ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES
Annual Report 2017, Jerusalem
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Annual Report 2017
Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center, stands at the forefront of Holocaust education, remembrance, documentation and research. Situated on the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem, Yad Vashem offers a holistic approach to meaningful remembrance, groundbreaking research and a carefully crafted educational philosophy. The use of leading-edge technological platforms maximizes accessibility to the vast information in the Yad Vashem archival collections, making information and online educational initiatives available to an expanding and dynamic global audience. Yad Vashem works tirelessly to safeguard and impart the memory of the victims and the events of the Shoah period; is dedicated to documenting accurately one of the most calamitous chapters in modern humanity; and is determined to confront the ongoing challenges of keeping the Holocaust relevant today and for future generations.
FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DIRECTORATE

Dear Friends,

Since Yad Vashem was established 65 years ago, its activity has featured a crucial common denominator: The effective expression of perpetually relevant Holocaust remembrance upon the State of Israel, Jewish communities worldwide, and all of humanity. With the passage of time since the Shoah, Yad Vashem’s mission has become ever more challenging. Yet, our distinct approach to Holocaust remembrance and education remains consistently and dynamically relevant. Our activities in 2017, summarized in the following Report, illustrate that compelling relevance. For example:

Our new Holocaust Remembrance and Heroism Educational Center at the Israel Defense Forces’ training campus in southern Israel provides an optimal environment for commanders, assisted by Yad Vashem educators, to integrate Holocaust education within military training. Thanks to this new facility, the narrative of the Shoah can be taught more effectively to Israel’s soldiers and officers as a pivotal event in Jewish history, and as a constructive element in the forging of Israeli and Jewish ethics and identity.

We substantially expanded our outreach to segments of the general public that were not previously well versed in Holocaust history and its contemporary implications. Innovative learning frameworks opened in 2017, custom designed for diverse adult learning groups. New temporary and traveling exhibits, featuring such themes as photography through the Holocaust and diplomats recognized as Righteous Among the Nations, joined the rich pool of readily available Yad Vashem resources.

A new interactive online course on the use of primary historical sources, developed by our International School for Holocaust Studies, was successfully inaugurated this year by the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI). Historians, educators, archivists, psychologists and genealogists from over 15 countries have already seen how this tool, like others Yad Vashem has recently devised, fuses a composite of technologies into a powerful training platform that maximizes the potency of accessible Shoah-related archival sources.

During 2017, our International School also created a landmark massive open online course (MOOC), unprecedented in subject matter and scope, devoted to the origins and current-day manifestations of antisemitism. The six-week course, based on short video segments presented by leading researchers and public figures from around the world, insightfully explores the menacing, perplexing phenomenon of antisemitism, as evidenced during over 2,000 years of Jewish and world history. The course’s potential audience, and positive impact, are vast.

Given an alarming increase in the scope and intensity of various forms of Holocaust distortion we have been witnessing around the world, in 2017 we increasingly deployed Yad Vashem historians in roles of public advocacy and diplomacy, in addition to their preferred pursuit of academic research and teaching. Our content experts have helped spearhead a sophisticated global effort for conscientious honesty in humanity’s discourse about the Shoah.

Dear Friends,

This year, as we mark 70 years since the establishment of the State of Israel, I am reminded of a popular verse in Psalms: “Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy.” As a survivor of the Holocaust, this verse is particularly poignant and deeply meaningful to me. Jewish history is replete with episodes of darkness and suffering—from the burden of slavery in Egypt to the viciousness of the inquisition in Spain, to the mass murder of European Jewry during the Holocaust. How many tears did the Jewish people shed over baseless hatred and irrational cruelty? Yet even under the most dire of circumstances, the ancient dream of returning to the Land of Israel was kept alive in the hearts and minds of our people throughout thousands of years of Jewish life in the Diaspora.

I have mentored, together with my brothers and sisters who survived the Holocaust, to see the fruition of these dreams come to life. Arriving as a young orphaned child on a refugee ship to the shores of Eretz Israel, I can still recall feeling that for the first time since losing family, friends, community and almost all that was familiar to me— I had finally returned home. The modern-day State of Israel is a miracle to behold; it is the fulfillment of the visions of the Prophets of Israel—As it is written in the Book of Jeremiah: “And the children [of Israel] shall return to their borders.” The survivors of the Holocaust have greatly contributed towards building this country into the thriving state that it is today. We have helped transform the arid desert into blossoming fertile ground. We have laid the foundation for the innovation and advancements that place Israel at the forefront of global technology.

However, as the State of Israel continues to evolve and develop, the age-old voices of antisemitism are still heard around the world. It is imperative that we bolster our efforts to safeguard the values of the survivor generation together with the voices of the victims that were silenced. Yad Vashem will work ceaselessly to ensure that the vision of the survivors, embodied by their unbreakable spirit and unending fortitude, is passed on to future generations.

Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate

FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

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Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council
HIGHLIGHTS OF YAD VASHEM’S ACTIVITIES IN 2017

**HOLOCAUST EDUCATION**
- 325,000 Israeli students, soldiers and security force members attended educational programs
- 45,600 worldwide participants in online courses
- 8,000 US teachers received training in “Echoes and Reflections” multimedia program
- 1,200 participants at the biennial Israeli Teachers’ Conference
- 680 day-seminars at Yad Vashem for 16,000 Israeli educators
- 80 training days for 2,900 educators throughout Israel
- 85 long-term seminars for 1,900 educators from abroad and 70 short seminars for 1,400 overseas participants

**RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS**
- 24 fellowships and awards granted to scholars
- 23 international research workshops and symposia
- 29 new publications
- 7th annual International Holocaust Research Book Prize

**ARTIFACTS & ARTWORK**
- New exhibition “Flashes of Memory: Photography during the Holocaust” opened in the Exhibitions Pavilion
- 880 new artifacts; 31,600 total
- 860 new works of art; 11,200 total

**RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS**
- 450 individuals recognized as Righteous Among the Nations; 27,000 total

**VISITS AND COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS**
- 925,000 visitors
- 800 world leaders, dignitaries and official visitors
- 260 memorial services
- 75 events

**INTERNET ACTIVITY**
- 18 million visits to the website in 8 languages
- 15.2 million video views on YouTube channels in 8 languages since their launch
- 24,000 new Facebook members; 162,000 total
- 10,000 new followers on Twitter; 34,000 total
- 5,000 new followers on Instagram; 17,000 total

**COLLECTIONS**
- 3 million new pages of documentation added to the Archives; 204 million pages total
- 800,000 pages of documentation digitized
- 4,700,000 names now in the Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names
- 28,800 Holocaust-era items donated for safekeeping by 1,170 individuals
- 14,000 photographs added to the Photo Archive; 490,000 images total
- 1,100 new Holocaust survivor testimonies filmed; 130,000 video, audio and written testimonies total
- 29,000 public inquiries for archival information answered
- 167,000 publications in 60 languages now in the Library
- 260 Holocaust-related films acquired; 8,150 total
- 11,200 films now searchable in the online Film Catalogue
- 12th annual Award for Artistic Achievement in a Holocaust-related Film
The International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem stands at the forefront of Holocaust education, continually expanding its reach to meet the rising global interest in learning about the Shoah. The International School serves as a world hub for teaching about the Holocaust, attracting educators and students from around the world. The educators are exposed to a unique inter-disciplinary and age-appropriate pedagogical approach to Holocaust education that helps them acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to advance Holocaust education in contemporary educational settings and via its innovative online educational platforms.

325,000 students and security force members attended educational programs
Since the 2017/18 academic year overlaps with the 70th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel, this year's national conference on Holocaust education centered on the theme "Touching the Dream, Touching the Pain: Eretz Israel, the State of Israel and the Holocaust." During the event, which took place at the beginning of the summer vacation, over 1,200 educators from across Israel attended dozens of expert lectures, film screenings, presentations, tours and educational workshops at the International School for Holocaust Studies and across the Mount of Remembrance. Panels at the conference dealt with the question of whether the founding of the State of Israel was linked to the Holocaust, and experts in the field grappled with the complexity of issues regarding Israel’s ultimate responsibility as the home of the Jewish people.

"Actually the Holocaust put the very establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz Israel in jeopardy."

Prof. Yehuda Bauer, Yad Vashem Academic Advisor

In April 2017, the Holocaust Remembrance and Heroism Educational Center, a cooperative effort between Yad Vashem and the IDF, was dedicated at the IDF training campus in the Negev. The Center comprises an interactive display, entitled "The Human Spirit in the Shadow of Death," as well as an active commemoration space with a rotating display. The establishment of the Center allows Yad Vashem educators to develop and carry out programs as an inherent part of the training activities of individual soldiers and officers. New recruits are taken through the exhibit by soldier guides who have been trained by Yad Vashem staff. Dealing with the story of the Holocaust as a pivotal event in the history of the Jewish people, alongside examining values such as Jewish identity, mutual responsibility, heroism and attachment to the Land of Israel, forms the basis for these cooperative educational endeavors and allows the next generations of soldiers and commanders to commit to passing on the torch of remembrance.

