

DOCUMENTATION OF JEWISH RECORDS WORLDWIDE

The Documentation of Jewish Records Worldwide (DoJR) project, a strategic initiative of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS), will build a first ever master catalog, JCat, of all record collections holding Jewish genealogically relevant data.



"An amazing project!"

Henry Louis Gates Jr.

Renowned professor and prolific scholar at Harvard University, Emmy Award-winning filmmaker, host and executive producer PBS's *Finding Your Roots*

PRESERVE JEWISH HISTORY & HERITAGE

DEVELOP COMMUNITY HISTORIES

BUILD FAMILY HISTORIES

RECREATE LIFE STORIES

IDENTIFY INDIVIDUALS

DISCOVER RECORDS

WHERE WE'RE GOING

**BUILDING BRICK BY BRICK
THE LIBRARY OF THE JEWISH WORLD**

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

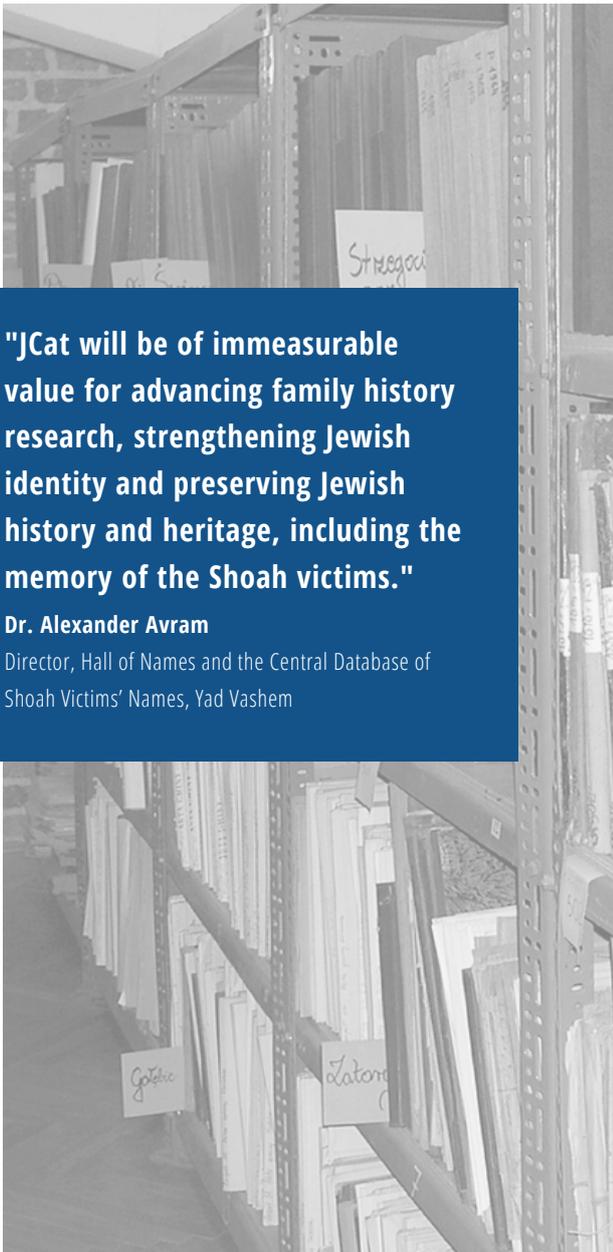
Most information about our Jewish ancestors' past is hidden in plain sight. It is estimated that 85% of records pertaining to Jews do not have "Jewish" in the title. DoJR will shine a light in the dark corners where no light has shone for centuries. This information tells us what life was like for our ancestors, who they were, what they did, and how they lived.

CONNECT L'DOR V'DOR

It connects one generation to the next, helps us know who we are, and allows us to leave that knowledge as a legacy. So our children, their children, and their children's children, can know who they are. These discoveries start with a catalog of everything.

A GLOBAL REFERENCE

A treasure trove of records of our ancestors' lives resides in archives, libraries, courthouses, synagogues and many other facilities in villages, towns, and cities across the globe. For those seeking to discover their ancestors, JCat will answer the question "What records are available for my ancestral town?" JCat is a global reference for all these records that document individuals, inform their life stories, and enable the building of family and community histories, preserving Jewish history and heritage.



"JCat will be of immeasurable value for advancing family history research, strengthening Jewish identity and preserving Jewish history and heritage, including the memory of the Shoah victims."

Dr. Alexander Avram

Director, Hall of Names and the Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names, Yad Vashem

WHY NOW

**BECAUSE NOW WE CAN...
BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE**

TECHNOLOGY MAKES IT ACHIEVABLE

- **DIGITIZATION:** Institutions continue to digitize their collections facilitating online access.
- **CROWDSOURCING:** Crowdsourcing methods enable a global community of catalog contributors.
- **AUTOMATION:** Advances in use of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning for records processing drive down catalog entry cost and time.

