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#### **President's Shpiel by Kim Sheintal**

Come to the next three programs presented by the Jewish Genealogical Society of Southwest Florida to get into the spirit of Jewish genealogical research and learn about Jewish history.

#### **Not For Israel Only: Using Israeli Archives & Resources for Worldwide Jewish Records**

Sunday, December 17, 2006, Michael Goldstein will present Not For Israel Only: Using Israeli Archives & Resources for Worldwide Jewish Records. Michael Goldstein is a Jerusalem-based genealogist who researches, mentors, lectures, and conducts workshops in Israel and North America. He specializes in guiding North Americans in locating and connecting with Israeli family, facilitating the use of local Israeli research sources. His expertise is in tracing Israelis whose testimonies are found in Yad Vashem records.

Israel holds a treasure of data relating to Jews throughout the world who have lived in Palestine or Israel--as well as those who never set foot in the Holy Land. We shall begin with an exploration of such prominent Israeli archives as The Hebrew University and National Library, the Joint Distribution Committee, The Central Archives of the History of the Jewish People, Yad Vashem, and more. We will touch on the importance of each as a repository for records, books, photos and documents, as well as their particular area of concentration.

In addition, we will explore a range of known and lesser-known sources consisting of Israeli government databases, cemetery records, landmenshafts, and others. Whether members of your family came to Palestine in the 19th century as chalutzim or more recently as Holocaust refugees or part of the wave of Jewish immigration from the former Soviet Union, there is a good chance that somehow they reached Israel, if only for a short time. To help genealogists locate these relatives or their descendants, we will give tips in how to best overcome the

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### **Program**

**Sunday, December 17, 2006 (1:00 PM)**

JCC, 582 S. McIntosh Road, Sarasota

**Not For Israel Only: Using Israeli Archives & Resources  
for Worldwide Jewish Records**

by Michael Goldstein, Jerusalem-based genealogist

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Hebrew hurdle and the distance. And finally, we'll brief participants on cultural and communications issues to keep in mind once they've tracked down the Israeli relatives and/or their descendants.

In the case of Yad Vashem, we will go much beyond the Pages of Testimony to look at the resources that help trace individuals (or their descendants) who gave testimony in the early 1950s and the resources of our lost communities.

#### **Notable Jewish Confederates**

Sunday, January 21, 2007, Lunelle Siegel will present a program on Notable Jewish Confederates. Siegel is President of the Augusta Jane Evans Wilson Chapter #2640 United Daughters of the Confederacy in Temple Terrace, Florida.

Thousands of Jewish Americans served for the Confederacy during the War of 1861-1865. Some were soldiers, others were government officials, and even one was a famous spy.

The highest-ranking Jewish government official, long before Nixon appointed Henry Kissinger was Confederate President Jefferson Davis's appointment of Judah P. Benjamin to his cabinet. The Ellenton Gamble Plantation Historic site exists today because of its connection to Secretary Judah P. Benjamin.

Learn more about the long-standing Jewish connection to the South as Lunelle Siegel presents a program on a few of these notable Jewish confederates.

#### **Dear Helga, Dear Ruth**

Sunday, February 18, 2007, Helga Harris will tell her story about letters that bound a friendship shattered by history as two 10-year-old girls say goodbye to each other at a train station in Berlin in 1938. One (Helga) goes to New York and, a year later, the other (Ruth) is granted asylum with family in Santiago, Chile. Though their traditional German/Jewish backgrounds are identical, their new lives take dramatically different turns.

Fiercely independent and resentful of her roots, Helga quickly becomes Americanized, completely losing all traces of her German accent. She becomes a fashion designer in the anonymous city where no one knows her history. Conversely, Ruth continues her upper middle class lifestyle in Chile, living a sheltered, chaperoned life and marrying a man twice her age when 17. After long correspondence, the women are reunited 24 years later, spending a year together in New York as if they had parted company only yesterday.

## The Early Jews of England (Part 4)

By Anita Woolf

### 1262

This year heralded a massacre of Jews living in London when some 700 poor souls were slain. More murders took place 1262 in Winchester, Worcester, again in London, Canterbury and Bristol. Jewish property was again pillaged and Jewish blood once more flowed freely. By 1264, with so many disorders breaking out, many Jews managed to flee overseas. (At this point there was a power struggle between Simon de Montfort and Jews. De Montfort hated Jews because it was only with the aid of money confiscated from them by King Henry that he could continue financing his numerous battles. This continued for two years until 1266 when King Henry regained control of the nation.)