"Some soldiers have had little connection to the Holocaust, but the moment they’re shown their history, their sense of duty is energized."

Sergeant Roni Tzach, Guide in the New IDF Holocaust Remembrance and Heroism Educational Center

18,700 Israeli educators received training
FORTIFYING EDUCATIONAL TIES WITH SPAIN

In July 2017, the International School for Holocaust Studies welcomed a group of 44 teachers from Spain. Their professional development seminar on the Mount of Remembrance was coordinated jointly with longstanding partner Centro Sefarad-Israel, and helped lay the foundation for the participants to form local networks of educators. In October, the International School followed up on its work in Spain by organizing a unique learning opportunity for a high-level delegation of representatives of the Spanish educational authorities. Centro Sefarad-Israel and the Israeli embassy in Madrid recruited the participants, including officials from the Spanish Education Ministry and local educational authorities in the administrative divisions of Castile and León, La Rioja, Madrid, Galicia and Ceuta. As a result of the successful event, contacts to formalize Yad Vashem’s ties with the Spanish Education Ministry and accredit its seminars have gained significant momentum.

“I’m very grateful to Yad Vashem for the methodological tools I can now utilize to teach my students about the Holocaust.”

Juan, Spanish Seminar Participant

150 seminars for educators from abroad

ISRAELI SCHOOL CURRICULUM HELPS TEACHERS CONVEY HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

During 2017, more than 200 schools, most of them elementary schools, responded to a request by the Israel Ministry of Education to integrate its new national Holocaust education program into their annual syllabus. Created in 2014, the program helps teachers in Israel gear Holocaust education materials to specific student age groups. More than 600 days of training were held throughout Israel this year, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education. Many of the participating schools sent direct feedback to Yad Vashem, in which they expressed the importance of dealing with the subject of Holocaust education, and described their teachers’ increased ability to convey the subject in a way that is suited to their students’ emotional and cognitive level.

“We believe that children should be allowed to know about the Holocaust, but it is important to impart that knowledge in an age-appropriate way. This excellent course helps us do just that.”

Orit, Participating Teacher in Israel’s National Holocaust Education Program
MORE THAN A NUMBER: STORIES FROM THE SHOAH

During 2017, 35 teachers took part in the Gandel Program for Australian Educators. One of the teachers, Elizabeth Little, submitted an outstanding final project on the topic “More than a Number. Stories from the Shoah.” In the unit, Little’s 15- to 17-year-old students were exposed to a variety of texts – poetry, short stories, diary entries and memoirs – that tell the story of the Holocaust in accordance with Yad Vashem’s educational philosophy, and came to appreciate the cultural aspects of Jewish writing. They also gained a deeper understanding of the timeline of the Holocaust, and the events and people it impacted, through exposure to various stories of victims, bystanders and survivors. Ultimately, it is hoped that students will view the stories of the Holocaust as important, and develop respect, understanding and passion for learning about this pivotal period of human history.

“ECHOES & REFLECTIONS”: DYNAMIC PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR AMERICAN EDUCATORS

The “Echoes & Reflections” multimedia educational program empowers teachers and students with the courage to question the past and the knowledge to impact the future. In 2017, the program took all its resources online, making its comprehensive lesson plans and primary source documents – photographs, poetry, art, literature and testimonies – completely accessible to educators. In keeping with the shift to online resources, a large selection of professional development programs was also offered via webinar by Yad Vashem experts, on subjects such as using poetry and art to teach the Holocaust, the Righteous Among the Nations, and the Kristallnacht pogrom. In addition, Yad Vashem facilitated a successful 10-day summer seminar for US educators using “Echoes & Reflections” in their classrooms, and produced a new Holocaust Education Video Toolbox film, entitled “Liberators and Survivors: The First Moments.” This film is the sixth in the series of Toolbox films produced by Yad Vashem for “Echoes & Reflections”, the films have collectively reached over 205,000 viewers worldwide, about half of whom are from the US.

“If we concentrate on teaching our students about the life of individuals, families communities - their hopes and dreams as well as their life experiences - we will remember them as people, and not numbers.”

Jill Dragiff, “Echoes & Reflections” 2017 Advanced Educators’ Seminar Participant
GENERATION TO GENERATION: TEENAGERS LEARN FROM HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

Yad Vashem, in conjunction with the Israel Ministry of the Diaspora and the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center, recently created a new program pairing Holocaust survivors with teenagers studying in Jewish high schools. In November 2017, a pilot program – "Generation to Generation" – was launched in Chicago, affording Jewish youth an opportunity to get to know survivors as complex, yet approachable, human beings with life experience to offer the young adults. Some 70 students from five Jewish high schools in the Chicago area participated in the program, along with survivors originating from Czechoslovakia, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Lithuania. Yad Vashem educational staff provided training for local school staff and survivors in conducting inter-generational conversations. Groups of students meet with survivors to talk, think, question and discover the wisdom that comes from living a life full of challenges and opportunities. Students record these conversations in special diaries, and will create a documentary – film, written or audio – about their experiences at the program’s conclusion.

"I will never know the full extent of the past generation's anguish, but I promise to keep their memory alive. Their fight for life was not in vain, and as a teenager in the 21st century I will make sure that my actions echo their bravery and courage."

Rochel Kaltmann, Student in "Generation to Generation" Program

TEACHING ABOUT THE SHOAH IN THE SOVIET UNION

A unique project spearheaded by the International School for Holocaust Studies and the Na'aleh project strives to instill an understanding of Holocaust history in youth who were raised in countries of the Former Soviet Union (FSU). The project initially exposes youth who immigrate to Israel prior to their parents, including Jewish youth aged 14-16 who study in Israeli high schools, to the subject of the Holocaust, but often leads to a sparked curiosity in regards to their own family stories. The young men and women also tour the Museum Complex at Yad Vashem, and hear testimony from a Holocaust survivor from the FSU. An additional Holocaust remembrance initiative for the Russian-speaking public was launched in Hadera, Ashkelon and Bat Yam. The initiative, in cooperation with Masa, comprises group tours and lectures at Yad Vashem, round-table panel events in which veterans share their stories, and poster exhibitions in Russian and Hebrew celebrating local veterans.
KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH ISRAELI YOUTH: YOUTH MOVEMENT CONGRESS

The 11th annual Youth Movement Congress was held at Yad Vashem in February 2017. The 350 participants in the Congress included alumni of Youth Movements in Israel – religious and secular, Jewish and Arab, right and left on the political spectrum. This year, the Congress hosted Dr. Yitzhak Arad, who was a youth himself during the Holocaust. Arad, who was a partisan who fought in the forests, later served as a soldier in the Red Army until the end of World War II, and went on to serve as a member of the Palmach and officer in the IDF for many years. Inspired by Arad’s personal story, the congress dealt with the role of the youth movements in Jewish communities before the war and the changes that occurred during the Holocaust. The participants discussed dilemmas and conflicts faced by members of the youth movements during the war.

EDUCATIONAL PRIZE AWARDED TO SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTING SURVIVOR’S INDIVIDUAL STORY

In June 2017, Yad Vashem held its annual award ceremony for outstanding initiatives in the field of Holocaust education. One prize was granted to the Etzion Gever School in Eilat, for the creation of a visual learning center tracking the historical events and personal story of Andrew Nachman Tillman, a Holocaust survivor currently living in Toronto, Canada. Using a variety of media, the center tells the unique story of Tillman – his life in Warsaw before the Holocaust, his struggles as a young child in the ghetto and later in hiding – culminating with his liberation at the end of the war. The Learning Center hosted fifth- and sixth-grade students of the school, as well as teachers and students from other schools in Eilat and the surrounding area.
INTERDISCIPLINARY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS CREATE DISCOURSE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

During 2017, the International School for Holocaust Studies conducted several flagship projects that help connect young people to the difficult subject of the Holocaust via interdisciplinary studies – art, photography and graphic design.

"Postcards Generation 4.0" – a joint effort of the International School and the Department of Visual Communication at the Harry Bloomfield WIZO Academic Center in Haifa – aimed at creating a contemporary discourse of young artists dealing with Holocaust representation and its meaning for future generations. The students participating in the project created work in various formats, including films, books, postcards and pictures.

Yad Vashem and the ORT Israel network continued their joint “Memory through the Lens” project, during which high school students photograph and interview Holocaust survivors from the communities in which they live. The displays are the culmination of a process that included visits to the homes of the survivors, visits to day centers for the next generation, as well as in-depth interviews reflecting the survivors’ feelings and insights.

The "Keeping the Memory Alive" Poster Design Competition is a biennial joint project of the United Nations Holocaust Outreach Programme and the International School. An international judging panel selected twelve designs out of more than 150 posters submitted from Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Israel, Peru, Poland, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Slovenia. A display of the winning posters was mounted across the world to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day, with an accompanying online lesson plan created by Yad Vashem’s pedagogical experts.

