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

In 2018, Israel is 70. JGS of SW FL is celebrating. The JGS of SW FL will have a table at the "We Love Israel Shuk" on Sunday, January 14, 2018 (12:00 pm - 5:00 pm) at the Jewish Federation (580 McIntosh Rd., Sarasota). The JGS of SW FL will have an Israel Heritage Celebration on Sunday, April 15, 2018 at 1:00 pm at Aviva (1951 N. Honore Ave., Sarasota) to share family stories about the formation of Israel and enjoy music and song by Sharon and David Ohrenstein. Israelis have contributed much to promote, help, and trace Jewish heritage.

- Geni (owned by Israeli company MyHeritage)
- MyHeritage (Israeli Company)
- Tracing the Tribe-Jewish Genealogy on Facebook: Founder/Administrator is Schelly Talalay Dardashti (officer of several Jewish genealogical societies in the US and Israel and now serves as US Genealogy Advisor for MyHeritage.com)
- Museums in Israel (Palmach Museum, Museum of the Jewish People)
- Israel Genealogy Research Association (mission statement: "IGRA is the revival of a genealogy society that has been in existence since 1999. We are focused on genealogy – helping people with their family research, and making available to the public a wide variety of material from the Ottoman period through the early years of Israeli Statehood, as well as additional documents about Jews from the Diaspora which are located in Israel. We will attempt to work with people from many nationalities, and to provide information in as many languages as possible.")
- All Israel Database (by IGRA)
- Yad Vashem (Israel's official memorial to the victims of the Holocaust)
- Israel State Archives  
(For websites of the above list, see WWW on page 3.)

**Jewish Genealogical Society of Southwest Florida**

## **MISHPOCHOLOGY**

**Volume 22, Number 4 December 2017**

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Mishpochology is published quarterly.

[www.jgsswf.org](http://www.jgsswf.org)

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### **JGS of SW FL MEETING**

**Sunday, December 17, 2017 (1:00 PM)**

Aviva campus in the Kobernick building

1951 N. Honore Ave., Sarasota

**Program: Why Should I Test My DNA?**

By Arthur Sissman

For details, Kim Sheintal 941-302-1433, [klapshein@aol.com](mailto:klapshein@aol.com)

### **Why Should I Test My DNA?**

Arthur Sissman, founder of the Jewish Genealogy SIG (Special Interest Group) in Collier County, will present "Why Should I Test My DNA on Sunday, December 17 at 1:00 PM at Aviva (1951 N. Honore Ave., Sarasota). Arthur has been tested at Ancestry DNA, Family Tree DNA and 23andMe, and uploaded his raw DNA to GEDmatch. He leads workshops in how to use all four research methods and what it all means.

### **US Census Bureau Proposes to Have US Postal Workers to be Enumerators for 2018 End-to-End Census**

The United States Census Bureau has a proposed rule for a test to have US Postal workers be the enumerators for the 2018 end-to-end census test in preparation for the 2020 US Census. The pilot test will involve 40 postal carriers in two zip codes in North Attleboro MA and Warwick, RI. Comments must be received by November 20, 2017.

The rationale for using US Postal workers as stated in the proposed regulation are: The potential long-term advantages to the Census Bureau include:

- (1) Leveraging local USPS knowledge about households to pinpoint the best time for an interview,
- (2) increasing the pool of enumerators without hiring new temporary staff, and
- (3) providing a more flexible landscape for how and when Nonresponse Followup (NRFU) interviews occur during the enumeration phase of a census

The end-to-end census test is a method to test all the major components of the 2020 census. To learn more about this see: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/2018-census-test/faqs.html>

To see the proposed regulation go to: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-09-20/pdf/2017-20036.pdf>. The pdf from the Federal Register cuts off the last part of the "Request for Comments" but it is contained in full in the text version: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-09-20/html/2017-20036.htm>

Jan Meisels Allen, Chairperson,

IAJGS Public Records Access Monitoring Committee

## Post-Communist Czech Republic is Experiencing a Renaissance in Jewish Heritage and Culture

by Alexander Woodle

The fall of communism in 1989, the birth of the Internet in 1991 and the rise of the European Union in 1993 has opened the floodgates for new opportunities for descendants of Czech Jews to see clearly into the past and develop a picture of Jewish life going back two centuries or more. Vital records have been uploaded to the Internet, synagogues refurbished and many Jewish cemeteries documented, photographed and restored. This could not have been accomplished without the help of many individuals and organizations within and without the Czech Republic, and by the descendants of Czech Jews who live around the world who pushed for and contributed to a variety of projects to make access easier and more universal.

