

Comments/Suggestions on Publishing a Family Memoir.

Lessons Learned From Publishing

“Looking Back, The Russian Revolution Through the Eyes of a Jewish Child”

By Isadore Weiss - Publisher: Authorhouse.

Collecting and Reviewing the Material

In our case, in addition to the actual memoir, Prof. Doherty and we collected documents, interviewed people, took careful notes, listened to Isadore Weiss' audio tapes, and then collated the information into chapters. Once we had collected all our material, Prof. Doherty and my wife and I assembled the documents into the order that we felt the material should be presented.

Scanning the Paper Manuscript to an Electronic Format

We had already scanned the memoir into a PDF document that could easily be emailed as an attachment for a collaborator to read. We could not use the original document in its present form for publishing. The original memoir was written on a typewriter and some of the letters had faded, an 'e' could easily be mistaken for a 'c' etc.

To prepare the memoir for inclusion into the book, we next scanned the PDF document using an OCR [optical character recognition] program to change the PDF document to a Microsoft Word Document. Once that conversion was done, then corrections were possible. Even with the OCR conversion, some sections were not usable because of hand written corrections, strike-outs, etc. We essentially retyped the entire document using the OCR document as a template. My wife, Deb proof read the entire book multiple times before we were satisfied that we were not finding any more mistakes. Prof. Eamon's dear mother also proof read the document several times, too.

Caution: Be careful of "Auto Correct." Near the end of the editing, I decided to run MS Word's Auto-Correct one more last time. It changed all the references of the region Kamentz-Podolski to Kamentz-Poodles!!

Inviting Other Co-authors

Other contributors supported the context of the memoir by elaborating on the politics, economics, geography, or may enrich the text in other ways, but be careful to remain in control of what they contribute.

Selecting a Publisher

It is important to select the correct publisher for your needs. We selected "Authorhouse" because they allowed us to retain the copyright and we could sell the book to a movie company as a script if the opportunity arose. Isadore's wife, Sylvia also received royalties along with statements of

sales annually. Lastly they obtained for us an ISBN number as well as web space on major online bookstores such as Amazon and Barnes and Noble in addition to promoting it on their own website. Authorhouse also uses “on demand” printing which means they will fill orders for any number of books requested. Authorhouse also has very a friendly and knowledgeable staff, who worked with us. They created the front cover of the book from an old sepia postcard photo of the ship, “Orbita” using false color in a very skillful manner. We recommend them very highly, and we felt their cost was very reasonable.

Book Signings and Posters

We had two Book Signings, one at Fairleigh Dickenson University [FDU] and one at Meadow Lakes where Sylvia Weiss was living, so that the people who contributed to the the book and their families could celebrate and gather with potential readers.. We also created a poster for the book signings using a Power Point program. Prof. Doherty suggested that posters should include: the title of the book, a section about the author(s), a graphic of the book, and a synopsis of the book of about 300 words or less. We created postcard mailers to let people know of the book signing [See Meadow Lakes Example].

Be Proud of Creating a Family Legacy

You and your collaborators will be very proud of your book, knowing that you have preserved a family story with pictures and supporting documents for generations to come.