

# VENTURING INTO OUR PAST



# JGSCV

## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE CONEJO VALLEY AND VENTURA COUNTY

June, 2014

Volume 9 Issue 9

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

JGSCV commemorated Yom Hashoah-Holocaust Memorial Day—with a double presentation: Viewing of the documentary *The Voyage of the St. Louis* and Clara Knopfler, a Holocaust survivor. The SS St. Louis sailed from Germany with 937 Jewish passengers who were not permitted to disembark in Cuba, the United States or Canada. This is not the Hollywood version of *The Voyage of the Damned*, but a documentary that depicts the story from the perspective of surviving passengers who made the crossing as children and in readings from the diary of the ship's captain. Clara Knopfler, spoke about the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Holocaust in Hungary. JGSCV was much honored to have Clara share her experiences with us. Please see page 6 for a write-up of the meeting.

Thank you to JGS founding member Werner Frank for facilitating the schmoozing corner 20 minutes before the meeting. Due to the length of the program we did not have a 5-minute genealogical hint.

At the last two meetings JGSCV treasurer Karen Lewy provided two documents: 1 a computer class survey asking for feedback on future topics, and 2. sharing your genealogical stories for our newsletter. Copies of these documents are on page 12. If you did not complete one at the meeting please do so and email it to [treasurer@jgscv.org](mailto:treasurer@jgscv.org). We haven't received many responses and would appreciate your



Clara Knopfler (right) speaking at the May 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. SS St. Louis (left) subject of the documentary shown.

### NEXT MEETING

**SUNDAY, June 1<sup>st</sup> 1:30-3:30 PM**

#### Roundtable Discussions

Small, individual country/region discussion groups with each one designed to focus on a single geographic area with an expert leading each.

## JGSCV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

6052 Hackers Lane  
Agoura Hills, CA 91301  
818-889-6616

Jan Meisels Allen, President  
[president@jgscv.org](mailto:president@jgscv.org)

Stewart Bernstein, Member at Large  
[stewart@jgscv.org](mailto:stewart@jgscv.org)

Debra Kay Blatt, Secretary  
[secretary@jgscv.org](mailto:secretary@jgscv.org)

Warren Blatt, Member Education  
[education@jgscv.org](mailto:education@jgscv.org)

Dorothy Drilich, Member at Large  
[Dorothy@jgscv.org](mailto:Dorothy@jgscv.org)

Allan Linderman, Newsletter Editor  
[newslettereditor@jgscv.org](mailto:newslettereditor@jgscv.org)

Helene Rosen, VP Membership  
[membership@jgscv.org](mailto:membership@jgscv.org)

Karen Lewy, Treasurer  
[treasurer@jgscv.org](mailto:treasurer@jgscv.org)

Israel Perel, Librarian  
[librarian@jgscv.org](mailto:librarian@jgscv.org)

Jan Meisels Allen, Publicity  
[publicity@jgscv.org](mailto:publicity@jgscv.org)

---

Barbara Algaze, FHL  
[barbara@jgscv.org](mailto:barbara@jgscv.org)

David Oseas, Webmaster  
[webmaster@jgscv.org](mailto:webmaster@jgscv.org)

completing one or both of the surveys.

As many of you may remember, I am very involved with records access on behalf of the IAJGS and the genealogical community at large as IAJGS's voting member on the Records Access and Preservation Committee (RPAC). Genealogists are continuing to have difficulty with access to records not only in a number of states but also in Congress. The recent enactment of the Bi-Partisan Budget Act by Congress in December included a provision—section 203—which limits certification to access the Death Master File (Social Security Death Index). To help address the Genealogists concerns, RPAC adopted a Genealogists Declaration of Rights—all three RPAC sponsoring organizations' boards of directors—Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS), National Genealogical Society (NGS) and the IAJGS unanimously approved its adoption. JGSCV belongs to all three societies.

The campaign to have genealogists sign the declaration was started at the NGS conference in Richmond Virginia May 7-10. Everyone who is concerned about records access is encouraged to read the declaration and sign it. There were books available at the NGS conference and people signed by state of residence. I was the first Californian to sign! You may sign at both the IAJGS and FGS conferences later this summer or at the Southern California Genealogical Jamboree in Burbank June 6-8. There is also an on-line declaration to sign at <http://bit.ly/gen-declaration>. Please read more about this on page 10 and visit the IAJGS website for more information at: <http://iajgs.org/ISigned.html>. You will see some "famous" genealogists' photographs signing the books at the NGS.

