reach youth in the Jewish, Asian, and Latino communities, as well as youth who participate in the Alameda County Probation Department’s Weekend Training Academy and the Beyond Emancipation program for

former foster youth. In 2012–2013, the project was managed by Alternatives in Action with funding from the Alameda County Health Care Services Agency School Health Services Coalition. Expert support has come from staff and volunteer genealogists from the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California, the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society, the California Genealogical Society, and the Oakland FamilySearch Library.

More than 300 East Bay youth have been touched by the Youth Ancestral Project, inspiring intergenerational dialogue, increased self-esteem, and a deeper sense of family identity. For more information about the project, please visit <http://keithcarson.org/Education>.



SFBAJGS Family Finder Update

The surnames and towns being researched by our newest members are listed below. This database is maintained for the benefit of our membership. If you have a correction or update, please write to SFBAJGS at P.O. Box 318214, San Francisco, CA 94131-8214.

Surname	Town, Country	Member
Baum	Wyszogrod, Piaseczno, Nadarzyn	Gary Patou
Bresler	Wyszogrod, Piaseczno, Nadarzyn	Gary Patou
Cerchuk/Szerchuk	Russia/Poland	Nancy Silverrod
Cherin	Minsk; Pinsk; Freehold, NJ	Nancy Silverrod
Dajdel	Wyszogrod, Piaseczno, Nadarzyn	Gary Patou
Davids	Amsterdam, Rotterdam Germany	Gary Patou
Dreyfus	Alsace	Diane Lindauer-Levinson
Fischer	Przysucha, Sulejow	Gary Patou
Fromet	Amsterdam, Rotterdam Germany	Gary Patou
Gompers	Amsterdam, Rotterdam Germany	Gary Patou
Hajler	Przysucha, Sulejow	Gary Patou
Hirsch	Kiev	Nancy Silverrod
Joseph	Amsterdam, Rotterdam Germany	Gary Patou
Jakubowicz	Zgierz	Gary Patou
Kerszberg	Wyszogrod, Piaseczno, Nadarzyn	Gary Patou
Kopff	Kiev, Chicago, Colorado (Denver, Cripple Creek)	Nancy Silverrod
Krygier	Wyszogrod, Piaseczno, Nadarzyn	Gary Patou
Leib/Levie	Amsterdam, Rotterdam Germany	Gary Patou
Mednikopff/Mednikov	Kiev	Nancy Silverrod
Meijer	Amsterdam, Rotterdam Germany	Gary Patou
Mozes	Amsterdam, Rotterdam Germany	Gary Patou
Pasamonik	Wyszogrod, Piaseczno, Nadarzyn	Gary Patou
Sandel	Amsterdam, Rotterdam Germany	Gary Patou
Sharkovich	Anyksciai Ukmerge, Kovno, Vilna, Es'mony	Gary Patou
Stokvis	Amsterdam, Rotterdam Germany	Gary Patou
Szczerba	Pajeczno	Gary Patou
Szlamowicz	Przysucha, Sulejow	Gary Patou
Uri	Alsace-Lorraine	Diane Lindauer-Levinson
Volpe	Kaunas	Diane Lindauer-Levinson
Wolkowicz	Przysucha, Sulejow	Gary Patou
Zatalovsky/Zatalovsky	Kiev, Ukraine in general	Nancy Silverrod

Ensuring Your Genealogical Legacy

Beth Galleto

What's the difference between a hoarder and a genealogist? This is not a joke. I have a vision of my daughter, after my death, gazing in dismay at all my genealogy files, piles, boxes, and notebooks, throwing her hands in the air—and then throwing most of my precious (to me but not to her) stuff into big black plastic garbage bags to be hauled to the dump.

And why wouldn't she? If I have not made clear what things are important and why—and what should be done with them—she will have no way to distinguish trash from treasure.

This was the problem addressed by Patricia Burrow in her presentation on 12 January at Rhoda Goldman Plaza in San Francisco. She asked us, her audience, to put ourselves in the place of the person who will be going through our things after we are gone, trying to decide what to save and what to discard. She has clearly thought a lot about this problem and has come up with many practical common-sense solutions.

Her first suggestion was to publish your research. She noted that the work doesn't have to be finished (which, if you are like me, it may never be). You can publish something as simple as a collection of family group charts. Then send your published product to family members. Sending family stories to the younger generation may get them interested in genealogy.

