

Getting A Better Look at Our Family Photos

Exploring the photo enhancement tools at MyHeritage.com

by Scott E. Meyer

Over the past year, Ancestry competitor MyHeritage.com has introduced several game-changing, easy-to-use online tools that often produce results that are nothing short of amazing—sometimes venturing into the category of unbelievable. Though MyHeritage is a subscription service, as of this writing it offers for free the enhancement of a limited number of photos. However, as astounding as the results can be, there are a few things you need to know about them in order to get the most benefit.



COLORIZING MONOCHROME IMAGES — Genealogy is (at least in part) about making discoveries. Researchers of Jewish genealogy sometimes face unique challenges, but also stand to make unique discoveries. I made two such discoveries very recently using the tools at MyHeritage. The first related to a black and white photo from the 1930s of my mother-in-law's family around a festive table in Poland at which were three generations.

The fact that the photo was textured meant that there were little bumps all across it. That helps keep glare down but does not look great when enlarged. Still, it was the only photo that is known to exist of some of the people pictured in it.

After I enhanced the photo and then colorized it using the tools at MyHeritage, I saw something I hadn't noticed before: *There are photographs propped up on the table—presumably family members who were not there in person. The MyHeritage tools have their limits—in this case I could not identify the people in those photos—within-the-photo—but the fact that I could now see that the family decided to include them in the family portrait tells me a bit more about this group.*



RESTORING FADED COLORS — The second example (right) is another picture of my mother-in-law—this time alone. Clearly, she is standing at another festive table, but when was the photo taken? The border provides a clue, but does it read "66" or "99"? The appearance of my mother-in-law and the faded color suggest 1966 rather than 1999. But the colors of the faded image were restored with yet another MyHeritage tool, and it then became clear exactly when the photo was taken. *Now one can easily notice the matzah amid the wine bottles. Passover!*



If we are fortunate, our box of family photos includes those of people not long after they arrived from the Old Country.

To the left is another family portrait. This time, it features the parents and children of my maternal grandfather, Joseph Bluver. I don't have the original photograph; it was posted to FaceBook by my cousin, Jenny Schwartzberg. Time had not been good to the image. Yet it was impressive to see how MyHeritage tools could breathe life into it.

JGSI Board of Directors:

Co-President: Debbie Kroopkin
Co-President: Wendy Hauser
Vice-President - Membership: Sandra Schon Kiferbaum
Vice-President - Membership: Terry Taylor
Vice-President - Programming: Michael Tarkoff
Vice-President - Publicity: Martin Fischer
Treasurer: Debbie Soren
Recording Secretary: Scott Meyer
Corresponding Secretary: Barry Finkel
Director-at-Large: Douglas Bank
Director-at-Large: Gary Barron
Past President: Mike Karsen

MORASHA:

Executive Editor: Dale Amdur
Design/Layout: Marcia Hirsch
Contributing Editors: Bobby Jacobs, Sandra Schon Kiferbaum,
Debbie Kroopkin, Scott Meyer
Proofreaders: Dennis Aron, Barry Finkel,
Sandy Pakin, Bena Shklyanoy, David Sterlin
Distribution: Debbie Kroopkin, Barry Finkel

CEMETERY PROJECT: Alvin Holtzman, Chair
E-NEWS: Barry Finkel, Marcia Hirsch, Helen Stopek
HELP DESK: Barry Finkel, Martin Fischer, Marcia Hirsch,
Alvin Holtzman, Mike Karsen, Debbie Kroopkin
JGSI TELEPHONE: Harriet Rudnit
TECHNOLOGY ADVISOR: Ron Miller
WEBMASTER: Jan Mishkin
TRIBUTE CARDS: Myrna Siegel
EDITORIAL POLICY: JGSI welcomes articles for publication in *Morasha* that will help members further their research. Articles with several photos or exhibits in jpeg format and a word count under 1,500 words are preferred. The Editorial Board reserves the right to accept or reject any material submitted and to edit those articles that are accepted. Articles must be typed to minimize possibility of errors.
Send articles to morashaeditor@jgsi.org

JGSI Membership Categories:

*Acknowledged in *Morasha*

U.S. Single/family membership	\$25
U.S. Contributing membership*	\$36-49
U.S. Patron membership*	\$50-99
U.S. Sustaining membership*	\$100+
Canadian membership (USD).....	\$30
International membership (USD).....	\$36

Send check/money order to:
JGSI, P.O. Box 515 • Northbrook, IL 60065-0515

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Exploring the Photo Enhancement Tools at MyHeritage.com.....	1
From the Editor • Legacies	2
Board Business • President’s Message • Membership.....	3
Guiding my Client to her Jewish Father and Living Sister.....	4
My Grandfather, the Polygamist!.....	5
Finding Your Record in FHL Films.....	8
JGSI Recap 2021 Meetings	11
Upcoming JGSI Programs.....	12

From the Editor...

by Dale Amdur, Executive Editor

On Mother’s Day weekend, my husband and I traveled to our daughter and family near Columbus, OH to celebrate our grandson’s Bar Mitzvah. Relatives from six states came to enjoy the celebration, including our son from California. It was a great family reunion since we had not seen each other in nearly two years.

Our daughter asked me to give a genealogically-related speech after the service. My speech was a short summary of the information that I had collected over the past 30 years into my genealogical research. The most important part of my speech was telling our grandson that a Bar Mitzvah is an important and integral part of our Jewish heritage and how much our Jewish heritage meant to his ancestors. I then presented him with copies of the three family history books that I have written over the past four years.

To our readers – with the help of articles in all of our current and past issues, may you pass down your heritage, your *Morasha*, to your descendants.

Thank you to those who contributed articles to this issue:

- Scott Meyer – Exploring the Photo Enhancement Tools at MyHeritage.com
- Russ Maurer – Finding your Record in Family History Library Films
- Steven Flack – Guiding my Client to her Jewish Father and Living Sister
- Paula Hyman – My Grandfather, the Polygamist!