World War II devastated Czech Jewry with about 85% or 80,000 Jews lost in the Holocaust. Many of the survivors fled the spread of Communism in the 1950s, many immigrating to Israel. The current Jewish population in the Czech Republic stands at about 3900 with most living in Prague and a few hundred in larger cities.

The vital records of the Czech Republic are a treasure trove of information especially those from Bohemia. Many of the original records were destroyed during World War II, and, as a consequence, the Moravian records are, unfortunately, not as complete. A visitor twenty years ago would visit the Prague Archives to look at these vital records under the guidance of the staff and make photostats or ask for copies on microfilm.

Today, through the enormous efforts of Lenka Matusikova, former Archivist at the Czech National Archives and many donations from members of the Austria-Czech Special Interest Group, the birth, marriage, and death records and Familiant books are only a click away on the Internet. MS Matusikova and her staff meticulously scanned all of the pages in the metrical books which had survived.

Jews have lived in the Czech lands for around 1000 years. The old Jewish cemetery in the Josefov section of Prague, together with seven synagogues including the oldest in Europe dating to the 13th century, are a testament to the foothold Jewry had in this magnificent city.

Over many centuries Jews were welcomed and expelled in the Czech lands as war and Antisemitism waxed and waned. Jews sought refuge in smaller cities and then towns. When persecution flared in these new habitations, the Jews melted away into tiny villages far away from population centers. Today we find their remains in 334 cemeteries scattered throughout the countryside. Many of these people had fled from discrimination in bordering countries as European events such as the Thirty Years War and the Chmielnicki Massacres in Poland overtook them. Wherever they went, however, the Jews brought their culture, religion and traditions.

These small Jewish communities immediately established and built synagogues and bought land for cemeteries. Many of them were protected by the nobles (Schutzjuden) who owned these villages and realized the importance of the Jews to the local economy. My paternal ancestors were members of these small communities.

My ancestors came from Western Bohemia. My fourth great grandfather, Moyses Wudl, a woolen merchant, lived in Prostibor and Darmysl. In 2001, I visited the Telice Jewish Cemetery with two Czechs who have helped Jews uncover their

family history, Achab Haidler and Julius Muller. The cemetery would be easy to pass by without knowing its precise location. It is surrounded by cultivated fields and looked like a small isolated woodlot. Upon closer examination, one could discern a rectangular stone wall in severe disrepair encompassing scattered tombstones in various conditions. We were fortunate to find my ggg granduncle Salomon Wudl, son of Moyses, born in 1771. We also found one of Salomon's daughters, Esther Wudl Eckstein.

My gg grandfather, Jeremias, born in Western Bohemia, moved to the South Bohemian town of Ckyne in 1830. He married and had a large family and died in 1866. He is buried in the Ckyne Jewish Cemetery, which unlike the previous cemetery had been restored by the volunteer efforts of a few local men led by Professor Jan Podlesak. Podlesak grew up in a small, nearby village and completed Jewish studies at university. He felt the Jewish story was important to the fabric of Czech history. To that end he helped to document and restore a number of Jewish cemeteries in South Bohemia. The Jewish descendants are eternally grateful to his unselfish efforts to memorialize our ancestors. Jan passed away recently, but not before he saw another of his pet projects completed—the complete restoration and rededication of the Ckyne Synagogue.

There are only a handful of these Gentile individuals who have committed themselves to restoring, preserving and documenting the rich Jewish history of the Czech Republic. Of the more than 400 original synagogues that dotted the Czech lands, only 200 remain, but since 1993, 65 have been rebuilt or restored and serve as cultural venues or historic museums.

