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International Workshop Examines the Concept of Space  
during the Shoah (pp.12-13)

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# From Pers

## Dr. David Silberklang

■ **It was a dramatic moment.** The Soviet army broke through German defenses and advanced on Buczacz and its environs, liberating the area on 23 March 1944. Some 800 Jews, a tiny fraction of the original Jewish community, emerged from hiding. Among them was historian Dr. Josef Kermisz, who had fled Warsaw to his native Eastern Galicia early in the war and had survived the last five months in hiding nearby with a Polish Christian friend. The Soviet commanders quickly identified the 36-year-old Kermisz, drafted him, and sent him to teach at the officers' training school in Zhitomir, further east. However, the Soviets held Buczacz for only eleven days. In a counter-offensive, the Germans retook Buczacz on 3 April and immediately shot the "liberated" Jews. The Soviets finally liberated the town on 21 July. Kermisz had survived by coincidence.

While still in the ghetto, Auerbach recorded one of the most important early survivor testimonies – the 323-page account by Treblinka escapee Yaakov Krzepicki

The Soviet army then advanced rapidly westward, liberating Lublin on 23 July 1944. Kermisz got himself transferred there in September, was discharged, and immediately joined Dr. Philip Friedman and Nachman Blumenthal in a new project – recording Jewish survivor accounts in Lublin. Like Kermisz, Friedman and Blumenthal had survived the war in hiding. Their work in recording survivor accounts succeeded beyond their expectations, and by the end of 1945, the Jewish Historical Commission in Lublin had recorded some 1,500 testimonies.

All three historians went on to make a seminal contribution to laying the foundations for Holocaust research – Friedman eventually became a professor at Columbia University; Blumenthal directed the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw and then worked in research

# Execution to Documentation

## How Survivors Laid the Foundations for Holocaust Research

and publications at Yad Vashem; and Kermisz became Director of the Archive at the Jewish Historical Institute and then the Institute's Deputy Director – followed by his appointment as the first Director of Yad Vashem's Archives. The survivor testimony project these three men organized recorded some 7,300 survivor accounts in Poland by the end of 1947.

One of their important partners in organizing the Jewish Historical Institute was Rachel Auerbach, a writer and journalist who had been active in the “Oneg Shabbat” underground archive led by Dr. Emanuel Ringelblum. Auerbach had also survived in hiding – on the “Aryan” side of Warsaw. While still in the ghetto, she recorded one of the most important early survivor testimonies – the 323-page account by Treblinka escapee Yaakov Krzepicki – between 28 December 1942 and 7 March 1943. She, too, became a central figure in the Jewish Historical Institute, where she developed standards for recording survivor testimony and later became the first Head of Yad Vashem's Oral History Department.

Parallel to this, on November 28, 1945, Yisrael Kaplan, a survivor from Lithuania, co-founded and directed the Central Historical Commission of She'erit HaPletah, based in Munich, in the American zone of occupied Germany. In the following three years, the commission's staff recorded more than 2,500 survivor accounts.



■ Rachel Auerbach with Hirsch Wasser, a Secretary of the “Oneg Shabbat” Archive, at the discovery of part of the Ringelblum Archive, September 1946. Yad Vashem Photo Archive

Parallel projects organized by survivors were undertaken in Paris and Budapest at the same time, as well as by Leib Koniuchowsky, who recorded the detailed accounts of survivors in Lithuania. Many thousands of survivor accounts were written as a result of all the above projects, and much additional documentation was collected to build these early Shoah archives.

As mentioned above, Kermisz, Blumenthal and Auerbach became central figures in Yad Vashem from its founding. Friedman maintained close contact with Yad Vashem until his untimely death in 1960, directing a joint documentary project between Yad Vashem and YIVO in New York and contributing seminal methodological

articles to the early issues of *Yad Vashem Studies*. Kaplan's Historical Commission archive became one of the important early collections deposited in Yad Vashem's Archive, recruited by Kermisz, and Koniuchowsky donated his collection to Yad Vashem in 1989.

Initiative, luck and sometimes the assistance of others had helped these people survive the Holocaust, and remarkable vision had led them to jump into recording survivor accounts immediately after liberation

Other survivors also played central roles in promoting the recording of survivor testimony and developing the archive at Yad Vashem and research methods. Among these were Dr. Shaul Esh, who escaped Germany on the eve of WWII and became Yad Vashem's first Publications Editor and Editor of *Yad Vashem Studies*; Dr. Nathan Eck, a survivor from Warsaw who was involved in research and edited the *Yad Vashem Bulletin* and later briefly edited *Yad Vashem Studies*; and Dr. Meir (Mark) Dworzecki, a survivor from Vilna, who was a member of the Yad Vashem Directorate and established the first Israeli chair in Holocaust studies at Bar-Ilan University.

Initiative, luck and sometimes the assistance of others had helped these people survive the Holocaust, and remarkable vision had led them to jump into recording survivor accounts immediately after liberation and to lay the foundations for Holocaust research. Their seminal role in laying these foundations cannot be overestimated, and their legacy lives on in the work performed in Yad Vashem and many academic institutions around the world to this day.

*The author is Senior Historian in the International Institute for Holocaust Research and Editor-in-Chief of Yad Vashem Studies.*

# A Life of Education and Love

## Marking 75 Years since the Murder of Janusz Korczak

■ *“Whoever was in the ghetto saw how mothers protected their children, how they fed them but did not eat, a boundless love. Of course, it was catastrophic, there was death all around, but within that was so much love... When I ask myself where I get the strength to write, it is not from the horrific sights, but rather from the visions of love that were there, that were everywhere. Janusz Korczak and Stefa Wilczyńska chose a path of education and love, and never veered from it – even at the cost of their lives.”*

Israeli novelist and Holocaust survivor Aharon Appelfeld

Janusz Korczak, (born Henryk Goldszmit; 1878 or 1879–1942) was a Polish Jewish doctor, author and educator. Born in Warsaw to an assimilated Jewish family, Korczak dedicated his life to caring for children, particularly orphans. He believed that children should always be listened to and respected, and this belief was reflected in his work. He wrote several books for and about children, and broadcast a children’s radio program.

In 1912, Korczak became the director of a Jewish orphanage in Warsaw. Joining him as his deputy was his dedicated companion Stefania “Stefa” Wilczyńska. The two had met three years earlier, and formed a close bond. At the onset of World War I, Korczak was enlisted; Wilczyńska was left to run the orphanage, which had expanded and now housed some 150 children. In 1935, she visited the *Eretz Israel* and lived at Ein Harod until 1939. With the Nazi occupation, the members of Ein Harod

arranged for Wilczyńska to leave Poland, but she declined and instead moved to the Warsaw ghetto along with Dr. Korczak and the children.

Korczak first refused to accept the German occupation and heed their regulations (consequently spending time in jail). However, when the Jews of Warsaw were forced to move into a ghetto, Korczak and Wilczyńska refocused their efforts on the children in his orphanage.

Dr. Na’ama Shik gave a moving account of the boundless love and dedication that Korczak and Wilczyńska displayed towards the children in their care at the orphanage

“The lack of official barriers between him and the orphans stood out,” recalled Moshe Zertal, a member of Hashomer Hatzair in Warsaw, in his memoirs documenting his occasional visits to the orphanage. “I saw him sitting naturally on a small study bench next to a boy reading a book. I watched him listen to a lively conversation among children, or cheering them up and directing the “cruel” match among the two contenders who had lost their temper. I saw him many times kissing the hand of a small or weak child; it was like an act of respect and sanctity toward the young



■ Janusz Korczak with children at his orphanage in the Warsaw ghetto. Yad Vashem Photo Archive

child, who was paving his way in the hostile world of the grown-ups.”

On 5 August 1942, during a two-month wave of deportations from the ghetto, the Nazis rounded up Korczak, Wilczyńska and the 200 children in their care. They marched in rows to the *Umschlagplatz* with Korczak in the lead. The two never abandoned their children, even to the very end. Janusz Korczak, Stefa Wilczyńska and the children were sent to Treblinka, where they were all murdered.

To mark 75 years since the murder of Korczak, Wilczyńska and the children, Yad Vashem

## New Learning Environment Dedicated to Janusz Korczak

Sandra Rosenfeld-Katz and Natalie Mandelbaum-Adler

■ Yad Vashem recently launched on its website a new learning environment dedicated to Janusz Korczak and Stefania Wilczyńska. The learning environment is divided into two parts: The first part gives the teachers an overview of the lives of Korczak and Wilczyńska, the innovative values that stood at the center of their philosophy, and the way they were expressed and put into practice both at the orphanage and outside of it. One example discussed in the learning environment is the “Children’s Court,” which was based on the values of democracy and the granting of

equal rights to children. Another example is the children’s newspaper *Maly Przegląd* (*The Small Review*), which was added as a weekly supplement to the Friday edition of the Polish-language Jewish newspaper *Nasz Przegląd* (*Our Review*). For Korczak, it was important that a newspaper for children would be written by the children themselves, supplying them with a space for self-expression, a medium through which to address their own questions and to present their own topics of interest. The young writers wrote about topics that concerned them as well as issues

they encountered with their parents and teachers.

In order to provide teachers with educational tools for use in the classroom, the second part of the learning environment offers a lesson plan. It examines Korczak’s image and his last journey with the children to their joint death. These are presented and approached through poems written about Korczak, as well as the commemorative monument dedicated to his memory in Yad Vashem.

*The authors work in the e-Learning Department, International School for Holocaust Studies.*

To mark 75 years since the murder of Korczak, Wilczyńska and the children, Yad Vashem organized a daylong educational seminar for some 100 members of the Hamahanot Haolim youth movement, as well as a memorial ceremony



■ Members of Hamahanot Haolim youth movement fly kites in memory of Janusz Korczak, Yad Vashem, August 2017

organized a daylong educational seminar for some 100 members of the Hamahanot Haolim youth movement, as well as a memorial ceremony. During the first part of the day, the participants toured the Yad Vashem campus and discussed educational dilemmas of Jewish communities and individuals during the Holocaust. Afterwards, the students were introduced to the characters of Korczak and Wilczyńska; they discussed Korczak's educational curriculum and theories, and examined socio-educational issues facing educators today.

In the spirit of Korczak, who always stressed the need to bestow the same rights upon children as adults, questions were posed of the role of education in the topsy-turvy world of Europe during WWII; a world in which so many children were forced to become adults overnight – a world devoid of the most basic human values. Dr. Na'ama Shik, Director of the International School's e-Learning Department, gave a moving account of the boundless love and dedication that Korczak and Wilczyńska displayed towards the children in their care at the orphanage.

"When we talk about the Holocaust, we are not used to talking or even thinking about love," she stated. "We almost always think of the Shoah from the end – the shooting pits, the gas chambers, the terrible journeys towards them.

We think about the hunger, the cold, the horrors, the threats and the loss. We think about the breakdown of solidarity and the uncompromising battle for survival, the desperation, and often the extreme loneliness. But not about love."

"We viewed them as our father and mother," recalled Yitzhak Belfer, a former resident of the Warsaw ghetto orphanage whose story was screened to the participants during the seminar, and was present at the wreath-laying ceremony held at Yad Vashem's Janusz Korczak Square at the end of the day. "A father – who was away for hours from the home, and whose return always excited us greatly; and a mother – who was always with us, every day, in the home to cheer us up and tell us off, to encourage us and to remark on our behavior." "She [Stefa] would walk past our beds at night, and cover the children, make sure we had brushed our teeth, worry about our health. In the morning, if someone didn't feel well, they would go to her," recalled Ada Poznanski. "She would worry that the children had eaten. I wasn't a good eater, and so she would come to check if I had eaten and drank."

Following the memorial ceremony, 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.

## New in the Virtual School

### The Story of Buczacz

Dima Kolotilenko and Elad Schlesinger

■ From the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Jews, Ukrainians and Poles all lived together in Buczacz (today in western Ukraine) in a relatively peaceful atmosphere, although tensions existed. The volatile interwar years caused radicalization among the non-Jewish local population, many of whom collaborated with their Nazi occupiers in the persecution and murder of their Jewish compatriots.

On the eve of WWII, the Buczacz Jewish community numbered some 7,500-8,000. As deportees arrived, the number grew to 11,000-12,000. The community boasted numerous synagogues, schools, a hospital and many other local institutions and organizations, and gave birth to several renowned individuals, such as Nobel Laureate S.Y. Agnon, Warsaw ghetto historian Emanuel Ringelblum and the Nazi-hunter Simon Wiesenthal. After the Nazi occupation in 1941, over 4,000 of Buczacz's Jews and other Jews who found themselves in the town's ghetto were sent to the Belzec death camp. The remaining majority were murdered in the familiar surroundings of their hometown. Few survived. The picturesque, scenic recreation site Fedor Hill, where the local Jewish and non-Jewish children used to play together, became one of the two mass murder sites of the Buczacz Jewry; the other one was Bashty Hill adjacent to the Jewish cemetery, still visible today as a remaining vestige of the once-rich Jewish life in Buczacz.

The story of Jewish Buczacz, from its foundation through the vivid and eventful years of the community and up to its tragic destruction, is now presented in a new educational environment of the International School for Holocaust Studies. Part of Yad Vashem's "Untold Stories" online research project conducted within the framework of the Moshe Mirilashvili Center for Research on the Holocaust in the Soviet Union at the International Institute for Holocaust Research, the environment includes a historical survey, primary documents, Holocaust survivor testimonies, videos depicting the murder sites and an interactive map of Buczacz, as well as an overview of postwar efforts to commemorate this once-vibrant and prolific Jewish community.

*The authors work in the e-Learning Department, International School for Holocaust Studies.*

# Education ■ Former Neo-Nazis

Leah Goldstein

■ “I grew up in a pretty normal family – a mother and five siblings – but in a xenophobic environment. My older brother was in the neo-Nazi movement, my mother was a xenophobe, my grandfather was a Nazi in the 1940s. That is my family story.”

So recalled Peter Sundin, a participant of a recent seminar at Yad Vashem for Swedish educators. Sundin joined 25 teachers who came to the Mount of Remembrance to learn more about the Shoah and acquire effective tools for educating Swedish youth of its relevance today.