WHILE DOORS ARE OPEN

- **OPEN ACCESS:** Fluctuations and variances in administrations and policies of archival institutions drive a mandate to get inside now, before the door closes again.

TIME IS THE ENEMY

- **RECORDS VULNERABILITY:** Records suffer damage and destruction with time (human, mold, insect, flood and fire).



Volunteers are digitizing fragile 19th century collections.

BY THE NUMBERS...

52

DISCOVERIES

- 52 collections, 686,000 pages, previously unknown, discovered by 2 archival researchers (Mikolayev, Ukraine and Kielce, Poland) in 4 weeks. 116,000 Jewish ancestors can now be remembered.
- 80 more expected in Mikolayev alone.

1.9B

CATALOGS

- 1,893,000 collections in FamilySearch catalog.
- 8,500 collections keyword search "Jewish" in FamilySearch catalog. How many are hidden?
- 85,400 libraries/archives in WorldCat/OCLC.
- 60M pages of documentation in Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, Jerusalem.



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EMAIL US: JCatCommunity@DoJRW.org



AN INVITATION

JOIN US IN BUILDING THE LIBRARY OF THE JEWISH WORLD

THE AJGS-VIC DOJR SURVEY PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

The Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Victoria) ([AJGS-Vic](#)) is a non-profit organisation dedicated to collecting, preserving and disseminating genealogical information, teaching research techniques and offering databases to people interested in researching Jewish ancestry in operation since 1995. As a member of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies ([IAJGS](#)), AJGS-Vic launched a project in partnership with the IAJGS's Documentation of Jewish Records Worldwide ([DoJR](#)) project to complete a state-wide regional survey of all documentation available that provides information about the lives of our Jewish ancestors so that we may discover and know them. The data describing these record collections will be entered into the freely accessible and searchable online catalog, JCat.

We invite (**your organisation**) to support the AJGS-Vic team to conduct a survey of your holdings, identify the relevant documents within your organisation's archive, and prepare the descriptions for entry into JCat.

IMPACT OF YOUR PARTICIPATION

Every relevant record identified in your archive is a starting point for people, not only in Australia, but worldwide, to discover their Victorian ancestors — to piece together and understand what life was like for their ancestors, who they were, what they did, and how they lived — and to leave that legacy of information about their Victorian roots for future generations.

WHAT IT TAKES

The AJGS-Vic team will hold a **Discovery Meeting** with your representative to review your inventory of records and to identify those that may have Jewish genealogical relevance. They will then hold one or more **Descriptions Sessions** with your representative and examine sample records as needed to create descriptions of the contents of the records for entry into JCat.

How will data privacy be addressed? We are not publishing the data in the records themselves in JCat. We are only publishing a description of the type of information that is available and whom to contact to access any records of interest. Data privacy will always be under your control.

NEXT STEPS

Schedule a Discovery Meeting with the AJGS-Vic team led by Dr. Helen Gardner, Helen@thegardners.com.au



Andrew Markus, AO. Emeritus Professor, Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation, lead Melbourne researcher on the Gen08 and Gen17 Jewish community surveys.

"This important project will provide a comprehensive overview of records held in the Victorian Jewish community for the benefit of current and future generations."

THE AJGS-VIC TEAM

Dr. Helen Gardner holds a B.Sc. (Chemistry) and a M.A. and Ph.D. in Psychology. She has had a long and varied career as a research biochemist, computer programmer, community development officer, psychologist and academic. Her interest in genealogy dates from 1997, when she discovered a branch of her family living in the USSR, and has continued more recently from 2014 with DNA analyses. She is a member of the AJGS-Vic committee and was the initiator of the society's involvement in the DoJR project.

Liz James, OAM is a retired teacher-librarian whose interest in genealogy began when she discovered her ancestors came from a connecting network of multiple rabbinical family trees whose names included and counted among the oldest Jewish settlers in Germany who founded the Ashkenazi Jewish community. Liz is a committee member of both the AJGS-Vic and the Australian Jewish Historical Society Victoria and maintains the library collection for both societies. Since 2003, Liz has helped hundreds of people solve their family history mysteries and introduced countless children to the joys of genealogical research as part of the *School Roots Program* making sure they have access to important records kept within the resource collections of both societies.

Bubbles (Lily) Segall is a retired nurse and midwife and now works as a Clinical Teaching Associate with medical students at Melbourne University and as a volunteer Doula with vulnerable women. Her working life was spent in the Northern Territory of Australia in various roles which included Remote Area Nurse, Audiometrist, Family Planning Practitioner, Community Development Officer and Administration Officer in an aged and disability program. She has been involved in genealogy since 1967 and was the editor of the South African Special Interest Group Jewish Genealogy Newsletter for five years. She has been the secretary of the AJGS-Vic since 2016.



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