There are 334 Jewish cemeteries in the Czech Republic and an additional 25 Jewish sections in municipal cemeteries according to the Czech Heritage Action Initiative (C.H.A.I.). A number of these cemeteries have been restored, documented and photographed.

The Federation of Jewish Communities of the Czech Republic is the umbrella organization that brings together the ten individual Jewish communities which own the Jewish sites within their geographic areas. The largest of these is the Prague community that owns and administers 180 Jewish cemeteries. These cemeteries in turn are maintained by Matana, a corporation owned by the Prague Jewish Community. While there have been recent grants from the European Union to repair and rebuild synagogues, funding for the maintenance, repair and restoration of cemeteries is limited. Cemetery restoration and documentation is costly. Volunteers have helped clear overgrown burial grounds and some reconstruction, but professional efforts are needed to ensure proper restoration.

C.H.A.I. ([www.chaiworks.org](http://www.chaiworks.org)) is one organization whose mission is to build strong connections between the Jewish communities of the Czech Republic and those elsewhere in the world. They support the restoration and preservation of Jewish cemeteries and synagogues in the Czech Republic. I have worked closely with this organization led by Lisa Feder and it was through her that I heard about the Muzeum Ceskeho Lesa or Museum of the Bohemian Forest in Tachov, Czech Republic. Since 2002, its office of Jewish Cemeteries (<http://zh.tachov.org/>) under the leadership of Dr. Vaclav Fred Chvatal has been documenting, photographing and restoring Jewish cemeteries in Bohemia.

I emailed Dr. Chvatal in 2012 and we began a discourse about his mission. Serendipitously, he was working on the Telice Jewish cemetery! In 2013 I bundled a graduation of an

Austrian cousin, a visit to see the Ckyne Synagogue restoration in progress and a visit to Dr. Chvatal in Tachov. Remembering how degraded this cemetery was on my first visit, I was surprised at the reconstruction progress that had been accomplished. Among the stones re-erected was my ggg grandmother! The wall surrounding the cemetery was being repaired and a new gate forged. The final touch was signage placed at its entrance.

Each of these projects is tackled with meticulous care. The vegetative overgrowth is removed and a map is prepared of the existing tombstones, cemetery border and trees. When these small Jewish cemeteries were established, the land sold to the Jews was not always the best. Ravines, hillsides or undesirable acreage became sacred permanent sites to bury the dead.

The next phases of restoration are to upright toppled stones and repair or replace broken stones. Following the Holocaust, many cemeteries, now abandoned were vandalized and stones taken to be used in construction. Some research is done to identify prominent families and look for their descendants. When a cemetery restoration has been completed, the tombstones are photographed and the epitaphs noted and translated.

Dr. Chvatal has published a number of books on his restoration work that are sold through the museum. He receives small grants from the Federation of Jewish Communities and private donations to help fund his work. Some labor is contracted, but progress is slow because of funding levels. In 2015, a non-profit was formed called Tachov Archives and Museum Society or TAMUS for short. Their website is <http://tamus.tachov.org/>. They also have a Facebook page.

If you are reading this article because you have a family history within the Czech lands, I highly recommend you investigate and think about joining TAMUS efforts in memorializing our Jewish ancestors.

Thanks to JewishGen's Austria-Czech SIG, you can make a tax deductible donation to this organization by going to [http://www.jewishgen.org/JewishGenerosity/v\\_projectslist.asp?project\\_cat=8](http://www.jewishgen.org/JewishGenerosity/v_projectslist.asp?project_cat=8) and specifying the contribution be channeled to TAMUS.