Sundin got involved with neo-Nazis in his hometown at the tender age of 14, and finally quit the movement after taking part in a particularly violent attack against a young immigrant. In 2012, he met Christer Mattson – a well-known Swedish leader who has worked with former neo-Nazi leaders for the past 20 years and now heads the Swedish “Tolerance Project” that helps educate students and teachers alike about the dangers of hate and xenophobia. He told Mattson his story, and began working with youth involved in xenophobic movements. “I’ve been to Poland twice and now I am here in Israel at Yad Vashem because I feel it is the best Holocaust education I can get.”

Every year thousands of educators and community leaders from around the world journey with this same open mind to participate



■ Swedish educators during their seminar at Yad Vashem

Åhlén realized he wanted not only to increase his knowledge on the Holocaust but also understand why and how it happened

in seminars at Yad Vashem. They come to draw on Yad Vashem’s unique approach to Holocaust

education and use these skills back in their home countries. Yad Vashem also has official agreements with dozens of countries that send their teachers to Israel to participate in these important teaching courses.

As a relative “side-player” in the war, for decades afterwards the general Swedish population received scant knowledge about the Shoah. In the 1990s, with Sweden’s desire to join the European Union and the rise of the fascist National Socialist movement, the Swedish government understood more had to be done

## The Asper Foundation Renews Support of Holocaust Education Worldwide

■ At present, over seven decades since the end of WWII, the world finds itself with a plethora of challenges in Holocaust education: the troubling rise of Holocaust denial and antisemitism, which is enjoying renewed and widespread legitimacy; a fading generation of survivors who are able to share their personal experiences; ever-shortening attention spans of today’s students, creating challenges for classroom engagement; and the sad recognition that even within Jewish communities, in-depth knowledge on the Holocaust is a phenomenon in decline.

In recognition of these troubling phenomena, the Asper Foundation of Winnipeg, Canada recently renewed its commitment to and

partnership with Yad Vashem in cementing an additional five years of support of the Asper International Holocaust Studies Program at the International School for Holocaust Studies. Originally an initiative of renowned philanthropists Israel and Ruth (Babs) Asper z”l, the Asper Program was conceived 15 years ago to educate the wider public about the events of the Holocaust through various multilevel educational initiatives. Developed in partnership with Yad Vashem’s educational experts, the mandate of the Asper Program incorporates comprehensive professional development programs, support for Yad Vashem’s international educational conferences and expert international engagement, among other facets.

Tens of thousands of beneficiaries from over 70 countries have been impacted since the Asper Program’s inception.

Standing today at the helm of the Asper Foundation are David, Gail and Leonard Asper, who faithfully continue the legacy of their parents. The Foundation has achieved global acclaim for successful initiatives in Israel and Canada that support many areas of need, including the arts, community development, human rights, literacy, education, media and healthcare.

With the renewed support of the Asper Foundation, Yad Vashem’s experts will continue to work towards combatting current challenges, raising awareness, and facilitating groundbreaking outreach in Holocaust education the world over,

# Turned Holocaust Educators

## Seminar Supports Swedish Efforts to Fight Xenophobia

“If you want to understand what it means to be a human being, you have to come to Yad Vashem.”

Ola Flennegard

about Holocaust education. Consequently, in 1998 Prime Minister Gören Persson spearheaded a Swedish campaign, “The Living History Forum,” and began to foster education about the Holocaust within its own borders and throughout the world.

And yet, this wasn’t enough. Neo-Nazis gathered greater and greater numbers, among the youth especially. Holocaust denial, as well as other racist and xenophobic ideologies and acts, lay high on their agenda. Following the shocking murder by four neo-Nazis of a Czech immigrant teenager in 1995, the “Tolerance Project” was born, in an attempt to identify, work with, and eventually turn around at-risk youth caught up in fascist movements.

Kimmie Åhlén, another participant in the Swedish educators’ seminar with a neo-Nazi past, came to Yad Vashem because of his complicated

personal history. Involved in a culture of alcohol and drug abuse and committed to violence and fighting “communists” and immigrants, Åhlén was on the fast track to the top of the neo-Nazi movement. In school, he denied the Holocaust, telling his teachers that he didn’t believe in it because Jews and Jewish culture were the greatest enemy of National Socialism.

Åhlén got involved with the “Tolerance Project” after revisiting a Jewish graveyard in Karlstad (the southwestern Swedish town where 500 Jewish women went to recuperate after the war). When he first visited the site, he was convinced that there were really no Jews buried there. But under Mattson’s guidance, his horizons opened and he realized he wanted not only to increase his knowledge of the Holocaust but also understand why and how it happened. He is especially inspired by hearing survivor testimony at Yad Vashem. “As I work with young people, using first-hand stories of Holocaust survivors is a way to bring history to life and create sympathy for the victims.”

Social Science teacher Helena Hermansson agrees. “Swedish teachers are obliged to teach about the Holocaust in particular, as well as other genocides. But Swedish teachers need to learn more about how to teach the Holocaust. Students should see history as an ongoing process, learning from the past, and seeing

the individuals behind the stories. In this way, students learn that their choices can make a difference.”

History teacher Ola Flennegard has been dealing with Holocaust education since 2001 and was interested in coming to Yad Vashem in order to deepen his understanding of the events of the Holocaust, as well as to learn about its didactic approaches to Holocaust education. “Without profound knowledge about the Holocaust, we cannot encounter neo-Nazis or neo-Nazism. Superficial knowledge can be catastrophic. The preservation of memory at Yad Vashem is so evident and on a high level... we need to move away from linear teaching to learning about what happened before and after – to give more of a perspective to the event. The Holocaust was not only, or even mainly, about the camps, but about the hole in Europe that needs discovering – six million people. If you know where to look you can find traces of what was.

“You can’t be a European [educator] and not want to teach about the Holocaust, and show your students the loss it caused of human values in Europe. It is not enough to appreciate what was lost – we need to understand that human beings were behind the loss and they were born no different to us. If you want to understand what it means to be a human being, you have to come to Yad Vashem.”

pinpointing the areas of greatest need and where programming will have the greatest impact. The Asper Program will keep developing new initiatives to promote high-level Holocaust education training, providing educators with the proven resources and tools to teach about the Holocaust and rebut efforts to deny or diminish it. Above all, the ongoing support of the Asper Foundation will cement Yad Vashem as the world leader in Holocaust education, and act as the center of public discourse to that effect.

“We are delighted that our friends and partners, Gail, Leonard, and David Asper, have decided to perpetuate their bond with Yad Vashem, which is so deeply important and dear to all of us here,” said Yad Vashem



■ At the opening of the “Keeping the Memory Alive” poster exhibit, sponsored by the Asper Foundation, at the United Nations, Vienna, Austria

Chairman Avner Shalev. “Twenty years of unabated support is a rare indication of steadfast commitment to the principle and practice of



■ Workshop during the International Conference for Jewish Educators, December 2016, Yad Vashem

meaningful remembrance, and we look forward to marking their unswerving commitment in the near future.”

## Graduate Spotlight

Every year, over 300,000 students and educators in Israel and around the world attend hundreds of educational activities, in a dozen languages, at the International School for Holocaust Studies. Featured here is one of the School's graduates, and what she has achieved since:



## Zuzana Varhaníková Slovakia



James Joseph McIntosh

■ Zuzana Varhaníková is an educator who teaches theatre arts in extracurricular programs in Bánovce nad Bebravou, Slovakia. While working on a piece of documentary theater (a dramatic genre based on real-life documents) centered on Holocaust survivor testimony, she turned to the Museum of Jewish Culture in Bratislava for assistance. This cooperation developed over time, leading her to apply to join a seminar at Yad Vashem.

In the course of a preparatory seminar day in Slovakia that Varhaníková attended, Yad Vashem's Miriam Mouryc delivered a presentation about the educational philosophy and age-appropriate approach of Yad Vashem. The presentation made an impression on Varhaníková, who took care to incorporate it into her later work.



■ Graduate Zuzana Varhaníková

While at Yad Vashem, Varhaníková also heard about a Holocaust survivor from Czechoslovakia named Hana Bořkovicová (1927-2009). Bořkovicová and her family were deported to the Theresienstadt ghetto in 1943 and to Auschwitz in 1944.

Bořkovicová and her mother survived, but her father and brother did not. Mouryc had previously interviewed her in Prague on behalf of the USC Shoah Foundation in 1996 and was happy to share the testimony with Varhaníková. Bořkovicová's experiences during the war made such an impression on Varhaníková that she decided to create a work of theatre based on

Bořkovicová's testimony and one of her books, *The Forbidden Girls*.

Varhaníková cast eight young actors in the play – girls approximately 13-14, like the protagonists in the book – and studied Jewish culture and the Holocaust with them. The cast and crew won second place in a Slovak drama competition, as well as in the European Festival for Children and Youth Theater in Poland in 2015.

"The performance changed me, as well as my attitude towards the world," said Laura Matejčeková, one of the actors. "People who came to these performances might not have known anything about the Holocaust, but thanks to our performance, they were able to see that it was a difficult time for people whom others labeled as 'different.' It was not easy for us to act. We lived their lives on the stage."

*The author works in the European Department, International School for Holocaust Studies.*

## Expanding Knowledge in Slovakia

■ After the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in March 1939, an independent Slovak state was established under the leadership of Jozef Tiso, a Catholic priest. Slovakia, a client state of Nazi Germany, became the first Axis partner to consent to the deportation of its Jews. Despite the valiant efforts of a small circle of Jewish activists, known as the Working Group, to protect the Jews of Slovakia, between March and October 1942, the Slovak authorities concentrated Jews in camps in Slovakia. Some 58,000 of these Jewish internees were transported to their deaths in Poland. The deportations stopped in the fall of 1942, but this was only a respite for the remaining Jews.

At the end of August 1944, as the Red Army advanced, the Slovak underground rose up against the Tiso regime but the Germans brutally put down the uprising. The deportations of the Jews resumed, and nearly 13,000 more were sent to the camps. In total, some 70,000 out of Slovakia's close to 90,000 Jews were murdered during the Holocaust.

In recent years, Yad Vashem has fostered ties with numerous partners in Slovakia in the hope of expanding Holocaust education and

commemoration in the country. The assistance of Yad Vashem's Slovak partners, particularly Ambassador of Slovakia to Israel H.E. Mr. Peter Hulényi and Director of the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising Stanislav Mičev, has been essential to establishing closer relations with various government ministries, culminating in the signing of a joint declaration with Slovak Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport Peter Plavčan when he visited Israel in May 2017.

In December 2016, Yad Vashem coordinated a seminar for 18 Slovak educators at the Sered' Holocaust Museum. "The participants learned a great deal at the seminar, and continue to build awareness of our country's wartime treatment of the Jews," said Museum Director Dr. Martin Korčok. "We hope to continue training our teachers, who will pass their knowledge on to their colleagues and to their students."

"Delete Memory," a popular resource for Holocaust education, has also been translated into Slovak. This particular unit, designed like postcards, will form the foundation of a new pedagogical workshop for Slovak educators. The International School is also recording a



■ Slovak Minister of Education Peter Plavčan (right) taking a guided tour of the Holocaust History Museum, May 2017

film of interviews with Marta Wise (née Weiss), a Holocaust survivor and native of the former Czechoslovakia.

In view of the expanding ties with this country, Yad Vashem has opened two new seminars for groups from Slovakia: the first for Slovak educators and the second for its first-ever delegation from the Slovak Committee for the Prevention and Elimination of Racism, Xenophobia, Antisemitism and Other Forms of Intolerance.



# The Holocaust and the State of Israel

## National Educators' Conference Tackles Jewish Yearning for the Promised Land

Yael Richler Friedman

■ Since the current school year will overlap with the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel, this year's national conference on Holocaust education centered on the theme of "Touching the Dream, Touching the Pain: *Eretz Israel*, the State of Israel and the Holocaust." During the event, which took place at the start 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 Yad Vashem's campus on Jerusalem's Mount of Remembrance.

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

**Prof. Yehuda Bauer**

The main panel at the conference centered on the question of whether the founding of the State of Israel was linked to the Holocaust. World-renowned Holocaust historian and Academic Advisor to Yad Vashem Prof. Yehuda Bauer believes so – but not in the way some people think. "Actually, the Holocaust put the very establishment of a Jewish state in *Eretz Israel*, which was dependent on massive immigration from Europe, in jeopardy," he stated, via video link, at the conference. "The Holocaust made the entire demographic-numerical basis that could have built a state here disappear."

During the panel, in which Prof. Bauer, Prof. Elhanan Yakira and Prof. Moshe Halbertal participated, Prof. Bauer explained that a simplistic understanding of the connection between the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel would lead to a lack of basic understanding about both Zionism and the Shoah. Viewing the founding of Israel strictly through the prism of the Holocaust means disregarding all the work of the Zionists, as well as the *Yishuv's* accomplishments in *Eretz Israel*, before the Holocaust. Furthermore, he explained that these kinds of statements also attest to a lack of any understanding about



■ More than 1,200 educators from across Israel attended Yad Vashem's seventh national teachers' conference in July 2017

the Holocaust at all. "The Jewish people were utterly powerless during WWII, not in a relative sense, but absolutely," he said. "The result of the Holocaust was that it placed the establishment of the State of Israel in grave danger, too."

Prof. Yakira demurred. "The two events are clearly linked," he argued. "It couldn't be otherwise: two of the greatest events in the history of mankind as a whole, and certainly for the Jewish people, transpired within only a few years of each other. They cannot be unrelated. That flies in the face of all historical and human logic."

If so, asked Prof. Yakira, why do some people find it important to separate these two events? His answer was that they did so in order to counter anti-Zionist arguments that the Jewish state's legitimacy lay not in longevity, but rather was solely a product of the Holocaust. Some also feared that the Zionist enterprise that preceded the state's founding would be totally erased.

Commenting on this issue, Prof. Halbertal argued that the matters must be considered from a different angle. In his opinion, the Holocaust disproved all of the ideologies that had been common among European Jews prior before the war: ultra-Orthodoxy, communism, Bundist assimilation, etc. Only the Zionist ideology was strengthened following the Holocaust: Jewish existence was untenable outside of Israel.

All of this notwithstanding, Prof. Bauer agreed that the Holocaust indirectly impacted the founding of the State of Israel. The survivors who gathered in the postwar DP camps included a Zionist ideological core, which constituted a

third of this group, as it did before the Holocaust. They pressured the Allies, particularly Britain and the United States, to find a solution for them. For many Holocaust survivors, that solution was *Eretz Israel*. Prof. Halbertal stated further that a key message of this complex question was Israel's ultimate responsibility as the home of the Jewish people.