All of these interdisciplinary exhibitions and more are on display throughout the International School for Holocaust Studies. They are used for teaching and learning about the Holocaust, and serve as an inspirational source for discussions with diverse educational groups from Israel and abroad.
LEARNING PROGRAM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

In 2017, a unique and moving educational initiative was undertaken by the International School for Holocaust Studies, under the auspices of the "Dorothy’s Hope" Holocaust Education Project for Individuals with Special Needs in memory of Dorothy Jolson z”l. In cooperation with the informal education youth movement "Krembo Wings" for special needs youth, ten meetings, customized to the group’s specific requirements and challenges, were held on the Yad Vashem campuses in Jerusalem and Givatayim to help participants in the group prepare for their upcoming trip to Poland. In addition, a unique arts project was conducted with students from the ONN school in Tel Aviv for special needs students featuring the students’ artistic interpretations of the story of Etty Hillelsun as rendered in her memoir Hashamayim Shebatochi (The Heavens Within Me).

E-LEARNING

Yad Vashem’s International School for Holocaust Studies continues to develop innovative e-learning and online platforms, offering advanced digital materials that are increasingly integrated into the educational system. By providing educators with relevant tools to appropriately broach the important and serious subject of the Holocaust in their classrooms, the International School provides excellent online resources – for both student and teacher alike.

45,600 participants in online courses

Education & E-Learning

Holocaust Education Video Toolbox
DOCUMENTARY FILMS PROJECT PRESERVES VOICES OF SURVIVORS

Pages of Life, a new documentary film about the lives of Holocaust survivors Genia and Nachum Manor, intertwines the story of their rescue by Oskar Schindler, their great love, and their shared commitment to Holocaust commemoration. The film is one of the six short documentary films produced by the International School for Holocaust Studies during 2017, all of which aim to preserve the voices of the survivors for generations to come. The six Holocaust survivors featured in the new films were chosen in order to appeal to a variety of audiences. The films include archival footage, historical photographs, pieces of music and educational and informative captions, raising educational dilemmas and presenting diverse ways in which survivors coped with the events of the Holocaust and its aftermath.

“ANTISEMITISM: FROM ITS ORIGINS TO THE PRESENT” FREE ONLINE COURSE FEATURES EXPERTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Enrollment recently opened for a new Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) created by Yad Vashem, entitled “Antisemitism: From Its Origins to the Present.” Available on the UK FutureLearn digital education platform, the course navigates more than 2,000 years of history, attempting to answer many of the major questions surrounding the evolution and nature of antisemitism. The six-week course is based on short video lectures presented by 50 leading researchers and public figures from around the world and Yad Vashem: historians, sociologists, linguists, philosophers and political scientists, as well as policy-makers and religious leaders. The course deals with the evolution of antisemitism until the Holocaust, beginning with the Greco-Roman Age, and continuing through the Middle Ages and modernity. It goes on to look at antisemitism in the world today, focusing mainly on antisemitism on the far-right and far-left political spectrums, as well as in the Arab and Islamic worlds, showing the perseverance of old antisemitic tropes and the emergence of new ones, namely Holocaust denial and anti-Zionism.

“I am a doctor from Algeria. As I grew up in an environment full of confusion about this subject, I hope that I will find answers and explanations to one of the most mysterious phenomena that humanity has encountered – one that continues to be on the rise today.”

N.B., Participant in Online Course on Antisemitism from Algeria
During 2017, over 925,000 people visited Yad Vashem on Jerusalem’s Mount of Remembrance to learn about the cataclysmic events of the Holocaust, commemorate the victims, and pay tribute to the survivors. Over one-third of these visitors received guided tours of the campus, including heads of state, participants on more than 800 official visits for dignitaries, and delegations from a variety of cultures and nationalities. In addition, Yad Vashem held some 75 events in conjunction with Holocaust survivor and next-generation organizations, as well as over 260 memorial services.
HOLOCAUST MARTYRS’ AND HEROES’ REMEMBRANCE DAY 2017

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2017 OFFICIAL VISITS

Over 800 world leaders, dignitaries and official visitors
DIPLOMATS ATTEND EVENT MARKING HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

Ahead of the UN-sanctioned International Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust, Yad Vashem hosted its annual event for members of the international diplomatic corps in Israel. Addressing ambassadors and representatives from dozens of countries were Israel’s President H.E. Mr. Reuven Rivlin and Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev, who spoke about Holocaust survivor and author Aharon Appelfeld, who recently passed away. The diplomats then heard a lecture on the topic “From Old to New: Antisemitism – Contemporary Challenges” and went on to tour the newly inaugurated exhibition, “Flashes of Memory: Photography during the Holocaust.”

DILEmmas AND SACRIFICES: YAD VASHEM SYMPOSIUM HIGHLIGHTS JEWISH RESCUERS DURING THE HOLOCAUST

Despite the extreme circumstances and breaking down of normal life behaviors during the Holocaust, many Jews offered help – food, shelter, guidance and support – to their fellow Jews. Those receiving assistance were often members of their immediate and larger families or communities; however, sometimes they were also people they had never met before, with whom they had been thrown together in the crucible of the Shoah. For decades, Yad Vashem has dealt with the phenomenon of Jewish rescuers within the larger context of Jewish solidarity and mutual aid in its varied educational and commemorative efforts. In December 2017, the topic was brought to the fore at a symposium on Jewish rescuers during the Shoah. Through a range of addresses, including testimony from a Holocaust survivor, speakers highlighted the varying elements and different circumstances from among the multitude of stories of Jewish rescue during the Holocaust.
"SHAPING MEMORY": COMMEMORATIVE POSTER COMPETITION

The winner of the 2017 national competition to design the official poster for Holocaust Remembrance Day in Israel was Tamar Odaya Bodner, a third-year undergraduate student in the Department of Graphic Design at Emunah College in Jerusalem. The poster hints at the face of a young boy – who is in fact Tamar’s grandfather, Yoseph Yishaya Bodner. One of the many printed numbers in the poster is the one tattooed by the Nazis on the forearm of her grandmother, Miriam Bodner. A lesson plan based on the poster was distributed to schools across Israel and posted on the Yad Vashem website.

“The shadowy figure behind the numbers is a reminder of our duty to remember the Holocaust victims as human beings, with individual and distinct identities. This meaningful image represents the complexity of Holocaust remembrance.”

David Tartakover, Israel Prize Laureate in the Field of Design, who headed the judges’ panel for Israel’s 2017 Holocaust Remembrance Day Poster

A LIFE OF EDUCATION AND LOVE: MARKING 75 YEARS SINCE THE MURDER OF JANUSZ KORZAK

Janusz Korczak, (born Henryk Goldszmit; 1879-1942) was a Polish Jewish doctor, author and educator. In 1912, Korczak became the director of a Jewish orphanage in Warsaw. Joining him as his deputy was Stefania “Stefa” Wilczyńska. In August 1942, Korczak, Wilczyńska and the children they cared for were sent to Treblinka, where they were all murdered. To mark 75 years since this tragic event, Yad Vashem organized a daylong educational seminar for 100 members of the Hamahanot Haolim youth movement, as well as a memorial ceremony. Participants toured the Yad Vashem campus and discussed educational dilemmas of Jewish communities and individuals during the Holocaust. Afterwards, the students learned about Korczak’s educational curriculum and theories, and examined socio-educational issues facing educators today. Later, the youths flew dozens of kites in the spirit of Janusz Korczak’s unique educational worldview, in order to convey his legacy of respect, love and equality of rights – especially for children.
OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

A range of activities were offered in 2017 as part of Yad Vashem’s efforts to engage the public in cultural and educational enrichment events throughout the calendar year:

WIDE ARRAY OF COURSES FOR THE ISRAELI PUBLIC

Yad Vashem has expanded its new adult enrichment courses, enabling the general public the opportunity to learn from Yad Vashem experts and enhance their knowledge on subjects related to the Holocaust and its commemoration.

In January 2017, a 20-week course on Holocaust Studies and Jewish Heritage in cooperation with the “Dorot Hahemshech” organization was opened in Jerusalem. An additional course, outlining the basic history of the Holocaust period, was offered in October in Kiryat Bialik, in northern Israel. In March 2017, the Yad Vashem Archives Division and the Central Zionist Archives ran a genealogy course offering unique tools for those seeking to research their family history. The course included an overview of best practices for use of Yad Vashem’s databases as well as those of leading archives in Israel and around the world. Additionally, a new the Yad Vashem course for public service employees, entitled “The Holocaust: Between History and Memory,” received accreditation from the Israel Ministry of Finance.

SEMINARY SHEDS LIGHT ON HISTORY OF JEWISH LIFE IN THE VILNA REGION

In June 2017, Yad Vashem, in cooperation with the World Zionist Congress, held the third “Vilna Seminar.” Entitled “Yiddish Longings,” the seminar was comprised of two intensive study days at Yad Vashem and a five-day trip to Vilna and other destinations in Lithuania, such as Kaunas, Ziezmariai and Trakai. The 25 participants had the opportunity to learn about the rich Jewish life in these areas, as well as the calamitous events that befell the Jews of the region during the Holocaust.

