

CHAI

From Colorado

Summer 2005

Jewish Genealogical Society of Colorado

Preserving Your Family Records

Last month, I attended a workshop conducted at the National Archives on "Preserving Your Family History Records." Conducted by Linda A. Blaser, a National Preservation Officer for Regional Records, I garnered useful tidbits to store and maintain materials made from paper, film, and CDs.

The critical factors to be wary of are temperature, relative humidity, light exposure, water damage and pests.

In terms of photo problems, there can be many including poor original processing, fading of colors, silvering, or yellowing of color and paper. The best thing to do is to scan or digitize all older photos before the original is gone. You shouldn't write on photos. Pencil fades and brown ink smears because its made of iron.

Linda explained that photo albums come in many forms including the old black paper album where the paper was acidic and there were adhesive problems. Those pictures attached with paper photo corners often become detached and valuable photos can be lost as a result. Adhesives should be made of a starch paste like wheat to avoid this or made of plastic such as polyester or polypropylene. There are also "archival adhesives" on the market from professional distributors such as Gaylord.com.

Another common display is the magnetic album where the plastic sheet often sticks to pages making the removal of photos impossible. One useful suggestion was to put the entire album into a Ziploc bag and then into the freezer. The cold may possibly release the photos without further damage. With many of the plastic sleeve type albums, the plastic itself is acidic and will damage the pictures.

Best practices in photo storage include using an acid and lignin free album or archival plastic sleeves. continued-

Founded in 1995, the Jewish Genealogical Society of Colorado is a member of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies, a nonprofit organization with 76 member societies in 16 countries. Membership is open to anyone interested in researching Jewish roots. Guests are welcome at monthly meetings.

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**Contributing
articles are
welcome!**

Preserving Your Family Records (-continued)

A note about film. In the 1920's and 1930's, film was made of nitrate or acetate, which smells like vinegar. These are flammable materials and deteriorate. Store color film in a 30-35 degree freezer.

For matting and framing, Linda recommended choosing acid free mats, rag or lignin free board, and hinging properly. Using the right mat can eliminate mat burn, which is often visible after only twelve years.

In order to preserve original or out-of-print books to retain their value and format, you might want to wrap them in Mylar, Melinex, polyester or polypropylene plastic or place them in an airtight box. You can create your own box for this purpose and leave the spine visible to read the title. When you store books, shelve your books according to size to support one another and to avoid temperature and relative humidity fluctuations. Shelves should not be wood as the wood could be acidic and bookshelves should be protected from ultra violet light. A layer of plastic could be placed between wood shelves and books for protection.

When storing loose papers or documents, use acid free folders or document boxes. Make sure the folder is larger than the document. Remove any and all acid free wrappers and housings immediately as these are destroying them! Oversized records such as maps can be rolled into acid free or lignin free tubes. If you have mold, freezing will kill it and then vacuum it off delicately.

For CDs, store them flat and get polypropylene CD covers to prolong their life which is only estimated to be 80-100 years.

Make copies of your most valuable documents now and move those copies offsite in case of a fire or flood.

If in doubt about storage of your valuable family materials or if you want professional assistance in restoring a damaged item, contact the American Institute for Conservation for a list of conservators in your area. They are located in Washington, DC at (202) 452-9545 or info@aic-faic.org. Most local libraries also have conservators on staff including the Jefferson County Public Library in Lakewood.

Many FAQs regarding preservation including standards for digitization are available online through NARA at <http://www.archives.gov/preservation/index.html>.

US Holocaust Memorial Museum Filming in Ukraine

The United States Holocaust Museum is filming records relevant to the Holocaust in Ukraine. It is based on an agreement signed in 2000 between the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine and the Museum. Now additional archives in Ukraine have agreed to cooperate with the Museum. These include the Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine (Lviv); the State Archive in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea; State Archives of Vinnytsya, Transcarpathian, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kyiv, and Chernivtsi oblasts. The Museum's proposition for cooperation is currently being considered by the management of the State Archive of Khmelnytsky Oblast. Information can be found at <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Eng/News/pr-2005.03.php#Top>

Project Hopes To Trace Ancestors Back 10,000 Years

National Geographic and IBM are embarking on a landmark, five-year study that will map how mankind populated the Earth. It is the most ambitious genetic anthropology research initiative ever.