"These and other issues dealing with longing by Jews in the Diaspora to return to Israel before, during and after the Shoah will remain with educators on the eve of Israel's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary,"

**"Only the Zionist ideology was strengthened following the Holocaust: Jewish existence was untenable outside of Israel."**

**Prof. Moshe Halbertal**

concluded Sarit Hoch-Markovitz, Director of the International School's Department for Israeli Teacher-Training. "The conference made it possible for teachers to study them, deepen their significance, and prepare themselves for educational work around them in the upcoming school year."

*This year's Yad Vashem Desk Calendar focuses on the longing and desire of the Jewish people to return to Eretz Israel before, during and after the Holocaust. For more details, see p. 21.*

*The author works in the Department for Israeli Teacher-Training, International School for Holocaust Studies.*

# International Research Workshops

Leah Goldstein

## Supporting Innovative Scholarly Investigations into the Holocaust

■ One of the main goals of the International Institute for Holocaust Research is to promote innovative and enlightening research in Israel and abroad. In a special interview for Yad Vashem Jerusalem, Institute Director Dr. Iael Nidam Orvieto explains the different types of workshops that take place every year, and their importance in the scholarly investigation of a vast range of Holocaust-related topics:

### How can workshops help to develop new areas of Holocaust research?

In our annual summer workshops, we concentrate on topics that are just in their beginning stage of research or topics that are being researched anew, with innovative methodologies and approaches. Senior and young scholars from all over the world meet to present ground-breaking papers and to discuss them, enabling a vital discourse that undoubtedly advances research. This summer we had a stimulating workshop that dealt with an innovative topic – “Holocaust Research and the Spatial Turn” (see pp. 12–13). Past topics have included “Non-Jewish Jews during the Shoah: Fate and Identity”; “The Deportation of the Jews during the Nazi Period”; and “Jewish Languages Facing Persecution and Destruction.” All of these workshops were held through the generous support of the Gutwirth Family Fund.

### Do PhD students participate in these workshops?

Indeed they do, but we also organize special workshops dedicated to advancing PhD candidates from all over the world. A group of young scholars meet for a special workshop in Yad Vashem for several days. They present their ongoing research and discuss it with their peers from different countries as well as with senior scholars from Yad Vashem. For many of them it is the first opportunity to present their findings in an academic environment with researchers from abroad, and to receive important feedback on their work as well as their methodologies. Moreover, these discussions enable each student to become part of a network of current and future scholars, an endeavor that



■ PhD candidates discuss their findings at a special workshop held at Yad Vashem in cooperation with the University of Southern California

the International Institute for Holocaust Research has been promoting for decades.

This summer we held two such workshops. The first, made possible through the generous support of the Gutwirth Family Fund and the UCS Shoah Foundation, was held in collaboration with the University of Southern California, and raised some very interesting topics, such as Soviet Yiddish culture, music in Theresienstadt, and the Jews in the rural districts of the Šiauliai region. During the workshop, the participants discussed their findings and also had the opportunity to utilize and conduct research in our archives. This particular workshop is part of a program of mutual workshops we hold with partner academic institutions and universities abroad, and this was the third meeting with USC.

Another type of workshop to support PhD students falls within our summer PhD fellowship program. This program allows an opportunity for PhD students from abroad working on Holocaust topics to come and conduct research at Yad Vashem for two weeks. During their tenure, these young scholars participate in a workshop at which they present and discuss their PhD topics with Israeli scholars. The workshop, also made possible through the support of the Gutwirth Family Fund, advances academic discussion that assists the PhD candidates to promote their research.

### What other workshops does the Research Institute offer?

We also arrange workshops dedicated to research projects initiated by our various Research Centers. These workshops are usually organized in the middle of the project's timetable, and their aim is to create an opportunity to meet the other colleagues who participate in the project, discuss the research presenting different aspects and methodologies, and consider ways to advance and accomplish the common project.

This summer, our Eli and Diana Zborowski Centre for the Study of the Aftermath of the Holocaust held a workshop connected to its current research project dedicated to child survivors (see p.11). Last year, The Moshe Mirilashvili Center for Research on the Holocaust in the Soviet Union organized a workshop on their project dealing with interethnic relations between Jews and non-Jews in the USSR during the Holocaust.

All of these stimulating workshops enable participants to present their work and relate to questions raised by the participants in response to their studies, which in turn helps the scholars progress with their endeavors and thus advance innovative Holocaust-related research.

For more information about the research workshops at Yad Vashem: +972-2-644 3271  
[research.institute@yadvashem.org.il](mailto:research.institute@yadvashem.org.il)

# “He Seems So Much to Want to Belong to Someone”

Leah Goldstein

## Research Workshop Investigates Child Survivors in the Postwar Period

■ On 17 April 1948, Ernie Paine published a short piece in the *Toronto Daily Star*: “Kept Hidden in Box, Boy Finds Home Here.” The boy in question was Mendel Gwiazda, a Polish Jewish child discovered sick and undernourished in a blown-out, abandoned warehouse in Warsaw in the spring of 1945. Both of Mendel’s parents, as well as his three siblings, were murdered at Treblinka. Meanwhile, in Toronto, Ontario, Wolfe Goldberg had all but given up hope that any of his Polish relatives had survived. Then the news came: Mendel – the son of Goldberg’s distant cousin Elka – had survived in hiding with Catholic rescuers. An American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) social worker dispatched to examine the youngster in a Jewish orphanage posited that the “clingy and affectionate boy... seems so much to want to belong to someone.”

Convinced that the erasure of suffering and the path to a brighter future could only take place amongst family, Goldberg made it his mission to adopt Mendel. Social welfare and childcare norms of the era agreed with Goldberg: Mendel’s physical and psychological rehabilitation was more likely to occur within a loving adoptive home than inside an institution. When the ship carrying Mendel docked at Hudson River Pier, New York City, in April 1948, Goldberg stood eagerly awaiting his charge’s arrival. “He’ll make a good companion for my five-year-old son, Gerald,” he thought, and introduced himself as Mendel’s father. With that welcome, Mendel Gwiazda ventured forward into a new life as Melvin Goldberg.

The story of Mendel Gwiazda/Melvin Goldberg was brought by Dr. Adara Goldberg (no relation) during a workshop held in July by the Diana and Eli Zborowski Center for the Study of the Aftermath of the Holocaust at Yad Vashem’s International Institute for Holocaust Research. The 14 participating researchers, hailing from the US, Canada, Israel and Germany, met as part of a research project that is examining the fate and experience of child survivors in the immediate postwar period.

“The project seeks to examine different aspects of the post-liberation ordeal,” explains Center Director Dr. Sharon Kangisser Cohen. “These aspects look at the demography of



■ Original newspaper clipping from the *Toronto Daily Star* featuring the story of orphaned Holocaust survivor Mendel Gwiazda

child survivors of the Holocaust, mechanisms of finding children and reconnecting them to larger organizations and agencies, their psychological and physical rehabilitation, and the process of rebuilding their lives through immigration and adoption. In addition, the research is not specific to one geographical location but attempts to trace the experience of children who have come from Europe and resettled in different communities.”

Research presented at the recent workshop was varied, and included: education, welfare and healthcare services for Jewish children in DP camps; the search and return of children hidden in convents in France; the liberation of child slave laborers; the adoption of child survivors both in the United States and in Canada; strategies for the “rejudaization” of children in postwar France; and how child survivors mediated their postwar memories. Discussion panels were led by Prof. Dalia Ofer, an expert on the social history of the Holocaust, who is co-editing a publication on the topic,

including articles produced in the framework of the project, due out in 2019.

Goldberg’s research addressed issues of displacement, national interests, and child welfare and protection after the Holocaust. In her presentation, she explained that despite the WOP (War Orphans Project)’s initial mandate, the advanced ages of most of the child survivors reaching Canada led to a huge shift in the resettlement project. Adoption, the promise made to European relatives and guardians, not to mention the orphans, was no longer the stated goal. Compounding factors caused placements overwhelmingly to collapse before reaching the one-year mark: no centralized Canadian adoption policy; inadequate supervision and support for newly-formed families during the adjustment period; and a lack of mental health support for the

### The project looks at the circumstances in which child survivors found themselves after the war and their attempts at rebuilding their lives

orphans. In the end, fewer than 100 adoptions took place; of these, many cases occurred in kinship homes. Most of the remaining 900-plus youth were instead placed in foster homes and paid boarding homes. Some established relationships with their host families; many more did not.

“These facts allowed for a revised focus and line of questioning,” explained Goldberg. “How did being enveloped (or not) in a new family impact child survivors’ sense of belonging? How did they understand and experience the adoption process? And, what did it mean to be a child survivor and adoptee in a non-survivor home? I hope that my research sheds light on the experience of child survivors in the aftermath of the Holocaust, and enhances our understanding more broadly about the challenges of caring for and rehabilitating young survivors of trauma.”

# Holocaust Research and the International Workshop Examines the Concept of Space during the Shoah

■ How did a Jewish inmate in a ghetto or concentration camp, or a Jew in hiding, deal with the limited space he or she was forced to live in? In which way did antisemitic legislation create spaces that separated Jews from the rest of society, even without physical boundaries? And 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 recently discussed by an array of scholars from different countries and disciplines, including history, sociology, art, literature and music, at the summer workshop held by the International Institute for Holocaust Research entitled “Holocaust Research and the Spatial Turn.”

Over the past twenty-five years, the issue of space has won increasingly widespread attention in historical research, as well as social and cultural studies. Researchers are no longer inclined to view a space as a transparent and empty neutral capacity in which history takes place. Instead, they have begun to deal with questions pertaining to the design of different spaces – and the way in which people perceive, produce and experience them.

In his opening lecture, Dr. Yaakov Borut from Yad Vashem’s Archives Division discussed the friction between “space” and “place” in the world of German Jewry during the Holocaust. Using a range of sources, including the extant Jewish press, he described discrepancies in relation to the use of different “Jewish” spaces, such as synagogues, cemeteries and ritual baths.

“A space is defined by the activities taking place within it,” stated Dr. Borut. “People who come into such a space accept the rules that govern the activities within its boundaries. And if they breach them they are expelled from the space – for example pubs, where people are ejected if they get drunk and misbehave.” In Nazi Germany, Jews did not live under normal circumstances. One important aspect of their daily life was that they were increasingly forced into “Jewish spaces,” i.e., spaces reserved specifically for Jews, and the amount of space available for Jews continually decreased. These circumstances led to discrepancies between spaces and the activities taking place within their boundaries, which in turn led to conflicts.

One case concerned the use of synagogues for secular cultural events. “The activities of the synagogue are governed by Jewish law – and holding secular events, such as artistic performances, concerts and lectures, within this space were opposed by Orthodox leadership,” explained Dr. Borut. However, the circumstances proved stronger, and synagogues – not only Liberal, but also the Orthodox ones – were increasingly used for such activities. A repeated expression of the times was that the synagogue

Researchers are no longer inclined to view a space as a transparent and empty neutral capacity in which history takes place

had become again not merely a house of prayers but a house of assembly – a *Beit Kneset* [the Hebrew term for synagogue]. Consequently one of Germany’s leading rabbis, Rabbi Yechiel Yaakov Weinberg, ruled: “It is a *mitzvah* [positive commandment] to strengthen the hearts of the Jewish people at this time,” and allowed lectures, but not concerts, to be held in synagogues, albeit under strict conditions and limitations: the lecture was to be preceded by the recitation of verses from the Psalms or by a *Dvar Torah* [religious discourse], no one was permitted to speak in the synagogue without the approval of the local rabbi, no discussion was to take place after the lectures (for fear of heretical opinions being expressed in the synagogue), men and women were not to mingle, and so on.

Other lectures in the workshop covered different aspects related to the topic. In her lecture, Judith Siepmann, a young German historian associated with a research project at the Open University of Israel, chose to focus on “Objects, Space, and Memory: The Meaning of Things and the Perception of ‘Home’ by German Jews under the Nazi Regime.” Bringing a number of vignettes recounting the difficulties of German Jews in choosing which objects to take with them as they were forced out of their homes and into smaller and more foreign spaces, Siepmann illustrated the deeply emotional process this entailed.



■ Moritz Müller (1887-1944), *Rooftops in the Ghetto, Theresienstadt Ghetto, 1944*, Watercolor on paper. Yad Vashem Art Collection



■ A letter from August 14, 1939, from Berlin resident Kati Moses to her son Gerd in Eretz Israel. In the letter, Moses describes the room she just moved into in a shared apartment, focusing on the way she decorated it and arranged her possessions. Yad Vashem Archives

“Being confronted with such a reconsideration of one’s belongings was a common theme among German Jews under the Nazi regime – and not only in the moment of emigration,” said Siepmann. “Growing economic and social restrictions led to many being forced to take in subtenants, or leave their homes, move into often much smaller places and – if emigration failed – eventually live in cramped *Judenhäuser* [places allotted to Jews for living] until their deportation. This almost always involved radically downsizing the household.”

One example brought by Siepmann was that of Hans and Marie Schmoller, an elderly middle-class couple living in Berlin. At the beginning of 1939, the Schmolles took their relatives, Anna and Hanni Behrend, into the apartment, which challenged them to rearrange their space. One of the changes included artificially creating a

# Spatial Turn



Leah Goldstein

room by splitting a larger one into two using curtains and cupboards. It was referred to as “Neutralia” – neutral ground. This space took over the function of a living room, where all the family members could gather and socialize, even though the size of the apartment was clearly limited and everyone had to give up personal space for it. “By this, the Schmollers preserved a certain kind of bourgeois division of space,” explained Siepman. “Not only the decoration, but also the activities in ‘Neutralia’ signified its ‘public’ quality as a salon or living room. Here chamber music events also took place, which Hans Schmoller began organizing from 1940. Interestingly, ‘Neutralia’ kept existing until the very end, the deportation of the Schmollers in 1942, even though the space shrank even further when the apartment was turned into a *Judenhaus* and subtenants, an entire family, had to be taken in.

“By arranging the objects in a specific way in order to construct space and preserve a middle-class sense of home, the objects help establish a “place of refuge” and a sense of permanence linking past, present and future – which becomes especially crucial in this moment of exclusion and isolation.”