This heralded more harsh treatment. Laws were passed denying them land ownership. Their ordinary business transactions were denied to them. (See footnote.) Taxation was to the hilt, and by 1271 this tax was already too burdensome to bear. Then a further levy was imposed – unable to pay, Jews were immediately imprisoned. A chronicler of that period reported that “nothing but weeping and wailing was to be seen in every corner.”

### 1272

King Henry III died after a reign of 56 years. By then the Jews of England had been reduced to abject poverty.

### 1272-1290 Edward 1

Just over 200 years had passed since King William had conquered England and had introduced Jews to the country. At the time of Henry 111's death the new king was fighting in the Crusades and was unable to return, and it was a further two years before he was able to do so. After so many years of penury, the Jews were thus desperately poor, and were unable to be of service to him. Therefore Edward created an “interesting” plan and a law was passed in 1275 by Parliament – “The Law Concerning Jews.” English Jewry, denied money lending and banking managed to engage in other employment. (See footnote.) However, trade guilds which were confined to Christians and which controlled all industries in the country resulted in little employment actually being possible. Nevertheless, the new Law, although denying Jews so many opportunities, appeared to open other avenues. Renting land for farming, albeit for only a 15-year period, merchants, artisans, all these pursuits opened up. Interestingly, this law also meant that Jews could mix freely with their Christian neighbors and for a short period a more relaxed relationship ensued. However, King Edward was warned by the Church of the dangers of this new situation and so the “Jew Badge” regulation became more rigorously enforced. All Jews, male and female, from the age of 7 years, were forced to wear a yellow

badge. (See previous mention of this badge.) There was much chaos in the country at this time – they could not travel in safety, they were still denied the guilds. By 1275 such were the penuries and penalties imposed on them, they were, yet again unable to pay the heavy taxes. Once more English Jewry was faced with utter ruin. Many, in despair, converted. Many were imprisoned.

### 1278

The King needed to finance his luxurious lifestyle and realized that he could no longer fleece his Jewish subjects. And so, at this date he aided the arrest of all the Jews in the country on a charge of “chipping” the coin of the realm. (Silver coinage has notches at regular intervals. This is called a milled edge.) In those days, milled edges did not exist, edges were uneven and would occasionally snap. It was the practice to “chip” off small quantities, melt down the scraps and then sell them at a profit (!) Both Jews and Christians had been accused of this crime, and were subsequently severely punished, even executed. Although it had never been proven that the practice was more common to Jews, this was to change. In this year of 1278 every Jew was accused, arrested and sent, in chains, to London for trial. 260 were hanged in the Tower of London for supposed coin-chipping. However, the Christians, arrested simultaneously were, on payment of fines, freed.

### 1279 Leading up to the Expulsion in 1290

In this year, the false accusation of Ritual Murder was again raised by the King. Jews, in chains, were dragged through the streets, many dying due to their injuries. There were numerous trumped up charges brought against them. Queen Eleanor, the King's mother, encouraged her son in his anti-Jewish measures. She owned several towns in England, including Gloucester, Worcester and Cambridge, and had already expelled all the Jews in these towns.

The “Law Concerning the Jews” was deemed a failure. Edward always bowing to the wishes of the Church, expelled all the Jews from his estates in Gascony, France. When news of this expulsion reached England, Edward became increasingly popular to the point that Parliament offered him Jewish possessions, such as they were, and the Church offered him further possessions (?) on provision that he would expel all English Jewry. Business jealousy, dislike of “outsiders” religious prejudices and unruly mobs all strove together to bring doom to Jews.

King Edward was a willing tool. On 18 July 1290 the decree of Expulsion was signed by him. (Records show that this fell tragically on the Fast of Av, the 9 of Av. Both Temples were destroyed on this date.) English Jewry, after two centuries and generations of settlement were to be cast out.

They were to leave 1 November. Synagogues, schools, etc. were confiscated by the King. They were allowed to

take with them money, such as they had, and possessions which they could carry.

