

FAMILY LEGACIES

Linking the past with the present and future

Jewish Genealogy Society of Southern Nevada, Inc.

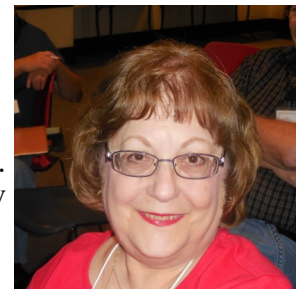


Winter 2024 Volume 28, Number 1

President's Message

Hello Members,

2023 is rapidly winding to a close and we look forward to 2024. New databases, new breakthroughs in our research, new members and new friends.



As I look back on 2023, I can say we had so many excellent programs, in person and via Zoom. The plan for 2024 is to have at least 2 possibly 3 Zoom meetings, interesting speakers and in March we will have "An Individual Day of Help". The idea for this program is to work hands-on downstairs at the FamilySearch Library using 3 valuable databases, Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org and Jewishgen.org. If you are new to genealogy, we will work one on one with you to either get started on a database of your choice or give you some assistance, again one on one with your brick wall. You will need to sign up and state which database you want help with; you will be assigned a mentor and a time. We will have to limit times so about 20 minutes per person so as to accommodate everyone. We want you to feel comfortable using the FamilySearch Library after our monthly meetings and on your own. Library director, Mark Waite graciously stays after our meetings to allow us to use the facilities until 4:00pm.

I also want to mention our annual Holiday Brunch which was held on December 10th. While we did not have as large a turnout as in previous years, I have to say the quality and quantity of food was amazing. I was especially happy to see many of our newer members attend and the food they brought could rival any Las Vegas buffet. I always try to sample a little of everything, but just couldn't do it this year. Every year I look forward to Sheila Drayster's chopped liver which just gets better every year. Many of those sitting near me also commented on just how good it was. Our newest member (she just joined that day), Ruth Krasnitz Rannazzisi, brought a kugel that was absolutely delicious. There were so many good dishes this year that I'm already looking forward to next year's feast!

As part of our Holiday Brunch, we have each member tell of their success or not so successful year of genealogy. There have been many years where I had not one single success in my research (although not this year) and there were a few members who didn't succeed in what they had hoped to accomplish, but for the majority it was a very good year. Hopefully 2024 will be successful for all.

JGSSN MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

We hope this email finds you well and enjoying the holiday season. As we reflect on the past year, we're grateful for the support of members like you who make our genealogical community thrive. We extend our heartfelt wishes for the safety of our friends and family in Israel and sympathy for all affected by the hostilities.

We wanted to remind you that it's time to renew your membership with JGSSN. Your continued support allows us to maintain our vibrant community and provide valuable resources to all members.

You can renew your single membership for \$20 or a 2-person household membership for \$30 by clicking on our [Membership page](#). For those who prefer to send a check, please make it out to JGSSN and mail it to P.O. Box 371561 Las Vegas, NV 89137. Or bring your check to our next meeting.

Your renewed membership comes with a range of benefits, including free attendance at in-person meetings, our quarterly Family Legacies publication, monthly News to Note, and access to available past Zoom speaker recordings. We believe these resources will continue to enrich your genealogical journey.

This year, we're also encouraging members to consider making an additional donation of any amount by clicking on our [Donation page](#). Your generosity will help us expand our offerings and reach even more individuals passionate about genealogy.

Thank you for being an integral part of JGSSN. Your support enables us to foster connections, share knowledge, and explore our family histories together. We genuinely appreciate your commitment to our community.

Renew your membership today and, if possible, consider making a donation to support our shared passion for genealogy. We look forward to another year of discovery and collaboration with you.



GRANDMA NEVER DIED

Author: *Augusta Siegel*

My aunt Gus wrote these wonderful little stories when she was 75 years old, about life at the turn of the century. She lived until she was 90, and at 88 even added another "look back" page. She was a gifted writer and poet, with an incredible memory for details. "Grandma Never Dies" will be serialized with stories in the next several issues of the JGSSN Family Legacies.

Susan Vermillion Mugge

Chapter 4. My Story Continues

The Flu Epidemic of 1918

GRANDMA NEVER DIED (cont.)

I was ten years old and going to P.S. 146 in Brooklyn. The year was very disastrous for thousands of people who did not survive the flu epidemic of 1918, one of the most severe epidemics in history.

I remember weeks and weeks of illness. Two of my sisters and I had the flu, but mine was the worst. Most of my hair fell out, and I could barely walk. Eventually I recovered and it was time to go back to school. My classroom was one flight up. When I got back to school, I learned that hundreds of children and teachers were home sick, and some had died.

In those days, children wore knitted hats, and since this illness caused many of the children to lose their hair, we all wore those hats to school. To us at that time, it was embarrassing to be seen with an almost bald head. So, for many weeks when I was in school, I wore my knitted hat all the time. My teacher too, had just returned to school after her illness and the two of us used to walk up the one flight very, very slowly, one step at a time. She did not wear a hat but her hair was long but very thin.