Remember that the IAJGS 34<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Jewish Genealogy will take place in Salt Lake City July 27-Aug.1. See page 11 for more information.

The annual Ventura County Fair will be held on July 30- August 10. As in year's past we have had JGSCV members volunteer at the genealogy booth and are hoping some of the members will volunteer to work the booths along with representatives of the Ventura County Genealogical Society and the Ventura Family History Library. For more information on the Fair and how to volunteer see page 11.

We are awaiting Temple Adat Elohim confirmation of meeting dates for Sept. 2014 - June 2015. As soon as the dates are finalized they will be reported on the website, at the meeting and of course here in *Venturing Into Our Past*.

Our June 1 meeting is "Round Tables" where experienced members of the JGSCV and other experts will lead discussions on the following areas: Canadian, Galician, German, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, and US research. There will be two 45-minute sessions—some of the areas will have tables in both sessions. Start preparing your questions now so that you will make the most out of this opportunity.

Looking forward to seeing you on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

*Jan Meisels Allen*



**ABOUT JGSCV . . .**The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County meets once a month, usually on a Sunday. Meetings are oriented to the needs of the novice as well as the more experienced genealogist. Members share materials, research methods and ideas as well as research success or failures. Members have access to the JGSCV library located on special shelves at the Agoura Hills Public Library. Members also receive our monthly newsletter, which is circulated by email.

2014 dues are \$25.00 for a single membership and \$30.00 for a household unit. To join, please send a check in the appropriate amount to JGSCV and addressed to Helene Rosen at 28912 Fountainwood St., Agoura Hills, CA 91301. Obtain the new/renewal membership form on our website at [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org) by selecting the membership button.

### **FAMILYSEARCH ADDS 5.4+ MILLION IMAGES**

FamilySearch has added more than 5.4 million images to collections from England, New Zealand, Philippines, Portugal, Russia, Spain and the US. Note, not all are indexed. <https://familysearch.org/node/2538>

### **WWII RECORDS FREE ON FOLD3 TO MAY 31**

Fold3, a subscription site, is making its WWII military records collection available for free through May 31<sup>st</sup> in honor of Memorial Day. Non-subscribers are required to create a free membership to view the records. Some of the records available include, Draft Registration Cards, Army Enlistment Records, Navy Muster Rolls and Casualty Lists. To begin your search: <http://go.fold3.com/wwii/>

### **NEW RECORDS ON ANCESTRY.COM**

- U.S. Military Registers, 1862-1970
- Florida and South Carolina Airline Passenger Arrivals, 1907-1957
- Germany, Sachsenhausen Deaths, 1938-1962
- New York State Census, 1905
- Surrey, England Baptisms, Marriages, Burials, 1538-1812

Start your search at [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

### **“FINDING YOUR ROOTS” RETURNS TO PBS**

Beginning September 23<sup>rd</sup>, each Tuesday PBS will air the second season of “Finding Your Roots” with Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Among the 30 guests scheduled for this season are Ben Affleck, Anderson Cooper, Billie Jean King and Stephen King.

### **DNA STUDY OF JEWISH ANCESTRAL ROOTS**

The May 1, 2014 issue of DNA Tribes Digest includes Jewish related ancestral components in Europe, West Asia, the Indian Subcontinent and Africa. When compared with known Mideastern Jewish, Sephardic-Sicilian and Ashkenazi Jewish components, a chronology of ancient ‘deep ancestry’ links can be identified between Jewish and non-Jewish populations around the world. For the complete DNA Tribes Digest go to: <http://www.dnatribes.com/dnatribes-digest-2014-05-01.pdf>

### **GENTEAM ADDS 235,000 NEW RECORDS**

GenTeam, a free data collection and research site dedicated to capturing Viennese and Austrian records has added almost a quarter of a million new records for its 24,500 registered users. Added records include Medical Databases, Baptismal Indexes and Parish Indexes. There are currently more than 10 million records available at [www.genteam.eu](http://www.genteam.eu)



The JGSCV will hold a general meeting, co-sponsored with Temple Adat Elohim, on Sunday, June 1, 2014 at Temple Adat Elohim 2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

## The Topic: 'ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS'

Experienced members of the Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV) and other experts will lead small groups of like-minded attendees who will discuss their country and region specific genealogy while seeking insights and help on researching their family history in areas of interest such as: Canada, Galicia, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the United States, and more. There will be two 45-minute sessions enabling everyone to participate in at least two areas of interest at the roundtables. Our traveling library books will be available for these discussions. This is a perfect way to meet others interested in the same areas and subjects as you and to get help in breaking down a brick wall or two.