Thus, Tuesday 10 October 1290 began the exodus. Some fled to France, some settled in Paris, other traveled to Spain. Others to wherever a Jewish community was – they were amongst the lucky ones who found a haven. There were, nevertheless, Jews who remained in England, living outwardly as converts, or who lived secretly in remote hamlets and villages. (There were also Jews who had managed to flee the Spanish Inquisition – known as Marranos – who secretly settled in England.)

Thus, the Jews of Medieval England who had resided, courtesy of King William, from 1066 under such fluctuating and often cruel conditions, were, in 1290 finally expelled by King Edward 1.

#### **Footnote:**

I hope the reader appreciates that if I had covered the whole of the socio-economic structure of Medieval England, these articles would have been so lengthy as to constitute a book! I have omitted, condensed, and sometimes ignored aspects which, space permitting I would normally have included. I will, however, make a brief mention of alternative employment which undoubtedly existed during this period. We know, for example, from the description of events which took place that there were Jewish physicians, goldsmiths, pawnbrokers, vintners and even soldiers. There were also Jewish fishmongers and cheesemongers, and the Banker, Aaron of Lincoln, was also a wool merchant. There were further indications that the wealthiest Jews had more than one residence. Again, Aaron was one – he had property in London, apart from his Lincoln home. (Actually he died in the London property.) Although Jewish/Christian relations were, in the main, negative, Jews depended on the Christian community for the construction of their properties, and on their food and clothing markets. It is also documented that, after the Expulsion Jewish persons of repute were, on invitation, accepted by Kings and Nobles to set foot in England. Dick Whittington, the famous Lord Mayor of London, for example, brought a Jewish physician, one Maistre Samson de Mirabeau, to attend his wife, Lady Alice. He came in 1409, and was granted residence for one year, to settle and practice his profession, even to travel within the country. The following year, another physician, Elias Sabot of Bologna was admitted to England, with similar privileges. Many more Jews from overseas were allowed entry to England, albeit with restrictions.

That brings us to the end of the dark period of Medieval England, where Jews were proven to have lived. It was not until Oliver Cromwell, some 350 years ago in 1656 were Jews permitted to return.

## **Roots Television is Online**

Roots Television is now available. However, this isn't a traditional television channel. Roots Television is a website at <http://www.RootsTelevision.com> that features videos. In fact, in many ways, this is better than a television station: it is available at any time you wish to view it, 24 hours a day.

Roots Television is by and for genealogists and family history lovers everywhere. The channel promises to appeal to archives hounds, scrapbookers, cousin collectors, roots-travel enthusiasts, Civil War re-enactors, those interested in DNA, reunion planners, history buffs, story-tellers, flea market and antiques fanatics, nostalgia nuts, and many more.

## **Great Great Grandmother** by Kim Sheintal

I have been tracing my family for twenty years and I am frequently adding cousins to my tree. Because only one of my grandparents was born in the United States, most of my research is from Polish and Lithuanian records.

My only grandparent born in the United States was Lil "Mom" Lebovitz (nee Contorer). Her mother (my great grandmother), Mary Contorer (nee Jaffe), came to the United States in her twenties and married in Chicago. Over the years, I learned that Mary's father Pinkus "Samuel" Jaffe (my great great grandfather) and Mary's grandfather Moses "Morris" (my great great great grandfather) came to the United States. Pinkus came to the United States in 1901 according to the ship manifest. I do not have the ship manifest for Moses, but I have a 1912 photo of him taken in New York. Until May 1, 2006 when I received an e-mail from Jeanne Behrman Wax, I thought their wives never came to the United States. Jeanne wrote, "I found something amazing on Ellis Island....1901 arrived Elke age 14, Esther age 16 and mother Chaya Sore, going to Chicago to join husband/father Pinkus Jaffe! What do you think?" I was thrilled to receive this e-mail, because my great grandmother Mary has a sister Elke, a sister Esther, and a father Pinkus. No one in my family had ever mentioned that my great great grandmother came to the United States.

Jeanne has helped tremendously with our Jaffe family research. Soon we hope to prove exactly how we are related. This fall, Jeanne went to Waldheim Cemetery near Chicago and took a photograph of Chaya Sore Jaffe's gravestone. Thank goodness Jeanne spotted my Jaffe listing on JewishGen Family Finder in December 2004 and sent me an e-mail. Literally, the rest is history.