The Genographic Project will use sophisticated computer analysis of DNA contributed by hundreds of thousands of people - including indigenous populations and the general public - to reveal mankind's migratory history and to better understand the connections and differences that make up the human species.

Purchase a Participation Kit for \$99.95 from www.nationalgeographic.com/genographic, submit your own cheek swab sample, and track the progress of the project as well as learn about your own journey and migratory history. Personal results will be stored securely and anonymously. Tests will only be used for nonmedical analysis.

The money raised from the sale of kits will be used to finance research on indigenous populations, and a portion will go to a fund that preserves their culture.

A Class Action Settlement Could Affect Jewish Hungarian Victims of Nazi Persecution and their Heirs as advertised in the WSJ May 2, 2005

A Settlement of a pending lawsuit could affect you if you or your relative might have had property on the Hungarian Gold Train. If the Settlement is approved and you qualify, you may be able to apply for assistance from Jewish social service agencies. Or, you can object to the Settlement by informing the Court of your objections. Or, if you choose, you can exclude yourself from the Settlement altogether.

The Hungarian Gold Train consisted of twenty-four freight cars containing personal property seized by the Hungarian government during World War II from Hungarian Jews, which was taken into U.S. custody in May 1945 in Austria. The U.S. has agreed to handle claims that it mishandled this personal property.

Any communication related to this Settlement - comment, objection, exclusion request - must be in writing, postmarked no later than August 1, 2005 and conform to specific Court requirement. Full terms of this Settlement appear online at www.HungarianGoldTrain.org. Email Class Counsel at brent@hbsslaw.com or call 1-800-562-0831.

A JGSCO Time Capsule by Myndel Cohen

Time: June, 1999

Place: Temple Emanuel

"Congratulations on becoming the second president of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Colorado" said outgoing president Sandy Greenberg. "Whatever did I get myself into?" I replied.

For the next six years I would have the pleasure of leading an exciting group of Jewish Genealogists who want to be part of the research process.

Many of these early members continue to take an active role within the group as officers, board members, volunteers and meeting attendees.

We hunt and search and scratch trying to find that missing link that would perhaps solve all of our genealogy dilemmas. Just one more great grandfather or shtetl name or marriage license.

We learn some European geography, we learn about the National Archives and about the Family History Centers. And that is only the beginning. Many of our members attend international conferences and relay information to the group.

JGSCO recognizes its responsibilities to the Jewish Community by supporting an outreach program, by sharing its top notch library collection, and its moral and historical obligations by indexing the JCRS records.

Our monthly programs are presented by both professionals and very well informed amateurs with extensive knowledge.

My house has been home to the monthly, very well attended, board meetings and JGSCO needs additional board members who can attend one monthly morning meeting. Can I count on you?

As past president, I will continue to serve on the board helping to make the Jewish Genealogical Society of Colorado a premier organization.

I will just say thank you for the joy these past six years have given me.

I'm not going away and I hope you aren't either and we will have many happy researching years together.

Best wishes to Anne Fendrich on her new role as president!

JGSCO Book News by Sandra A. Greenberg, JGSCO Librarian, sangreenb@aol.com
Our newest book is "Genealogical Gazetteer of the Kingdom of Hungary" by Jordan Auslander and published by Avotaynu. It has information about more than 12,000 towns including regions of Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovak Republic and Ukraine. These towns were all within the 19th century borders of the Kingdom of Hungary. We have also renewed our subscription to the Avotaynu journal and have many back issues available. New issues will continue four times a year. Within the past year we have acquired many new books that will help you in your personal genealogy. These books and materials are all listed on our JGSCO website and available at our JGSCO library collection held at the Temple Emanuel library. You won't be disappointed!

A Call To Action

by JGSCO Vice President Ted Ruskin

As has been said, and even sung, for many years, the Jewish experience has been expressed by the word "tradition". And because of tradition, the future of Judaism is not in question.