The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County is dedicated to sharing genealogical information, techniques and research tools with anyone interested in Jewish genealogy and family history.

There is no charge to attend the meeting. Anyone may join JGSCV. Annual dues are \$25 for an individual and \$30 for a family.



## JGSCV UPDATES . . .



**JGSCV** is seeking an assistant editor for our newsletter, “Venturing Into Our Past”. The assistant editor will need to devote only about of 2 hours (at your own pace) throughout each month researching and accumulating the records updates and insights that appear on page 3 of this publication. Help in writing will be provided if necessary. Please contact Allan Linderman if interested: [newslettereditor@jgscv.org](mailto:newslettereditor@jgscv.org)

THE SCHMOOZING CORNER is available if you would like individual insights



for your genealogical pursuits from an experienced JGSCV member. JGSCV founding member Werner Frank (in photo left with JGSCV President Jan Meisels Allen) led the Schmoozing Corner prior to the May 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. Come to the front right corner of the meeting room and



look for the SCHMOOZING CORNER sign 20 minutes before the meeting is

scheduled to begin.

You can help JGSCV when you shop at Amazon.com by simply entering the Amazon site from JGSCV’s **home page**. Start at <http://www.jgscv.org> and scroll to the bottom to click on the Amazon graphic (like the one here). This will take you to the same page you always start at – except JGSCV will receive a marketing fee at no cost to you.



Don’t forget to sign-up or renew your Ralph’s Community Contribution Program. JGSCV receives significant contributions from Ralph’s when you use your Ralph’s Card and have chosen JGSCV as your participant organization. See “Notices” at the JGSCV website [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org).

If you enjoy and are enriched by JGSCV programs, please remember to renew your membership or join for the first time. JGSCV dues help defray the costs required to develop such a full schedule of fertile programs and speakers to enhance your genealogical research and experience. A form is on page 13 and on the website [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org)

JGSCV Computer Workshops are one of the many benefits of membership. To help plan future Workshops, please fill out the form on page 12 and tell the board what interests you most. You may hand it in at the sign-in desk at the next meeting. If you prefer, just ask for the form at the desk at the next meeting and fill it out there.

JGSCV would like to include your genealogical discoveries in our newsletter. Maybe it is a photo or a document that you have uncovered. Maybe you have connected with a new relative. Or, maybe you’ve encountered a brick wall that you’d like to share. Please take some time to summarize what you would like to share and we will contact you for more details if necessary. See page 12 for more details.

## Highlights From:

# Yom Hashoah Commemoration Program

Each year JGSCV commemorates Yom Hashoah—Holocaust Memorial Day—with a special program. This year in keeping with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum’s 2014 theme we presented *Days of Remembrance Confronting the Holocaust: American Responses*—both action and inaction in the face of the refugee crisis in 1939 and the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the deportation of Hungarian Jews.

### SS ST. LOUIS

Many of us know the story of the *SS St. Louis*, the ship carrying 938 people—almost all of them German Jews fleeing Nazi persecution. The ship left Hamburg, Germany with landing permits for Havana, Cuba in May 1939 – before the War broke out in Europe. The permits were invalidated before the ship arrived in Havana. For 30 days the *St. Louis* wandered the seas and was refused haven by every country in the Americas including the United States. Pleas to President Roosevelt were unheeded. The ship returned to Europe where many passengers died in the holocaust. As part JGSCV’s program



of American responses in confronting the Holocaust, the documentary *The Voyage of the St. Louis\** was shown. The film depicts the story from the perspective of surviving passengers

who made the crossing as children and in readings from the diary of the ship’s captain.

The documentary gave those in attendance a deeper understanding of the frustration, anger and fear of the passengers who fled Germany on the *S.S. St. Louis* in what appeared to them as the last hope of escape. The *S.S. St. Louis*, part of the Hamburg-America Line (Hapag), left after Kristallnacht and many of the passengers did not readily have funds to pay for the voyage. Relatives outside of Europe provided funding for some. There were many and varied passenger stories. One passenger had been in Dachau and was permitted to leave only by fleeing Germany within 14 days. Another told the story of how his father could not get to the ship in time and asked his wife not to go with the children but she felt it imperative to leave Germany when they could. They recounted the Nazi flag flying and the photograph of Hitler in the social hall. One passenger related that they asked for the Hitler photograph to be removed during Sabbath services—which it was—only to be returned the next day. Another passenger who died while on board was buried at sea as the others were concerned that a dead passenger might impede their landing in Cuba. The passenger was buried draped in a Nazi flag.