CONCERT FEATURES CHILDHOOD MEMORIES OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

In September 2017, some 800 Holocaust survivors and their families gathered at Yad Vashem’s Fighters and Jewish Partisans monument for an evening entitled “Memories of Home,” highlighting elements of Jewish culture in various communities on the eve of World War II. During the evening, short films were screened featuring Holocaust survivors sharing memories of their prewar childhood homes. Cabinet Minister for Social Equality Gila Gamliel and Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev attended the moving event, during which popular Israeli singers David D’or and Roni Diokni also performed.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

During 2017, Yad Vashem continued to offer special guided tours of its campus, including the Holocaust History Museum, and lectures on a range of topics relating to Jewish history prior to and during the Holocaust. Hundreds of senior citizens from all over Israel have visited Yad Vashem as part of the “Shlishi b’Shleikes” (Tuesday in Suspenders) program, an initiative of the Israel Ministry for Senior Citizens.

THE YAD VASHEM FILM CLUB

During the first season of the “Yad Vashem Film Club,” five monthly cinematic events were held for the public in Yad Vashem’s Edmond J. Safra Auditorium. Between March and July, some 1,200 people viewed some of the finest Israeli and foreign dramatic films; two screenings (“Kapo in Jerusalem,” directed by Uri Barbash, and “Past Life” by Avi Nesher) were held in the presence of their renowned Israeli directors, who discussed their work with the audience. Other films screened, together with a historical lecture, were “Aftermath” (Włodzimierz Pasikowski: Poland), winner of the 2013 Yad Vashem Avner Shalev Chairman’s Award; “When Day Breaks” (Goran Paskaljevics: Serbia) and “The Counterfeiters” (Stefan Ruzowitzky: Austria), which received an Academy Award for Best Foreign Film in 2008.

“It’s always surprising and exciting to see a full house, and when people sit in the first or second row in a theater like this one, I feel like thanking them personally. I can’t think of a more appropriate venue than Yad Vashem for a screening of ‘Past Life.’”

Avi Nesher, Director
In January 2018, Yad Vashem inaugurated a new exhibition, entitled: “Flashes of Memory: Photography during the Holocaust.” The innovative display, housed in the Exhibitions Pavilion of Yad Vashem’s Museums Complex, presents a critical account of visual documentation – photographs and films – created during the Holocaust by German and Jewish photographers, as well as by members of the Allied forces during liberation. 

The exhibition focuses on the circumstances of the photograph and the worldview of the documenting photographer, while emphasizing the unique viewpoint of the Jewish photographers as direct victims of the Holocaust. Displayed throughout this unique exhibition are some 1,500 photographs and 13 films, as well as original newspaper clippings, albums, diaries and a number of original cameras from the period.

“Some of these moving and penetrating images can now be seen in the exhibition ‘Flashes of Memory’ at Yad Vashem… We will never forget them, and we will continue to mention them and their heroism to the world. May the memory of all six million of our heroes be blessed and engraved in our hearts forever.”

Israel’s President H.E. Reuven Rivlin
THE ART COLLECTION

Yad Vashem’s Art Collection, the largest and most wide-ranging collection of its kind in the world, includes over 10,400 pieces, most of which were created during the Holocaust. These works, which give testimony to the spirit of the individual under the harshest of circumstances, represent a living testimony of Jews during the Holocaust while expressing an awesome creative power. The artists who produced them, in ghettos, in camps and in hiding, used their tools as instruments of expression and defiance during the most devastating period in their lives in order to leave a trace of their existence for posterity.

HUNDREDS OF WORKS BY MURDERED ARTIST BOLSTER ART COLLECTION

This year, a rare collection of the German artist Hana Hellmann was donated to Yad Vashem, including 712 of her artworks. Hellmann was born in 1887 in Nuremberg, the daughter of a well-to-do German Jewish family. Trained as a teacher, she completed her doctorate in Switzerland before settling in Frankfurt. There she began a spiritual quest, during which she became close to the Catholic faith. Ultimately, Hellmann was hospitalized in a sanatorium for Jews only. In 1942, Hellmann and the residents of the sanatorium were deported to the Sobibor extermination camp, where they were murdered upon arrival. During her lifetime, Hellmann created thousands of drawings, mostly of flowers, accompanied by letters and poems. During her imprisonment, much of her work was destroyed; however, several hundred of her records and letters survived, thanks to associates who preserved them. The poet Elazar Beniouz contributed the comprehensive collection of paintings to Yad Vashem, where intensive research on the artist’s family history and translation of inscriptions were undertaken.

THE ARTIFACTS COLLECTION

Yad Vashem’s Artifacts Collection is comprised of close to 31,000 items connected to the devastating events of the Holocaust era. Since Yad Vashem’s establishment, gathering genuine artifacts has been part of the process of commemorating the destruction of European and North African Jewry. The many personal effects in the collection disclose the individual stories of people, families and, at times, entire communities.

HANDB-EMBROIDERED TORAH SCROLL SASH OF CHILD MURDERED IN AUSCHWITZ

The Jews of Germanic origin have a beautiful custom of creating a “wimple” – a decorated Torah scroll sash – from the cloth used to swaddle Jewish baby boys at their circumcision. On the eve of World War II, a wimple was prepared for the circumcision of Moshe (Walter Marcel) Yosef. In 1940, two-year-old Moshe was deported with his parents to the Auschwitz death camp and murdered. The colorful wimple, which was hand-embroidered with the traditional blessing “Just as he has entered the [covenant of] circumcision, so too should he enter [the covenant of] Torah, marriage and good deeds” – is a sad testimony to the fate of the infant boy, whose life was so tragically cut short.
YAD VASHEM ONLINE

Yad Vashem’s website continues to reach a vast global audience, with over 18 million visits from around the world during 2017. Comprehensive sites in Hebrew, English, Spanish, German, Russian, French, Farsi and Arabic are helping meet the ever-growing demand for reliable and accurate Holocaust-related information. Yad Vashem’s dynamic presence in social media – 162,000 members on Facebook, and a growing audience on Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram – offers an unprecedented opportunity for rapidly communicating ideas, sharing relevant content and engaging with and connecting to a broad and diverse public who can immediately share the information with thousands more.

WEBSITE AND NAMES DATABASE LAUNCHED IN FRENCH

In March 2017, Yad Vashem launched a new, comprehensive website in French. Joining Yad Vashem’s seven other websites in English, Hebrew, German, Spanish, Arabic, Farsi and Russian, the new website provides information and knowledge about the Holocaust to French-speaking communities around the world. The launch took place in Paris in the presence of the Mayor of the Fourth District Christophe Girard and President of the French Friends of Yad Vashem Pierre-François Veil, and with the participation of renowned Nazi hunter Serge Klarsfeld and Holocaust survivors. The French website was launched together with Yad Vashem’s YouTube Channel in French, which so far contains over 180 videos, including survivor testimonies and documentary footage. In January 2018, in advance of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Yad Vashem also launched its Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names in French.

“Yad Vashem’s French website allows us to ensure that no person can ever claim that he or she didn’t know.”

Christophe Girard, Mayor of the Fourth District, Paris

SOCIAL MEDIA OFFERS GLOBAL COMMEMORATION

"Wageneutige Frauen": Geschichten von Frauen, die während des Holocaust Juden rettetn #Ausstellung online ow.ly/T9v4306ers13

Franck Stuyvesant, Artistic Director, Yad Vashem
"I LEFT EVERYONE AT HOME"
NEW ONLINE EXHIBITION ON LAST LETTERS FROM THE HOLOCAUST: 1943

For decades, Yad Vashem has collected thousands of personal letters that reveal the hardships of Jews surviving day by day during the Holocaust. A selection of this correspondence is featured in the third in a series of online exhibitions about last letters sent during the Shoah: "I Left Everyone at Home" – Last Letters from the Holocaust: 1943. While expressing dismay at their terrible situation, many of the letters contain optimistic messages and hopes for reunion. These online exhibitions provide rare documentation of the stories of Holocaust victims through manuscripts, photos, Pages of Testimony filled out in their memory, and excerpts of testimony from family members who survived. In addition, Yad Vashem recently uploaded "We Shall Meet Again," featuring last letters sent in 1941 and 1942, in three new languages: French, Spanish and German. Already available in English and Hebrew as two separate exhibitions, "We Shall Meet Again" displays a selection of the last messages received by relatives of Holocaust victims caught in the inferno of Europe during the early years of the war.

18 million visits to the website

LAST LETTERS FROM THE HOLOCAUST: 1943
"I Left Everyone at Home"

RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS

Since Yad Vashem first embarked upon the worldwide program to recognize non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust, more than 26,500 individuals have been granted the title of Righteous Among the Nations. The honor is a unique and unprecedented attempt by the Jewish people to pay tribute to those who stood by their side at a time of persecution and great tragedy.