■ *The interior of the synagogue on Oranienburgerstrasse, Berlin, Germany, before the war. Yad Vashem Photo Archive*

Another angle presented at the workshop was the visual representations of space. Director of Yad Vashem’s Art Department, Museums Division Eliad Moreh-Rosenberg explained how two Jewish artists, Moritz Müller and Pavel Fantl, who were interned in the Theresienstadt ghetto, responded to their new environment through art.

Based on works from the Yad Vashem Art Collection, Moreh-Rosenberg analyzed the artists’ representation of their “outer” space, as well as their daily and intimate interiors. “In the depiction of street corners and barracks in Theresienstadt, for example, Müller used space to convey a sense of claustrophobia and confinement,” described Moreh-Rosenberg. “Whether the perspective is from the side or more symmetric, the artwork is closed, framed, packed and crowded, even when people are almost absent. The only open space lies above in the piece of sky, which is always present. Thus the feeling of escape happens above the roofs, beyond the limits of Theresienstadt, i.e., symbolically, beyond the reality of the ghetto, in a spiritual way or through imagination.

“Fantl, a physician by profession who directed the hospital for quarantined typhus patients in Theresienstadt, used humor and satire to denounce the conditions of incarceration and

**Bringing a number of vignettes recounting the difficulties of German Jews in choosing which objects to take with them as they were forced out of their homes and into smaller and more foreign spaces, Siepman illustrated the deeply emotional process this entailed**

the lack of hope in the ghetto. His drawings repeatedly feature a barrier to the unreachable outside world, implying that the only way out is death. In his works dedicated to his son Tomas, he allows himself to be more optimistic, and uses fantasy to imagine their liberation and the beautiful world that they will hopefully find beyond the barrier of the ghetto. Neither Fantl or his family, nor Moritz Müller, had the chance to survive and experience once more the space of freedom. They were all sent to Auschwitz and ultimately murdered.”

*The workshop was held through the generous support of the Gutwirth Family Fund.*

## Research Fellow: Natalie Belsky

■ **Natalie Belsky (University of Minnesota, Duluth) is a historian of the Soviet Union, Soviet Jewry and the Holocaust in the territories of the former USSR. Her current research project focuses on**



population displacement in the Soviet Union during the war, which led to the evacuation and flight of millions of people from the western territories of the USSR (Ukraine, Belarus, the Baltic republics, etc.), soon to be occupied by the Nazi forces, to Soviet Siberia and Central Asia following the German invasion of 1941.

“Among the evacuees and refugees who found themselves displaced to the Soviet interior during the years of the war, there was a significant number of individuals of Jewish ethnicity, both from the territories of interwar Poland and the USSR,” Belsky explains. “My project specifically focuses on evacuees’ and refugees’ experiences on the home front, including their encounters and contacts with local residents.

“As a fellow at Yad Vashem, I had an incredible opportunity to work with the memoirs, correspondence and diaries of survivors who spent a significant amount of time in the Soviet Union during the war. These materials provide a great deal of insight into these individuals’ daily lives, concerns and tribulations, as well as their perceptions of the world around them. In particular, I worked with the fascinating diary of Yefim Talanker, a 15-year-old youth who was evacuated with his mother and brother from the city of Khar’kov in the fall of 1941 to Molotov (current-day Perm’ in Western Russia) near the Ural Mountains. In his extensive diary, Talanker writes about the progress of the war, his family’s tribulations as his brother is mobilized into the army, his experiences in Perm’ and his eventual return home. Through the lens of this source, we are able to see Talanker coming to terms with his own identity, as a Soviet citizen, a former resident of Ukraine, and a Jew, in light of his new environment.

“My time as a fellow at Yad Vashem has certainly proved invaluable in helping me gain a more nuanced understanding of the experiences of Holocaust survivors who found themselves on the Soviet home front during the war.”

*Natalie Belsky received her fellowship at Yad Vashem through the Baron Friedrich Carl von Oppenheim Chair for the Study of Racism, Antisemitism and the Holocaust founded by the von Oppenheim Family of Cologne.*

# A Piano from a Destroyed World



Michael Tal and Simmy Allen

■ During the planning of Yad Vashem's Holocaust History Museum, a space was set aside to replicate a living room characterizing the life and culture of a typical prewar Jewish German family, including furniture, a bookcase and a piano. The curators were unable to locate a piano from Germany in the Yad Vashem Artifacts Collection, so a different piano was placed in the room. This was rectified just a few months ago, when the Margulies' family, who escaped from Germany in March 1939, donated their beloved piano. This piano now completes the display depicting the life of many Jews in Germany before the war, and stands as testimony to a unique story of rescue.

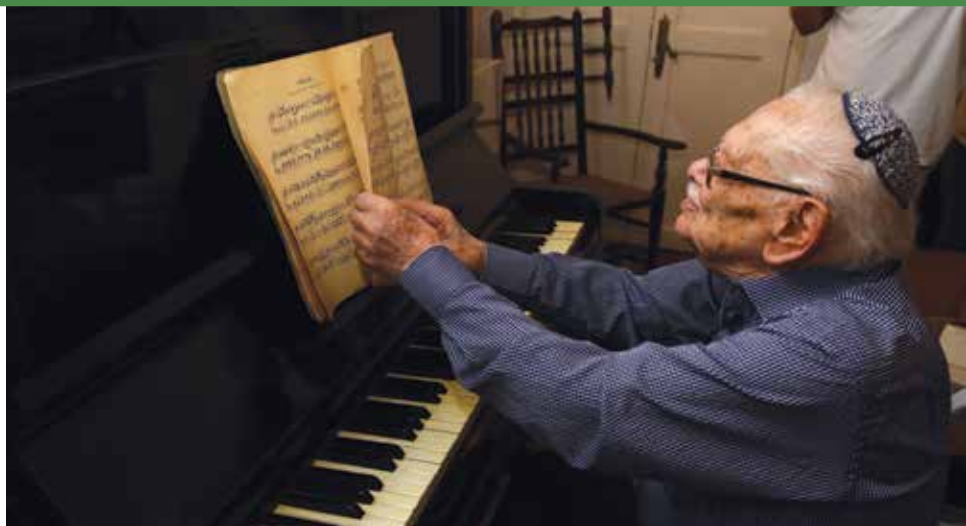
Menashe Margulies and Bracha-Leah (Rachel) Markel, immigrants from Poland,



■ Adolf (Abraham) and Szalay (Shlomo) Margulies before the war. Yad Vashem Photo Archive

had two sons: Adolf (Abraham, b. 1920), and Szalay (Shlomo, b. 1923). In Germany, the family operated a textiles trading business, much of which was based in Holland. As such, Menashe received a visa that allowed him free entry to Holland. With the passage of the Nuremberg Laws and the expansion of the decrees against Jews however, the family's economic situation began to deteriorate. The boys were sent to study outside of Chemnitz: Abraham in Hamburg, and Shlomo in Leipzig.

In October 1938, all "non-German" Jews were expelled from Germany. Menashe and Bracha-Leah managed to escape deportation, and went into hiding in the home of an acquaintance. Abraham was caught and



■ Holocaust survivor Shlomo Margaliot sitting at the piano from his home in Chemnitz, Germany, now on permanent display in Yad Vashem's Holocaust History Museum

deported to Krakow. Fearing for his family's safety, Shlomo returned to Chemnitz, where he found his parents in hiding.

Understanding that they needed to leave Germany, Menashe traveled to Holland, where he was granted visas to *Eretz Israel* for the whole family. Bracha-Leah immediately

began packing their belongings, including their beloved family piano, into a shipping container. Meanwhile, 15-year-old Shlomo traveled to Berlin in order to purchase passage for the family by ship. However, all the spots were already taken. A friend advised him to try to buy airline tickets with Lufthansa Airlines. Shlomo paid 2,544 RM for roundtrip tickets that would take his family to their ancient homeland. "Who flew in 1939? And to [British Mandatory] Palestine of all places! Astonishingly, I paid and got a receipt."

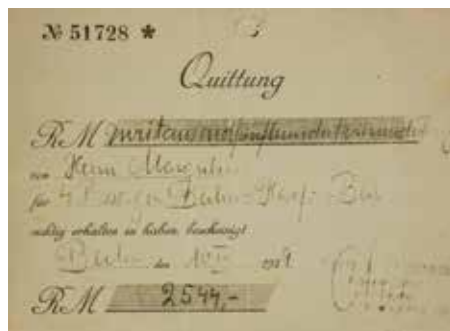
Against all odds, Bracha-Leah was able to secure Abraham's return to Berlin, and the family departed Germany in March 1939. After three days, including stops in Germany, Italy and Greece, they finally landed in Haifa. Their belongings arrived shortly afterwards. Years later, Lufthansa reimbursed the family for part of the cost of their unused return flight back to Germany.

In early July 2017, four generations of the Margaliot (Margulies) family journeyed from across Israel to see their family's piano now on permanent display in the Holocaust History Museum. "This is the perfect place to keep our treasured piano," said David "Dubi" Margaliot, Shlomo's son. "It is evidence of the life that once was, and tells the story of my family's incredible escape from Nazi Germany just months before the outbreak of WWII."

Michael Tal is Director of the Artifacts Department, Museums Division.

**"Who flew in 1939? And to [British Mandatory] Palestine of all places! Astonishingly, I paid and got a receipt."**

Shlomo Margaliot



■ Receipt of the airline tickets Shlomo Margulies purchased to bring his family to Eretz Israel just a few months before the outbreak of WWII

## New Display Cabinet in Visitors Center Features Holocaust-Related Artifacts

■ At the end of June, a new display cabinet was unveiled at Yad Vashem, which will be used for rotating exhibits of personal items from the Holocaust era currently housed in Yad Vashem.

The first item to be displayed in the cabinet, which is situated in the Visitors Center at the entrance to Yad Vashem, is a beautiful shirt embroidered with silver thread that was made by the artist Sol Levi. Shortly before their deportation from Salonika, Greece to Auschwitz



■ Survivor Marcel Levi (center) at the unveiling of the new display cabinet in Yad Vashem's Visitors Center, exhibiting the shirt that was embroidered by his mother, Sol

in April 1943, Levi deposited her dearest possessions with neighbors for safekeeping – including the shirt.

The entire Levi family was murdered at the infamous death camp, except for the teenaged

Shortly before their deportation to Auschwitz, Sol Levi deposited her dearest possessions with neighbors for safekeeping – including the embroidered shirt

Marcel, who was sent to a forced labor camp. In early 1945, the prisoners, including Marcel, were led on a death march from the labor camp to an area close to the Dachau concentration camp in Germany, where they were liberated by the US Army. In 1948, Marcel immigrated to Eretz Israel, where he fought in the War of Independence.

Marcel and members of his family were present for the unveiling of the display cabinet,



■ The beautiful shirt hand-embroidered by Sol Levi of Salonika, Greece before the war

which took place in the presence of Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev and Chairman of the Israeli Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee Avi Dichter.

“Today I close a circle,” said the Holocaust survivor at the unveiling. “This is the only physical vestige I have of my family. Here, at Yad Vashem, it will serve as testimony of the horrors of the Shoah for the next generations.”

## Auschwitz Museum Traveling Mega-Exhibition to Include Holocaust-Era Artifacts on Loan from Yad Vashem

■ Since 1947, millions of visitors from around the world have traveled to Poland to visit the authentic site and remains of Auschwitz-Birkenau, and learn about the history of the infamous Nazi concentration and death camp.

This November, a traveling mega-exhibition dedicated to the camp and its historical meaning will be launched in Madrid, Spain. The exhibition, created by the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, will visit 14 cities around the world, seven in Europe and seven in North America, bringing its history closer to millions of people.

The exhibition will display more than 600 original artifacts, most of them belonging to the Auschwitz Museum collections, including an original barrack from Auschwitz III-Monowitz. In addition, the exhibition also includes items loaned from various international institutions, as well as from survivors and private collections.

Yad Vashem carefully selected five original artifacts to lend the exhibition, each of which gives a different perspective on the attempt

by Jewish prisoners to cling to life amongst so much death and despair. From a pocket-knife and a slip exchanged for a precious daily bread ration to ease the daily lives of two young female prisoners, to a prayer shawl and bag sent by a victim to his daughters shortly before his deportation to Auschwitz, the items on loan from the World Holocaust Remembrance Center all carry deeply personal and moving stories of the individuals behind them, symbolizing the daily struggle for survival in the intolerable conditions of the camp while maintaining the humanity and identity of the victims.



“Yad Vashem’s Artifacts Collection, which numbers more than 30,000 pieces, is a wide mosaic of personal memories,” explains Vivian Uriah, Director of Yad Vashem’s Museums Division. “The artifacts are tied to the fate of the individuals, the families and the communities during the Holocaust, whose life stories are filled with moments of fear, despair and loss, but also with resourcefulness, compassion, hope, bravery and love. These artifacts give a platform to the story of the victims, illustrate their humanity, identity and names, and present the mute testimony we are able to pass on to the consciousness of future generations.”

# "The Woman with the Big Heart"

Naama Galil and Limor Bar Ilan

■ **"The woman with the big heart" is how Hava Warburg was known to many people in her hometown of Hamburg.** Born in 1912, she was the second of three daughters to an affluent family. Although her parents were non-practicing Jews and well-integrated in German society, they were connected to tradition and were meticulous contributors to the community. The family lived in a spacious house and also owned a vacation home outside the city.

Hava's father Fritz was a banker, and her mother Anna was a kindergarten teacher – a career Hava also chose to follow. Hava stayed in close contact with her extended family: her father's parents, who also lived in Hamburg; and her mother's parents, who lived in Sweden and would come to visit every summer.

The Nazi Party's rise to power did not initially affect the Warburgs. Fritz believed that the troubles would pass, and dismissed his non-Jewish friends' recommendations to leave Germany. Yet later, during the process of Aryanization, the bank that the Warburgs owned was transferred to the sole hands of their German partner.

From 1933-1938, Hava established a daycare center in Hamburg for Jewish children whose families had fallen on hard times. A total of some 250 children passed through

Although Hava participated in rescuing and raising the children, most of her work was in the organizational sphere, and by June 1941 she had managed to secure immigration visas for many young boys and girls to Eretz Israel

the center, whose expenses were covered by Hava's parents. Arriving after school, the children would eat lunch, do homework and then play. To help enhance their knowledge, Hava studied more about Jewish history and culture with a religious instructor, and after meeting with emissaries from Eretz Israel, she began to be influenced by Zionism. One of

the emissaries was Naphtali Unger, who she eventually married.