Thank you to Debbie Kroopkin, Scott Meyers, and Sandra Schon Kiferbaum for their columns, and to Bobby Jacobs and Martin Fischer for their recaps of previous meetings. Thank you to our proofreaders and to Marcia Hirsch for her amazing work on the design/layout of *Morasha*.



LEGACIES

JGSI extends condolences to Mike Tarkoff, our Vice-President-Programming, on the loss of his sister.

Barbara Elaine Tarkoff Block Cope died May 21st in Phoenix. She is survived by her husband, Lee Cope, children Susan (Rick) Ortolano and David (Marcia) Block, grandchildren Maya and Danielle Block, and brother Michael (Sheryl) and the late Gene (late Cooky).

If you know about the passing of a past or current member, please email a link of the obituary or provide the information to morashaeditor@jgsi.org.

BOARD BUSINESS

A Mystery No Longer...

by Scott E. Meyer, JGSI Recording Secretary

Tikvah is the Hebrew word for hope. Recent JGSI Board meetings have shown that the directors, in spite of the many challenges presented by a pandemic, have been moving forward. The Board is ever hopeful of not only continuing to provide members with what they have come to expect from the organization, but to build on those expectations and with an eye toward improvement. It should come as no surprise that decision making is about the future. Sometimes JGSI members have seen the effect of votes cast at board meetings almost immediately, while the effect of other votes may have been seen days, weeks or months later. Creating a calendar of future programs necessitates looking forward, as does all the many volunteer-driven projects currently underway as well as those that are planned. Certainly, the plans for those projects had to be made and volunteers sought before the projects could be embarked upon and later completed.

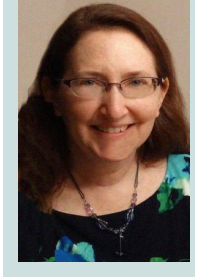
Modification and change have been a silent watchword at the most recent board meetings. As this year is an election year, candidates for positions had to be sought, and the election process itself had to be reviewed and tweaked, considering the current limitations of in-person gatherings. With the Board's input, a committee has been exploring ways to make the JGSI website an even better resource, and an upgrade is now in the offing. Needed changes to the JGSI Bylaws have been reviewed. Discussions have also begun regarding "opening up" – how we might go about beginning to meet in person again after more than a year meeting only remotely—and when we might do so. That date seems much sooner rather than later—finally.

It is certainly something to which all JGSI members can look forward... with tikvah.

From the PRESIDENT

by Debbie Kroopkin

We held our Annual Meeting on June 26th and I am happy to welcome several new board members, including Douglas Bank and Gary Barron as members-at-large. I am very grateful to past board member Wendy Hauser, for agreeing to serve as Co-President for this two-year term. A key focus of the next two years will be leadership development. If you are interested in taking a leadership role in the future of this organization...don't be shy. Let us know! We are always looking for additional volunteers for various roles. Currently, we are developing a programming committee and a membership committee. If you would like to become more involved, please send me an email at president@jgsi.org.



I want to remind you to sign up for the Member's Discussion Forum on our website. Don't miss out on the opportunity to learn from your fellow members and read the announcements about great resources and webinars. For example: Ancestry.com has extended the availability of its Library edition from home until December 31st. Also, the Wilmette Family History Library is reopening with access to its onsite collection, but not yet for its online collection. In addition to the Member's Forum, we can help answer your genealogy questions at our monthly discussions before our programs, through our info@jgsi.org email, as well as by phone. In addition, a small group of us have enjoyed the DNA discussions with Alvin Holtzman and Gil Bardige serving as our 'in-house' experts and answering so many of our questions. Feel free to join us!

Just a reminder - most libraries and archive repositories are continuously adding to their online digital collections. It is always worth checking back and revisiting searches you may have conducted, even a year ago. An example of a website that is literally adding millions of records is Arolsen-archives.org (Make sure to switch to English in the top right-hand corner). The E-Guide is an indispensable resource to be able to understand the records. Other helpful websites you may not have explored include genealogyindexer.org, tkfgen.org, jewua.org, szetel.org.pl and stevemorse.org. Here are some free webinars: <https://www.jewishgen.org/education/edu-webinars.html>.

Best of luck in your research!

JGSI Membership

by Sandra Schon Kiferbaum, Vice-President Membership

**WELCOME to NEW MEMBERS who have joined from
February 16, 2021 to June 4, 2021**

**Rena Appel • John Callen • Cynthia Eckhardt • Phyllis Faintich • Barbara Goodman • Bonnie Gould
Louise Greenfield • Rob Klegon • Rosalie Kornblau • Judith Leavitt • Mark Platt • Richard Sakols
Gail Sonnenfeld • Fred Spagat • Jessica Taylor
Julie Weisman • Sarah Barrash Wilson**

As this issue is going to press, JGSI is beginning our "Renewal Season." All single-year memberships expire on July 1st. Multiple year memberships expire on July 1st of the last year of the membership term. When your membership is due to expire, you will receive an email reminder. If you have already renewed, we thank you!

While we, of course, accept and appreciate all payment methods, we are encouraging everyone to use our online

payment system through our JGSI.org website. It is quick, easy, and secure. Your membership will be processed immediately and we will save on printing, paper, postage, and trips to the post office box. All payments receive a receipt by email.

Members who pay by check should expect a longer processing time due to slower mail delivery. Again, we appreciate your patience and support.

GUIDING MY CLIENT TO HER JEWISH FATHER AND LIVING SISTER

by Steven Flack

In March, 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic was exploding, I was scheduled to present “When DNA or Documents Reveal Life-Altering Origin Secrets” to JGSI. An eager guest was sorely disappointed that the in-person program was cancelled (although later rescheduled as virtual). This guest’s inquiry provided me the first of what are now numerous requests for genetic genealogy investigations.

