

Saturday, February 13, 2021

Children of Old Mokum: A Story of 19th-Century Economic Migration

10:00 am to 11:30 am

In August 1867, arriving in London's East End from Amsterdam and making their way to the Dutch Jewish enclave in Whitechapel's Spitalfields sector, **Christine Jackson's** youthful great-grandparents must have wondered why they had left one slum neighbourhood for another. Eighty years later in struggling post-WW II Britain, their descendants described their immigrant ancestors as successful tobacco and diamond merchants living in London in large houses with servants and owning a cigar factory; it all seemed wildly incongruous.

In 2003–04, lacking any direct links to the era, Christine and her cousin Rod determined to unravel that family story. They found that the Internet, then about to change genealogy forever, not only helped to reconstruct their family's place in Victorian and pre-WW I eras, but also revealed its humble origins in The Netherlands. Christine tells us about their search and its results.

About the Speaker

A family historian for more than 40 years and active member of BIFHSGO since 2002, **Christine Jackson** has made presentations to BIFHSGO and other regional societies on her Sussex County ancestry and on the results of her three-year research project on the history of the Ottawa Valley's Cowley family. Her articles on these topics have been published both here and in England. One of Christine's four grandparents however was *not* born and raised in Sussex, but was part of a family of economic migrants to England from Continental Europe. She researched this family with a cousin when the Internet was a relatively new tool in the genealogical toolbox.