INTENSIVE RESEARCH RESULTS IN RECOGNITION OF RESCUER

While sifting through old files regarding Righteous Among the Nations requests, a letter was found, written in 1976 by Olga Lukač, living in a kibbutz in the north of Israel. Lukač, who had escaped with her family from Zagreb to Arezzo in Italy, wrote that she had been hidden by Gonippo and Nova Massi in a small village in the mountains in Northern Italy. The information was scant, and so the Department of the Righteous launched a detailed search. According to information provided by the kibbutz, Lukač was no longer alive, and had never married. The kibbutz was asked to hang a note in the public dining hall calling on its members to call Yad Vashem if they had any information. Consequently, the kibbutz archivist contacted Yad Vashem and provided documents from Lukač’s personal papers, enabling Yad Vashem to trace her brother, Ljudevit, in Germany. Based on his testimony and Lukač’s letter, the Commission for the Designation of the Righteous Among the Nations decided to recognize Gonippo and Nova Massi as Righteous Among the Nations.
NEW EXHIBITION ON DIPLOMATS HONORED AS RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS

At the request of the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Yad Vashem recently produced a traveling exhibition focusing on diplomats who have been recognized as Righteous Among the Nations. Set against the backdrop of the Shoah and the attitude of world leaders to the persecuted Jewish populations across Europe and North Africa, “Beyond Duty” tells the stories of these envoys and the challenges they faced, enriched with quotes from the Righteous and the Jews they attempted to save. The exhibition opened in February 2018 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jerusalem, in the presence of Israel’s Prime Minister, members of the Diplomatic Corps, and Nina Admoni (née Wertans), a Holocaust survivor saved by Righteous Among the Nations Chiune Sugihara. At the opening, a monument at the Foreign Ministry dedicated to diplomats recognized as Righteous Among the Nations was unveiled. The exhibition, which has been produced in more than ten languages so far, will be displayed in some 70 diplomatic representations worldwide.
The Yad Vashem Archives house the most comprehensive collection of Holocaust-era documentation in the world. Ongoing efforts have made much of the archival collections accessible to the public – thus exposing the wealth of information gathered by Yad Vashem to an ever-growing worldwide audience. Recent agreements facilitating the sharing of information with various international archives have further propelled the growth of the Archives’ holdings, which now include some 204 million pages of documentation.

3,000,000 pages of documentation added
In May 2017, the State of Israel and the Russian Federation signed a significant Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), enabling unprecedented archival cooperation between the two countries. The MOU provides for the exchange of copied documentation, meetings between experts, mutual assistance in expanding access to archival documentation and the establishment of joint projects. The first cooperative project between the two countries was with Yad Vashem, and dealt with locating and publicizing previously unknown Holocaust-era documentation in Russian archives. The current agreement will enable the identification, together with the Rosarkhiv (the Federal Archival Agency), of archived and undiscovered Holocaust records. It is hoped that the project will help advance the mission of recovering many of the 1,300,000 names of Holocaust victims, mostly from Eastern Europe, whose details are as yet unknown. As a goodwill gesture, the Rosarkhiv presented Yad Vashem with some 300,000 copies of personal cards of prisoners from Auschwitz stored at the Russian State Military Archives (formerly the Osoby Archives).

The completion of a decade-long project collecting names of Holocaust victims from the area of Greater Hungary during World War II was marked in January 2018 at an event in Paris in cooperation with the French Foundation for the Memory of the Shoah (Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah). The project enabled the identification of more than 200,000 names, which have been added to Yad Vashem’s Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names. Today Yad Vashem has information on 80 percent of Hungarian Holocaust victims. The Hungarian Names Recovery project was initiated and supported by Holocaust survivor and former French politician the late Simone Veil, a close friend and supporter of Yad Vashem and a driving force behind groundbreaking Holocaust commemoration, documentation and education in France, Europe and around the world.
In December 2017, Yad Vashem hosted a seminar for a group of archivists and librarians from Serbia, including directors of municipal archives and libraries across the country. After an address by the Ambassador of Serbia to Israel H.E. Mr. Milutin Stanoev, the participants enjoyed behind-the-scenes views of the work of Yad Vashem’s Archives and Libraries, and familiarized themselves with its research into the history of the Shoah. The archivists and librarians, most of whom had never visited Israel before, appreciated the chance to meet new contacts and learn about each other’s work. Several of them did not wait for the seminar to end before exploring potential projects and follow-up activities.

“The seminar gave me a more comprehensive view of the Shoah.”
Petar Djurdjev, Director of the Novi Sad Historical Archives

NEW INTERACTIVE ONLINE COURSE ON THE USE OF PRIMARY HISTORICAL SOURCES

As part of its mission to support the Holocaust research community, in April 2017 the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI) launched an online course developed by Yad Vashem’s International School for Holocaust Studies. Titled “It Must All be Recorded Without a Single Fact Left Out: The Holocaust through the Perspective of Primary Sources,” the course features original documents and interviews with leading historians, and introduces various primary sources essential for Holocaust research, discussing their critical examination and application. Aimed at the university graduate level, the course is comprised of an introduction and six lessons, focusing on photographs, diaries, bureaucratic documents, letters and testimonies. The course ran twice in 2017, bringing together historians, educators, researchers, archivists, psychologists and genealogists from over 15 countries, who quickly hailed its excellent content and delivery.

“This course provided a chance to ‘sit down’ with so many whose work I have long admired and to get to know some other extraordinary scholars whose work I only knew a little about.”
Prof. Steven Gorelick, Hunter College, NY, Course Participant
HOLOCAUST-ERA DIARY AND PHOTOGRAPHS TO BE PRESERVED FOR GENERATIONS TO COME

Among the items donated this year to Yad Vashem’s “Gathering the Fragments” nationwide campaign were a unique Holocaust-era diary and photographs belonging to Ruth and Meir Kalka. Natives of Czestochowa, Poland, Ruth and Meir were married in 1942. The Germans sent them to work in the Hasag factory near the ghetto. In March 1943, fearing that they would be deported, the couple decided to flee the ghetto. They moved from one hiding place to another, subject to daily dangers at the hands of the Germans as well as surrounding farmers. Throughout their wanderings and their escape, Ruth recorded the events in a diary in a small metal-bound notebook. In October 1945, Ruth and Meir Kalka left Poland for Eretz Israel. In June 2017, Ruth and Meir’s children donated their parents’ cherished items, including the diary, for safekeeping at Yad Vashem, where they will be preserved and, together with their story of survival, passed on to future generations.

PAGE OF TESTIMONY LEADS TO MIRACULOUS FAMILY REUNION

The last time 102-year-old Holocaust survivor Eliahu Pietruszka saw his family was in Warsaw at the beginning of World War II. Until recently, he believed that his entire family had been murdered during the Holocaust. However, in November 2017, Eliahu met for the first time with his newly discovered nephew Alexandre, the son of his brother Wolf, who, unbeknownst to him, had also survived. The emotional and unexpected meeting took place thanks to information on Pages of Testimony recorded on Yad Vashem’s Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names. Alexandre was moved to tears when he saw a prewar family photograph, saying that it was the first time that he had seen a photograph of his grandparents. Alexandre recounted how his father, like Eliahu, always thought that he was alone in the world.

“You are no longer alone. You now have family in Israel. It is truly a miracle.”

Eliahu Pietruszka, Holocaust Survivor
During 2017, Yad Vashem expedited efforts to record the testimony of survivors in Israel by increasing visits to survivors in their own homes. The challenge of recording testimony has become even more complicated, and not only because of the emotional complexity involved. The majority of survivors still alive today survived the Holocaust at a young age, having been born in the 1930s or even the early 1940s. They tell what they know about their lives during the Holocaust, sometimes based on fragments of memories that coalesce with information they heard or that their acquaintances passed on to them. The interviewer’s job is to find ways to spur personal memories and to turn the fragments of memories into concrete information. In many cases, the survivor’s children and grandchildren watch the copy of the testimony right away, and poignantly thank the interviewer team.

“As I grew older, and especially in recent decades, I felt the need to document what I experienced... During the interview, they made me feel as if I were the only person on earth, and they gave their undivided attention and energy to me and me alone.”

Israel Shaked, Holocaust Survivor

FATE OF JEWISH GIRLS EXPELLED FROM POLISH SCHOOL UNCOVERED

Recent research efforts by staff at Yad Vashem’s Reference and Information Department and Hall of Names helped uncover the fate of 87 Jewish girls who were expelled from the all-girls Middle School No. 2 in Krakow, Poland during the Holocaust. The painstaking research was made difficult due to the fact that many of the surviving girls had changed their surnames several times, first to Hebrew and then again upon marriage. Nevertheless, the findings revealed that 21 girls were murdered during the Holocaust, 24 survived, and the fate of the others could not be determined. The project began nearly two years ago when the school’s principal contacted Yad Vashem after finding a trove of records that included a list of the girls expelled on 9 December 1939, following orders from the German Nazi authorities. In May 2017, a moving ceremony, including prayers by a rabbi and a Roman Catholic priest, was held at the school, at which a plaque commemorating all 87 girls who were expelled from their institution was unveiled.
The 12th annual Avner Shalev Yad Vashem Chairman’s Award for a Holocaust-related film was granted to Hungarian director Ferenc Török for his film *1945*. *1945* is based on “Homecoming”, a short story by Gábor T. Szántó, who co-authored the screenplay for the film. Shot in black and white, the film opens with an austere journey on foot by two Orthodox Jews, father and son, who tread onward to an unknown destination with a trunk containing undisclosed contents. Rumors reach their hometown before they do, setting off a series of disasters, as panic spreads among the villagers, who have profited in many ways from the “disappearance” of their Jewish neighbors during the war that has just ended.