### **JGS of SW FL Upcoming Programs**

**Sunday, December 17, 2017 @ 1:00 pm at Aviva**

Why Should I Test My DNA? by Arthur Sissman

**Sunday, January 21, 2018 @ 1:00 pm at Aviva**

Social Networking for Genealogists by Donna Moughty

**Sunday, February 18, 2018 @ 1:00 pm at Aviva**

Hidden Gems of Jewish Genealogy by Marlis Humphrey (Immediate Past President, International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies)

**Sunday, March 18, 2018 @ 1:00 pm at Aviva**

Russification - An Attempt to Integrate the Jews into Imperial Russia by Doug Cohen

**Sunday, April 15, 2018 @ 1:00 pm at Aviva**

Israel Heritage Celebration (First Hand Accounts by those in Israel at the time of her founding) accompanied with music and song by Sharon and David Ohrenstein

### **JGS of SW FL 2018 Membership Dues**

Single Membership: \$25/year Family Membership: \$30/year  
Mail check (payable to JGS of SW FL) with your name, e-mail, phone, address and surnames/places you are tracing to:  
Liz Klaber 4461 Violet Avenue Sarasota, Florida 34233

## **Wonderful World of Websites**

<https://www.geni.com/>

commercial genealogy and social networking website

<https://www.myheritage.com/>

online genealogy platform with web, mobile, and software products and services

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/tracingthetribel/>

Tracing the Tribe-Jewish Genealogy on Facebook

<http://www.palmach.org.il/Web/English/Default.aspx>

Palmach Museum

<https://dbs.bh.org.il/>

Museum of the Jewish People

<http://genealogy.org.il/>

Israel Genealogy Research Association (IGRA)

<http://genealogy.org.il/tag/igra-databases/>

All Israel Database

<http://yvng.yadvashem.org/>

Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names

<http://www.archives.gov.il/en/>

Israel State Archives

<http://www.abc2news.com/news/national/daylight-saving-time-causes-younger-twin-to-be-older-than-brother>

Younger Twin Older Than Twin Brother

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/collections/new-york-city-directories#/?tab=about>

City Directories for New York City

<http://www.familytreemagazine.com/article/international-genealogy-websites-2017>

101 Best Free Genealogy Sites of 2017

<https://moonswings.files.wordpress.com/2017/06/genealogy-on-facebook-list-jun-2017.pdf>

Latest listing of genealogy groups on Facebook

<http://www.jewishgen.org/DNA/>

JewishGen and FamilyTreeDNA working together

### **South Bay Genealogical Society Updated Details**

Outdated information appeared in the fall 2017 newsletter. South Bay Genealogical Society meets the third Tuesday of the month from September thru May (lunch at noon and program at 1:00 pm) at the United Methodist Church (1210 W. Del Webb Blvd, Sun City Center). President is Terri Cardozo (813-633-5172). Website is [www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~flsbgs/](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~flsbgs/).

### **JGS of Tampa Bay - Lunch & Learn Social**

Sunday, December 10, 2017 at noon

Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services

14041 Icot Blvd., Clearwater RSVP Sally Israel 727-343-1652

## Two Special Letters Buried Among Hundreds by Kim Klapman Sheintal

My father passed away on April 26, 2007. My mother passed away on July 20, 2017. As my sister and I went through memorabilia in their condo on August 7, 2017, we found two letters (one of which was a rough draft of a letter that my father was preparing to write to Sam Klapman on January 29, 1985, the other was the actual letter that my father received from Sam Klapman that Sam sent to my dad on March 1, 1985). I heard that my family had Klapman cousins in Canada, but I had no idea how I was related to Klapmans in Canada or what their names were. I vaguely remember hearing in the mid-1980's that my first cousin Howie Klapman met a Klapman he did not know when he was at a restaurant in California when he gave the name "Klapman" to the hostess and there was another Klapman couple (Sam and Ruth) who also gave their name to the hostess. So when the hostess at the restaurant said, "Klapman, your table is ready" both Klapman couples went to the hostess to be seated. The two Klapman couples introduced themselves to one another, but could not determine how they were related. Sam Klapman and his wife were visiting California from Canada. Howie Klapman and his wife were visiting California from Chicago. Finding these two letters was exciting for me. It confirmed what I vaguely remembered hearing over 30 years ago. What amazes me most is that my father had saved hundreds of letters. My sister and I looked at the large pile of letters but did not read all of the letters. In fact, we threw away most of the letters without reading them. I am so glad these two particular letters caught my eye. I am saving these two letters.