Because of the anti-Jewish laws that prevailed in Germany at the time, the daycare staff could not take the children on field trips in the city. In order to let the children enjoy some outdoor recreation, Hava and her family organized summer camps outside Germany. The camps were funded by Hava's family and other donations, and they met three times in Denmark and once in the Netherlands. "For the children, this was a very big deal," Hava later recounted. "We were free there."



■ A list of Jewish children rescued by Hava Warburg in her own handwriting

In September 1938, Hava moved from Germany to Stockholm, Sweden. Her parents followed in May 1939, later joined by her younger sister, Charlotte. Ingrid, her older sister, had moved earlier to the United States. Hava herself had intended to spend a short while in Sweden, a waystation before immigrating to Eretz Israel, but after the Kristallnacht pogrom, she made a brave decision. In a letter that former daycare children sent to Hava for her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, they wrote, "As the situation of the Jews in Germany grew more and more perilous, Eva (Hava) Warburg courageously intervened.



■ Jewish refugee children in daycare in Sweden, under the supervision of Hava Warburg. Yad Vashem Photo Archive

After tough negotiations, she managed to get 500 Jewish children permission to leave Germany and placed them with Swedish families. Many of these children never saw their parents again. For many years, Eva Warburg remained a substitute mother in a foreign country."

Hava herself recalled how, together with the Jewish community in Sweden, she brought children from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia, and divided them up among Jewish families whenever possible, although some went to live in Christian homes. "Two groups of Youth Aliya came too... We set up facilities for these children. We rented a house, and the children worked for farmers who lived in the area. It was real Hachshara [agricultural training]... I was very involved. We had a smaller place for the religious children. We had a total of five homes for children who didn't have families who could take them in."

Although Hava participated in rescuing and raising the children, most of her work was in the organizational sphere, and by June 1941 she had managed to secure immigration visas for many young boys and girls to Eretz Israel. Hava was also involved in the rescue of more than 200 Jews from Denmark. She raised money in Sweden and helped buy a small fishing boat that sailed back and forth, transferring Jews fleeing Nazi-occupied Denmark to Sweden.

Throughout the war years, Hava maintained correspondence with her future husband, who had been serving in the Jewish Brigade since 1944. They were finally reunited in Israel a decade after having parted, and they married three months later. As a young mother, Hava continued her work in education and childcare in Israel. For years she stayed in contact with the children of the daycare center in Hamburg as well as with those she managed to bring to Sweden, some of them until the day she died.



# Registering Their Fate

## Researchers Piece Together What Happened to the Schoolgirls from Krakow

Sima Velkovich

When representatives of Yad Vashem's "Gathering the Fragments" project visited her at her home in Rehovot, Hava gave them photographs, documents and letters to be preserved by Yad Vashem for posterity. The items she gave included a list of names of the children who were transferred to Sweden that also documented the fate of their parents; letters and

For years she stayed in contact with the children of the daycare center in Hamburg as well as with those she managed to bring to Sweden, some of them until the day she died

drawings prepared by the children; photographs taken at the centers in Hamburg and in Sweden; and her own family photographs. Hava passed away in November 2016 at the age of 104.

"Thank you for the excellent documentation you prepared about our mother," wrote her children Gabi Unger and Dvora Pur in a recent email to Yad Vashem. "We have no doubt that she would have been so happy to see her story publicized, but sadly she passed away just a few days before this occurred. Your project will, on top of everything, become part of our family lore about our mother, her unique personality and her unusual life path."

Yad Vashem runs the "Gathering the Fragments" campaign in cooperation with the "Landmarks" Program at the Israel Ministry of Jerusalem and Heritage and "Yedioth Ahronoth," and with the support of the Israel Ministry of Education; Dora Zitno (Argentina); The Hamburg Foundation for the Advancement of Research and Culture (Germany); Friends of Yad Vashem in the Netherlands; and the Nash Family Foundation (USA).

So far, the "Gathering the Fragments" campaign has collected 233,000 original Holocaust-era items from 10,000 members of the public, including 134,000 documents, 90,000 photographs, 50,300 letters, 4,100 artifacts, 640 artworks and 180 films. For more information: [collect@yadvashem.org.il](http://collect@yadvashem.org.il); 972-2-6443888

Naama Galil is Project Coordinator in the Commemoration and Community Relations Division. Limor Bar Ilan was a researcher and content writer for the "Gathering the Fragments" Campaign.

■ Two years ago, Yad Vashem's Archives received a letter from Gabriela Olszowska, Principal of the Adam Mickiewicz Secondary School in Krakow. In her letter, Olszowska explained that she had recently discovered the school registry from 1939-1940. The registry listed personal information about 87 Jewish girls expelled from the school on 9 December 1939, three months after the Germans occupied the city. This school was set to celebrate its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017, and Olszowska wished to find information about the fate of these girls in order to commemorate them.

"Usually with a request like this to research so many names, I would suggest they send a researcher to Yad Vashem, but it was clear to me that a school cannot allocate such resources," said Lital Beer, Director of the Reference and Information Department in the Archives Division. "I was extremely moved by Ms. Olszowska's initiative to commemorate the Jewish girls and teach the young students about them, so I decided we would take on this endeavor."



■ The infant Rita Scherer before the war. Yad Vashem Hall of Names

Staff at the Reference and Information Department set about tracing the fate of the Krakow girls. Despite difficulties in tracing survivors who had changed their names after marriage or immigration, they managed to find information on 51 girls from the list. This documentation revealed that 21 of the girls were murdered during the Shoah, and 24 survived the Holocaust and left Poland. Some gave testimony to Yad Vashem or filled out



■ School register from the Adam Mickiewicz Secondary School in Krakow listing the 87 Jewish girls expelled from the school in December 1939

Pages of Testimony commemorating murdered family members. While some documentation pertaining to the other six was found, their fates remain unknown.

One of the girls whose fate they did manage to reveal was Rita Scherer. Scherer was born in 1932 in Krakow to parents Luska and Henryk. She was a first-grade pupil when the war started. In 1943, she was sent to the Belzec extermination camp and murdered there. Her brother Michael Scherer survived, and filled out a Page of Testimony in memory of Rita in 1988, attaching a beautiful photo of the young girl. Another former student, Halina Krumholz, was sent to the concentration camps of Plaszow and Auschwitz. After liberation, she moved to a Displaced Persons camp, and later immigrated to Israel.

On 23 May 2017, a solemn unveiling ceremony took place at the Adam Mickiewicz Secondary School, revealing a memorial plaque to all the Jewish girls on the register expelled during the war. Taking part were local clergy, school students and Yad Vashem representative Zvia Fried. "When I read the names of the 87 girls, after each name, a student called out "jestem" ("I am)," said Principal Olszowska. "This will ensure that the young students never forget the Jewish girls from their hometown, and their terrible fates during the war."

The author is Reference Archivist in the Reference and Information Department, Archives Division. She and Zvia Fried of the Hall of Names conducted the research on the schoolgirls from Krakow.

# “Many Times I Cried Behind the Camera”

## Filming Holocaust Survivors’ Testimony in Their Homes

Orit Noiman

■ “For many years, I ignored anything that had to do with the Holocaust, even though I’m a Holocaust survivor. 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. They were very polite, and it was evident that they had prepared well for the interview. They knew the right questions to ask, the right time to ask them, and how to conduct the interview appropriately and calmly. It was a pleasure to have their company.”

So recalled Holocaust survivor Israel Shaked after Merav Shani of Yad Vashem’s Testimonies Section interviewed him in May 2017, together with cameraman Ran Adam.

Over the past decade, Yad Vashem has been expediting its work to record the testimony of survivors in Israel by offering to come to their homes. “As the years go by, we’ve witnessed a change in the importance for Holocaust survivors to give testimony,” said Yad Vashem Archives Director and Fred Hillman Chair for Holocaust Documentation Dr. Haim Gertner. “If to date many of them dealt with the trauma in silence, nowadays the younger generation’s wish to learn more and share their families’ histories on social media encourages survivors to speak up. The general public isn’t always aware that Yad Vashem has skilled and professional teams who record testimony from survivors, and that’s one of our missions in the near future: raising the public’s awareness, and recording more testimony from Holocaust survivors.”

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 and that their acquaintances passed on to them. The interviewer’s job is to find the ways to spur personal memories, to turn the fragments of memories into concrete information.

“These people were babies or infants during the war,” explains Sigal Holzmann, who has been conducting interviews for 17 years. “Some of them



■ Brothers Eli (left) and Dan Steiner, Holocaust survivors from Zagreb, Yugoslavia (today Croatia), being interviewed by Nava Gibori and filmed by Yifat Barkan in Dan’s home in Haifa, Israel, August 2017

barely know anything about their past, or have fragments of information and memories. Some of them never felt they were Holocaust survivors, and preferred to stay away from the topic their whole lives, right up to the time of the interview. However, with the aid of the relevant historical knowledge, together we try to build a coherent and sequential story. It’s a very emotional process, and there’s not a dry eye in the house when it’s over.”

Someone else is present during the testimony, but goes unnoticed, although their job is very significant. Quietly and professionally, the cameramen of the Testimonies Section turn the survivors’ homes into film studios. They set up

**“I decided to convince my mother to talk to you... it’s important to pass the history of her lost and cruel youth on to our grandson and her great-grandchildren.”**

Ariella Angel

the room and angle the lights to create a clear area with no distractions. “There’s no curtain to separate the cameraman from the survivor when you’re filming in their home,” explains Filming Coordinator Mickey Zilberstein. “The cameraman sits behind the interviewer, across from the survivor, and makes unbroken eye contact. This requires heightened alertness from the cameraman and ensures that he pays attention

to the testimony... There were many times when I cried behind the camera. I go on the journey with the survivors; I go through the process through the lens with each and every one of them, and dive hand-in-hand into their memories.”

Immediately after recording the testimony, the cameramen produce a copy for the survivors and their families. In many cases, members of the younger generation watch the copy of the testimony right away, and poignantly thank the interviewer team.

“Thank you so much for agreeing to my request to interview my mother, after so many years of her refusing to talk,” wrote Ariella Angel, daughter of Ita Heide, to interviewer Ronit Wilder and cameraman Daniel Daniel. “Every time we asked her, she insisted it wasn’t a ‘story’ and that nobody could understand what she went through. I decided not to give up and convince my mother to talk to you, because you’re the experts on the subject, and it’s important to pass the history of her lost and cruel youth on to our grandson and her great-grandchildren, who long to hear it all.”

*The Yad Vashem Archives contain over 129,000 testimonies in video, audio and written formats. Yad Vashem records over 1,000 video testimonies annually. To schedule a time to give testimony in Israel, please call 02-644-3888.*

*Yad Vashem’s testimony collection efforts are supported by: Jack and Marilyn Pechter; Hudson Bay Capital; Vladimir Zemtsov, the Philip Chosky Trust; the Circle of Service Foundation; the Nash Family Foundation; Samson Charity Foundation, based in Switzerland; Friends of Yad Vashem in Austria; Society of Friends of Yad Vashem in Liechtenstein; Swiss Friends of Yad Vashem; and Hamburger Stiftung zur Förderung von Wissenschaft und Kultur.*

*The author is Head of the Collection and Registration Section, Archives Division.*

# Names Collection from Every Possible Source

Zvi Bernhardt and Sara Berkowitz

■ **The Erlau Ledger – a list of names of Holocaust victims from the town of Erlau in Hungary written by the town’s chevra kadisha (burial society) in 1948-1949 – was recently put up for auction.** Avner Yonai, who has helped collect names for Yad Vashem’s Shoah Victims’ Names Recovery Project in the past, realized that this was an original source containing within its pages the names of whole families from Erlau murdered during the Holocaust. He approached the auction house, who in turn turned to the holder of the ledger. The result of this action was that a scanned copy of the ledger was transferred to Yad Vashem, and some 300 names of Holocaust victims from Erlau were added to its records.

Since its establishment, Yad Vashem has set out to recover the names and identities of the six million Jewish men, women and children murdered in the Holocaust, and to gather them into one collective database so that any person anywhere in the world may access these names. To date, the Central Database for Shoah Victims’ Names comprises some 4,700,000 names, about half of which were gleaned from Pages of Testimony. Unique to Yad Vashem, these Pages are special forms filled out by a relative or former acquaintance to commemorate a victim he or she knew, and stored in the Hall of Names at Yad Vashem for eternal safekeeping. Yad Vashem receives over 1,000 new Pages of Testimony every month.

In addition to Pages of Testimony, many more names of Shoah victims have been gleaned from a variety of sources. These include archival sources, such as deportations lists, community registers and personal diaries and letters – in fact, any material, like the Erlau Ledger, containing personal information on the victims. Various venues in which Jews commemorated after the war the names of those murdered are also a reliable source of information. Among the most central of these sources are the *Yizkor* books published by communities to commemorate their town or city’s martyrs. Yad Vashem has gathered over 650,000 names from these books in its Names Database, and hopes to add tens of thousands more in the coming year.

Another rich source of information on Shoah victims is found within religious commemorative efforts, including names inscribed on plaques or Judaica in synagogues or mentioned in introductions to holy books published after the Holocaust period. Dozens of volunteers and dedicated staff working in Yad Vashem’s Names Recovery Project have collected hundreds of thousands of names from these sources over the past decade. Together with new names, some of these sources have provided additional important information, helping to piece together the details of the victims’ identities.