**FILMS**

Yad Vashem’s Visual Center — the world’s largest digital film library for Holocaust-related films — acquires films of all genres and in all languages concerning Jewish life between the two world wars, the Holocaust period, postwar antisemitism, genocide and other associated topics. Among the many films attained in 2017 are Israeli feature films, award-winning documentaries, television programs, short films and amateur movies distributed worldwide.

**HUNGARIAN DIRECTOR GARNERS AVNER SHALEV CHAIRMAN’S AWARD**

The 12th annual Avner Shalev Yad Vashem Chairman’s Award for a Holocaust-related film was granted to Hungarian director Ferenc Török for his film *1945*. *1945* is based on “Homecoming”, a short story by Gábor T. Szántó, who co-authored the screenplay for the film. Shot in black and white, the film opens with an austere journey on foot by two Orthodox Jews, father and son, who tread onward to an unknown destination with a trunk containing undisclosed contents. Rumors reach their hometown before they do, setting off a series of disasters, as panic spreads among the villagers, who have profited in many ways from the “disappearance” of their Jewish neighbors during the war that has just ended.

**FILM RESTORATION PROJECT: IN SEARCH OF LADINO**

In 2017, the Yad Vashem Visual Center and Yael Perlov, together with the Perlov family, produced the restoration of *In Search of Ladino* — a unique documentary film by David Perlov about language, memory and identity. The film follows Ladino speakers, their culture, their memories and their hopes for the future of their mother tongue. One of the earliest efforts to bring Ladino-speaking Holocaust survivors in Israel to the screen, *In Search of Ladino* provides a rare documentation of their testimonies and songs. The film was meant to be part of a trilogy about languages — Hebrew, Yiddish and Ladino — but Perlov only managed to make the first film. The director avoids being didactic: He focuses his glance on the faces of the people, he listens carefully to their stories and songs, and he creates a film that brings back to life the richness and diversity of Ladino culture.
BOOKS

The Yad Vashem Library seeks to collect all material written about the Holocaust and to make it available to the reading public. To date, the Library contains some 167,000 titles in 60 languages of published Holocaust-related material – a wealth of information about the Shoah as well as humanity’s attempt to grapple with one of the most traumatic events in human history.

167,000 publications in the library

ADAPTING TO CHANGING TRENDS IN REFERENCE RESOURCES

Over the course of 2017, the Reading Room of Yad Vashem’s Library and Archives Building has undergone important changes, reflecting the digitalization of much of the Archives collection and changes in how people look for information. At the beginning of the millennium, when the Reading Room was first set up, people still needed and used many different kinds of published reference works: encyclopedias,lexicons,almanacs,yearbooks and bibliographies. However, with the tremendous growth of resources available over the Internet, many titles have been removed from the shelves of the Reading Room, and more room has been made for computers as well as more comfortable seating. Although the need for published works may have changed, books remain essential for any serious attempt to learn or conduct research, reinforcing the primary mission of the Yad Vashem Library, to collect and preserve all published material about the Holocaust.
Yad Vashem’s International Institute for Holocaust Research was established a quarter of a century ago in order to broaden and intensify scholarly study of the Holocaust. By encouraging, supporting and advancing Holocaust research, the Institute fosters cooperative projects among academic institutions and encourages young scholars in their studies. Its projects help lay the foundations for additional research of the tragic events that took place during the Shoah.
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE REFLECTS ON THE JEWISH FAMILY IN THE SOVIET UNION

The Research Institute’s Moshe Mirilashvili Center for Research on the Holocaust in the Soviet Union is leading groundbreaking global academic discourse on various aspects of the history of the Jews living in territories included within the borders of the Soviet Union as of June 22, 1941 until the immediate aftermath of WWII. It strengthens ties with relevant researchers and organizations, encourages international scholarly cooperation, and advances pioneering research in all related areas through new research projects, publications, testimonies, workshops, seminars and conferences for senior and young scholars alike.

In November 2017, the Center held a unique international conference on family units during the Holocaust, and the hardships they faced under German-occupied areas of the USSR and the Soviet rear. The conference convened leading scholars from Israel, the US, Germany and Canada for in-depth discussions on such topics as the benefits and disadvantages of hiding with family members; the creation of “surrogate families” while in hiding or fleeing; the fate of Jewish orphans and children of mixed marriages; gender role reversal; creative solutions for agunot (Jewish women whose husbands’ fates are unknown and wish to remarry); and the use of parcels as a means of mutual relief and to communicate with family members in other countries.

“The recent conference at Yad Vashem highlighted the centrality of studying Soviet Jewish families during the Holocaust. The conference was the first, groundbreaking step into this direction. I am honored to be a part of this important initiative.”

Prof. Anna Shternshis. University of Toronto

DOCUMENTING THE HOLOCAUST IN NAZI-OCUPIED POLAND

An international workshop investigating the documentation of the Holocaust in Nazi-occupied Poland took place at Yad Vashem in September 2017. The workshop, the first in a planned series, was organized by the Research Institute’s Center for Research on the Holocaust in Poland, in collaboration with the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and with the Polish Center for Holocaust Research at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. Participants from Israel, Poland and the US, both established scholars and doctoral students from various academic institutions, focused on topics such as the use of postwar German and Jewish sources in the academic investigation of the Holocaust in Poland. The next workshop in the series is scheduled to take place in Washington, DC.
HOLOCAUST-ERA JEWISH PRESS OFFERS HISTORICAL INSIGHTS

During the early years of Nazi rule (1933-1938), the Jews were pushed out of public life in Germany, but the authorities allowed them to continue to publish newspapers and magazines, which flourished among the information-starved Jewish public and became their primary supplier of information. The fascinating content, illustrations, photographs and caricatures published during these crucial prewar years, provides important sociological and historical information. In recent years, the Research Institute's Center for Research on the Holocaust in Germany initiated the publication of a series of scholarly articles examining Jewish periodicals in Germany during the Nazi regime, offering educators, students and scholars of modern Jewish history exceptional insights into Jewish communal life of the period. During 2017, two volumes were added to the series: Jewish Religious Practice under Nazi Rule (1933-1938) and Its Reflection in the German-Jewish Press (edited by Jacob Borut) and The Press for Jewish Children and Youth in Germany, 1933-1938: Warning or Reassuring? (edited by Hanna Livnat).

ARTIST'S DIARY SHEDS LIGHT ON EXPERIENCES DURING AND AFTER THE HOLOCAUST

Immediately upon liberation, Holocaust survivor and artist Yehuda Bacon began keeping a diary in which he described his experiences during the Shoah and in its immediate aftermath. The diary entries include detailed accounts of his time in Auschwitz, and are accompanied by illustrations of the hardships he endured, as well as portraits of war criminals. Written mainly in Czech, Bacon filled some twenty notebooks with his writings between 1945 and 1950, some of which provided testimony used in trials for Holocaust war criminals. The Diana and Eli Zborowski Center for the Study of the Aftermath of the Holocaust of Yad Vashem’s International Institute for Holocaust Research is planning to publish the first eighteen of Bacon’s notebooks, annotated and accompanied by a historical introduction, and including footnotes prepared by Bacon himself together with the Center’s Director. During 2017, the manuscripts were prepared for publication, and important details relating to people, places and organizations were recorded as a basis for the scientific editing of the volume. The first two volumes will be published during 2018.
MAPPING THE HOLOCAUST IN THE USSR

The online research project “The Untold Stories: The Murder Sites of the Jews in the Occupied Territories of the Former USSR” aims to create a comprehensive picture of more than 2,700 murder sites scattered across the German-occupied territories of the Soviet Union during the Holocaust. These areas are where the greatest numbers of Jews were murdered by the Nazis in direct proximity to the cities, towns or villages in which they lived before and during WWII. The Untold Stories subsite presents detailed information on each community based on archival documentation, including Soviet and German official reports, as well as recent scholarly research. Thousands of documents and photos, as well as hundreds of video clips with interviews of the survivors and witnesses of the events, enrich scholarly knowledge of this catastrophic period. During 2017, 150 murder sites were added to the project, which now includes information on 1,250 sites at which Nazi Germans and their collaborators murdered Jews from approximately 650 communities.

The project provides new opportunities for historians to analyze the information, and draw comparisons between the implementation of Nazi policy in different regions and territories of the USSR.

RESEARCHERS GATHER AT GROUNDBREAKING WORKSHOP

How did a Jewish inmate in a ghetto or concentration camp, or a Jew in hiding, deal with the limited space in which he or she was forced to live? In which way did antisemitic legislation create spaces that separated Jews from the rest of society, even without physical boundaries? What was the role of “mental spaces,” often created by groups and individuals in order to cope with the harsh and worsening realities? These and other questions were discussed by an array of scholars from different countries and disciplines, including history, sociology, art, literature and music, at the 2017 annual workshop held by the International Institute for Holocaust Research entitled “Holocaust Research and the Spatial Turn.” The groundbreaking workshop enabled renowned scholars from Israel and abroad to develop a stimulating discourse on a subject that is gaining increasingly widespread attention in historical research, as well as in social and cultural studies.
INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH BOOK PRIZE 2017: PROF. DAVID CESARANI

The Yad Vashem 2017 International Book Prize for Holocaust Research was awarded posthumously to Prof. David Cesarani, for his book Final Solution: The Fate of the Jews 1933-1949 (Macmillan, 2016). Dawn Cesarani accepted the prize on her late husband’s behalf. Based on decades of scholarship, documentation newly available from the opening of Soviet archives and declassification of Western intelligence service records, as well as diaries and reports written in the camps, Cesarani’s book challenges accepted explanations for the anti-Jewish politics of Nazi Germany and the inevitability of the “Final Solution.”