*S.S. St. Louis* Captain Gustav Schroeder had given the crew stern warnings that these passengers were to be treated just like any others. The passengers spoke highly of the Captain and his courtesy and understanding of the passengers’ plight. The documentary showed the Captain disembarking in Cuba trying to talk with the government officials to let the passengers get off the ship—to no avail. At the end of the War the surviving passengers supported the Captain to avoid punishment as a war criminal.

Onboard, the passengers “enjoyed” the trip with good food, entertainment and children’s games. The irony of living a “good life” on a German ship after fleeing what had become unbearable circumstances in Germany, was not lost on them.

Several days before reaching Cuba, the ship’s captain received a message that foretold the problem: passengers might not be able to disembark in Cuba without paying for additional entry requirements. In early 1939 Cuba passed a decree that stated that each refugee needed a



*In Havana harbor unable to dock. Relatives in surrounding boats.*

visa and was required to pay a \$500 bond to guarantee that they would not become wards of Cuba. But the decree also said that tourists were still welcome and did not need visas. The director of immigration in Cuba, Manuel Benitez, realized that the decree defined neither a tourist nor a refugee. He decided that he would take advantage of this loophole and make money by selling landing permits which would allow refugees to land in Cuba by calling them tourists. He sold these permits to anyone who would pay \$150. Benitez himself had made a small fortune in selling these permits. Benitez’ son, at the time the documentary was made, was living in Miami and was interviewed—and he concurred that his father did make money on this arrangement—as did others.

As related in the documentary then- Cuban president- Federico Bru and Benetiz did not agree and turned a “deaf ear” to the pleas of the passengers. When the ship arrived in Cuban waters Captain Schroeder was advised that President Bru disallowed the St. Louis passengers to disembark. The ship had to anchor in the harbor and not dock at the Hamburg-Line pier. Family and friends of the passengers who were in Cuba rented boats and encircled the *St. Louis*. The passengers on board waved and shouted to those below, but the smaller ships weren't allowed to get too close. This would be the closest the relatives would get. One man who was living in Cuba begged his wife to throw their son overboard to him so he would at least have him. Another passenger who jumped overboard in a suicide attempt was taken to a Cuban hospital. His family was not permitted to leave the ship to visit him.

Representatives of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) in Cuba tried to meet with government officials to get permission for the passengers to disembark—to no avail. Eventually the ship was told to leave Cuban waters and sailed to Florida. Many of the passengers had US visa numbers and begged President Roosevelt to let them stay in camps until their numbers came up—also to no avail. Passengers who wrote to Mrs. Roosevelt asking that the children be allowed to stay in the US never received a response. Concerned that the ship would land and disembark the passengers, the US Coast Guard kept the ship stay far from the landing areas and eventually had the ship leave US waters. The documentary mentions that President Roosevelt had an election coming in 1940 and the assumption was the President did not want to make political enemies out of any group prior to an election. In 1939, many depression weary Americans were concerned about foreigners taking their jobs. Of course xenophobia and anti-Semitism also played roles. There were many who did not want to get into the impending war in Europe in early 1939 and by not accepting the passengers they may have felt that was a way of “avoiding” the war.



*S.S. St. Louis surrounded by smaller vessels in the port of Havana (USHMM Photo)*

The ship then sailed to Canada—the last sanctuary in North America-- where they also were refused entrance. Prime Minister Mackenzie King’s “private diary included concerns that too many Jews were moving into his Ottawa neighborhood”. The Prime Minister referred the *S.S. St. Louis* request to land and disembark the passengers to his “hardline” Deputy Immigration Minister, Frederick Blair. Blair rejected the request saying “no country could open their doors wide enough to accommodate the Jews leaving Europe—the line must be drawn somewhere”.

The limited supply of oil, gas and food became hopeless—and Captain Schroeder knew they would need to find a place to dock or return to Germany. The ship’s passengers became very upset and did not want to return to Germany, surely facing detention in concentration camps. The passengers threatened to go overboard as they felt the North Sea held a better fate than Germany.