# Wonderful World of Websites

<http://www.avotaynu.com/nu.htm>

Links to all back issues of *Nu? What's Nu?* can be found at this website. There is a search engine on that page that allows searching back issues. This e-zine has been published for more than six years and contains a wealth of genealogy news.

<http://genealogyguys.com>

(Genealogy Guys Podcasts)

George G. Morgan and Drew Smith discuss genealogy. Podcasting (from Apple's "iPod" and "broadcasting") is a method of publishing files to the Internet, allowing users to subscribe. It first became popular in late 2004, used largely for audio files. A podcast is for playback on mobile devices and personal computers.

<http://www.collectionscanada.ca/immigrants/index-e.html>

*Moving Here, Staying Here: The Canadian Immigrant Experience* is the new online exhibition for the Library and Archives Canada. This ambitious project was developed with two key goals in mind. The first was to facilitate improved access for genealogists and other researchers to some of LAC's frequently used immigration documents, such as passenger lists and land grants. The second goal was to provide Canadians with a unique history of Canadian immigration for the years 1800-1939.

<http://www.FamilyTreeRegistry.org> (family trees)

This is a website to publicize your personal family tree. One must create an account to use this website.

<http://www.votyanu.com/books/mapmytree.htm>

Progeny Genealogy has developed a fascinating software package that maps all the places in your family tree database onto a map of the world. The places can be anywhere in the world. Called "Map My Family Tree," the system reads trees directly from nine popular genealogical software systems, including Family Tree Maker and Personal Ancestral File, or it can read from a GEDCOM file for those systems they do not support. The cost of the software is \$39.95 and is available from Avotaynu at the website named above. It runs on Windows 2000 or XP.

[http://www.yadvashem.org/lwp/workplace/IY\\_HON\\_Welcome](http://www.yadvashem.org/lwp/workplace/IY_HON_Welcome)

Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, is the Jewish people's memorial to the murdered Six Million and symbolizes the ongoing confrontation with the rupture engendered by the Holocaust. Containing the world's largest repository of information on the Holocaust, Yad Vashem is a leader in Shoah education, commemoration, research and documentation. To search for a victims name online go to the website listed. Yad Vashem, together with its partners, has collected and recorded the names and biographical details of half of the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis and their accomplices. Millions more still remain unidentified. If you know a Holocaust victim, submit Pages of Testimony and send photographs of the victims so they will always be remembered.

## Genealogy Surveys

**Survey result highlights from Abe Simon**

(JGS Southern Nevada)

**What advise would you give to a beginning genealogist?**

Don't give up and use creative spelling.

**What gives you the most pleasure from doing genealogy?**

helping others find their ancestral records

**What has been your best source of information?**

Ellis Island database online

**Survey result highlights from Charles B. Nam**

(Tallahassee JGS)

**What have you gained (besides discovering family) from your genealogical research?**

enhanced perspective on the history of where my ancestors lived

**What genealogy book would you recommend to a beginning genealogist?**

*Climbing Your Family Tree* by Ira Wolfman

**What has been your best source of information?**

National Archives of Latvia and Lithuania

## Upcoming IAJGS Conferences

1) The hotel and dates for the 28th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy (2008 in Chicago) are set. The hotel is the Chicago Marriott downtown magnificent Mile and the dates are August 17-22, 2008. More details will be announced, as they are available. The Chicago conference is being hosted by IAJGS in cooperation with the JGS of Illinois and the Illiana JGS.

2) More will be coming very shortly regarding the IAJGS hosted 27th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in Salt Lake City from July 15-19, 2007). The committee is hard at work and there is no doubt it will be a great conference in such a fantastic research location.

3) The IAJGS website has been updated with pictures and the wording of the plaques for the 2006 Achievement Award Winners. Be sure to check it out.

Anne Feder Lee, IAJGS President

## Genealogy Tips

Contact schools (beginning with grammar school) and ask for the records of your parents, grandparents, etc. to learn more about them.

Look online for phone books from around the world to see the frequency of surnames in your family. Try contacting these people and you may discover some new cousins.