Hardly any schoolwork was done that term, but we were happy we had survived the flu epidemic of 1918.



GRANDMA NEVER DIED Con't

Chapter 5. My Story Continues

The Big Brown Dog

One day, towards the end of summer, a big brown dog appeared where we were all spending our vacation. It was not unusual, we later learned that people who were leaving their summer retreats would throw their cats and dogs out on the road so as not to take them back to the city.

The big brown dog wandered around our house every day and we thought he belonged to one of our neighbors. Sometimes we would feed him with leftovers, believing he wasn't getting enough food from his owners.

Thus, when the time came for us to leave Greenville, we just packed up and left, occasionally waving goodbye to the big brown dog. During the next few weeks, we came up for weekends only. Each time we found the dog sitting on our porch, waiting. Then we came to the realization that he had no home but had made our house his home.

We had a very sad feeling about this. We made a number of telephone calls, asking who would like to have a dog. No one wanted him. They all had farm dogs. We could not leave him alone after that and eventually took him to the animal shelter where they promised to try to find a home for him.

We kept in touch and were very happy to learn that a lovely family came and took the dog home with them. That made us all heave a sigh of relief. The man who helped bring the dog to the Humane Society was a Mr. Bruno Froidenstein. He was a teacher and trainer of dogs but he always said, "I don't train dogs, I train people"

Chapter 6 will be continued in the next issue of Family Legacies



Note: Family Legacies relies on our membership for articles from you, the membership. It has been discussed at our board meetings about reducing the number of issues each year or completely abandoning it. Without articles we have nothing to send you. None of us are professional writers so please consider writing something to be included in our next issue. The board really doesn't want to discontinue Family Legacies, but without anything to print, there will be nothing to include.

JGSSN Board

DID I KILL HIM?

By Bert Reiner

In 1964, we had the New York World's Fair. What a show, there were 160 pavilions hosted by 80 nations. It was located in Forest Hills, Queens, New York, only five minutes from my mother's home. How could we miss seeing it? So my wife Sandy, our 6mo old daughter Helaine, 9mo old German Shepherd Leibschen, and, I drove to the World's Fair grounds. Also accompanying us were our neighbors and friends, Phil and Marie Abrams. Since Phil's father lived in the neighborhood near where my mother lived, we decided to take his car, drop us off at my mother's, they then would drive onto his father's house, and pick us up the next morning. This was going to be an exciting day.



The following morning on Sunday, Sandy and I were walking our dog when I saw an empty parking spot (a rare occurrence in NYC), directly across from my mother's apartment house (see above). So, I had Sandy stand in the spot reserving it for Phil's car, who was on his way due to arrive shortly. After a few minutes, another car pulled up, slowly started to back up into the parking spot, gently pushing Sandy out of the way. He then yelled "*hey lady, you can't reserve a parking spot, you stupid bitch*". The guy then proceeded to park, then he and his wife got out of their car. I was furious, and yelled at him "*you almost ran over my wife, how dare you call her names?*" At which he replied "*you can't reserve a parking spot, you stupid Jew!*" When I got close to him, he swung his fist at me, I ducked, he smashed his fist into Sandy's eye.

DID I KILL HIM? Con't

I couldn't let this go, I grabbed his collar and returned his hit, hard on his chin. He fell backwards, stumbling over a row of evergreen bushes, hitting his head against the side of the building, and remained still (not due to my hit but from falling against the building). **Oh, my G'd, did I kill him?**

As he lay motionless, his wife screamed "*you killed my husband*", loud enough for a patrolling policeman to hear. The cop rushed to where we were standing on the sidewalk, walked over to the unconscious guy leaning against the side of the building's foundation to assist some help. Suddenly, the guy came too, and started yelling again, telling the cop "*that stupid broad was in the street saving a parking space*". The cop couldn't be bothered for such trivia, and just walked away.

Suddenly, someone from an upper story, said for us to "*stop yelling, this is Sunday morning*". Just then, another tenant, dumped a bucket of water on us.



"ZOOMING INTO UNITY: WEEKLY FREE SESSIONS SHAPING POLISH/JEWISH RELATIONS"

By Ben Kempner

During the pandemic, I actively sought engagement in virtual communities. I don't remember how I discovered the "Forum for Dialog", but it has become a valuable connection. This forum organizes weekly Zoom calls, delving into diverse topics related to Polish/Jewish experiences. I've participated in numerous enlightening lectures, with a recent standout covering the Lodz Ghetto—a topic close to my heart, as my grandparents were deported there from Vienna in 1942, spending a year in those challenging conditions.