MY CLIENT:

My pro-bono octogenarian client was a serious genealogist in her own right. She believed herself to be maternally English and Scottish, and paternally Norwegian. She had traveled to Norway, stood on the land where her father was born and raised, and had Norwegian mementos throughout her home.

My client and her septuagenarian sister had initially tested their DNA five years prior. Her sister’s results confirmed the belief in their ancestral roots; 50% English/Scottish, and 50% Norwegian. My client’s results differed in that the 50% Norwegian was replaced in her results with 50% Jewish. She spent years evaluating the possible origins of her Jewish ethnicity. After two retests in 2019 with different DNA companies, my client came to understand that something was dramatically amiss.

Many of my client’s and others have taken simultaneous DNA tests along with siblings, usually to confirm family lore; and in a surprising number of instances have obtained conflicting and confusing results. I can observe but not explain this pattern.

Even though the octogenarian lived in Chicagoland, the pandemic meant that our interactions would be virtual. During the first phone call, with a view of her DNA results, I tested the waters and determined that it was safe to inform her that (a) the DNA results were certain, (b) her “nuclear” sister was in-fact her half-sister. While her dad was her dad, he was not her biological father. To a traditional (document-based) genealogist with 80 years of life experiences, this was still received with a large measure of shock.

My next questions were: “Do you have any interest in finding out, to the extent possible, about your biological father, and the existence of any possible half-siblings, dead or alive?” I asked her to

consider this, perhaps along with her nuclear sister, who she acknowledged would be as shocked as anyone.

My client’s respect for her dad was as intense as that she felt for her mother, and as intense of that of her sister’s. However, my client’s interests in adopting her dad’s values and outlooks varied significantly from her sister, although this in no way detracted from the love and harmony in her family unit.

In this case, as in every one of the other investigations I have undertaken, either within my own family, as well as for clients, there is universally a release of pent-up lifelong feelings of being unexplainably different in physical appearance, interests, abilities, and outlook. As a life sciences undergraduate major, I understand this conceptually to be the contribution of genetic nature vs nurture in upbringing.

THE “GO-AHEAD”:

I soon received word that my client had consulted her sister, and they both agreed that they would always be as close as ever. Furthermore, I was to proceed full-speed-ahead with the investigation. Despite a full-time job, family responsibilities, and other interests and hobbies, I dove in and located several promising matches on Ancestry.com. Of the top matches, I learned that my client had made inquiries. Not surprisingly, these messages were not specific, and the responses were of little value.

THE PROCESS:

I first had to determine her maternal and paternal matches. In this case, I had her sister’s results to segregate the matches and identify her paternal DNA matches and associated trees. Looking at the partial tree of her top paternal match, even with a camouflaged username and with many individuals intentionally and unintentionally privatized due to lack of death years, I had a sense that I had located close biological paternal cousins. I urged my client, despite the passage of several years’ time, to recontact this testee. But this time, I would guide the messaging. With a concise message informing the purpose, sharing the backstory, and providing an assurance of confidentiality, the message requesting specific info received a prompt, “I will get back to you very soon.” Once initial

contact was made, trust was established, and the sharing began. I used the website dnainter.com and the powerful tool “What Are The Odds [WATO]?” to inform the genetic investigation. Along with other matches and trees, I was able to specify the most probable placement of my client’s father on the other member’s family tree with 86% certainty. With this in hand, we inquired about their common relative. The problem was that his name, despite an uncommon given name and a very common Jewish surname, was one I could not locate on any public records.

As a modicum of trust and confidentiality had been established with biological cousins, my client pointed out the research blockage (not a brick wall, just drywall in my terminology!). In turn, we were blessed to quickly receive some key facts without which it would never have been possible to quickly, easily, and cost-effectively complete the investigation. Her biological father had initially changed his surname, and later his first name!

With my client’s probable biological father’s new names, I located him in 1934 as a student at the University of Michigan. Not just any student, but as Chairman of a Rally in probably the most nationally significant challenge to Michigan Athletics in history. Georgia Tech had been invited to play at the Big House (Michigan’s nationally known football stadium). The game had been scheduled over six months in advance. Georgia Tech had one condition: that Michigan bench their best player, Willis Ward, for the stated reason that he was Black. Willis was not just fast, he qualified for the 1936 Olympics with times faster than Jesse Owens! In truth, Georgia Tech was frightened that with Willis Ward on the field, they would decisively lose. Willis Ward’s road game roommate was the team’s star center, a man of humble beginnings named Gerald Ford, later President of the US. Ford was outraged and was set to quit the team. Ever the politician, Ford was unwilling to rock the boat. It took my client’s father, the son of immigrants, yet only a first-year grad student, to organize and publicly confront racism and the powerful leaders now enshrined on Michigan sports buildings. These events are immortalized in the 2011 film “Black
Con’t, page 9

MY GRANDFATHER, THE POLYGAMIST!

by Paula Hyman

It has taken me five years to write the second part to this story that was originally published in the Fall 2016 issue of *Morasha*. It concerned my grandfather's abandonment of my grandmother and father in Havana, Cuba in 1926. Much new information has appeared since then and I can now add to the story. Here is a recap of that article:

My 18-year-old paternal grandmother, Mania Solganik, emigrated alone from Kiev, Russia in 1924 with the goal of entering the United States. Because of quotas that had been enacted that year limiting the number of Eastern European immigrants into the U.S., many ships were rerouted to the Caribbean. My grandmother ended up residing in Havana, Cuba, where she waited for permission to enter this country. In 1924 there were 24,000 Jews living in Cuba. All were called, "Polacos," (Pollacks), by the Cubans, even if they were not from Poland. This Jewish community was in a constant state of flux. Thousands entered Cuba each year, but thousands left for the U.S. when they were able.