The persecution of the Jews, as Cesarani saw it, was not always the Nazis’ central preoccupation, nor was it inevitable. Instead, he shows how, in German-occupied countries, it unfolded erratically, often due to local initiatives. For Cesarani, war was critical to the Jewish fate. Military failure denied the Germans opportunities to expel Jews to a distant territory and created a crisis of resources that led to the starvation of the ghettos and intensified anti-Jewish measures.

“David Cesarani’s Final Solution is a magisterial work of history that chronicles the fate of Europe’s Jews.”

From the Judges’ Considerations, International Research Book Prize 2017

VISITING SCHOLAR: PROFESSOR NATALIE BELSKY

Natalie Belsky, Assistant Professor at the University of Minnesota Duluth, made extensive use of Yad Vashem’s resources during a two-month postdoctoral fellowship at the International Institute for Holocaust Research in 2017. While engaged in her research, Belsky encountered first-hand personal documents in Yad Vashem’s Archives – memoirs, diaries and interviews – left by Jewish evacuees and refugees who fled their homes in Ukraine, Belarus and the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. As part of her research, Belsky examined how the wartime sojourn in the Soviet interior affected the mentality and outlook of evacuees, as well as their notions of identity and belonging. One of the diaries, composed by someone who spent the years of the war in the unoccupied territories of the Soviet Union, sheds light on the ways in which Soviet Jews who later immigrated to Israel remembered their wartime childhood and adolescence. These young people, loyal Soviet citizens, were forced to grapple with their Jewish identity in new and creative ways. The results of Belsky’s research served as the basis for her fellows’ presentation, and an academic article to be offered for publication during the coming year.

“Beyond the research opportunities the Institute provides, it also serves a very important function in bringing together scholars in the field and providing a venue for discussion and collaborative learning.”

Natalie Belsky, Research Fellow
YAD VASHEM STUDIES

Yad Vashem Studies is an international scholarly journal committed to a multi-faceted and thorough examination of all aspects of the Holocaust. Appearing since 1957 in English and Hebrew editions – twice annually since volume 35 (2007) – Yad Vashem Studies consistently features path-breaking articles. In volume 45:1 (June 2017), Jan Grabowski and Dariusz Libionka deconstruct the new Ulma Family Museum in Markowa of Poles who Saved Jews during World War II. They demonstrate that this museum – created on the site of the heroic attempt by the Ulma family to rescue Jews, for which the entire family of eight paid with their lives – commits “historical fraud” by omitting facts, and distorts history in order to construct a historical narrative whereby the large majority of ethnic Poles helped Jews during the Holocaust. Indeed, in Markowa, some Poles exhibited great sacrifice and courage in order to rescue Jews, but others killed Jews with great zeal. Sometimes the same people first helped and then took part in the murders. As in many other rural areas in Poland, greed, ill will and antisemitism often trumped virtue and sacrifice in Markowa. As the Holocaust continues to shake the foundations of modern civilization, Yad Vashem Studies reiterates its commitment to examine and grapple with this terrible rupture in the history of the Jewish people and of all humanity.

YAD VASHEM PUBLICATIONS

As part of the International Institute for Holocaust Research, Yad Vashem Publications disseminates innovative research about the Holocaust that influences Shoah remembrance and academic investigations. Each year, Yad Vashem Publications releases dozens of new titles in a variety of genres and languages, including archival materials, memoirs of Holocaust survivors, research conference proceedings, encyclopedias, catalogues and albums.

DENUNCIATION AND RESCUE: DUTCH SOCIETY AND THE HOLOCAUST

This new book by Pinchas Bar-Efrat examines the attitude of the Dutch authorities toward the Jews during the Nazi occupation, particularly that of the directors of the various government ministries, as well as of the ministers of the government-in-exile and of Dutch society in general. The author probed thousands of files of postwar trials of war criminals in the Netherlands, discussing the modus operandi of these war criminals and their motives for denouncing Jews. He also surveys the activities of the Dutch police and, in contrast, the important actions of the Dutch resistance and the individuals who concealed Jews, assisted them in obtaining false papers, or provided them with ration cards and money.

ON THE EVE: THE JEWS OF EUROPE BEFORE WORLD WAR II

Bernard Wasserstein’s Hebrew-language tome discusses the hopes and fears of the Jews of Europe in the 1930s, their philosophy, values, religious views, ideological and social schisms, and many cultural reflections. Describing Ashkenazim, Sephardim, religious and secular Jews in the shetls and large cities throughout Europe, he analyses the distress of the Jews, positing that it was due to internal breakdown no less than to external persecution. European Jewry comes alive in the author’s descriptions of its leaders, intellectuals, rabbis, leading figures and masses of anonymous people who make history.
PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES 2017

Rabbi Israel Meir Lau  Chairman of the Council
Dr. Yitzhak Arad  Vice-Chairman
Dr. Moshe Kantor  Vice-Chairman
Jacob Danon  Chairman of the Human Resources Committee
Joseph Horowitz  Chairman of the Controlling Committee
Dov Gilboa  Chairman of the Finance Committee
Prof. Dina Porat  Chairman of the Academic Committee
Justice Jacob Türkel  Chairman of the Commission for the Designation of the Righteous Among the Nations
Zvika Yochman  Chairman of the Building Committee

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Cynthia Wroclawski  Deputy Director, Archives Division
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Calanit Ben Haim  Deputy Director, International School for Holocaust Studies
Shulamit Imber  Pedagogical Director, Fred Hillman Chair in Memory of Janusz Korczak, International School for Holocaust Studies
Inbal Kivity Ben-Dov
Orly Nir  Deputy Director, Commemoration and Community Relations Division
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Irir Agram **  Deputy Director, Information Technology Division
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Lilach Shitdler  Deputy Director, International Institute for Holocaust Research
Iris Rosenberg  Spokesperson and Director, Communications Division
Yifat Bachrach-Ron  Deputy Director, Communications Division
Dr. Robert Rozett  Director, Yad Vashem Libraries
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Dr. Susanna Kokkonen, Christian Friends of Yad Vashem and Scandinavia Desk
Arik Rav-On, German-Speaking Countries and German Swiss Desk
Adv. Arie Zuckerman, Diaspora Affairs Desk and Special Advisor to the Chairman of the Directorate

*outgoing
**incoming
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS 2017

REVENUES

- Government of Israel: 49%
- Department Activities: 40%
- Funds & Donations: 11%

Total Revenues: NIS 192,704

EXPENDITURES

- Education: 28%
- Documentation: 20%
- Technological Infrastructure: 13%
- Remembrance: 12%
- Management: 7%
- Research: 6%
- Resource Development: 6%
- Maintenance & Construction: 8%

Total Expenditures: NIS 192,704

ANNUAL REPORT 2017
YAD VASHEM SOCIETIES AND FRIENDS WORLDWIDE

Yad Vashem is deeply grateful for the dedicated work and fundraising efforts of its Friends Societies across every continent of the globe. The activities, events and awareness-raising endeavors of our partners are crucial to our shared mission of spreading Holocaust remembrance and education worldwide.

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR YAD VASHEM
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Executive Director: Ron B. Meier, PhD
Chief Development Officer: Eillene Leistner
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INVEST IN YOUR HERITAGE – JOIN YAD VASHEM’S LEGACY CIRCLE

Let your estate plans ensure that the memory of the Shoah is passed on to future generations. By including Yad Vashem in your estate plans, you guarantee a future that confronts denial and indifference. To learn more about legacy giving please visit: www.yadvashem.org/legacy or e-mail: international.relations@yadvashem.org.il
As we reflect back on the past year, it is clear that Yad Vashem’s integral role in keeping individuals worldwide connected to the Shoah has been rendered more challenging while taking on heightened meaning, making us proud to welcome this year’s new Benefactors who help make this possible. The celebration of Israel’s 70th year of independence motivates us even further to strengthen our commitment to Holocaust remembrance and education. We invite others to join us in our vital mission to disseminate the legacy of the Shoah in order to build a better future for the Jewish people and the rest of the world.

Dr. Miriam and Sheldon G. Adelson

NEW BENEFACTORS

ALEX AND VERA BOYARSKY

The Boyarsky family from Sydney, Australia believes that everyone has a responsibility to help improve the wellbeing of those around them. This value has been passed to each generation of the family in memory of Imre and Elisabeth Steiner z”l, who survived Auschwitz and Mauthausen and whose Shoah history is on record at Yad Vashem. Their daughter, Vera Boyarsky and her husband Alex continue their legacy.