One way of connecting today's Jewish experience with that of the past is in the collection of information about those who preceded us. By learning their names, the pertinent facts of their lives and delving into the records of other lives or their circumstances and time period, we can get some idea of how they may have influenced our lives today.

Tracing one's familial roots can be an exciting and educationally rewarding activity for adults, children, and, very often, entire families. It is best to begin, with the present intergenerational family, gathering oral histories, sometimes taping or videotaping interviews, searching family stories for clues of the past generations.

As a board member of both the Rocky Mountain Historical Society - Ira M. Beck Archives and the Jewish Genealogical Society of Colorado, I'm concerned that vital family histories be kept alive for future generations.

It is not too late. I urge that public, private and religious schools within our Rocky Mountain region make the preservation of family history part of their curriculum.

Volunteers from the boards and memberships of the above mentioned organizations are willing to help train families, groups and individuals in the initial steps toward making family members of the past come alive and make family history an important source of pride for those who follow.

Ted Ruskin
Board Member
Rocky Mountain Jewish Historical Society -
Ira M. Beck Archives
and Jewish Genealogical Society of Colorado

JGSCO Spring Meeting Roundup

In April, guest speaker Tim Ostwald lectured on "Writing A More Readable Family History." Tim provided useful suggestions for producing family history books from popular genealogy software.

At the May meeting, JGS member Ed Richard told us about how he successfully researched his German Jewish ancestry.

The June JGS Colorado meeting was the annual installation of new officers and sharing of member success stories. One success involved a new member visiting Warsaw and learning about indices to early 1800's records held at the Warsaw State Archives as well as obtaining "survivor cards" through Yale Reisner at the Jewish Historical Institute. These are indexed online.

JCRS

I found my relative (Joseph Loebel) in the index of patient records at the Jewish Consumptives' Relief Society. That was exciting. It gave me yet another spelling of Lobel. I talked with Thyria Wilson at DU today about getting a copy of his records. She said that they now ask for a \$30 donation to the Rocky Mtn Jewish Historical Society. So it is no longer free to get the files.

I will be most interested to see what his file contains.

Bunnie Welch
JGSCO Member

Polish Declarations of Admiration and Friendship for the United States

is a presentation of the first 13 manuscript volumes of a larger collection of 111 volumes compiled in Poland in 1926 and delivered to President Calvin Coolidge at the White House to honor the 150th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

More than an impressive artifact, the collection is an important, largely unexplored primary source for genealogical, historical, and sociological research for it includes the signatures of nearly one-sixth of the population of Poland as it existed in 1926. The entries are from hundreds of elementary and secondary schools throughout Poland, including shtetlach in former Galicia that were part of Poland in the inter-war years. Every town, every village, every shtetl that had an elementary school is represented. Every pupil in every class signed his/her name. The digitalized secondary school volumes can be seen at: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/european/egwinv/egwdir.html>.

This searchable online presentation is a complete facsimile of the six oversized presentation volumes and the seven volumes of secondary school signatures. Researchers are now able to search by keyword (English or Polish without diacritics) and locate information about particular villages, cities, districts, provinces, institutions, or organizations.

There are no plans to digitize the primary school volumes but they have been catalogued and indexed and copies for shtetl entries can be ordered. You can contact Ron Bachman for further details and for help in navigating the website. His e-mail address is rbac@loc.gov.

FGS Conference in Salt Lake City September 7-10, 2005

The Federation of Genealogical Societies and the Utah Genealogical Society offer "Reminders of the Past; Visions for the Future" a conference for the Nation's Genealogists September 7-10, 2005 at the Salt Palace Convention Center, Salt Lake City, Utah.

The annual FGS conference is being held in The major destination for the family history researcher, Salt Lake City, home of the Family History Library. The location of this conference provides conference attendees with a not to be missed combination of top-notch genealogical lectures within walking distance of an unsurpassed genealogical treasure trove.

For those who just cannot get enough genealogy, there is an added bonus: The Family History Library will be offering extended hours during the conference!