I don't know the details of my grandmother's life in Havana, because she never talked about it, and I never asked. Many Jews made their living by peddling or working a twelve-hour day in clothing workshops run by fellow Jewish immigrants. Since Grandma possessed hand sewing skills, she probably worked in one of those sweatshops. There is a lack of details on how she met my grandfather, Borys Gotlieb, born in 1900 in Kovno, Poland (now Kaunas, Lithuania); but they married on March 3, 1925. Eleven months later she gave birth to my father, Ysaac Gotlieb (known in the U.S. as Isadore (or Izzy) on February 3, 1926.

Since Borys was a travel agent he was often gone, traveling frequently to Mexico, since it was easy to obtain a visa to visit there. Five years after immigrating,

in early 1928, when my father was just two years old, Grandma finally received permission to enter the U.S. However, Borys refused to go and traveled to Mexico instead! She left with my father,



*Grandma Mania and Borys' Wedding Photo
— Havana, Cuba, 1926*

entered the U.S., and traveled directly to Chicago where her relatives lived.

Without a husband to support her, life was very difficult. She got a job as a milliner, but since all the relatives also worked, she was forced to put my father in an orphanage until he was old enough to go to school. In the 1930 census, I found my father's name at a house located at 6401 S. Peoria in Chicago. He was listed as a "boarder," along with 27 other children. In the census, it did not appear to be an actual orphanage, but rather a boarding house for children in my father's predicament. My grandmother visited him on Sundays when her one relative who owned a car would take her from Albany Park to the South Side. I can only imagine the heartbreak she endured leaving her only

child far from home in the care of others for years.

While living with her relatives, Mania struggled to make ends meet while my father was growing up, barely eking out a living. Her Chicago relatives moved to Cleveland. Grandma was forced to rent a room from a complete stranger - a woman and her family - and lived with her for years. Gizzie and her kids, Phyllis and Richard, grew very close to my father and my grandmother and he was like a son/brother to them. Although my Grandma Mania has been dead for many years, I still keep in touch with Gizzie's kids and grandkids. They are like family.

Eventually, Grandma and Dad were able to move into their own apartment and my father subsequently completed high school in June, 1944, immediately enlisting in the U.S. Navy, so he would not be drafted into the army. Grandma Mania did not want her only child going to war and spent many sleepless nights worrying about him, just like other families at the time. He came home safe and sound, and upon his return, he went straight to work at the Knickerbocker Hotel as a bellboy. He had to go to work to help support my grandmother. He was unable to take advantage of the GI Bill, as all his friends did, and was quietly envious of them, because they all went to college. The abandonment of my grandmother and my father profoundly affected their lives in a negative way. My grandmother constantly worried about money. A few years after my father's death, I found a letter relating how envious he was that his friends were all able to become professionals, but he wasn't able to.

As a child, I was very curious about this mysterious Grandfather, and he was the person that initially got me interested in genealogy. However, since he was never mentioned even once by my father or grandmother, I did not have much to go on except papers my grandmother had kept from Cuba.

When my father died in 2015, I found a wedding photo of Mania and Borys while cleaning out his personal belongings. My mother was absolutely flabbergasted because she had never seen this photo and they were married for 65 years! That discovery prompted me to work on finding out what had ever happened to him. So, my search began.

Con't, page 10

MyHeritage

Con't from cover

Images with landscapes seem to provide some dramatic results. Next is an image of my in-laws dancing in Israel on Shavuot in the early 1950s.



Next to it is the colorized version.

The added color somehow helps bring the viewer into the scene. One must keep in mind that the computer program is making some educated guesses as to the actual colors. It is sometimes impossible to know when the guesses are correct. I have done some comparison tests by first turning color pictures into black and white images and then having MyHeritage add color. There have been times when the colorized version actually looked better than the original!

ENHANCEMENT OF BLURRY IMAGES — I recently inherited a briefcase full of slide projector cartridges. After having them digitized, I was disappointed to see how blurry they all appeared on my computer screen. Why had I not noticed the blurriness before? Simply because I saw them from a distance on a beaded projection screen. Even when the

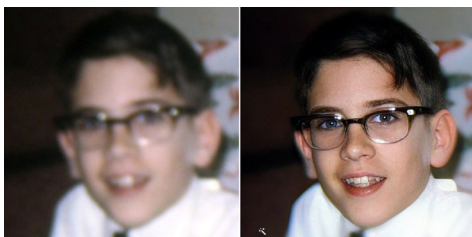


Kodak Instamatic camera that produced these slides was used to take standard photos, I never noticed that all the images were slightly



blurry—again because I was not holding the photo inches away from my eyes. When sitting a foot or two away from a high-resolution computer monitor, the lack of sharpness becomes not only evident, but disappointing. Again, MyHeritage tools came to the rescue!

Here is a Chanukah before-and-after to prove my point:



DRAWBACKS — One of the biggest drawbacks to any of these tools is that they require the program to recognize that there are faces in the photographs. You'd think that would not be too difficult for a sophisticated computer program. Think again. It seems that the program sometimes has difficulty recognizing men with beards, and that does not bode well for some of our ancestors! In photographs with several others in the image, the faces of the bearded folks may remain blurry while the others are sharpened. (For example take another look at the first photo example of the people around the festive table.) It may also not recognize people in images created with dot patterns, such as in pictures found in newspaper and magazines.

When eyes or other parts of the details of a face are in deep shadow, the program has to guess at what those details look like. That can produce some fairly disquieting results. In short, the less perfect the original image, the greater the chance that the result might be a nice sharp picture that does not actually resemble the subject. One may wish to experiment with lighter or darker versions of the original before uploading them to MyHeritage.