Burrow's guiding principle is to make clear how important your materials are by labeling and explaining them. After years of research you know where each name fits in the family tree and who

most of the photos are, but you may be the only person who does. Burrow advised us to organize for the eyes of a stranger. Place an introductory letter in each file, box, and notebook explaining what the material is and how it fits into the entire collection.

When writing a will you must designate an executor. Burrow suggested that your will should also name a genealogy executor. "This person is not expected to finish your work, but to ensure the documents live for future generations to know about," she said. In addition you can set aside money for sorting, organizing, and distributing your research.

If your family members have not shown much interest in preserving your research, find other people or organizations to whom it can be distributed, and contact them to make sure they will accept your materials. In a hand-out Burrow listed some places where family history materials may be donated, such as the Daughters of the American Revolution Library, New England Genealogical Society, and—perhaps more relevant to a Jewish audience—state and county genealogical societies. For example, since both sides of my family ended up in Nebraska after immigrating to this country, I should find out whether historical societies in that state are interested in my materials. If they are, I should specify this distribution in my will. *[Editor: Again relevant to a Jewish audience, recently announced was the new Leslie Caplan repository for important Jewish genealogical papers and records, located at the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People in Jerusalem. For more information write to Director Ami Elyasaf at director@ijg.org.]*

Another suggestion was to put together a "drop dead" book. This should include an explanation of your materials in each of five categories: digital files, paper and binders, photos, books, and memorabilia. Her presentation also included discussions of ways to preserve, organize, and back up all these types of materials, and how to note their importance for your survivors.

Burrow demonstrated her own organization by offering handouts, including an outline of her presentation, sources for materials to preserve your documents and photos, and sample documents, such as a codicil for your will.

If you missed this informative presentation, you have another chance. Patricia Burrow is scheduled to make the presentation again at Congregation Beth Am in Los Altos Hills on Monday, 16 June.



Finding Lillian, Hannah, and Dora, continued from page 9

to think that maybe my great-great-grandparents passed him on the elevated wood plank sidewalks from time to time or perhaps even knew him. Joseph Goodman, the owner and editor of the paper and a good friend of Twain, was Jewish, so perhaps this imagining amounts to more than just whimsy.

For now I carry on with research, stepping backward and forward in time, trying to identify more ancestors and descendants of Rosalia and Joseph to add more stones to our family mosaic and construct a fuller picture of our Jewish heritage. The process continues, as all our genealogical work does, as we brush away the dust of the past and shine light on the hidden.

Endnotes

1. Kaplan, Rochelle. "Utah's Jewish History, Part 2: Corinne." *Atsmi Uvsari*, Winter 2007, #18, page 7. Utah Jewish Genealogical Society.
2. *San Francisco Call*, 21 March 1897, 81, Number 111: 26 (via California Digital Newspaper Collection, <http://cdnc.ucr.edu/>, University of California, Riverside).



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Calendar of Upcoming SFBAJGS Events

Sunday, 9 February, Oakland: *The Changing Borders of Eastern Europe.* Steve Danko will discuss the historically shifting borders in Eastern Europe and how they affect your research.

Sunday, 23 February, Oakland: *Prussian Poland and Its Jews.* Roger Lustig of the German SIG will talk about the history of Jews in Prussia and the resources available for researching them.

Monday, 24 February, Los Altos Hills: *A Hundred Germanies, a Hundred Jewish Histories.* Roger Lustig will cover where the larger Jewish congregations and communities were in Germany and which states had jurisdiction over them.

Sunday, 30 March, San Francisco: *The Łódź Jewish Community and Its Diaspora: A Historical Perspective.* Łódź was the center of the industrial revolution in Russian Poland and one of the textile hubs of the larger Russian empire. This talk focuses on the historical development of the city of Łódź and the circumstances which led some of its Jewish inhabitants to leave for the United States and Canada.

Monday, 7 April, Los Altos Hills: *Digging into Family Roots and Discovering a Live Branch That Survived the Holocaust.* Shlomo Rosenfeld used addresses from old letters, ghetto records, and Yad Vashem Pages of Testimony to find living relatives who survived the Holocaust.

Sunday, 27 April, Oakland: *Greek Jewry and the Little Shul That Could.* Jim Mavrikios will discuss the history of Kehila Kadosha Janina, the Greek synagogue in New York City, and of the Romaniote Jews of Greece.

Also see pages 3 and 4. For more program information visit <http://www.sfbajgs.org/>.