The passengers were desperate. The children invented the game “Jews Not Allowed”. Mutiny was discussed. But the JDC in Europe was able to get Belgium, France, Holland and the United Kingdom to accept the passengers. Most wanted to go to England as the sea separated them from what was happening in Europe. However, only 228 were accepted there. Many of the passengers who were taken in by the other European countries found themselves being shipped east when the war broke out a

few months later—many of whom later perished.

### **CLARA KNOPFLER**

The second part of our program was devoted to the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the deportation of Hungarian Jews. JGSCV was privileged to have Clara Knopfler a Holocaust survivor from Hungary talk to us about her experiences. Clara lost 39 members of her family in the Holocaust. What is miraculous is throughout the War, Clara and her mother were never separated while being transported to four separate camps. When Clara’s mother died in the US in 1999 in the United States, she was the oldest surviving Holocaust survivor to give her story to the Shoah Foundation.

Klara in the United States known as Clara, was born in Transylvania which has been a part of either Hungary or Romania throughout history. Following WWI it was in Romania but in August 1940, in the midst of World War II, Hungary regained about 40% of Transylvania by virtue of the Vienna Award, with the aid of Germany and Italy. The territory, however, was returned to Romania in 1945. When Ion Antonescu came to power in September 1940 he brought the Iron Guard into the government. The Guard launched pogroms against the Jews. The anti-Semitic laws the Hungarians enacted included no school for Jewish children. And, Jews could not mingle with non-Jews. Life was frightening for Clara and her parents, sibling, aunts, uncles and cousins. In March 1944 Hitler’s army invaded Hungary. The Hungarians sold their country to the Nazis.



Clara’s family and other Jews in her village were given 2-days’ notice to pack. Only nonperishable food was necessary as there was no refrigeration at their destination. In reality they were given much less time to prepare to leave. Clara’s father- in- law served in WWI and originally was told that serving in that War



would protect him and his family from being subject to the Jewish laws. That was false as he, his sons and other family members all died in the gas chambers or in the concentration camps at Auschwitz or Dachau.

Clara and her family were taken by train to a brick factory in a ghetto of eight thousand people. They stayed longer than the provisions they brought with them could last and shared in the remaining foodstuffs with other families. That spring, they were transferred in cattle cars and told to bring minimal items. They were body searched before being placed 70 people per cattle car without knowing their destination. They were locked in the cattle cars for three days with no stops to let them go to the bathroom outside of the cattle cars. When the train stopped they were in Auschwitz where the men and women were separated. Her father and brother walking with the other men toward the camp is the last time she saw either of them. Then an SS man directed the women into two lines—the right line was for elderly, infirmed and with young children. Clara and her mother were pushed into the other line—her mother being the only “adult” as she did not look her age. The women all appeared strong enough for slave labor.

The women were taken to a barracks, were told to undress and had their hair shaved from their heads. About a week later they were selected with about 150 other Hungarian women to go to Kaiserwald, outside of Riga. There they worked 12-hour shifts to strip batteries for the metals to be used by the Nazis for ammunition. Their life in Riga was wretched, and Clara told in detail the paucity of food and clothing, absence of health care and the overall conditions of the camp. Walking to and from the camp they traversed broken tombstones of dead Jews.

The Nazi’s started to empty the camp as the Russians were arriving. Those who appeared “young and healthy” were selected to go on a ship to Danzig. From there, they were then taken to Stutthof in September 1944—a concentration camp for transient prisoners. Next, they went by

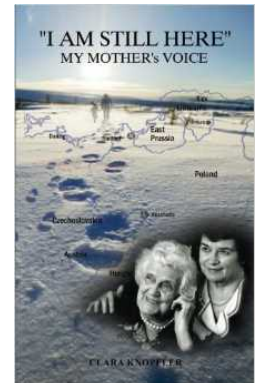
train to the small town of Dorbeck—where they dug anti-tank trenches into the winter months. In January 1945 the camp was evacuated due to the Russians’ close arrival. Soon the SS guards left and they walked and walked until some Russians directed to them to a school with a dormitory to sleep. It was winter of 1945 and they were going back to their home. When they arrived in April 1945 they found a shtetl devoid of Jews but with welcoming Christian friends who returned the goods they had taken from their home when they were deported.

