Opening session

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www.jewishgen.org/Bessarabia
Welcome to our first Bessarabia Winter Symposium!

Agenda of the opening session:

• About the Symposium
• Brief geography and history of the region
• Bessarabia Special Interest Group (SIG) – history and projects
About the Symposium

We have **16 sessions** on History, Genealogy and Culture of Jews in Bessarabia and in other places where Jews used to live.

Sessions include the Opening and Closing sessions, one Panel Discussion and **13 lectures**.

Every day sessions will start at 10am, and presenters will use 30-35 minutes on their topic and about 10-15 minutes for Q & A. We will have about 10 minutes breaks between sessions. If a presenter does not have time to answer all your questions, please submit them to me, and I will re-direct them to the presenter.
About the Symposium

We have presenters from many countries, including Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

In case, a presenter cannot come online for his/her lecture, we will substitute it with another one on topics of mutual interest.
About the Symposium

Tomorrow, on December 14 at 1pm, we are going to have a Panel Discussion:

*Where Can I Find Information About My Bessarabian Roots?*

After several minutes of an introduction by a moderator Ala Gamulka and panelists Alan Levine and Yefim Kogan, you will be able to ask questions and make comments. You can also send questions today to moderator Ala Gamulka, at gamulk@rogers.com and we will try to answer them tomorrow at the Panel.
What is Bessarabia?

And where is it?
Bessarabia on a map of Europe
1812 – Russian Empire occupied this land after Russia-Turkey war and Bucharest agreement.

For more than 100 years it was part of the Russian Empire, and in December of 1917 the area established a national assembly which proclaimed the Moldavian Democratic Republic, but in April of 1918 legislative body voted for unification with Romania. It was under Romanian rule until 1940, when it was occupied by the Soviet Union, see Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939.

1941 Romanian and German army invaded the region, until Soviets took it back in 1944. After that Bessarabia was under Soviet Union control, and South and North parts were added to Ukraine Soviet Republic and the rest to Moldova Soviet Republic.
Brief geography and history of the region

Brief history of Jews in Bessarabia

1812 – only 5,000 families or 20,000 Jews lived in Bessarabia. In less than 100 years, in 1897 Jewish population had grown to 225,000, 11.7% of total population.

1903 – pogrom in Kishinev. 47 Jews killed, 424-wounded. In 1903 and 1904 there were 20 pogroms in Bessarabia towns.

More about Jewish history you may hear in sessions at the symposium or at many articles from the resource guide. Here is one of them:

Bessarabia Special Interest Group (SIG) – history and projects

Bessarabia SIG was organized in 2011, at the IAJGS conference in Washington. Before 2011, Bessarabia was part of RomSIG.

About 15 years Bob Wascou (z”l) started and administered a large Bessarabia Vital Records project. We continue to work on this project. We are receiving Vital records directly from Kishinev, and last batch we received in August of this year: Birth and Marriage records for 1920 and 1921 for Kishinev and Beltsy.

We started many other projects since 2011.
Bessarabia Special Interest Group (SIG) – history and projects

Bessarabia SIG explores historical region of Bessarabia and part of Moldova Republic which is on the left bank of Dniester River – Transnistria unrecognized territory.

**Bessarabia** is combination of **Yellow and Purple**

**Republic of Moldova** is combination of **Yellow and Green**

**Pridnestrovia (Transnistria)** is **Green**
Here is a link to this list: https://www.jewishgen.org/bessarabia/files/databases/BessarabiaAsOfOct2022.pdf

Every database has a link to its Introductory pages.
What we did from September 2021 to November 2022

Vital records: 9,599 records

Revision Lists: 16,220 records for 4,129 families

Business directory: 2,612 records were added to Vsya Rossiya Business Directory for Bessarabia

Cemeteries: Zguritsa - 574 burial records with 572 images
- Kishinev, sector 6 - 3,214 burial records with 2,685 images
- Iagorlik - 11 burial records with 11 images
- Klishkivtsi - 2 Jewish cemeteries - received all photos, but not yet indexed
- Kishinev, sector 7 partly photographed

History of Jews section – added several articles, video
Plans for this year and future

At the end of December, we are sending another load of records to JewishGen to upload to the databases.

We will discuss our plans for next years at our Closing session on December 15 at 2pm. See you there.
Q & A

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