The Forum speaker detailed the recent digitization and indexing of documents in Poland related to the ghetto and offered assistance locating records. Promptly, I reached out to Ewa, inquiring about any pertinent documents in the archive concerning my grandparents. Within a day, she provided a 14-page PDF, unveiling a genealogical treasure trove.

Whether or not you uncover genealogical information, the Forum offers compelling Zoom lectures. Inquiring about their non-profit, I received a concise summary via email. The provided paragraphs encapsulate the essence, offering a link to short videos and guiding you on joining their distribution list for free lectures of your preference.

"ZOOMING INTO UNITY: WEEKLY FREE SESSIONS SHAPING POLISH/JEWISH RELATIONS" Con't

Here's the description that the Forum for Dialog sent me:

The Forum for Dialogue is the oldest Polish non-profit dedicated to improving Polish/Jewish relations. We identify and connect people from Poland and abroad for whom Jewish history and heritage matter. We bring together people committed to writing a new chapter in Polish/Jewish history. We call this community the Forum for Dialogue Network (<http://dialog.org.pl/en/forum-for-dialogue-network/>). Through our dedication to building genuine people-to-people connections across languages, geographies, and memories, we overcome decades of pain and miscommunication about the complexity of Jewish history in Poland, and foster relations resilient to the recurring domestic and international political turmoil. We have built around us an extensive network of people who believe in honest and ethical research of Polish/Jewish history, understand the value of remembering and commemorating the past with empathy, and share a spirit of honesty and mutual respect. To learn more about the work of the Forum and the community we support, please visit our YouTube channel featuring short videos about the activists and other Forum community members: <https://shorturl.at/bmnZ5>.

Since 1998, Forum has worked in Poland to foster interest in local Jewish history and heritage, educate about antisemitism, and build civil society by means of dedicated programs for students, educators, and activists, as well as leaders of public opinion, experts and scholars. We have been providing them with educational and networking programs, as well as grants and scholarship opportunities that impact the scope and reach of the work they do. Simultaneously, we have been reaching out to members of international Jewish community for whom Poland matters. Through these people-to-people connections we are continuing to grow an international community of individuals who are shaping the future of Polish/Jewish relations.

Part of that outreach, began in response to the pandemic travel restrictions of 2020, has been the *Zoom in on the Forum* series of weekly online sessions with guest speakers, including Forum for Dialogue activists from all over Poland, expert on Jewish history and heritage and current politics and social context. So far, we had 150 sessions, covering topics ranging from Yiddish cinema, tours of Jewish Poznan, Krakow, or Lodz, as well as impact of the political situation in Poland on Polish/Jewish relations, antisemitism in Europe, or discrimination of Jews in prewar Poland. Our zooms include Polish and international speakers and are always available in English. The sessions take place every Thursday, at 10 am Pacific, 12 pm Central, 1 pm Eastern, 7 pm Warsaw, 8 pm Tel-Aviv time and require registration. If you would like to know more about the upcoming programs or be added to the invite list, please contact Michalina Jadczyk at michalina.jadczyk@dialog.org.pl.



IF I COULD ASK

As a returning feature in Family Legacies, we are asking you the question: If I could ask one ancestor, one question, what would that question be and who would you ask? Make as many copies of this form as needed, with as many questions, but please, one question per form. We will randomly select a few questions for each issue.

Example: I would ask my paternal grandfather, "How did you get from your shtetl to the ship you sailed on to America?"

Please either e-mail or give you questions to Carole Montello (carmont7@cox.net) at the meetings and let's see what interesting questions our membership can come up with!

The ancestor I would ask:

My question:

Your name:

Jewish Genealogy Society of Southern Nevada Inc.

Like us on Facebook



Visit our website: www.jgssn.org

Updates will appear on this website, and on our Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/JGSSN>

President:	Carole Montello
Vice Pres:	Ben Kempner
Secretary:	Joan Nazer
Treasurer:	Valerie Hunter
Director:	Bert Reiner
Director:	Mark Kornheiser
Director:	Linda Rains
Director:	Joanne Green
Past Pres:	Mary Barkan
Editor:	Bert Reiner
Webmaster:	Ben Kempner

We will remain in contact with our members by:

- ◆ E-mailing our quarterly newsletter **Family Legacies**
- ◆ E-mailing our monthly **News to Note**
- ◆ Updating our website **www.jgssn.org**
- ◆ Sending E-mails with timely **genealogy information**
- ◆ You can also send us an E-Mail at **info@jgssn.org**

Upcoming meetings (Held at LDS FamilySearch library, at 509 S 9th street):

Jan 21: "Finding Your Jewish Ancesters in Family Search.org" by Todd Knowles, at 1:30p.

Feb 25: "How AI Can Help Genealogists" by Daniel Horowitz, at 1:30p.

"When There's a Will, There's a Way", by Daniel Horowitz, at 2:45p.

Mar 17: "A Day of Individual Help" Several experienced members will help you on either Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org, or JewishGen.org, at 1:30p.