They stayed in their small town (now Romanian) before moving to western Europe. In 1962 they immigrated to the United States. Clara was a French and Latin teacher for 45 years.

Clara discussed that many Hungarians are still anti-Semitic This past January—70 years after the Holocaust - the Hungarian government first apologized. Hungary’s UN ambassador Csaba Korosi to mark the 70th anniversary of the Jewish and Roma Holocaust made the following first ever apology. Mr. Korosi stated:

“We owe an apology to the victims because the Hungarian state was guilty for the Holocaust. Firstly, because it failed to protect its citizens from destruction and secondly because it helped and provided financial resources to the mass murder...Hungarian state institutions at the time shared responsibility for the Holocaust. This apology today by the Hungarian state must become part of national memory and identity”.

Clara wrote a book about her Holocaust experience, *“I Am Still Here” My Mother’s Voice* which she sold at the meeting. Copies are available on Amazon.com. JGSCV has purchased a copy for our permanent library.



\*Showing the Voyage of the St. Louis was made possible through the National Center for Jewish Film [www.jewishfilm.org](http://www.jewishfilm.org)

# GENEALOGISTS DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

The genealogical community has been fighting the misconception held by some national, state and local governments that genealogists may be the cause of identity theft and the broader issue of invasion of privacy. These misconceptions impede our access to vital records necessary for access to historical vital records. The Records Preservation and Access Committee (RPAC) launched a *Genealogists Declaration of Rights* at the recent National Genealogical Society conference in Richmond Virginia. Over 500 conference attendees signed the *Genealogists Declaration of Rights* in books with sign-up pages by individual states. The intent is to alert elected officials and regulators of the concern of their constituents on this matter by attaching the signed *Declaration* with the appropriate state pages along with letters regarding specific access records issues. RPAC is a committee on which IAJGS is a sponsoring member along with the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) and the National Genealogical Society. Other participating genealogical organizations include American Society of Genealogists (ASG), Association of Professional Genealogists (APG), Board for Certification of Genealogists (BCG), and the International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists (ICAP-Gen).

The Board of Directors of all three sponsoring organizations—FGS, NGS and IAJGS- unanimously voted to endorse the *Genealogists Declaration of Rights*. To read about this, including an RPAC press release and most importantly a link to digitally sign the *Genealogists Declaration of Rights* go to the IAJGS website: <http://iajgs.org/ISigned.html>. The electronic version of the *Declaration* is available at <http://bit.ly/gen-declaration>. The *Declaration* will also be available at the IAJGS 34th

International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in Salt Lake City, UT 27 July-1 August and at the FGS conference in San Antonio, TX 27-30 August. The "I Signed" sticker shown below was given to all those who signed and will also be available at the IAJGS and FGS conferences.

During the NGS Luncheon on May 10 copies of the over 500 signatures on the *Genealogists Declaration of Rights* was presented to Patricia Potrzebowski, Ph.D., the executive director of the National Association



of Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS), the group that developed the Model Vital Records Act. NAPHSIS embargoed dates for vital records at 125 years for birth, 100 years for marriage and 75 years for death records and requires indices to have similar embargo dates. Adoption of all or part of the Model Vital Records Act is voluntary by each state. When you visit the IAJGS website to read about the launch of the *Declaration* you may recognize some of the famous genealogists who signed the *Declaration* at the NGS conference (L to R) Judy Russell—The Legal Genealogist; Janet Alpert-Chairperson- RPAC; Dick Eastman—Eastman Online Genealogy Newsletter; Jan Meisels Allen-Chairperson, IAJGS Public Records Access Monitoring Committee and IAJGS representative to RPAC as well as Crista Cowan—Ancestry.com.

Please share the information with others you know who are concerned about records access. And, please encourage them to sign the *Declaration*.

# VENTURA COUNTY FAIR



Once again the Ventura County Fair (July 30-August 10) will take place at the Ventura County Fairgrounds located at 10 W. Harbor Blvd. in Ventura. This year's theme is: "A Country Fair With Ocean Air". Genealogical awards and prizes are offered as part of the Hobbies Department. For entry details go to <http://tinyurl.com/3p3ogaw> (<http://www.venturacountyfair.org/pages/4589/>)

On the lower right of that page in the yellow box you can download the *Entry Guide*.

You can enter online June 1-July 14, 2014 or bring your items to the Gem & Mineral building at the fairgrounds on July 26, 27 & 28 between 10 am-5 pm. Division 462 is genealogy and the requirements are included in the Entry Guide.