Alex and Vera Boyarsky have been active philanthropists for many years in areas ranging from Jewish issues to civic causes. They are patrons of the arts, major donors to the Jewish community as well as medical and scientific research and are deeply committed supporters of Israel and Jews in need worldwide.

The next generation of Boyarskys, in particular their son Andrew and his wife Taryn, are involved in philanthropic leadership roles. Alex and Vera have also passed this sense of responsibility to their daughter Michelle and her family – emphasizing that each individual can contribute to a brighter future for the world. As proud parents and grandparents, they hope the legacy of their values and deeds will continue for generations to come.

SADIA AND SIMY COHEN

Sadia Cohen Zrihen was born in Mellila, the Spanish autonomous city on the north coast of Africa. Sadia obtained his engineering degree in Madrid, and soon after immigrated to Venezuela.

For his dedicated work promoting growth in Venezuela and his close friendship and support of several former Venezuelan Presidents, Sadia received the Medal of the Order Francisco de Miranda. Sadia is also deeply committed to Israel and world Jewry, causes to which he dedicates significant energy and philanthropy. He was a director of the Israeliite Association of Venezuela, and through extensive work helped obtain 800 Spanish citizenships for descendants of Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain. Among many additional accolades Sadia has received, his support of the Shaare Tzedek Hospital in Jerusalem earned him the Shem Tov Award.

Sadia is married to Simy Bendayan, and together they have joined the honored circle of Yad Vashem Pillars in recognition of their most recent contribution, endowing the new exhibition “Flashes of Memory: Photography during the Holocaust.”

Sadie and Simy are devoted to their three children, Cota, Solita and Isaac, and their families all share the same commitment to philanthropy, the Jewish people and the State of Israel.

SIMA CONRAD Z”L

For all of her adult life, Sima Conrad z”l supported the work and mission of Yad Vashem. It was Sima’s wish to honor her parents and her family at Yad Vashem, supporting efforts to educate soldiers of the IDF, of which her father was a proud veteran, and helping to inform the world about the dangers of prejudice, stereotyping and genocide.

Sima’s mother, Clara Scharf Goldberg, was born in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, in 1926. In the spring of 1944, Clara was deported to Auschwitz with her entire family. Her parents and two younger siblings were murdered upon arrival. Clara and two of her sisters survived as forced laborers in the Stutthof and Elbing labor camps. After the war, Clara made her way to Eretz Israel, arriving in 1947. There she met her husband, Zygmunt Goldberg.
Born in Poland, Zygmunt fled east during the war and served in the Red Army before immigrating to Eretz Israel. Zygmunt and Clara married and settled in Israel, where their children, Yehoshua (Josh) and Sima, were born. Zygmunt served with distinction in the Haganah and later in the IDF.

In 1957, Zygmunt and Clara immigrated to the US where they built a happy life, supported by their successful business in painting and property management. Josh married Sharon and lives in Los Angeles. Sima married actor Michael Conrad (star of the 1980s TV show Hill Street Blues), who died prematurely from cancer. She dabbled in acting, and was involved in various organizations in her hometown of Malibu. Sima fought metastatic cancer bravely for almost ten years before succumbing to the disease in 2015.

**EVELYN AND JAIME ELLSTEIN**

With both of their families originally hailing from Poland, Evelyn and Jaime Ellstein were born in Mexico after their families migrated there. Today the couple has two daughters, Sharon and Sandra, and the family continues to grow in Mexico with the addition of the next generation. Evelyn and Jaime are generous and active philanthropists, as well as contributing members of the Jewish community in Mexico, assisting in many different ways. As Jewish continuity is of special significance to them, they are also committed to supporting the State of Israel.

Evelyn and Jaime Ellstein recently became Yad Vashem Benefactors in recognition of their generous support of Yad Vashem’s Holocaust History Museum. Their dedication to living a meaningful life is a source of inspiration to the Jewish communities in Mexico and Israel, as well as their two daughters and their grandchildren.

**FAMILY OF ANNE AND ISIDORE FALK**

The family of Anne and Isidore Falk recently endowed the Path of the Righteous at Yad Vashem, which leads down from the Memorial to the Deportees-The Cattle Car to the Garden of the Righteous. The Path is dedicated in memory of their beloved parents, Anne and Isidore Falk, z”l, and their dear brother, Michael David Falk, z”l.

Isidore Falk immigrated to the United States during WWI after his family was forced to flee Russian pogroms. The one recollection he shared from this painful period in his life was that during their flight, they were hidden each night by farmers who gave them food and shelter. While they will never know the identity of these people, the family’s generous gift is a way to recognize their actions, and thank them for their kindness and generosity.

The siblings believe that their parents would proud to be associated with this prestigious designation and with the people whose names are etched on the Wall of Honor in the Garden of the Righteous, including those who rescued a family relative during the war in Amsterdam. The family of Anne and Isidore Falk hopes that their gift will encourage Yad Vashem’s efforts to ensure that ‘Never Again’ will be a part of the world going forward, and keep the tragic events of the Shoah from fading into history.

**MILES AND KELLY NADAL**

New Yad Vashem Visionary Miles S. Nadal is the Founder, Chairman and CEO of Peerage Capital. Peerage Capital is a leading North American business services and private investment firm.

Mr. Nadal started his career in business services in April 1980. As Mr. Nadal’s business successes have grown, he and his wife Kelly and their family have taken on an increasingly larger role in support of important community and charitable organizations, becoming significant supporters of organizations in the areas of health care, education and children’s welfare in Canada, Israel, the US and around the world.

Although his upbringing was modest, Mr. Nadal’s late parents, Irwin and Renee, instilled in him a strong Jewish identity and the importance of charitable giving, which he and Kelly have passed on to their four daughters: Sarah, Samantha, Olivia and Julia. For each of their bat mitzvahs, the girls set up charitable funds in lieu of gifts. Kelly, Sarah, Samantha, Olivia and Julia have volunteered all over the world, helping underprivileged populations.

In November 2016, the couple visited Yad Vashem and immediately expressed their desire to support Holocaust remembrance and education, stressing the importance of Holocaust commemoration for generations to come. In early May 2017, Miles and Kelly Nadal were recognized as Yad Vashem Visionaries, unveiling their Entrance Arch in the Yad Vashem Entrance Plaza in honor of his family. During the ceremony, Miles pointed out that he and Kelly were privileged to become part of the Yad Vashem family, and that thanks to Yad Vashem, they were able to broaden the understanding of the history of the Jewish people, while ensuring its secure future.
In recognition of their generous support, Abraham (Axel) and Galia Stawski recently joined the honored circle of Yad Vashem Benefactors. Axel’s parents, Sara and Moniek Stawski z”l, were born in Koczķ and Będzin (Poland), respectively. Moniek was interned in several camps and liberated from the Gross-Rosen concentration camp. Sara survived the war using false documents of a gentile Polish woman, and was a slave laborer in various German factories. Sara and Moniek were lifelong supporters of Yad Vashem. Galia’s mother Esther z”l was a first-generation Israeli, whose parents emigrated from Lublin, Poland, in the 1920s. During the War of Independence, Esther served in the Haganah. Galia’s father Yovel z”l, an eleventh-generation Israeli, was a member of the Irgun, and a soldier in the British Army’s Jewish Brigade during WWII. His experience liberating Mauthausen shaped the rest of his life. Galia and Axel donated the Guardians and Trustees Terrace in memory of their parents, who displayed a zest for life; the memory of the past shaping their view of the future. The Terrace was also dedicated to their children and succeeding generations, in the hope that they will be able to live a free Jewish life.

The American Society for Yad Vashem, chaired by Leonard (Lenny) Wilf, held its 2017 Annual Tribute Dinner on 12 November 2017 at The Pierre Hotel in New York City. With a full house of over 600 attendees, this year’s Dinner raised record-setting support for Yad Vashem. Most notably, Robert H. Book initiated an appeal for additional donations towards Yad Vashem’s expanding educational programs with soldiers and officers of the Israel Defense Forces. The appeal, led by entertainment icon Haim Saban, was met with an unprecedented and encouraging response, with Yad Vashem Patrons Dr. Miriam and Sheldon Adelson and Haim Saban each making substantial gifts. The theme of the dinner, “Carry the Torch,” speaks to the importance of Holocaust education and keeping the next generation involved and committed to Holocaust remembrance. The four honorees, Robert H. Book, Amy A. Book, Abbi Halpern, and Barry L. Levine, fully exemplify what it means to be dedicated to this mission. The over 100 members of the younger generation that attended the dinner serve as confirmation of the ongoing relevance of Holocaust remembrance today.
PATRONS OF THE MOUNT OF REMEMBRANCE

Dr. Miriam & Sheldon G. Adelson, USA
The Estate of Bernard Aptaker z”l, USA

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Franz Karl Hess z”l, Switzerland
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Dana & Yossie Hollander, Israel
Maxi Librati, France
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The Crown Family, USA
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Keren Hayesod in honor of John & Pauline Gandel, Australia
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Phyllis & William Mack and Family, USA

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