Finally, Yad Vashem continues to cooperate with other institutions – such as memorial sites located at former persecution venues or



■ “Tree of Remembrance” at the Netiv Aryeh Yeshiva, Jerusalem

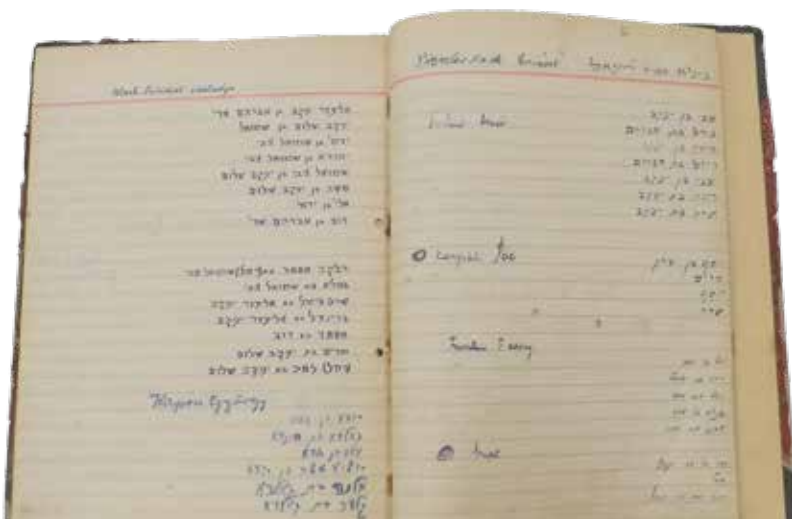
local initiatives to memorialize those who were murdered or deported from a particular town – for instance, the initiatives in the towns of Zlate Moravce in Slovakia and the private initiative of Aaron Leshem from Israel in bringing a copy of the original list of the names and details of the inhabitants of the town of Minsk Mazoweicko just before the ghetto’s liquidation in 1942.

“While the work of gathering and indexing the names can be tedious and repetitive at times, what really gives us motivation to continue is observing how important discovering information about their families is to those who use our Database,” says Dr. Alexander Avram, Director of the Hall of Names at Yad Vashem. “Knowing that tens of thousands of people are using and benefiting from our online database, discovering the fate of their loved ones and filling in gaps in their family trees and histories, is what spurs us on to find the missing names.”

*The Shoah Victims’ Names Recovery Project is generously supported by Dana and Yossie Hollander. Yad Vashem’s names collection efforts are also supported by: Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, France; the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany; Swiss Banks Settlement; Genesis Philanthropy Group; the Noaber Foundation; the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism; the Nadav Foundation; Swiss Friends of Yad Vashem; the Zanker Foundation, the Maror Foundation; Friends of Yad Vashem in the Netherlands; and Friends of Yad Vashem in Austria.*

*For more information on filling out Pages of Testimony or donating other sources containing names of Holocaust victims, please contact [names.proj@yadvashem.org.il](mailto:names.proj@yadvashem.org.il)*

*Zvi Bernhardt is Deputy Director of the Hall of Names, and Sara Berkowitz is Manager of the Shoah Victims’ Names Recovery Project, Archives Division.*



■ Names of victims written by the Chevrah Kadisha (burial group) in the Erlau ledger

# Marking the New Year

## Online Exhibitions Highlight Holocaust-Era Jewish Holiday Artifacts

Maya Shaham and Dana Porath

■ **Judaism revolves around the observance and celebration of life cycle events and holidays.** During the course of the calendar year, Jews observe special days with the purpose of connecting to their heritage. Throughout history, however, surges in

antisemitism sometimes forced Jews to mark these occasions at great sacrifice and danger to themselves and their communities. Nevertheless, they often risked their lives in order to maintain their Jewish culture they cherished so dearly.

In the lead-up to the recent High Holidays, Yad Vashem uploaded special online exhibitions showcasing a range of items from its Artifacts Collection, which offer a glimpse into some of the ways that Jews marked the Holidays before, during and immediately after the Holocaust.

### The Call of a Shofar from the Depths of the Holocaust

■ **In 1943, Moshe (Ben-Dov) Winterter, from the Polish city of Piotrków, was an inmate in the German Nazi forced labor camp Skarzysko-Kamienna.** There he worked in a metal workshop of a local armaments factory. In anticipation of Rosh Hashanah, he crafted a shofar (pictured) from a ram's horn in order to usher in the Jewish New Year.

The idea of making a shofar was initiated by the Radoszyce Rabbi, Rabbi Yitzhak Finkler, who was also incarcerated in the camp. He yearned to fulfill the commandment of blowing the shofar for the New Year. Finding the horn of a ram, as required by Jewish law for the making of a shofar, was far from a simple task. A Polish guard was bribed and brought a horn to the camp, but it turned out to be the horn of an ox. Only in exchange for a further bribe did he bring a ram's horn. The Rabbi approached Winterter, whom he knew from Piotrków, and asked him to make the shofar. At first, Winterter refused. Preparing an item that was not an armament in the metal workshop, or even carrying something



considered contraband from the workshop to the barracks, carried with it a penalty of immediate death.

In spite of the danger, Winterter soon came around to the task, and on the eve of the holiday brought the shofar to the Rabbi. Word spread, and on the holiday eve, the inmates gathered for prayers and to hear the sounds of the shofar.

Moshe Winterter kept the shofar with him throughout his incarceration until he was transferred to the labor camp at Częstochowa. When he was taken from there to Buchenwald, the shofar remained in Częstochowa until the

In spite of the danger, Winterter soon came around to the task, and on the eve of the holiday brought the shofar to the Rabbi. Word spread, and on the holiday eve, the inmates gathered for prayers and to hear the sounds of the shofar

camp was liberated. At that time, the shofar was passed on to the local Jewish community and later taken to the United States. Winterter immigrated to Israel after the war. In 1977, he assisted in its transfer to Yad Vashem for eternal safekeeping.

### Sukkah Decorations from Before the Holocaust

■ **Naftali Stern discovered his creative talent early on in his life, making handcrafted items related to Jewish festivals.** His works adorned his family home in Satu Mare, northern Transylvania. In 1940, Satu Mare was occupied by the Hungarians. After the liquidation of the city's ghetto in 1944, Naftali Stern was sent to a forced labor camp. Several months later, he and his family was deported to Auschwitz. From there, Naftali was interned in Wolfsberg, where he wrote from memory the now-famous *Wolfsberg Machzor*, containing the Jewish High Holiday prayers. From Wolfsberg, Naftali was forced on a death march, which ended in

When he returned home, Naftali found the Sukkah decorations he had once made hidden in the attic

Bergen-Belsen, where he was liberated. Naftali was the only survivor of his family. When he returned home, he found Sukkah decorations he had once made, like the one pictured, hidden in the attic. Naftali Stern and his wife Friedl, a Holocaust survivor also from Satu Mare,

immigrated to Israel in 1950. They continued to use his handmade decorations in their new home in Israel.



Maya Shaham works in the Artifacts Department, Museums Division. Dana Porath is Director of the Internet Department, Communications Division.

## Victims of ISIS Persecution Visit Yad Vashem

■ Nadia Murad cut a diminutive figure as she sat in Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies at the end of July, telling her personal story of survival after being captured and tortured by ISIS. With quiet dignity, she recounted what happened to her and other fellow Yazidis, thousands of whom were slaughtered, buried in mass graves, captured, tortured, raped and sold into slavery by ISIS fighters. Today, the remaining Yazidis are dispersed across the globe, prevented from returning to their home regions that remain politically and militarily unstable.

The Yazdi guests arrived at the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem seeking direction in terms of documenting and commemorating their own ongoing tragedy

Murad, a recently appointed UN Goodwill Ambassador who has become the most widely recognized survivor of the Yazidi atrocities, was visiting Israel for the first time to raise awareness of the plight of her people. Brought to Israel as part of an IsraAID delegation, she and Haider Elias, President of the "Yazda" Organization, came to learn from Yad Vashem's expertise in commemorating the events and victims of the Jewish people's greatest tragedy – the Shoah.

With quiet dignity, she recounted what happened to her and other fellow Yazidis, thousands of whom were slaughtered, buried in mass graves, captured, tortured, raped and sold into slavery by ISIS fighters

Murad only learned about the Holocaust after escaping captivity and fleeing to Germany. On becoming familiar with Yad Vashem's unrivalled expertise in commemorating the largest genocide in history, she quickly understood the importance of visiting Israel and touring the Jewish people's memorial to the Shoah.

The Yazdi guests arrived at the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem seeking direction in terms of documenting and commemorating their own ongoing tragedy, as well as raising awareness of it around the world.

After touring the Holocaust History Museum, Yad Vashem experts presented various methods of preserving and disseminating testimony, including the International School's "Witnesses in Education" film series. Several copies of these unique testimony-teaching tools, translated into languages of countries in which Yazidi refugees are currently residing, were presented to the

guests. Staff members assured the visitors that there is much to be learned from Yad Vashem's resources in terms of passing history down through generations, and offered mentoring and support.

"It is extremely meaningful for us that you are here at Yad Vashem today, to listen to your story and extend our assistance," said Dr. Eyal Kaminka, Lily Safra Chair for Holocaust Education and Director of the International School for Holocaust Studies. "We will continue to help you in your quest to meaningfully commemorate your people's tragedy, and hope that your journey will lead to a better present – and a brighter future."



■ Yazidi survivor Nadia Morad in Yad Vashem's Hall of Names

Yad Vashem remains in contact with the Yazidi delegation, providing them with continuous counsel from its vast experience in documentation, testimony collection and commemoration efforts.

## Yad Vashem Desk Calendar 2017-18: Yearning for the Land of Israel

■ The ancient Zionist dream of returning to Eretz Israel has been kept alive throughout thousands of years of Jewish life in the Diaspora. On the eve of World War II, all across Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and the Americas, Zionist youth movements thrived, including *Kibbutzim* and *Hachsharot*, preparing and training Jews with the life skills needed to reacclimatize themselves to life in the faraway Land of Israel.

With the outbreak of WWII and the devastating persecution of Jews in areas under Nazi control and influence, their Zionist dreams of a bright future were abruptly put on hold. Nevertheless, even under the direst of

conditions, a large portion of the persecuted Jews continued to cling to their dreams of rebuilding their ancient homeland.

This year's Yad Vashem's calendar marks 70 years since the establishment of the State of Israel, and focuses on the longing and desire of the Jewish people to return to Zion, before, during and immediately following the Holocaust. A new temporary exhibition dedicated to this topic will open at Yad Vashem in April 2018.

*The Yad Vashem 2017-18 desk calendar was produced with the generous support of the student body of the Meyer Academy, Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, USA.*

*The calendar is available for purchase in the Yad Vashem Online Store.*



During June–September 2017, Yad Vashem conducted 223 guided tours for more than 3,000 official visitors from Israel and abroad. These guests included heads of state and local government, ambassadors, mayors, NGO officials, economists, environmentalists, religious leaders and personalities from the entertainment world. Following is a small selection of our honored guests over these four months:

■ **Prime Minister of India H.E. Mr. Narendra Damodardas Modi** toured Yad Vashem on 4 July, guided by Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev. Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (back, left) also participated in the tour. “As we deal with conflict, intolerance, hatred and terror in our time, Yad Vashem serves as a mirror to society around the world,” wrote Prime Minister Modi in the Yad Vashem Guest Book. “May we not forget the injustices of the past and its devastating toll on humanity, and in remembering the past may we empower our children to make compassionate, just and righteous choices for their future.”



■ **Ethiopian Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Hailemariam Desalgen** (center) toured Yad Vashem on 6 July, guided by Director of the Yad Vashem Libraries Dr. Robert Rozett (right).



■ During his visit to Yad Vashem on 24 July, **Serbian Defense Minister Aleksander Vulin** (center) took part in a memorial service in the Hall of Remembrance, the floor of which bears the names of notorious concentration and death camps during WWII.



■ During his tour on 29 August, **UN Secretary General António Guterres** (second from left), accompanied by Israel’s UN Ambassador Danny Yatom (second from right), met with Yad Vashem Director General Dorit Novak (left) and expert staff from the International School for Holocaust Studies. The International School’s Jane Jacobs Kimmelman (right) showed the Secretary General some designs from the “Keeping the Memory Alive” International Poster Competition, today supported by the Asper Foundation (see pp. 6-7). This joint venture between Yad Vashem, The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme and the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) is geared to serve as both an educational and commemorative activity. The winning posters are displayed around the world in various high-profile governmental, civic and educational settings.



■ On 11 June, **Prime Minister of Nauru H.E. Mr. Baron Waqa** visited Yad Vashem, and toured the Holocaust History Museum.



■ On 13 July, **President of the Romanian Chamber of Deputies Liviu Nicolae Dragnea** toured Yad Vashem.



■ **Prime Minister of Georgia H.E. Mr. Giorgi Kvirikashvili** toured Yad Vashem on 24 July, including the Yad Vashem Synagogue, in which dozens of original artifacts of rescued Judaica from destroyed communities in Europe are displayed. The Prime Minister was accompanied by Director of Yad Vashem’s Art Department, Museums Division Eliad Moreh-Rosenberg (left).



■ **Irish Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Simon Coveney** visited Yad Vashem on 11 July. Minister Coveney toured the Holocaust History Museum, participated in a memorial ceremony, and visited the Children’s Memorial – a unique memorial to the 1.5 million Jewish children murdered during the Holocaust. “This is the deepest and most horrifying scar in the body of mankind,” Minister Coveney wrote in the Yad Vashem Guest Book. “So many terrible lessons for the future, so much pain for so many connected to this shame.”



■ During her visit to Yad Vashem on 22 June, **American actor Marlee Matlin** (right) toured the Visual Center, the world’s largest repository of Holocaust-related films, accompanied by Visual Center Director Liat Benhabib (left). Matlin, who is of Russian-Jewish descent, expressed great interest in investigating her own family’s connection to the Holocaust.



## Mossad Research on the Pursuit of Nazi War Criminals Uploaded to the Yad Vashem Website

■ Since the end of WWII and the liberation of the camps in 1945, the issue of prosecuting Nazi war criminals and historical justice has elicited major public interest, and many stories have been linked to the topic over the years.

### The study details factors and circumstances that explain why each of the criminals went unpunished

The apprehension and trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem in the early 1960s raised the issue of the place and involvement of the State of Israel and its intelligence services in the effort to deal with Holocaust criminals. Yad Vashem's Archives recently unveiled to the public an extensive study on the topic written (in Hebrew) by the Mossad's history department. "The Pursuit of Nazi War Criminals" summarizes more than three decades of the organization's activities on this matter, relying on the classified documents that had been kept top secret in the Mossad's archives over the years.