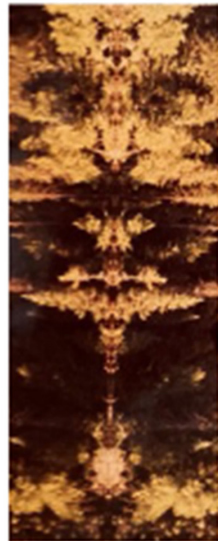
PAREIDOLIA — The imagined perception of a pattern or meaning where it does not actually exist is called "pareidolia." Examples include seeing what looks like animals in cloud formations or faces in tile patterns. Everyone's brain has done this for them at some time or other. The tools at MyHeritage may periodically introduce images that suggest pareidolia—images that never really existed replace mere wrinkles or shadows. This can result in eyes and teeth appearing in the fold of a dress, for instance. Though that sounds a bit gruesome, the fact is that it is usually not immediately noticeable.

Though, as with some things, once you notice it, you can't seem to un-notice it! For example, here is a simple landscape: trees and their reflections.

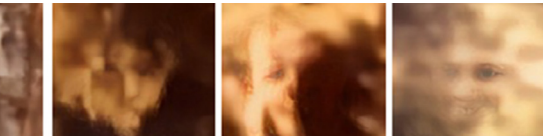


Con't from page 6

When turned sideways, most people can spot images resembling faces of fantastic creatures:

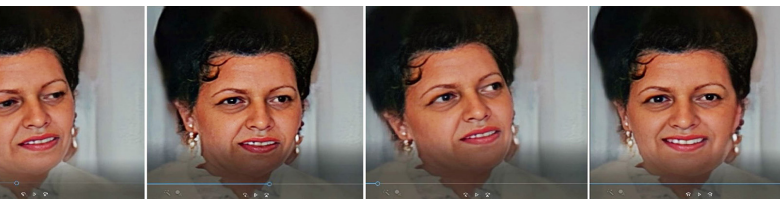


However, MyHeritage found images within the leaves and shadows that it enhanced like this:



DEEP NOSTALGIA™ — I thought I had seen everything in regard to

enhancement of photos. Colorization and sharpening blurred images really brings many photos to life, so to speak. But then I was notified that MyHeritage's latest tool, "Deep Nostalgia™", animates the faces in still photos. As the announcement proclaimed: "The result is a short, high-quality video animation of an individual face that can smile, blink, and move." Stranger than the claim was the fact that it turned out to be true!



I will not try to explain the science behind the magic, but you can see an example using the photo of my mother-in-law previously seen in this article. The animated version is available on YouTube at this web address: https://youtu.be/KdYC9UA_4RI

There are 10 different variations of the animation that can be chosen—some to better effect than others. When showing examples to several family members, the most common response was "creepy..." Perhaps, but also fascinating.

APPROACHING ETHICAL DILEMMA — As outstanding as the results can be, they present some challenging ethical concerns. Some may argue that a black and white or sepia tone photo has a charm and character all its own. The option of seeing the original image should not be taken away from future viewers. In addition, specific colors may have been used to specify an organization or religious, political, or social group. Changing the color, whether on purpose or by accident, could be severely misleading to those who do not have knowledge of the actual color. Animated images of faces may be entertaining, but they may not represent the way the actual person carried themselves and moved within the real world. The subjects of such animations could well be misjudged if the viewer believes the moving image to be an authentic representation of the subject.

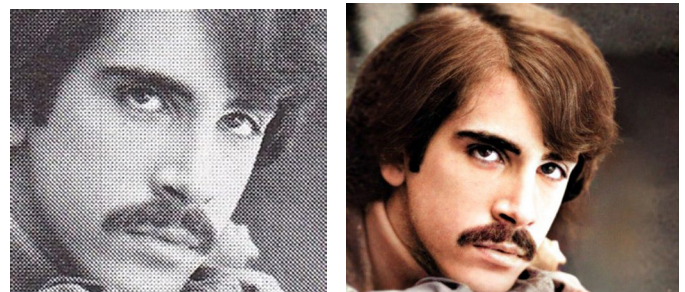


MyHeritage has attempted to address these concerns by placing small white icons in the lower left corner of each enhanced image. These symbols can alert the viewer to the fact that the image has been somehow changed. The untouched original image remains accessible at MyHeritage. An artist's palette indicates colorization, a magic wand suggests sharpening and contrast changes, and a ball in motion means that the image has been animated.

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF IT! —I have discovered a few workarounds to issues that you might be presented with when using the new MyHeritage tools.

The tools may reject "small" images. To resolve this issue, you will need to import the image into a photo editing program such as Photoshop and increase the resolution. (I have found that a resolution of 300 dots per inch seems to work very well.) Then, resave the higher resolution version and upload it to MyHeritage.

It has already been mentioned that the tools may not find faces in an image that it is made up of tiny dots such as this one:



Again, using photo editing software, the image can be blurred until the dots are no longer visible. Then, the blurry image can be uploaded to MyHeritage, which will notice the faces and sharpen and colorize them. Here is the result of using a blurred version of the black and white image.

Seeing that these remarkable tools came to light in only the span of about a year, I wonder what more may occur in the months and years ahead to advance the science behind it to help us make even more discoveries hidden within our box of old photographs.

In addition to the tools found at MyHeritage, other photo enhancing and colorizing tools are available through other apps found online and at app stores. Many of these are free to use with certain limitations. Performance may vary from app to app.

NOTES: As this issue was going to press, MyHeritage announced another photo enhancement tool, "Photo Repair," which it says will automatically repair scratched and damaged photos, "often with just one click." A quick trial of this tool indicates that it impressively repairs most of the issues you may encounter, but not necessarily all of them.

FINDING YOUR RECORD IN FHL FILMS

by Russ Maurer

Genealogists often find themselves flummoxed by the challenge of the record index. This guide is intended to show the steps, particularly for records from Lithuanian archives, although the steps generalize to other archives as well.

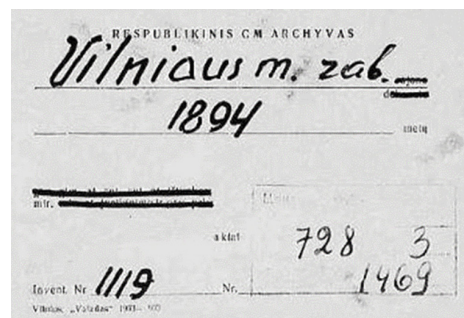
To illustrate, I will show how to find the death record of this unknown VAINEROVICH, child of Yankel B. Shmuel.