The conference venue is just a few blocks from the Family History Library. The exhibit/vendor hall will be in the conference center, offering the newest genealogical products, demonstrations of some of the newest software, books, preservation products and much, much more. There are luncheons, dinners, and a banquet for sustenance and opportunities to meet "living people" in between looking for dead ones.

Registration brochures for the conference can be obtained by visiting the Federation of Genealogical Societies website www.fgs.org, calling the Federation office; 1-888-FGS-1500; emailing FGS at fgs-office@fgs.org; or by writing: Federation of Genealogical Societies, PO Box 200940, Austin, TX 78720-0940.

The Cantonists: The Jewish Children's Army of the Tsar

A book by local author Larry Domnitch published in 2004 by Devora Publishing

The Cantonist era was a terrifying episode in Jewish history, and one that is etched in the collective memory of the Jewish people. Tsar Nicholas of Russia conscripted thousands of Jewish children - some as young as 6 years old - into his army for up to 25 years!

The Tsar's declared goal was nothing less than to convert these children to Christianity; for him, their baptism was of the highest priority.

This book reveals the struggle of these youngsters to maintain their Judaism against impossible odds. Many failed. But some, like Golda Meir's grandfather, succeeded in reclaiming their heritage and reconnecting the chain of Jewish tradition. Today, thousands of Jews are descendants of those stalwart Cantonists.

Here, for the first time, are dozens of previously untold accounts gleaned from the recently revealed records of that tragic era. They include true stories of parents who had their sons maimed to avoid the draft, of families betrayed by people they trusted, and of sons lost to their families and communities forever.

In a short appendix at the end of the book, the author has included a number of important documents of that tragic period, including "The Imperial Command for Baptism," "Penalties for the Family and Community of a Self-Mutilator," and "The Inductee's Oath."

Larry Domnitch has degrees in both political science and Jewish history. He writes extensively for newspapers and journals throughout the United States and Israel, especially about this unique period of history.

Editor's Note: My great great grandfather Avraham "Alter Soldat" (The Old Soldier) Karger was a Cantonist. Family lore says that he had an amulet sewn into his clothing that gave him strength to resist conversion. Not only did he remain a Jew, but after he completed his service, another bubbe meiser says that he actually convinced a fellow Cantonist who had converted to Christianity to return to Judaism.

Pikes Peak Genealogical Society Presents A One-Day Seminar "Genealogy Beyond the Internet" September 17, 2005 9am-4pm

The Pikes Peak Genealogical Society and the Pikes Peak Library District present "Genealogy Beyond the Internet" featuring nationally recognized speakers Sharon DeBartolo Carmack and James W. Warren. The pre-registration cost is \$30 and includes a luncheon meal and four lectures including "Family History Beyond the Internet: Taking the Next Steps," "The Silent Woman: Bringing a Name to Life," "Taxes, Trials and Tribulations: The Basics of Combing County Courthouses," and "Cryptic Clues in the Bone Yard." For more information or to register, call Ruth Christian at (719) 481-2875 or Melba Mayall at (719) 633-7558.

JGS of Colorado
1819 S. Kearny St.
Denver, CO 80224
www.jewishgen.org/jgs-colorado/

Welcome to our newest JGSCO members!

Margaret Hall, Monument
Cynthia Hirsch, Superior
Eleanor Judd, Denver
Rosalie Richter, Englewood
Floyd Russak, Highlands Ranch
David Sawyer, Denver
Charles Schloss, Englewood
Colly & Barbara Shulman, Denver
Elliott Simonberg, Denver
Howard Steinmetz, Boulder
Richard Strouse, Denver
Bunnie Welch, Lafayette
And welcome back!
Arlen Ambrose, Denver
Alan Loew, Winter Park

Many thanks go to the generous JGSCO
volunteers who sat at our table at the
Boulder Jewish Festival June 19th to
pass out materials and answer
questions.
David Bornstein
Ellen Kowitz
Terry Lasky
Howard Steinmetz
Bunnie Welch

IAGS Summer Conference on Jewish Genealogy
Daily Registration Available Onsite!
July 10-15, 2005
Flamingo Hotel, Las Vegas, NV

<http://www.jewishgen.org/jgs/jgs-southernnevada/shelley/index.htm>