JGSCV members have volunteered in past years in the genealogy booth and enjoyed it! The IAJGS conference ends on August 1 so there are still many days you can volunteer at the Fair! Genealogy volunteers are needed for each day. Volunteers participate in 4 hour shifts 10:30 a.m to 2:30 p.m.; 2:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. It is best if volunteers are familiar with Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org as well as other popular programs to show the fair attendees how genealogy is researched. Training sessions will be held for those needing an update on the latest programs. Volunteers are admitted to the Fair free but there are no parking privileges. For more information, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/54wupq> or original url: <http://www.venturacountyfair.org/pages/3441/>

If you are interested in volunteering please email Kristin Stiles at [kstiles222@yahoo.com](mailto:kstiles222@yahoo.com).

## 34<sup>th</sup> IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy



The 2014 IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy will be held in Salt Lake City July 27-August 1. The full program is now available on the website.

Registration is open and you may make your hotel reservation at the conference rate now. Registration for the Full Conference is \$295 until May 31, 2014. June 1 the fee increases to \$325. It is \$365 to register on-site. FAQ's regarding registration can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/l3hgysym>. Hotel rooms are limited so make your reservation now if you plan to attend. There is no penalty to cancel the hotel reservation up to 24 hours before the check-in date. Remember, there are SIG breakfasts, luncheons and other events that require pre-registration. When registration fills up the event is closed so plan ahead.

The conference website <http://iajgs2014.org> is updated regularly so visit often to learn more as new information is released.

And, for insights regarding travel and transportation once in Salt Lake City, go to <http://tinyurl.com/l1g4h5o>

# Will You Share Your Genealogical Stories?

To all JGSCV members: We would like to include your genealogical discoveries in our newsletter. Maybe it is a photo or a document that you have uncovered. Maybe you have connected with a new relative. Or, maybe you've encountered a brick wall that you'd like to share. Please take some time to summarize what you would like to share and we will contact you for more details.

---

---

---

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email  
address \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Number \_\_\_\_\_

## Future JGSCV Computer Classes Survey

To all JGSCV members: Thank you for taking the time and effort to respond to this survey. We want to know what interests you. We have listed some topics, but please add anything else you want to learn.

\_\_\_\_\_ Jewish Gen – Data Base Searches

\_\_\_\_\_ JGSCV.org Website Resource Links

\_\_\_\_\_ How to use Google for Genealogy searches

Genealogy software programs (write on the line below)

\_\_\_\_\_

Other

\_\_\_\_\_

Name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

## USHMM To Hold Special Program in Los Angeles:

### *The Search For The Rosenberg Diary Inside The Mind of A Nazi Perpetrator .*

Tuesday, May 27, 7:30 p.m. at Kehillat Israel 16019 Sunset Boulevard Los Angeles. To register to attend go to: <http://events.ushmm.org/profile/form/index.cfm?PKformID=0x12712aa9b> by Thursday, May 22 Tickets are free. To read more about the lecture go to: <http://www.ushmm.org/online/calendar/detail.php?EventId=41049>

## JGSCV MEMBER BENEFITS

- Annual assisted research afternoon at the Family History Library
- Members-only emails from the president announcing special events and free opportunities with Ancestry and other genealogical organizations and other items of genealogical interest
- Use of the traveling library at president's home – with an advance appointment
- For the first year of membership, JewishGen's Warren Blatt will assist with one concise question per month. He won't do your genealogy but with well thought out questions, he can help you on your genealogical journey.
- NEW! Members-Only Workshops on valuable genealogy tools

## JGSCV Meeting Dates Through August, 2014 At Temple Adat Elohim

***NOTE: Programs are set through August, 2014. There is no meeting July, 2014 to accommodate the annual IAJGS Conference (held this year in Salt Lake City). Once we have dates from Temple Adat Elohim we will post the September 2014-June 2015 meetings dates here.***

**Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup> 1:30-3:30 PM Program "Roundtables" featuring country-specific tables with experts leading each table**

**No Meeting in July to accommodate IAJGS Conference in Salt Lake City  
Sunday, August 10<sup>th</sup> 1:30-3:30 PM**

\*All programs subject to change. Check website [www.jgscv.org](http://www.jgscv.org)

"Venturing Into Our Past" © is the newsletter of the Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley (JGSCV). All rights reserved. Any article may be reproduced with prior notification and attribution.