Name	Father	Residence	Date of Death DD/MM/YY	Town	Place Recorded	Microfilm Item Image Archive / Fond
	Mother		Hebrew Date	Uyezd	Year	
	Spouse	Comments	Age	Guberniya	Record #	
			Cause of Death			
VAINEROVICH, Unknown	Yankel B Shmuel	-	30/10/1894	Vilnius	Vilnius	2205054
	--	Family from Vilna	-	Vilnius	1894	3
	--		-	Vilnius	F556	LVIA/728/3/1469

The box above gives the film number (2205054), the item number (3); on the film, the items - you and I would call them sections - are demarcated at the beginning and end with easily seen storyboards that are white print on black background), the specific image number (missing in this case), and the archival reference (LVIA is the archive, in this case the Lithuanian State Historical Archive; 728 is the fond, 3 is the inventory, and 1469 is the file number, which the Family History Library calls a volume number). You will want to make note of the file number as you may need it, the rest is not important for finding the record.

Just to the left of all that, you can find the record number, F556. Male and female records are numbered separately (for deaths and births). F556 means the 556th female death of the year (1894). You will be looking for this number to locate the correct record, once you are in the vicinity.

After you click on the film number, you get a page of thumbnails, typically a thousand or so. Scroll down the thumbnails until you spot the storyboard for item 3, shown (right). All you will be able to make out in the thumbnails is the prominent 3, but that is all you need. It is image 252 in this particular film. The storyboard confirms that this item contains file 1469 and no other files. It is helpful that there is only one file here; sometimes they stick multiple files in a single item. If that should be the case, you need to browse until you find the correct book cover for the volume you want. In this example, there is only one book, and the cover is the next image after the storyboard. The notations in the lower right corner show that this is volume 1469.



Now you need to find record F556, which would be, roughly, the 1100th death overall since males and females are all in a single list, even though numbered separately. A quick inspection shows that there are 5 deaths on most pages, so go forward 220 frames to get close (image 472). It happens that all the deaths on that page are males, but if you go to nearby pages, you will see that you are in the 400's of female deaths, so you need to go deeper into the file. F556 is actually on image 499 (below):

№	Годъ уморъ и погребенья.	Число и мѣсяць.		Имя.	Болезнь или отъ чего уморъ.	Кто уморъ.
		Христіанскій.	Еврейскій.			
Женскаго.	Мужскаго.					
556	1894	30	10	Дочь Шмуелевича	Stillborn	Yankel Shmuel

The first two columns are for the record number - females always on the left, males always on the right. The next column is for the place of death and burial (it says Vilna). The next two columns are for the date of death according to the Christian (left) and Jewish (right) calendars. It only gives the month and day because the whole file is for 1894. The Christian date will be according to the Julian calendar in Russian Empire records. The next column is for the age of the deceased. Following that is the cause of death. The last column is the identity of the

deceased. Here, it says "Stillborn daughter of Yankel Shmuelevich Vainerovich," which, per convention, means Yankel was the son of Shmuel. Thus, Yankel B Shmuel in the index should be understood as Yankel ben Shmuel.

Con't bottom of page 9

Con't from page 4

and Blue-The Story of Gerald Ford, Willis Ward and the 1934 Michigan-Georgia Tech Football Game” starring Steve Ford, Gerald Ford’s son. I was able to locate the actual poster prepared for the 1934 Rally and present this to my client – an influential moment in her legacy six years before her birth.

We also learned, from University of Michigan student records, that her father had earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. During WWII, her father had served his country by preparing propaganda on behalf of the United States Government, and these messages were aired, delivered, recorded, and archived.

In order to develop my client’s origin story, I used website calculators to determine her most likely estimated date of conception (EDC). When I learned this date, my client was able to share her mother and father’s residence and places of employment. Her father was the front desk manager and night clerk for a private writer’s club with guest rooms, still operating in NYC. I immediately called the club, asking to learn if they had the visitor and guest logs from April, 1939. While these records were not available, the club’s historian fully briefed

me on the function and operations of the club in 1939.

Ancestry.com research allowed me to determine that my client’s father also had two other daughters. One of these women had died in her 40s of breast cancer, and the other was alive and well and residing in Oregon. My client wrote and sent hand-written letters simultaneously to a P.O. Box and FedEx onto her probable new half-sister’s doorstep. A response to phone messages was received from her son, who was highly skeptical of the content of the letters to his aged mother. In time, with persistence that I hand-guided, a phone call was initiated. This resulted in a two-and-one-half hour conversation between two elderly women, who had previously known nothing of one another.

While the DNA matches to my client and social clues provided strong probability of the relationship, this was not proof of their relationship: only DNA testing would provide that. My client paid for a test. Unfortunately, the test kit failed. I explored many wild ideas for a retest, even contacting the local JGS for potential in-person assistance. When the woman in Oregon repeated the test with detailed step-by-step instructions,

the results were no longer speculative or probable. The results confirmed with 100% certainty their half-sibling relationship.

EERIE COMMONALITIES:

I cannot conclude this article without informing that my client, her biological father, and her biological half-sister, all Caucasians, had or have similar highly liberal leanings, surprisingly — despite births decades and half-continent apart, my client and her biological father both attended the same UWM (proving that there is a “fit” in college admissions), were prominent Civil (Black) rights activists, were all writers, etc.

SHARINGS/CONCLUSIONS:

My client received a veritable treasure trove of photos from her half-sister in Oregon, and more details on why her father who had lived in LA, had traveled from LA to NYC in April, 1939, and so much more. They now enjoy a warm relationship and hope to someday meet one another in person. I am humbled to be a part of their story.

