
THE JEWISH WEEK | jewishweek.timesofisrael.com

Tribute To Genealogist

BY JOSEPH FIBEL | February 22, 2017, 10:28 am |

I was delighted to see the article, "A Roots Journeyer Packs It In" (Feb. 17), about my friend, Miriam Weiner.

Back in 1993, when staff writer Steve Lipman first wrote about her, it was during the early days of computers, when there was virtually no overseas Jewish genealogical information available. Miriam developed her professional "back to your roots" tours for individuals or families long before any else would think of such a thing. Today, a trip back home is common, due to Miriam's pioneering.

Another pioneering effort on Miriam's part was the introduction to Jewish genealogy of the national archives of Eastern Europe.

Because she was bringing clients to the country archives where their family metrical (birth, marriage and death) records were kept, she became aware of the previously unknown availability of these records. Accordingly, Miriam inventoried the records available in the various countries she visited. These inventoried archival records were listed by country in her Routes to Roots website available to all.

Today, each of the Eastern European research groups, the so-called SIG's (Special Interest Groups) have gone to these archives, copied them and indexed them. Volunteers from the JRI-Poland (Jewish Records

Indexing) SIG alone have indexed over 7 million records, listing them by family surname and locality.

Every Eastern European country has its own SIG and lists of indexed family records. Jewish genealogy has become huge, in large part because of Miriam Weiner's pioneering work.

New Rochelle, N.Y.