It was not until 2015 that a very distant cousin of mine from Texas, explained to me how I am related to Sam Klapman. Sam Klapman and my father Aaron Klapman have the same great great grandfather making them 4<sup>th</sup> cousins.

January 29, 1985

Dear Sam,

Hello!

My nephew Howard Klapman called me several days ago to tell me that he met you and your wife in California. Naturally with the name Klapman I thought I would write you.

Some little history:

My father Morris Klapman and my mother Lena came from Poland around 1914 to Chicago. My father was in the Russian Army. Later two of his brothers Benjamin (wife Jenny) and Sam (wife Sarah) followed to Chicago.

Benjamin and Jenny have 4 sons (Alex, Frank, Joe and Martin) and 2 daughters. They in turn had children and grandchildren.

Sam and Sarah had 2 daughters (Ruth and Rose) and in turn had children and grandchildren.

My father Morris and my mother Lena had 5 sons (Simon, Harry, David, Aaron and James) and 2 daughters (Diane and Esther). My brother Simon never married. The rest of us did and we have 2 or 3 children each plus children and grandchildren.

All of us live in the suburbs of Chicago, except for my sister Diane who lives in Philadelphia.

My oldest daughter Kimberly Sheintal lives with her husband Jonathan and 2 daughters in Sarasota, Florida since 1971. Her in-laws also live in Sarasota, as they left Israel in 1946 to settle

in America. My son-in-law Jon was born in Israel in 1946 and came over to the USA when he was several months old.

My youngest daughter Elizabeth is single works at Bell Lab and lives in Chicago.

I am 63 years old and my wife Phyllis is 56 years. I have been retired 2 ½ years. My wife went back to college and after 21 years as a speech pathologist will retire in June. We plan to make our permanent residence at our place in Longboat Key, Florida (adjacent to Sarasota).

When I went in the army during World War II, I never knew that my father had 3 nieces (who lived in London), so when I went overseas to Great Britain and Europe during the war I met them and their respective family.

I'm really not much in for writing as is my daughter Kim but I wanted to write you.

Happy New Year to your wife and family.

Respectfully,

Aaron Klapman

March 1, 1985

Dear Aaron,

How wonderful it was to receive your letter and to hear from the Klapmans south of the border.

It was real exciting to accidentally meet with Howard and his wife Annie and I hope that in the not too distant future our families will meet again, and there will always be nice things to talk about.

Aaron, I am the youngest in our family of our immigrated parents so that I don't have too much information about what took place in the old country. However, over the years regular tales have been told.

My father Joseph Klapman, who passed away 26 years ago immigrated from Plodzk Poland to Canora Saskatchewan (in Canada) in 1912. When he left Poland, he left behind his wife Malke and 3 children, Harry, Esther and Meyer. While he was in Canada his wife Malke passed away in Poland. Very shortly after his oldest son Harry (now deceased) came over to Canada, and within a short period of time his daughter Esther who is also deceased, and then shortly after his son Meyer came to Canada, who thank God is alive and well.

Meyer today is 74 years young and the late Harry and Esther were each about 2 years older. Because of winter vacation time, I have not yet been able to talk to Meyer about receiving your letter.

In Canada my father married Fanny Rosensweig of Winnipeg, who already had 2 daughters, Esther and Beverley, and together they had 3 sons. The oldest Max who is 64, Mickey 61 and I just had my 54<sup>th</sup> birthday. All of my brothers and sisters had children and now beautiful grandchildren.

Ruth and I have 4 children, three beautiful daughters, 33 years, 30 years, and 24 years and of course our only son Hartley who is 27. We are fortunate in having 4 beautiful grandsons ranging from 9 years old to 5 days old.

Ruth and myself fortunately are regular travelers besides spending part of the winters in Palm Springs. In our travels Aaron, we no doubt will make it a point to visit in your area as it sure will be a pleasure to meet and acquaint ourselves with you, your wife, and your mishpocha.

With kindest regards,

Sam Klapman