In closing, I repeat my famous DNA warning, “Don’t test if you are not prepared for what you might learn.”

(© Copyright 2020. LitvakSIG, Inc. All rights reserved.)

(reprinted from <https://www.litvaksig.org/all-lithuania-database/fhl-film-navigation> with permission from LitvakSIG, Inc.)

FHL FILMS

Con't from page 8

Other kinds of records can be found by similar steps, even though each record type will be organized a little differently. The record below shows an example of a marriage record. The record number is in the first column, while the next two columns are used for the age of the bride and groom.

ЧАСТЬ II. — О БРАКОСОЧЕТАВШИХСЯ.						
№	Л. Т. А.		Кто совершил обряд обручения и бракосочетания (хицу).	Число и месяц.		Кто именно, съ кѣмъ вступаетъ въ бракъ, также имена и состояніе родителей.
	Женского.	Мужского.		Христіанскій.	Еврейскій.	
2	22	22	Мортисега Магеленский при свѣдѣн тсодѣи Мѣи ме Мадѣиши, и Сабриецъ Редѣи	25	15	срѣдѣи / Срѣдѣи / Аронѣи срѣи / срѣи / Аронѣи срѣи / срѣи / Аронѣи Мѣи / Мѣи / Аронѣи срѣи / срѣи / Аронѣи срѣи / срѣи / Аронѣи

In some records, the index will give an image number instead of (or in addition to) the item number. The image number will “usually” get you close to your target, but you still need to use the record number to find the correct record. The image numbers now are not exactly the same as they were when the records were indexed, as FamilySearch has evolved. Recently, I saw a case where the given image number was 430 and will *usually* get you close to the record was actually at image 340! Unusual, and probably the result of an actual error, but you never know.

Russ Maurer
(send questions to me at
vhrproject@litvaksig.org) Nov. 28, 2020

MY GRANDFATHER

Con't from page 5

At first, I could find no records for him at all. On one of the Cuban papers Grandma saved, Borys had related that he had never been to the U.S. But the Borys Gotlib I kept seeing in my research had lived in New York for a while, so I did not think it was him. I discovered that was Lie #1! There are also conflicting facts in these papers and on Ancestry.com concerning his age, born, 1900 or 1905, and place of birth, Kovno, Poland or Pinsk, Russia. Lies #2 and #3! I began to get suspicious of his reason for lying, but then a lot of information from Mexico appeared on Ancestry and my suspicions proved to be "on the money." I had hit the genealogy jackpot!

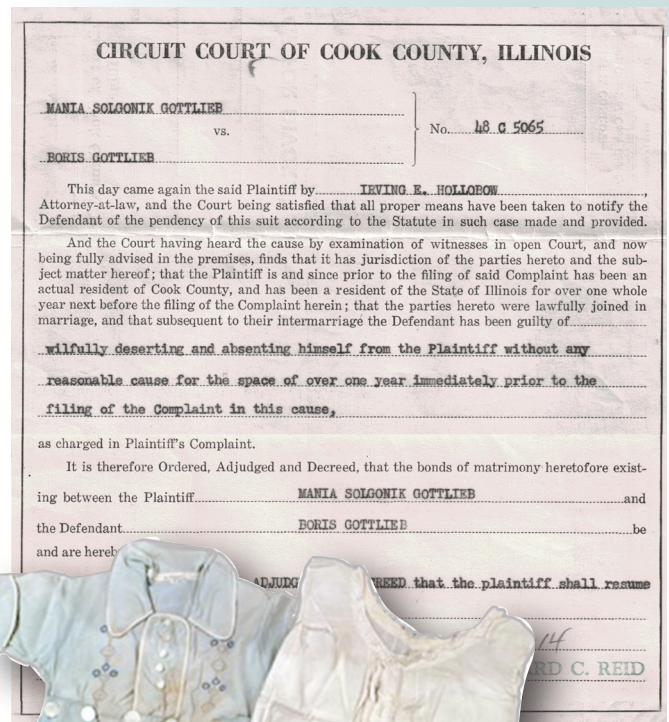
I found the reasons for all Borys' subterfuge. When he met and married my grandmother in 1924, he was already married - to Elizabeth Klein in Mexico City. They had a child there together, Ana Klein Gotlib, born in June 1923. He had hidden the fact that he was already married with a child from my poor grandmother, who had been duped by him. Lies #4 and #5! No wonder he traveled to Mexico instead of the U.S. - he had a family there. A cousin and a friend helped me translate the Spanish on the marriage and birth certificates and we were all stupefied by this knowledge. I could find no divorce records for Borys, so when he got married to Elizabeth, he was still married to Grandma Mania. My Grandpa Borys was a bigamist!

But there's more: As I continued searching, I discovered that in 1937 he married Chaja Gitel Bercover Seluelman, in Puebla, Mexico. Now he was a polygamist with three wives! He was a travel agent, so he traveled from place to place without his three wives knowing about each other. It was like a Hollywood movie. I found records of his air travel to San Antonio, Texas, Southampton, England and Capetown, South Africa. This guy got around! Who knows how many other families he had sired around the globe?

In 1948, my grandmother wanted a divorce because she had met someone. There was no communication between the U.S. and Cuba at that time, so Grandma Mania went to a lawyer and followed the legal steps to get a divorce in absentia. The Cuban government did not answer letters from the lawyer, but she still had their marriage certificate and my father's birth certificate. The divorce was granted. Grandma got remarried in 1949, to a gentle man I refer to as Grandpa Herman.



Grandma Mania and my father, Izzy, Age 6 — Chicago, 1932



Mania and Borys' Divorce papers (Chicago, 1948), and my father's baby clothes from 1927 from

Cuba, carefully preserved by Grandma Mania.

By that time, my father was an adult and dating my mother, and he was relieved that Grandma Mania no longer had to worry about money. Herman was not wealthy, but he had a reliable job as a typesetter at the *Chicago Tribune*. My parents remained married until his death in 1972.