A concise summary of the Mossad's efforts at pursuing Nazi war criminals, the study deals with the organizational structure of the various units that ran the intelligence-gathering operations, and prepared and carried out missions from 1959-1991. It also describes eight stories of surveillance and pursuit of different Nazi fugitives, above all Hitler's secretary Martin Bormann, one of the top members of the Nazi Party and the highest-

ranking Nazi fugitive whose fate is unknown. Besides Bormann, the research describes the pursuit of the Gestapo head Heinrich Müller; the Nazi physician Horst Schumann; Alois Brunner, one of Adolf Eichmann's aides; Walter Rauff, who was responsible for the production of the gas vans; Gestapo Head in Lyons Klaus Barbie; Franz Murer, who was responsible for the murder of the Jews of Vilna; and Ernest Lorch, who was in charge of the destruction of the Lublin Jewish community. The study details factors and circumstances that explain why each of the criminals went unpunished. The third part of the study is dedicated entirely to a

### The compilation was written and edited by Yossi Chen (Chinitz), a Mossad operative and Holocaust survivor who fled the ghetto as a teenager, survived in the forests, and was one of the immigrants aboard the SS Exodus

comprehensive summary of the uncompromising yet fruitless 30-year pursuit of Josef Mengele, who became one of the symbols of Nazi mass murder in Auschwitz.

The compilation was written and edited by Yossi Chen (Chinitz), a Mossad operative



and Holocaust survivor from Lakhva, Poland (now Belarus) who fled the ghetto as a teenager, survived in the forests, and was one of the immigrants aboard the SS *Exodus*. It was printed as

classified studies in 2007, and is now being revealed in full to the general public for the first time. They are accessible on the Yad Vashem website and to visitors in the Yad Vashem Archives and Libraries building.

"It's only natural that the Mossad's comprehensive and important study, prepared by a Holocaust survivor and based on archival documents, be preserved at Yad Vashem and placed at the disposal of researchers and the general public," said Yad Vashem Archives Director and Fred Hillman Chair for Holocaust Documentation Dr. Haim Gertner. "The collection of documentation in the Yad Vashem Archives, which numbers over 200 million pages, is a highly valuable source for finding information about Nazi criminals and serves as a basis for locating and prosecuting fugitives, which is why it also previously served the Mossad's investigators in their activities. In order to reveal this information to the general public, we have decided to upload the entire study to Yad Vashem's website."

## Director of 1945 Wins Avner Shalev Chairman's Award 2017 Mimi Ash

■ The 12<sup>th</sup> annual Avner Shalev Yad Vashem Chairman's Award 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



■ Yad Vashem Chairman's Award Winner Director Ferenc Török

destination with a trunk bearing 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. The film draws upon a variety of genres, replete with narrative and visual conventions reminiscent of *film noir*, as well as Hollywood Westerns.

The award jury praised *1945* as an "innovative mystery [that] unravels amid a landscape of cataclysm. Its stunning cinematic vision exposes the corrosive power

of antisemitism and collaboration during the Holocaust."

*1945*, which received an award at the prestigious Berlinale earlier this year, is Török's sixth feature film. His highly acclaimed cinematic debut was with *Moscow Nights* (2001), a coming-of-age drama set in Hungary in 1989 against the backdrop of the fall of the Eastern Bloc; *1945* continues his examination of his country's history at times of political transition. Plans to distribute *1945* in Israel are currently in the making.

The author is responsible for the Visual Center's Film Acquisitions and Research.

## Simone Veil (1927-2017)

■ **Yad Vashem mourns the passing of Simone Veil, former president of the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, a major supporter of Yad Vashem.** A survivor of Auschwitz, Simone lost both her parents and a brother during the Shoah. She often spoke about the war's darkest hours, yet never let the Holocaust define her. She was a loyal friend of Yad Vashem, devoted to the mission of transmitting the memory and meanings of the Shoah to future generations.

Simone rose from the ashes of the Holocaust to become the first female president of the European parliament in 1979. Her name is associated to this day with women's rights and equality, especially in pioneering the defense of women's reproductive rights. Becoming a moral authority for the West over the years, Simone warned the world against Holocaust denial and radical Islam in 2007 at the UN General Assembly. She was one of France's most

cherished personalities and a strong supporter of the Jewish State. From her mother, Simone learned Jewish values, "for which, throughout their long and tragic history, the Jews never stopped fighting: tolerance, respect for the rights of all, and solidarity." Both of her parents died during their deportations, leaving "these humanist values as their only legacy."

After withdrawing from political and public life, Simone continued to support Yad Vashem's remembrance and education efforts through collecting names of Shoah victims as well as commemorating French Righteous Among the Nations. One of her sons, Pierre-François Veil, continues her legacy as the President of the French Friends for Yad Vashem.



Simone died just two weeks before her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. She was laid to rest at the Paris Panthéon alongside her husband, Antoine, among esteemed French figures such as Victor Hugo, Marie Curie, Émile Zola, Voltaire and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

On 26 October, a ceremony was held at Yad Vashem honoring Simone Veil, and marking the conclusion of a decade-long project to gather the names of Holocaust Victims from Hungary. The project, funded by the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah and supported by Veil, succeeded in uncovering the names of 80 percent of all Hungarian Holocaust victims - making it one of Yad Vashem's most successful archival endeavors.

Yad Vashem extends its heartfelt condolences to Simone's family. May they be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

## 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.

## New Benefactors: Dr. Abraham (Axel) and Galia Stawski

■ **In recognition of their generous support of Yad Vashem and their recent donation of the Guardians and Trustees Terrace, Dr. Abraham (Axel) and Galia Stawski have joined the honored circle of Yad Vashem Benefactors.**

Axel's parents, Sara and Moniek Stawski z"l, were born in Poland, in Kock and Będzin respectively. Moniek was interned in several concentration camps and liberated from the Gross-Rosen concentration camp. Sara survived the war as a slave laborer in various German factories using false documents of a non-Jewish Polish woman. Sara and Moniek were lifelong supporters of Yad Vashem and the cause of Holocaust Remembrance.

Galia's mother Esther z"l was a first-generation Israeli whose parents immigrated to Israel from Lublin, Poland in the 1920s. During Israel's War of Independence, Esther served in the Haganah. Galia's father Yovel z"l was born in Petach Tikva, an 11<sup>th</sup>-generation Israeli, and was a member of the Irgun and a soldier in the British Army's Jewish Brigade during the final years of WWII. His experience of liberating the Mauthausen concentration camp shaped the rest of his life.

Axel serves on the Executive Committee of the American Society for Yad Vashem and has been a longstanding supporter of Yad Vashem.



Galia and Axel Stawski donated the Guardians and Trustees Terrace in memory of their parents, who all displayed a zest for life, with the memory of the past shaping their view of the

future. Fittingly, the Terrace was also dedicated to their children and succeeding generations to be able to live a free Jewish life.



# Friends Worldwide

## USA

■ On 14 June, the **American Society for Yad Vashem** hosted its annual “Salute to Hollywood” benefit gala together with the Jewish Life Foundation. The evening honored **Edita and Abraham Spiegel z”l** and their family, represented by their daughter **Rita Spiegel**; the feature film *Denial*; and world-renowned singer and famed KISS co-founder **Gene Simmons** and his mother, Holocaust survivor **Flora Klein**. American Society Chairman **Lenny Wilf** welcomed 700 distinguished and enthusiastic supporters of Yad Vashem.

Following video messages from Harvard Law Professor Emeritus **Alan Dershowitz** and Prof. **Deborah Lipstadt**, author of the book *History on Trial: My Day in Court With a Holocaust Denier* on which the feature film *Denial* was based, Executive Vice-President of Participant Media **Jonathan King** presented The Vanguard

Award to *Denial* producer **Gary Foster**. “We live in a world where facts mean nothing and false narratives are everywhere,” said King. “That is why we need places like Yad Vashem.”

Patrons of the Mount of Remembrance **Dr. Miriam and Sheldon Adelson**, long-time friends of the Spiegels, presented The Lifetime Achievement Award to Rita Spiegel on behalf of the entire Spiegel family for building the Children’s Memorial at Yad Vashem.

The Legacy Award was presented to Gene Simmons, who credited his mother for his drive, toughness and hopefulness: “Everything about my mother’s life has been about survival,” he said.

The success of this year’s dinner was an important building block in developing visibility and recognition of Yad Vashem’s permanent place within the Los Angeles Jewish community.

■ On 6 June, the American Society hosted its annual Spring Luncheon at the Jewish Museum in New York City. **Tova Friedman** (top), one of the youngest Jews to have survived Auschwitz, spoke about her experiences during the Holocaust. Director of the e-Learning Department of Yad Vashem’s International School for Holocaust Studies **Dr. Na’ama Shik** (bottom) spoke about the use of technology in telling the story of the Holocaust to future generations. The luncheon was co-chaired by **Danielle Karten, Abby Kaufthal, Jaci Paradis and Rachel Shnay**.



■ Left to right: **Nathan Sandler**, Gala Chair **Karen Sandler**, **Beth** and **Lenny Wilf**



■ Left to right: **Lenny Wilf**, **Gene Simmons**, **Rita Spiegel**, **Gary Foster**, American Society Executive Director **Ron Meier**



■ The American Society’s Young Leadership Associates (YLA) held their annual “Evening at Citi Field” on 19 July. Holocaust survivor **Marvin Zborowski** (left, with outgoing YLA Co-Chairs **Abbi Halpern** and **Berry Levine**), brother of American Society founder **Eli Zborowski z”l**, spoke about the importance of telling the story of the Holocaust to young people. Chaired by **Sam Gordon**, the event was made possible due to the generosity of American Society board members and Yad Vashem Pillars **Marilyn** and **Barry Rubenstein**.



■ Left to right: Director of the American Desk, International Relations Division **Michael Fisher**, International Relations Division Managing Director **Shaya Ben Yehuda**, **Helmut Biemann**, Yad Vashem Visionary **Yossie Hollander**



■ Left to right: **Gitta and Jack Nagel**, Dinner Honorary Co-Chairs **Elissa and Edward Czuker**



■ Left to right: Yad Vashem Visionaries **Fela Shapell** and **Rochelle Shapell Buchman**



■ Patrons of the Mount of Remembrance **Dr. Miriam** and **Sheldon Adelson**

# Friends Worldwide

■ On 29 May, **Amy Westphal** (left), Grant Program Director at the Snider Foundation, Yad Vashem Builders, took a behind-the-scenes tour of the campus with Director of the US Desk in Yad Vashem's International Relations Division **Michael Fisher** (right). The visit also included an in-depth discussion with senior staff of the International School for Holocaust Studies.



■ On 15 June, **David and Allison Blitzer**, along with many members of their family, marked the bar mitzvah of their son **Michael** with a Twinning Ceremony at Yad Vashem. Michael generously raised money for Yad Vashem in honor of his bar mitzvah.



■ **Daniel and Carolyn Rosen** visited Yad Vashem on 18 June to conduct a Twinning Ceremony to mark the bar mitzvah of their son **Zachary**. Participating in the event were family and friends, including Daniel's parents, **Phyllis and Jack Rosen**. Jack is a second-generation Holocaust survivor.



■ On 13 July, **Dr. Lee Rosen** and his wife **Rachel** visited Yad Vashem with their two sons. During their tour of the International School for Holocaust Studies, the Rosens met with Lily Safra Chair for Holocaust Education and Director of the International School for Holocaust Studies **Dr. Eyal Kaminka** as well as International Relations Division Managing Director **Shaya Ben Yehuda**.



■ **Melvin and Susan Plutsky** (right) brought their family for a visit to Yad Vashem on 25 June. After visiting the Holocaust History Museum, a special Twinning Ceremony to mark the bar mitzvah of their grandson **Jakob** (center) was held in the Museum of Holocaust Art. Jakob's proud parents, **Stephen** (third from right) and **Lauren Plutsky** (second from left), his grandmother and his sister took part in this special visit.



■ On 26 June, **Todd Morgan** (left) and his sister **Tammy** (second from left) visited Yad Vashem with their families for a tour of the Holocaust History Museum.



■ Yad Vashem Pillars **Jane and Mark Wilf** recently visited the Holocaust History Museum.



■ Yad Vashem Builders **Leon and Michaela Constantiner** visited Yad Vashem on 4 July. The Constantiners bought their children, **Joanna and Philippe**, to participate in a very special tree-planting ceremony.



■ On 6 July, **Sandy A. Klein** (left), Trustee of the Lynne Waxman Foundation, visited Yad Vashem together with **Brandon Klein** (center). After touring the Holocaust History Museum, the Kleins were given a behind-the-scenes tour of the Yad Vashem Archives by the Archives Division Deputy Director **Cynthia Wroclawski** (right).



■ Yad Vashem Builders **Andy and Jan Groveman** visited Yad Vashem on 9 July, together with Jan's parents, Yad Vashem Benefactors **Marilyn and Jack Belz**. The group met with Yad Vashem Chairman **Avner Shalev**, as well as **Shaya Ben Yehuda** and **Dr. Na'ama Shik**.



■ On 10 July, **Ken** (left) and **Sheryl Pressberg** (center) visited Yad Vashem. The Pressbergs met with **Shaya Ben Yehuda** and were accompanied by **Michael Fisher** for an in-depth tour of the Museum of Holocaust Art, after which they met with **Sheryl Ochayon** (right), Head of the multimedia "Echoes and Reflections" educational program at Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies, to learn more about the program.



■ During their visit to Yad Vashem on 11 July, **Gregg Hymowitz** (left) and his daughter **Cloe** were hosted by **Michael Fisher** (right). The Hymowitzes were in Israel for the 20<sup>th</sup> World Maccabiah Games, in which Cloe participated.



■ **Michael Fisher** (left) and **Shaya Ben Yehuda** (right) escorted Yad Vashem Pillar **Zygmunt "Zygi" Wilf** (center) on his visit to the Yad Vashem campus on 11 July. Zygi was given a behind-the-scenes tour of Yad Vashem's Artifacts Collection, hosted by Artifacts Department Director **Michael Tal**.



■ On 19 July, US Donor Affairs Liason **Debbie Efraim** (center) welcomed **Samantha Mann** (second from left), granddaughter of Yad Vashem Guardians **David and Esther Mann** of the Caslow Foundation. Samantha and three friends took a meaningful tour of the Holocaust History Museum and the temporary exhibit, "Children in the Holocaust: Stars Without a Heaven."