The story does not end there. As more and more information has been released to Ancestry, I just recently discovered Borys' death certificate, dated July 5, 1962. He died of a heart attack in Chicago, of all places, just about a mile from where we lived in Albany Park. At the time, I was ten years old. He was living with a woman, of course, who reported his death. According to the death certificate his body was sent to Mexico for burial. That is where this story hits a brick wall. Why was Borys in Chicago? He could find our address in the phone book. Did he ever walk by our house hoping to see my dad? What happened to wife #1, Elizabeth, his daughter Ana and wife #2, Chaya? Did Chaya have children, also? Did Ana, my step-aunt, have any children? Do I have any relatives descended from these people? I am still looking.

With all my shocking discoveries, I wished my father and grandmother were still alive so I could tell them about Borys, the polygamist scoundrel. I do feel like they were vindicated by my discoveries; obviously, his abandonment had nothing to do with them. It was just a game he was playing, one where a lot of people got badly hurt.

◀ April 25

April 25, 2021, "Three Guides, Four Countries: A Daughter of Holocaust Survivors Travels to Their Ancestral Villages," by Deborah Long
DebbieTheTeacher@gmail.com

The daughter of two Holocaust survivors, Deborah Long recounted her shocking 2009 unearthing of family artifacts that compelled her to visit her ancestral villages in Poland, Hungary, and northern Germany to understand her parents' Holocaust history. The narrative of this program serves to inspire researchers who are up against all odds - few names, no family artifacts or photographs, and no living relatives. By using three guides, she visited four countries and told us about how, where, and what she saw there.



To find a guide in Poland, she asked the executive director of JRI-Poland, Stanley Diamond for a recommendation. Her first stop was Krakow where she visited family homes and the city record office. Deborah made a point of mentioning that the records she sought were not made available to her, possibly because of Polish privacy laws.

Further north, at the Zarki cemetery, she found tombstones of ancestors, but they were in Hebrew, a language Deborah never studied.

The second city she visited was Lodz, also in Poland, where she met the man who sent her pictures listing her grandfather in the white pages of the city directory. At the Jewish cemetery she saw memorial plaques made after people visited the graves of those buried. There were no trees in the ghetto part of the cemetery, but there were no mass graves either. Since she wanted

to say a prayer, a minyan had to be formed. Her next stop in Lodz was the archives, which was close to where her mother had lived. There she was able to make copies of family records and was shown a directory with her grandfather in the yellow pages. This was quite different than how she had been treated in Krakow by the person in the record area.

Deborah's next stop in Poland was Jezow, a shtetl 45 minutes to the east of Lodz. She found the birth records for her mother's father family, including documents with the signature of her great uncle.

In Budapest, Hungary Deborah visited the Ujpest Synagogue where her father had been a congregant and where he had had his Bar Mitzvah. Also, in Hungary she visited Debrecen.

Her trip to Hungary was followed by a trip to Germany. Her first stop was to Bergen Belsen – one of the concentration camps that her mother was in. Deborah also went to Dora-Nordhausen and Salzwedel to see the labor camps where her parents were interned. (You can see the camps and what they are like today on the Jewish Virtual Library.) Deborah also visited the hospital in Osterode-Am-Harz where her parents met after the camps were liberated.

It is up to each of us to read all the wonderful advice in the handout that was provided to help our research and educate our families.

◀ May 23

Eli Rabinowitz, an IAJGS board member, spoke from his home in Perth, Australia, about what he called "Journeys from Shtetl to Shtetl" for the Sunday, May 23rd, JGS of Illinois monthly online meeting. Much of his lecture was a tour of his website, Tangential Travel and Jewish Life (<http://elirab.me>).

Rather than focusing on standard genealogical research methods, Eli is actively involved in organizing and participating in events that commemorate or honor important parts of Eastern European Jewish history and culture. These have included the Bielski partisans' descendants' reunion in Naliboki and Navahrudak, Belarus; the new memorial for victims of the World War II massacre that took place near Birzai, Lithuania; and the groundbreaking ceremony for the Lost Shtetl Museum in Šėduva, Lithuania.

His major goal has been "very much about bringing people together," Eli said. This includes efforts to encourage young people to participate in family history as well as helping people from around the world to connect through commemorating their shared origins in an ancestral town.



Eli said he seeks to help people understand the historical context of their families' past and to honor family through commemorations that look at life now and life in the past of our ancestral communities.

Part of his work has included helping with the development of the JewishGen Kehilalinks, web pages devoted to Jewish ancestral

hometowns around the world. He writes and manages dozens of KehilaLinks and more than 750 WordPress blog posts.

For traditional genealogists, the year that something happened is most important. "For me," Eli said, "it is more about the stories and connections."

Did you miss a presentation?

Members can watch the videos and download the handouts at www.jgsi.org



Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois
P.O. Box 515
Northbrook, IL 60065-0515

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SKOKIE, IL
Permit #61

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**41st IAJGS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON JEWISH GENEALOGY**
from the past into the future
August 1-5, 2021 iajgs2021.org
All Virtual Conference

Future JGSI Sundays

July 25th — Kirsten Fermaglich, presents:
“A History of Jewish Name Changing in America”

August 29 — Sallyann Amdur Sack-Pikus, presents:
“What the Genealogist Needs to Know About Jewish Family Names”

October 24 — Joel Weintraub, presents:
“Finding Difficult Passengers on the Ellis Island Manifests” and “The 1950 U.S. Census”

JGSI Members Only — DNA Discussions

July 11 - 7:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting - <https://tinyurl.com/2fefpjr4> - Meeting ID: 985 1009 6766 - Passcode: 459699

August 15 - 7:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting - <https://tinyurl.com/3uv5txz8> - Meeting ID: 923 2214 8876 - Passcode: 978136



FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL: 312-666-0100