■ Yad Vashem Pillar **Ira Mitzner** (center, right) visited Yad Vashem on 15 August with two of his children, **Steven** and **Laura**. Ira's brother and sister-in-law, **Jacob** and **Marilyn Mitzner** (center, left) joined the visit, along with their son and daughter-in-law. After a tour of the Holocaust History Museum and the International School for Holocaust Studies, the group met with **Avner Shalev**.



■ On 16 August, **Matthew and Nikki Levinson** (center) visited Yad Vashem to mark the bar mitzvah of their twin sons, **Jacob** and **Max**, together with the boys' grandparents and sister. Following a tour of the Holocaust History Museum, the family held a special Twinning Ceremony in the Yad Vashem Synagogue.



■ Yad Vashem mourns the passing of its dear friend and American Society National Board member **Roman Kriegstein**. Born in Chrzanow, Poland, Roman, a survivor of the Holocaust, was an early supporter of the Valley of the Communities at Yad Vashem. Yad Vashem extends its heartfelt condolences to Roman's beloved wife Cecilia, his sons Arnold, Henry and Alan, and his entire family.



## ISRAEL

■ On 11 June, **Dr. Michael Hayden** (center) visited the temporary exhibition "Stars Without a Heaven: Children in the Holocaust" as well as the International School of Holocaust Studies. He also saw the future site of the Shoah Heritage Collections Center, accompanied by International Relations Division Managing Director **Shaya Ben Yehuda** (right) and Archives Director and Fred Hillman Chair for Holocaust Documentation **Dr. Haim Gertner** (left), which was followed by a meeting with Yad Vashem Chairman **Avner Shalev**.



# Friends Worldwide

## CANADA

■ Fifteen Canadian educators from various high schools and educational institutions were chosen to participate in the annual **Canadian Society for Yad Vashem** Holocaust Scholarship Program and attend the 19-day Summer Seminar for International Educators at Yad Vashem in July.



■ In June, **Hartley Hershenhorn** (left) and his friend **Nita** (center) visited Yad Vashem for the first time in 30 years. They toured the Holocaust History Museum and went behind the scenes in the Yad Vashem Archives with Managing Director of the International Relations Division **Shaya Ben Yehuda** (right).



## UK

■ On 6 August, **Nathan and Laura Helfgott** and family visited the Holocaust History Museum and the Children's Memorial.



## AUSTRALIA

■ Foundation Chair of the Jewish Holocaust Centre in Melbourne **Helen Mahemoff** (left) and her husband **Jeffrey Mahemoff AO** (center) toured the Holocaust History Museum and the exhibition "Stars Without a Heaven: Children in the Holocaust" on 25 June. The tour was followed by a behind-the-scenes visit of the Archives, led by Deputy Director of the Archives Division **Cynthia Wroclawski** (right) and a viewing of their family plaque on the Australian Wall of the Memorial Cave.



■ On 21 June, **Gary and Karyn Zamel** (left) were joined by friends **Bev and Josh Ehrlich** (right) on a tour of the Holocaust History Museum, Children's Memorial and the Museum of Holocaust Art.



■ **Ann and Rodney Smorgon** visited the Holocaust History Museum and Children's Memorial on 4 July, followed by a plaque unveiling on the Australian Wall of the Memorial Cave.



■ On 12 July, **Dr. Barry** (second from right) and **Geri Kras** (left), **Daniel Ross** (second from left) and **Jodie Kras** (right) toured Yad Vashem's Holocaust History Museum and Children's Memorial, followed by a viewing of their family plaque on the Australian Wall of the Memorial Cave.



■ On 2 July, **Harry Chojna and Marcia Griffin** (left), and **Tom and Lorelle Krulis** (second and third from right) took a behind-the-scenes-tour of the Yad Vashem Archives and visited the Holocaust Art Museum and the temporary exhibition "Stars Without a Heaven: Children in the Holocaust."



■ **Esther Fixler** (second from right) visited the Holocaust History Museum and Children's Memorial on 6 August with her son and daughter-in-law **Dov and Lani Fixler** (left), followed by a viewing of their family plaque on the Australian Wall of the Memorial Cave.



## GERMANY

■ Yad Vashem mourns the passing of Yad Vashem Benefactor and dear friend, **Rose Landschaft**.

Rose (Reizel) Landschaft (née Wiener), was born in Sosnowiec, Poland. Rose's father and one of her brothers were murdered during the Shoah, though the dates and places of their deaths remain unknown. Rose was imprisoned in Bergen-Belsen; she, her mother and her second brother survived the Holocaust. Following the war, Rose married Henry Landschaft z"l from Lodz, also a Holocaust survivor, who became a successful businessman.

The Landschaft family was deeply committed to Holocaust remembrance, recognizing in particular that education carries exceptional importance for the generations to come.

Rose Landschaft endowed a floor of the International Seminars Wing of Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies in memory of her husband and the Wiener and Landschaft families.

Yad Vashem extends its heartfelt condolences to Rose's nephew Tomasz Kalowski and the extended family.



## SWEDEN

■ Yad Vashem mourns the loss of Supporter **Georg Citrom**. Georg was born in Romania in 1931. He survived both Auschwitz-Birkenau and Buchenwald as a young boy, although his family and community were murdered during the Holocaust. Dignified, hardworking and humble, he labored his way from teenage refugee to successful businessman in his new home in Sweden. He married Elisabeth, also a Holocaust survivor, and raised their two children, Evelyn and Joel, who have settled in Israel and the United States, respectively. Yad Vashem extends its heartfelt condolences to his wife, children and grandchildren.



■ *Georg and Elisabeth Citrom in Yad Vashem's Hall of Remembrance, 2014*

## UKRAINE

■ **Anton Mikhalenko** visited Yad Vashem on 2 August together with his daughter, **Alexandra**, who was a summer volunteer at the Yad Vashem Archives.



## VENEZUELA

■ **Robert** and **Genia Croitorescu** (fifth and sixth from left) visited Yad Vashem on 17 July together with their family.



## MEXICO

■ **Cleret** (third from left) and **Moisés Tussie** (fifth from right) visited Yad Vashem on 21 July to mark the bar mitzvah of their son **Elias** (center). They were joined by members of their family as well Director of the Latin-America, Spain, Portugal and Miami Spanish-Speaking Desk of Yad Vashem's International Relations Division **Perla Hazan**. A plaque was unveiled in their honor in the Square of Hope.



■ **Sarah** (right) and **Rolando Uziel** (second from left) visited Yad Vashem on 6 July to unveil a plaque in their honor in the Garden of Contemplation. They were joined by their daughter **Ivette**, son-in-law **Alan** and grandson **Rolando**, as well as Yad Vashem Chairman **Avner Shalev** and **Perla Hazan**.



■ **Miriam** (second from right) and **Isaac Zonana** (second from left) visited Yad Vashem on 7 August to mark the bar mitzvah of their son, **Elias** (center). They were joined by members of their family as well as **Perla Hazan**. Plaques were unveiled in their honor on the new Builders Wall and in the Administration and Research Building.



## GIBRALTAR

■ On 7 August, brothers-in-law **Daniel Rudich** (fourth from right) and **Ariel Belilo** (third from left) visited the Holocaust History Museum and the Children's Memorial together with their children.



# Friends Worldwide

■ **Raquel and Alberto Cohen** and their children visited Yad Vashem on 3 July.



## ARGENTINA

■ During their visit to Yad Vashem on 21 July, **Dalia** (left) and **Sergio Starosielski** (right) were joined by their family as well as Director of the Latin-America, Spain, Portugal and Miami Spanish-Speaking Desk **Perla Hazan**. They unveiled a plaque in the Memorial Cave in memory of Dalia's family, who were murdered during the Holocaust.



## COSTA RICA

■ **Sara and Rodney Weisleder** (left) were joined by their sons and Director of the Latin-America, Spain, Portugal and Miami Spanish-Speaking Desk **Perla Hazan** and her husband **Moshe** during their visit to Yad Vashem on 20 July.



## SPAIN

■ President of the Jewish Community of Madrid **David Hatchwell** (fifth from left) visited Yad Vashem on 22 June with a group of friends. They were joined by Director of the Latin-America, Spain, Portugal and Miami Spanish-Speaking Desk **Perla Hazan**.



## BRAZIL

■ **Marcelo Melsohn** (center) and his family visited Yad Vashem on 6 July with Director of the Latin-America, Spain, Portugal and Miami Spanish-Speaking Desk **Perla Hazan**.



## MIAMI SPANISH-SPEAKERS

■ **Geula and Elias Benasayag** (left) visited Yad Vashem on 9 July with their son **Jacobo** (center). They were joined by Director of the Latin-America, Spain, Portugal and Miami Spanish-Speaking Desk **Perla Hazan** and her husband **Moshe**.



■ **Melissa and Stuart Fishman** (center) visited Yad Vashem on 21 June to mark the bar mitzvah of their son **Eliezer**. They were joined by **Perla Hazan**.



■ During their visit to Yad Vashem on 29 June, **Leslie** (second from left) and **Mijael Attias** (right) were accompanied by **Perla Hazan**. A plaque was unveiled in their honor in the Square of Hope.



## Christian Desk with ICEJ and The Museum of the Bible

■ The second international seminar for young Christian leaders took place at Yad Vashem in June 2017. Participants hailed from churches as well as lay-leader backgrounds worldwide, including countries as diverse as India, Norway and South Korea. In addition to studying at Yad Vashem and meeting with Holocaust survivors, the young leaders visited some of the key historic and religious sites around Israel.



■ Former graduates of Yad Vashem's Christian Leadership Seminars (2010-2017) had the opportunity to participate in the second annual graduates' meeting in Washington DC, generously sponsored by Museum of the Bible under its President **Cary Summers** (right). The long weekend included lectures, a Shabbat dinner and a tour of the Museum, which is currently under construction. Director of the **Christian Friends of Yad Vashem Dr. Susanna Kokkonen** (center) and International Relations Managing Director **Shaya Ben Yehuda** (left) were present at the meeting.



Courtesy: Tert Moy

■ ICEJ Finland, an early supporter of Yad Vashem's work in Christian communities, frequently hosts Yad Vashem events at churches across the nation. In June 2017, Director of the Christian Friends of Yad Vashem **Dr. Susanna Kokkonen** toured in Finnish and Swedish-speaking communities to deliver a series of presentations. The tour's highlight was an Israel Day hosted by the ICEJ with several speakers and musicians in performance. Left to right: National Director of ICEJ Finland **Kari Niemi**; Dr. Susanna Kokkonen; **Tuija Valtanen** of ICEJ Finland



■ ICEJ hosts its annual Feast of Tabernacles every Sukkot, bringing thousands of Christians from around the world to celebrate this special time in the Land of Israel. This year a reception was hosted at Yad Vashem for major donors and ICEJ branch directors, including **Mojmir Kallus** (front, second from left), the new International Director of ICEJ. Their tour of Yad Vashem included a behind-the-scenes visit to the Archives with **Shaya Ben Yehuda** (right).



## Your Support Helps Make a Difference

All of the activities, projects and events which you have just read about are made possible thanks to the generous support of our donors. In these difficult times, when there is a worrying rise in antisemitism and Holocaust denial around the world, Yad Vashem is doubling its efforts to commemorate the Holocaust, disseminate its universal implications and strengthen Jewish continuity. Yad Vashem is deeply grateful for your generosity in supporting its vital work and welcomes both new friends and established supporters as partners in our shared mission.

### ■ To make tax-deductible donations:

#### USA:

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### ■ Donations may also be sent to:

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**Donate online: [www.yadvashem.org](http://www.yadvashem.org)**

# The International Institute for Holocaust Research: Publications

## *Yad Vashem Studies, Volume 45:1*

Editor: Dr. David Silberklang

NIS ~~80~~ NIS 60



■ The latest issue of Yad Vashem's academic journal highlights local attitudes to the Jews during and after the Holocaust and the extensive use of oral history as a primary source. Among its articles: Jan Grabowski and Dariusz Libionka deconstruct the new museum in Markowa honoring Poles who saved Jews during the Holocaust; Yuri Radchenko looks at Ukrainian memory of local participation in the Holocaust in the Donbas region; Bart van der Boom challenges some

recent research on Dutch attitudes to the Holocaust; Jiří Friedl studies Czechoslovakian attitudes toward Jews fleeing postwar Poland; and Anna Maria Droumpouki investigates the Holocaust restitution efforts in Greece.

## *Such a Beautiful Sunny Day... Jews Seeking Refuge in the Polish Countryside, 1942-1945*

Prof. Barbara Engelking

NIS ~~174~~ NIS 128



■ This groundbreaking study sheds light on the struggle of the Jews who escaped to the Polish countryside and the threats and challenges they faced. Many Jews encountered a hostile environment of local Poles ready to denounce them to the Germans or to participate in manhunts, and in cases where they found refuge with Polish families who took them in, the dangers for both the Jews and their rescuers grew more acute as time passed. Based on a large number of documents,

the book tells the untold story of Jewish struggle for survival in a complex landscape of fear, betrayal and death.

## *After So Much Pain and Anguish: First Letters after Liberation*

Editors: Dr. Robert Rozett and Dr. Iael Nidam-Orvieto

NIS ~~148~~ NIS 108



■ Written in the immediate aftermath of liberation by Holocaust survivors and soldiers who encountered them, these letters reflect the mixed emotions of the survivors – the sigh of relief intertwined with the anguish of irreparable loss, and even first utterances of hope for a better tomorrow. This compilation of letters comprises a powerful, firsthand testimony.

## *From Death to Battle: Auschwitz Survivor and Palmach Fighter*

Beni Virtzberg

NIS ~~74~~ NIS 56



■ When Beni Virtzberg was nine years old, the *Kristallnacht* pogrom destroyed his carefree childhood in his home town of Hamburg, and his family was deported to Sosnowiec. After the Nazi invasion of Poland, they lived in a ghetto and were later transported to Auschwitz, where Beni lost his parents and was forced to assist Joseph Mengele. Following death marches to the notorious camps of Mauthausen and Melk, he finally immigrated to *Eretz Israel*, joined the Palmach, and fought in some of the fiercest

battles of Israel's War of Independence.

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■ On the cover: Pavel Fantl (1903–1945), *Behind the Fence, Theresienstadt Ghetto, 1942–1944*, Watercolor, ink and pencil on paper. Yad Vashem Art Collection, Gift of Ida Fantlová, the artist's mother, courtesy of Ze'ev and Alisa Shek, Caesarea, Israel

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